



Education and Culture

Socrates



EUROPEAN UNION SOCRATES PROJECT

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ADULT LEARNING ON THE ENVIRONMENT AND RELATED TOPICS – II

Environmental performance in the tourism sector

“Good business is green business!”

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Introduction:

The tourism sector includes a wide range of different businesses, hotels, restaurants, tour operators, tour agents, tourist guides, etc. Recent information indicates that tourism accounts for 10.7% of global GDP. Tourism can contribute significantly to local social and economic development. At the same time tourism may contribute to the deterioration of the local environment, if appropriate measures are not taken in time. Air pollution, waste generation, shortage of water and energy, sea pollution and excessive use of toxic chemicals are only some of the problems faced by the environment. In addition, the expansion of tourism without the consideration of special issues like the local conservation and protection of nature may lead to deterioration in the local environment. The carrying capacity of the local environment may be exceeded. It is therefore extremely important to educate the tourism industry of ways to reduce their environmental and human impact and therefore improve their 'environmental performance' and protect human health.

Aims:

- To increase awareness in the tourism industry, of the impact that their activities may have on the environment.
- To stimulate debates and dialogue between the municipality and businesses involved in tourism to create partnerships that may benefit the local environment.
- To inform tourism workers of the benefits that changing their behavior towards their environment could have on their businesses long term sustainability.
- To provide information on simple steps that could easily be taken in order to improve their environmental performance.
- To give advice on the possibility of using the tools provided by the EU, like EMAS or Eco-labeling, in order to register and commit themselves to becoming more environmentally sustainable.

Target group:

Businesses in the tourism sector: hotel owners, restaurant owners, tourist agents, etc.

Course content/list of subjects:

- Present day impacts of tourism on the environment and quality of life. A global overview. Examples from Greece.
- Concepts of sustainable tourism - what does it mean and why is it so important to implement sustainable tourism.
- The EU steps towards a sustainable tourism strategy. National efforts.
- Priority issues for sustainable tourism policy - targets and actions to be taken at all levels.
- Environment and tourism - horizontal measures.
- The integration of tourism into the overall policy of sustainable development.
- Establishing strategies and plans.
- Development of Sustainable Tourism. Planning measures. The role of Environmental Impact Assessment. Environmental standards, legislative framework.
- Management of Tourism - use of technology, monitoring, compliance mechanisms, initiatives by the tourism industry.
- Conditions for Success - capacity building, information exchange, involvement of all local stakeholders.
- Simple steps to be taken by all businesses in the tourism sector: recycling of waste, saving water and energy, use of ecological detergents, minimization of toxic chemical use in all materials, use of organic and local food, minimization of packaging, etc.
- The need to integrate tradition into tourism.

-Implementation of staff education and awareness raising programs, information programs for visitors/tourists.

Transversal issues:

The EC transversal issues - concerning equal opportunities for men and women and people with disabilities - are met through the organization of the meetings with all interested stakeholders of the tourism sector in the city. All people involved in the sector are invited to participate in these meetings.

Duration:

The lectures will take place on a weekly basis. 3 hours/week, for about 5 weeks will be needed in order to reach all the different businesses in the tourism sector. Every week, one meeting is arranged with one kind of tourist business - hotels, restaurants, tourist offices, workers, special activities offices, etc.

Training methods:

The training methods will include presentations, separate discussions with each different business group in the tourism sector. It is important to note that our aim is not just the one-way transmission of information, but the promotion of dialogue and the establishment of a local tourism strategy and master plan for tourism development and management as a result of the whole process. This process will also include, apart from the meetings, an information campaign through the media, with press releases, leaflets, and TV publicity.

Sources:

<http://www.eco-label-tourism.com>

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/emas>

<http://www.iso.ch/iso/en/aboutiso/introduction>

<http://www.world-tourism.org/>

<http://www.ypan.gr/>

http://europa.eu.int/comm/environment/governance/03052627volos_conference.htm