



Lifelong
Learning
Programme



GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA
Office for Cooperation with NGOs



Ministry of Tourism
REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

Travelife
Sustainability in tourism

LIFELONG LEARNING PROGRAMME LEONARDO DA VINCI Transfer of innovation
CSR TOUR „Corporate Social Responsibility Training and Certification in the Travel Sector“

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Press Release

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The importance of sustainable tourism

Sustainability in tourism is a market demand, not a trend

The EU has funded joint effort of the business and educational sector's common goal to promote sustainability in Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Netherlands and UK. This has proven to be recipe for innovative and sustainable tourism practices.

In the two-year project, eleven educational institutions and seven national tourism associations, in partnership with over 200 travel agencies, have embraced the Travelife system. The project was financed by the EU Lifelong Learning Programme – Transfer of Innovation fund and co-financed and supported by Office for Cooperation with NGOs and Ministry of Tourism of the Government of Croatia.

Travelife is a training, management and certification initiative for tourism companies committed to reach sustainability with primary focus on hotels, accommodations, tour operators and travel agencies. On its online platform, it offers educational tools, exams and a step-by-step certification process.

In mentioned countries, where the “Corporate Social Responsibility Training and Certification in the Travel Sector” (in short: CSR TOUR) project was implemented, the participation of travel agencies and other professional institutions has assisted the process of providing education and certification.

The result is that over 50 travel companies implemented sustainability management system, 94 hotels were Travelife certified and over 750 personal certificates of Travelife Sustainability Managers were issued. Both travel agencies and accommodation providers agree that sustainability is necessity demanded by the customers and tour operators and as such is the only professional option. The market dictates minimal negative influence on local communities and cultural and natural heritage.

“The Association of Croatian Travel Agencies’ (UHPA) is proud to have members who are willing to run great businesses that create unforgettable memories for the tourists and yet contribute to sustainable development of local communities and the protection of the environment and cultural heritage,” Željko Trezner, director of UHPA, has stated.

From business to schools

The focus has also been put to fast-forwarding innovation from the travel industry to educational institutions and their students. Travelife educational tools have been upgraded, translated into four additional languages and provided to trainers for professionals and students. During the trainings, more than 600 pupils and students have gained new knowledge and competences on sustainability in tourism.



Improved interactive modules on internal management are a great help to travel professional and learning tool in educational institutes.



Owners and employees from companies associated with the Silesian Branch of the Polish Chamber of Tourism awarded with Travelife personal certificates.

“Polish Chamber of Tourism has committed to CSR TOUR Project because sustainable management in tourism means benefits for the tourist market in terms of environmental protection, cooperation with suppliers and destinations. It also provides a great asset for tour operators and travel agents in terms of competitive advantage and cost savings. Polish Chamber of Tourism is also very much satisfied with cooperation with Polish VET institutes and engagement of students in Travelife training- it means that future staff of tourism companies will be more effective in implementing sustainability in TO&TA management systems.” said Bożena Szawłowska, PIT’s project manager.

In 2012, when the CSR TOUR project was initiated, the concept of sustainable tourism and corporate social responsibility was discussed on a theoretical level within the educational institutions. However it was recognised by the travel agencies and hotels that they hadn’t acknowledged the importance of their role, and the positive and negative impacts of their business.

Despite previous promotion by the mass media of sustainability and the undeniable influence of tourism , awareness-raising in the tourism industry was one of the most important goals of the project:

“HATTA (the Hellenic Association of Travel and Tourist Agencies) is happy to have participated in the CSR TOUR Project and considers it an actual success also in Greece. Despite the difficult times for our country, in which we were called to present Travelife to our members, and the various concerns that these difficult times have created for the Greek travel agencies, thanks to this project we were able to raise awareness among our members regarding the relatively new concept of sustainability in tourism and CSR and the benefits that these could bring to their enterprises, to offer them tools to work towards their certification with Travelife, but also to contribute to the education of young people in these principles, who will integrate them subsequently in their professional life. As is the case with

everything new, it needs time to really take root. We are confident, however, that sustainability and CSR, as well as Travelife, have a future in our country, “said Angeliki Rossolatou, HATTA’s project manager.

Croatian, Greek, Latvian and Polish Tourism Associations will continue to promote sustainability within the tourism industry and help travel agencies, tour operators, hotels and other accommodation facilities to monitor their social and environmental impact, but also to inform guests and business partners on their achievements.

Best practices in one brochure

A great amount of effort, numerous hours of work and many materials went into support the CSR TOUR project. All of which were aimed at helping the participating companies who were seeking to improve the quality of their services, the customer experience, the progress of the local community and environmental protection.



Best practices show that sustainability can be fun, and its success is based on taking small steps on the ‘sustainability road’. There is no ‘one size fits all’, every company needs to find its own route

Over 80 examples of good practice from travel agencies from Croatia, Greece, Latvia, Poland, Netherlands and United Kingdom have been gathered. They point out how travel agencies and all tourism-related businesses can use sustainability as a magnet for tourists and can help local communities and the environment. Furthermore they can educate tourists on sustainable development and the protection of flora and fauna. Examples of good practice are an inspiration to all travel agencies for improvement of their business management and excellent educational material for students. The brochure is *available for download* on www.travelife.info/csrtour/.

How to get engaged?

For more information, interactive Travelife trainings, videos, tools for planning and reporting please visit www.travelife.info