POOL OF GOOD PRACTICES

PROJECT NUMBER: 101144003
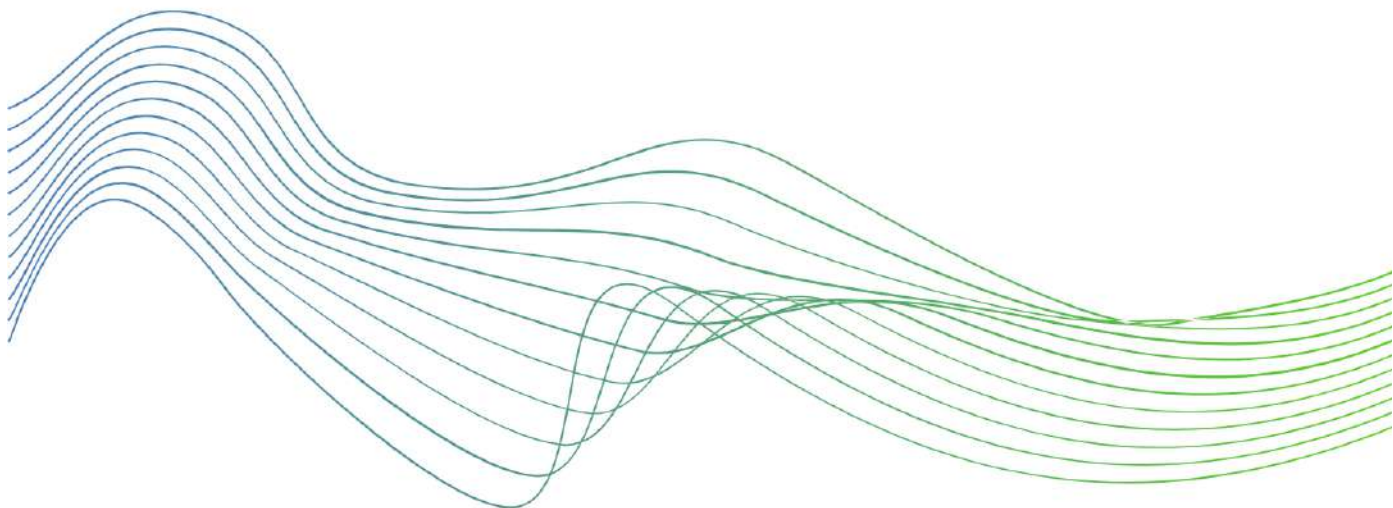
Report made by:

Bulgaria:

- MTBG - Ministry of Tourism – Bulgary (http://www.tourism.government.bg);
- Euro-Alliance Ltd (http://www.euro-alliance.net)
- PCCI - Plovdiv Chamber of Commerce and Industry (http://www.pcci.bg)

Cyprus:

- Frederick University (http://www.frederick.ac.cy)
- MAG – Magnetar (http://www.magnetar.com.cy);
- NTB - Nicosia Tourism Board (http://www.ntb.org.cy)

Greece:

- University of Macedonia (https://www.uom.gr/en)
- EPIHAL - Chamber of Halkidiki (http://www.epihal.gr)
- TIHC - Technical Institute of Heraklion Chamber of Commerce & Industry (http://www.katartisi.gr)
- OECON Group – Business and Development Consultants (https://www.oecon.gr/en/)

Italy:

- AITR - Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile (https://www.aitr.org/)
- CSL - Centro Studio e Lavoro La Cremeria (http://www.csl-cremeria.it)

Portugal:

- Escola Superior de Hotelaria e Turismo do Instituto Politécnico do Porto (http://www.esht.ipp.pt)
- TPNP, E.R. - Turismo do Porto e Norte de Portugal, E.R. (http://www.portoenorte.pt)

Slovenia:

- SŠGT MB - Srednja šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor (https://www.ssgt-mb.si/)
- Maribor Tourist Board (https://www.visitmaribor.si/)

Spain:

- CETT - Barcelona School of Tourism, Hospitality and Gastronomy (https://www.cett.es/es/)
- AETHNIC - ETHNIC Sustainable Tourism Association (https://www.aethnic.org/aethnic/)
- CCI Girona - Cambra de Comerç, Indústria i Navegació de Girona (http://www.cambragirona.cat)

Date: February 2025

Executive Summary

This consolidated report explores exemplary practices in sustainable development, particularly within the context of sustainable tourism and hospitality management. It emphasizes innovative approaches that aim to minimize environmental impacts while promoting social and economic responsibility among businesses.

The integration of sustainable practices is essential for fostering positive outcomes for the environment and society, ultimately leading to a balanced and responsible approach to tourism and hospitality. This report is the result of various forms of data collection, including a quantitative research method through structured interviews with insights from representatives in the tourism, hospitality, and restaurant sectors of the 7 countries developing this project: Bulgaria, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain.

As a working methodology, it was established that each country would produce a good practices report, in which a minimum of 5 good practices would have to be identified and described. The good practices identified by each country did not necessarily have to be implemented in that country but were considered by the partner to be relevant in the context of tourism sustainability and hotel management.

For data collection, it was used desk research and semi-structured interviews highlighting successful case studies and initiatives from different organizations. By presenting these case studies, the report aims to inspire stakeholders in the tourism and hospitality industry to adopt replicable practices and collaborate towards sustainable tourism as a means of fostering societal change.

In assumption, the final outputs of this report will be a conception of resource for stakeholders aiming to enhance their sustainability efforts within the tourism and hospitality sector, encouraging innovative thinking and the adaptation of successful practices to mitigate negative environmental impacts and promote responsible tourism and hospitality.

Contents

Index of Figures

Introduction

The tourism and hospitality sectors are at a critical stage in a time of increased awareness of the environmental footprint of tourism and hospitality management issues and the imperative need for sustainable development. Examining and demonstrating best practices that actively work to lessen negative environmental effects while fostering social responsibility is the goal of this consolidated report. It aims to present that incorporating sustainable practices into corporate operations of tourism and hospitality management is not only feasible but also necessary for a peaceful coexistence between environmental reservation and economic growth by highlighting initiatives that promote the prudent use of natural resources and cultivate positive relationships with employees and communities.

By emphasizing both qualitative and quantitative research methods, this report explores a variety of industry best practices in the tourism and hospitality industry. Structured interviews with important stakeholders are part of the investigation, offering a sophisticated perception of individual experiences and pioneering methods in sustainable tourism and hospitality management. These examples show how to achieve sustainable tourism in a variety of settings, whether it is through strict programs for energy conservation, community involvement, or the promotion of regional heritage. In this consolidated report, we recognize the importance of aligning all the efforts and the best practices with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By addressing these key aspects, we contribute to a broader global framework aimed at achieving a more sustainable and equitable future for all.

This report also emphasizes how important replicability is and it encourages other businesses and consumers to take part in cross-border sustainable initiatives by presenting effective models and practices from diverse stakeholders. The selected case studies, which range from community-driven projects to boutique hotels, demonstrate the revolutionary potential of implementing eco-friendly, social and economic conscious methods.

It is clear from navigating the complexities of contemporary tourism and hospitality sector that the sustainable practices described in this report are practical strategies that have the potential to provide major long-term advantages for the environment and society. This consolidated report is a result of research carried out in each of the seven countries that make up the consortium and reflects the best practices developed in these countries. By working together, we can create a tourism and hospitality sector that prospers and supports the dedication to preserving the environment and strengthening local communities.

The ultimate objective is to raise awareness and issue a call to action for all parties involved in the tourism and hospitality industry, encouraging them to use sustainable development as a promoter for progress.

1. Policies and Practices to Support Companies and Institutions

This section presents some examples of good practices for sustainability of tourism and hospitality management related to policies and practices that are implemented in different countries to support the activity of companies and other institutions. Those good practices examples are summarized as follows:

1. **Companies Tourism 360º Program**
   The National Tourism Board, Turismo de Portugal, developed a system to evolve the vision regarding the responsibility of companies in the sector as an agent of value creation (shareholders, workers, suppliers, community, territory and for the environment), creating a smarter sector, more sustainable and more responsible, giving conditions to companies to have more growth (intelligent growth), based on innovation and qualification, starting with 486 companies, hence 100 already have their ESG Engaged.

2. **AHRESP's Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages**
   AHRESP is a national association of tourism companies and worked with the Governmental Division for the Consumer, to define several practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages and measures to solve and enhance those practices and situations, with 25 recommendations, giving consumers conditions for better practices, clarify their doubts and to have more responsible and professional companies at the food and beverage sector.

3. **Blue Flag Initiative**
   The Blue Flag Initiative is a global certification promoting sustainable tourism through environmental management, water quality, safety, and education at beaches and marinas. It sets strict standards to protect natural ecosystems while enhancing visitor experiences. Challenges include financial constraints, enforcement difficulties, and climate change impacts. Benefits include improved environmental quality, safety, and increased community engagement. The program also raises awareness and boosts sustainable tourism.

4. **Tourism Policy-the Way Forward**
   Bhutan follows a High-Value, Low-Volume tourism policy, aiming to preserve its culture, environment, and traditions while maximizing economic benefits. This hospitality management model limits mass tourism by imposing a variety of rules that require visitors to book through licensed tour operators. The strategy ensures that tourism contributes to sustainability, cultural preservation, and local well-being while offering travellers a unique, exclusive, and immersive experience. By prioritizing quality over quantity, Bhutan maintains its pristine landscapes, rich heritage, and Gross National Happiness philosophy.

5. **Maribor Tourist Board**
   The Maribor Tourist Board exemplifies a good practice by effectively combining sustainable operations with community engagement. The organization integrates sustainable solutions into every aspect of its business, including energy management, waste reduction, and cooperation with local suppliers, which reflects a holistic commitment to sustainability. By obtaining Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, they demonstrate leadership in responsible tourism, ensuring they meet international sustainability standards. The

proactive approach to innovation, collaboration, and ethics showcases their determination to continuously improve and inspire others. Additionally, the clear performance indicators and strategic focus on reducing environmental footprints highlight the organization's long-term vision for both environmental and social sustainability.

6. **ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.**

   Atlantide is a social cooperative focused on environmental education and sustainable tourism, with a team of experts in ecology, tourism, and cultural heritage. It engages over 1 million students through impactful educational programs and promotes responsible environmental practices. By fostering collaboration among schools, local communities, and companies, Atlantide enhances both environmental awareness and the local economy. The cooperative faces challenges like misinformation and the need for continuous education, but its results are evident in increased sustainability adoption and local support. Key to its success is its highly qualified, passionate team, which drives the cooperative's mission.

7. **AlterEco cooperative**

   AlterEco, founded in 1997, is a cooperative that promotes sustainable tourism and local development in the Lunigiana region. By revitalizing local heritage and supporting eco-friendly tourism, it has fostered community-driven initiatives like eco-tourism, educational hubs, and the creation of local businesses. AlterEco's projects have empowered local residents and improved infrastructure, offering an alternative to the area's traditional marble quarrying economy. Through collaboration with local authorities, it has successfully attracted visitors, supporting a thriving sustainable economy.

These strategies seemed to be important measures to inspire and contribute to the implementation of sustainable practices by companies and institutions defining different practical tools to achieve it.

1.1. Companies Tourism 360º Program

Name	Companies Tourism 360º Program
	Programa Empresas Turismo 360º - Turismo de Portugal
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://empresasturismo360.turismodeportugal.pt/EmpTur360/
Country and date	Portugal, 2021

1.1.1. Background

Inserted in Pillar 4 - P4.4 Sustainability in Companies and Destinations – of the Tourism Recovery Plan, the Companies Tourism 360º Program (Figure 1) is a measure that aims to place companies at the center of the sector's sustainable transformation process.

Alongside the sector's transformation process, it is important to evolve the vision regarding the responsibility of companies in the sector as an agent of value creation, not only for their shareholders, but also for workers, their suppliers, the community, the territory and the environment. The aim is to create a smarter sector that creates more value, is more sustainable and more responsible, and naturally depends on companies more focused on intelligent growth, based on innovation and qualification, more responsible to society and more sustainable.

The tourism company at the center of the sector's transformation process, an actor that must be seen as a member of the community, from a 360º perspective. This involves cultural transformation work, in a close public-private partnership, curation, training, and, finally, the consecration of a form of public recognition for companies, based on economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Figure 1 - Companies Tourism 360º Program (Turismo de Portugal, 2021)

1.1.2.   Key Principles

The Tourism 360º Companies Program is an initiative by Turismo de Portugal that aims to place companies at the center of the sector's sustainable transformation process. Adhesion to the project was formalized by 19 partners, including the Portuguese Tourism Confederation, the Portuguese Association of Business Ethics, the Bank and the Order of Certified Accountants.

This program focuses on developing actions that include training tourism companies to incorporate ESG (Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance) indicators into their respective management processes, as well as accelerating the process of incorporating ESG indicators in companies, challenging them to actively rethink their environmental, social and governance practices. The program focuses on the development of actions that include training tourism companies to incorporate ESG indicators into their respective management processes, the provision of monitoring instruments, sustainability reporting models and includes the promotion of public recognition of organizations.

This initiative falls within the scope of international trends that embody challenges on a global scale related to the sustainability and social responsibility of tourism, for which it is important to leverage initiatives and dynamics that can ensure the dissemination of good practices, the responsible recovery of sector and strengthening its resilience and competitive capacity. As a national tourism authority.

In the case of Turismo 360º, it is also important to note that this good practice is also included in the access criteria to the Offer Qualification Support Line (tourism financing protocol between Turismo de Portugal and Banks).

1.1.3. Barriers and Challenges

Turismo de Portugal developed training actions aimed at managers and technicians in the areas of strategy, innovation or sustainability of micro and small tourism companies and medium and large companies, based on the following objectives and contents:

Objectives

- Acquire knowledge on emerging themes of sustainability and ESG management;
- Understand the vision and requirements of the financial sector for access to financing;
- Master the requirements underlying the legislation that is being defined in Europe and Portugal regarding the reporting of non-financial information;
- Understand the market challenges arising from Portugal's and Europe's commitments to climate change and emerging social issues;
- Know cost reduction strategies by reducing environmental impact and reinforcing social impact;
- Access sectoral ESG indicators;
- Understand techniques for collecting, managing and reporting ESG information.

Main contents

- The challenges and opportunities of sustainability;
- Start a sustainability journey;
- The importance of non-financial reporting;
- Structure and content of a sustainability report;
- Materiality and sectoral ESG – Environmental, Social & Governance indicators;
- Techniques and procedures for collecting, managing and reporting ESG information.

The 360º Tourism Companies Program aims to promote responsible practices in the environmental, social and governance pillars, ensuring companies have better conditions for access to financing, optimization of efficiency, and more sustainable financial performance. This Program fits into the pillars of Tourism in Portugal and aims to position the country as one of the most competitive and sustainable tourist destinations in the world.

On September 24, this program was distinguished by the European Commission with an honorable mention, within the scope of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards (EEPA), an initiative that

distinguishes good business promotion practices based on their contribution to the economic development and employment of regions.

1.1.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Turismo de Portugal recognized the record number of 486 tourism companies highlighted for their commitment to sustainability practices. 100 companies received the "ESG Engaged" seal, the maximum number of companies to achieve this level of distinction in the Companies Tourism 360o Program, as well as the 386 companies recognized with the "ESG Committed" seal that joined the sustainability journey through this Program.

The event took place at the Montebelo Mosteiro de Alcobaça Historic Hotel and was attended by the Secretary of State for Tourism, Pedro Machado, and the President of Turismo de Portugal, Carlos Abade.

The distinction of the 100 companies with the "ESG Engaged" seal reflects their commitment to environmentally responsible practices, through the implementation of concrete and measurable measures, which were reported through the Organizational Sustainability in Tourism Reporting Tool (FOREST). The 386 companies recognized with the "ESG Committed" seal demonstrate their aspiration to be at the forefront of the transformation of Portuguese tourism, proving that a sustainable and regenerative future is not only possible, but also economically viable.

1.1.5. Performance Indicators

From January 2022, and once these indicators have been defined, Turismo de Portugal is committed to training the sector in terms of sustainability, through periodic training actions that will continue throughout the entire Program. It is expected that, over the next year, around 2,000 companies will attend these training actions.

The launch of a Companies Tourism 360 platform is also planned for 2022, to allow companies to directly monitor their commitment to the defined ESG indicators and, thus, obtain their Sustainability Report.

It is also planned to create the Empresa Turismo 360 distinction, a seal awarded by Turismo de Portugal to companies that demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, in all its aspects, verified by a Sustainability Report.

1.2. Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages

Name	Guia de Regras e de boas práticas na Restauração e bebidas (Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages)
	AHRESP e Direção Geral do Consumidor - Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC) e a Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP)
Subsector	Restaurants
Website	Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC): XXIII Governo - República Portuguesa
	Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP): https://ahresp.com/
Country	Portugal

1.2.1. Background

This Guide (Figure 2) is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages.

Figure 2 - Cover of the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages (Direção-Geral do Consumidor, & AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal, 2023)

1.2.2. Key Principles

This Guide is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages.

1.2.3.   Barriers and Challenges

This guide is available online, the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Restaurants and Beverages, the result of joint work between the Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC) and the Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP), the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages. It is aimed at consumers and economic agents in the restaurant and beverage sector and seeks to answer and clarify recurring doubts such as, for example, gratuity, payment methods, capacity of spaces, minimum consumption in restaurant and beverage establishments, among others.

This Guide is available on the DGC and AHRESP websites[1].

1.2.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

The main benefits of this guide are that it will train consumers to adopt better practices, clarify all their doubts, as well as raise awareness among economic agents and respond to professionals in the restaurant and beverage sector, on a wide range of topics such as tips, sharing of meals, space capacity, among others.

1.2.5.   Performance Indicators

This Guide is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages, some of them controversial, such as the provision of glasses of water by the establishment, the entry of animals or the practice of tipping.

This document, which is based on the legislation that governs different situations, also includes understandings and good practices that must be carried out by establishments and their customers.

---

[1] https://magazineahresp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Guia-Regras-e-boas-praticas-na-restauracao_2023.pdf

1.3. Blue Flag

Name	Blue Flag
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://www.blueflag.gr/
Country	Greece

1.3.1. Background

The Blue Flag Initiative (Figure 3) is an internationally recognized certification program that promotes sustainable development in both freshwater and marine environments through rigorous environmental management, education, and sustainable tourism practices. Managed by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), the initiative aims to safeguard natural resources by improving water quality, enhancing safety, and encouraging responsible environmental practices at beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators worldwide. The Blue Flag certification is a prestigious eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas, and tourism boats that meet strict criteria in four main areas: environmental education and information, water quality, environmental management, and safety and services. To earn the Blue Flag, sites must demonstrate excellence in these areas, ensuring that visitors have access to clean, safe, and environmentally friendly recreational spaces. The program also fosters a sense of environmental stewardship by encouraging local authorities, communities, and tourism operators to engage in sustainable management practices. By maintaining high standards, the Blue Flag program supports the overarching mission to protect natural environments while promoting sustainable tourism and recreation. In doing so, it plays a vital role in environmental conservation within the context of global tourism.

Figure 3 - Blue Flag overview[2]

---

[2] https://lerosmarina.gr/blue-flag-2020/

1.3.2. Key Principles

The Blue Flag initiative is centered on promoting sustainable development in freshwater and marine environments by upholding high standards in environmental management, water quality, safety, and environmental education. To achieve these standards, the program requires specific resources and skills. Essential resources include skilled environmental managers, water quality testing equipment, lifeguards, and educational materials aimed at educating the public about sustainable practices. Key skills required for the program's success encompass environmental assessment, public engagement, safety training, and the implementation of sustainable management practices. The key principles of the Blue Flag program, as detailed on the Blue Flag Greece program, include:

- Environmental Education and Information: The program prioritizes educating visitors and local communities about environmental stewardship. This involves disseminating information on local ecosystems, responsible environmental behavior, and sustainable practices, which fosters a greater appreciation for natural resources and encourages sustainable interactions with the environment.
- Water Quality: Maintaining high water quality is fundamental to the Blue Flag certification. The program mandates regular monitoring and rigorous testing to ensure that water at beaches and marinas meets strict quality standards, thereby safeguarding public health and protecting marine life.
- Environmental Management: The program emphasizes the importance of effective environmental management to preserve the natural environment. This includes proper waste management, habitat protection, and minimizing human impact on the ecosystem, ensuring that beaches, marinas, and boating areas remain unspoiled for future generations.
- Safety and Services: Ensuring visitor safety is a cornerstone of the Blue Flag program. It requires the presence of trained lifeguards, readily available safety equipment, and comprehensive emergency response plans. Additionally, the program mandates clean, well-maintained, and accessible facilities, such as toilets, showers, and walkways, making these sites safe and enjoyable for all visitors.
- Accessibility: The Blue Flag initiative advocates for the inclusivity of beaches, marinas, and boating areas, ensuring they are accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. This includes providing accessible facilities and clear information about accessibility features to enhance the experience for all visitors.

1.3.3. Barriers and Challenges

The Blue Flag program faces several barriers and challenges in its efforts to promote sustainable development and environmental protection at beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators. One of the primary challenges is maintaining high standards across diverse locations. Each location presents unique geographical and environmental conditions, regulations, and challenges, making it difficult to apply a uniform set of standards universally. Additionally, resource availability varies significantly, particularly in developing countries or remote areas, where communities may lack the necessary infrastructure, expertise, or funding to meet the stringent criteria set by the Blue Flag program. Financial constraints are another significant barrier. Achieving and maintaining Blue Flag certification

can be costly, requiring substantial investment in infrastructure, environmental management systems, and ongoing monitoring and assessments. These costs can be a considerable burden for smaller communities or regions with limited budgets. Furthermore, promoting environmental education and awareness, which is a core component of the Blue Flag program, often requires additional funding and resources that may not always be available. Enforcement and monitoring present further challenges. Ensuring continuous compliance with Blue Flag standards necessitates regular and rigorous monitoring and assessment, which can be logistically challenging and resource intensive. The program's success also depends on the commitment of local authorities, communities, and stakeholders to uphold these standards. A lack of engagement or support from these groups can significantly hinder compliance and enforcement efforts. Climate change and environmental threats also pose substantial challenges to the Blue Flag program. Rising sea levels, increased frequency of storms, and other climate-related impacts threaten the quality and safety of beaches and marinas. In addition, pollution, marine litter, water contamination, and habitat destruction require ongoing effort and collaboration to manage effectively, particularly in areas with high tourist traffic or inadequate waste management infrastructure.

Balancing tourism and conservation is another critical challenge. In popular destinations, high levels of tourism can lead to environmental degradation, resource depletion, and strain on local infrastructure, which runs counter to the objectives of the Blue Flag program. There is often a tension between promoting sustainable practices and catering to local economic interests that prioritize tourism growth, which can lead to conflicts over resource use and environmental priorities. Public awareness and participation are crucial for the program's success but also present challenges. The Blue Flag program relies heavily on public awareness and understanding of its goals and criteria. If tourists and local residents are not aware of or do not value the Blue Flag status, maintaining high standards becomes more difficult. Moreover, encouraging sustainable behaviors among tourists and local communities, such as proper waste disposal and responsible resource use, is an ongoing challenge that requires continuous education and engagement. Lastly, regulatory and political challenges can impede the effectiveness of the Blue Flag program. Inconsistent environmental regulations and enforcement across different countries and regions create difficulties in maintaining a consistent standard for Blue Flag sites. Additionally, achieving and maintaining certification often requires strong political commitment and support from government bodies, which can be affected by changing political priorities and leadership. These barriers and challenges highlight the complexities involved in managing a global initiative like the Blue Flag program, which requires coordination, funding, and cooperation from multiple stakeholders to achieve its goals of promoting sustainable tourism and protecting the environment.

1.3.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

The Blue Flag program offers numerous benefits and positive outcomes, contributing significantly to environmental protection, sustainable tourism, and community well-being. One of the primary benefits is the enhancement of environmental quality at certified beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators. By adhering to the strict criteria set by the program, such as maintaining high standards of water quality, waste management, and ecological conservation, participating sites help protect natural ecosystems and biodiversity. This focus on environmental management reduces

pollution, promotes the conservation of local wildlife and habitats, and ensures that natural resources are used sustainably. Another key outcome of the Blue Flag program is the improvement of safety and services at certified locations. The program's standards require that beaches and marinas provide safe, accessible, and well-maintained facilities, including lifeguards, first aid, and clear signage. These measures enhance the safety and overall experience for visitors, making Blue Flag sites attractive destinations for tourists. This improved experience can lead to increased visitor satisfaction and repeat tourism, which can boost local economies. The Blue Flag certification also plays a significant role in raising environmental awareness and education among both locals and tourists. The program encourages educational activities and the dissemination of information about the environment, fostering a greater understanding of ecological issues and promoting responsible behavior. By engaging communities and tourists in environmental education, the program helps cultivate a culture of environmental stewardship and sustainability, which can have lasting positive impacts. Moreover, achieving Blue Flag status can enhance the reputation and visibility of a beach, marina, or boating tourism operator. The Blue Flag is an internationally recognized eco-label that symbolizes high environmental and quality standards. As a result, certified sites often enjoy increased media attention and recognition, which can attract more visitors who prioritize sustainable and environmentally friendly destinations. This increased visibility can contribute to the growth of sustainable tourism, providing economic benefits to local communities while encouraging the adoption of environmentally responsible practices.

In addition to these direct benefits, the Blue Flag program fosters greater community pride and involvement. Local communities often take pride in their Blue Flag status, which can lead to increased community engagement in environmental protection and sustainable tourism efforts. This sense of pride and ownership can drive local initiatives to maintain and improve environmental standards, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the site. Overall, the Blue Flag program generates multiple positive outcomes by enhancing environmental quality, promoting safety, raising awareness, boosting local economies, and fostering community pride. By encouraging sustainable practices and providing a framework for environmental stewardship, the program contributes significantly to the protection of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable tourism worldwide.

1.3.5.   Performance Indicators

The performance indicators of the Blue Flag program are designed to assess the quality, safety, and sustainability of beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators, ensuring they meet the high standards required for certification. Water quality is a primary indicator, necessitating regular testing to guarantee cleanliness and safety for recreational use. Environmental management focuses on effective waste management, the conservation of natural areas, and the reduction of ecological impact. Safety and services are assessed by the availability of lifeguards, lifesaving equipment, clearly marked swimming zones, and accessible facilities for all visitors, including those with disabilities. Additionally, environmental education and information are crucial indicators, aimed at increasing public awareness and engagement regarding environmental protection and sustainability. Further performance indicators include the number of sites certified annually, compliance rates with environmental management criteria, water quality metrics, the number of environmental education activities conducted, and stakeholder satisfaction levels. These comprehensive indicators collectively

help maintain the high standards of the Blue Flag program and evaluate its effectiveness in promoting sustainable tourism and environmental stewardship.

1.4.   Tourism Policy-the Way Forward

Name	Tourism Policy-the Way Forward
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://bhutan.travel/visit
Country	Bhutan

1.4.1.   Background

Bhutan (Figure 4), a country located in Asia, East of the Himalayas, is known as one of the happiest countries in the world. The country's past is not so turbulent as its neighbors as the state of Bhutan remained relatively untouched by the long-lasting effects of colonialism which has ensured that the people's sustainable way of life has remained intact. Bhutan tourism operates a scarce model as it incorporates the principle of high value, and low impact which enforces a strict framework of entry requirements and a daily visitor tariff. The daily tariff includes necessary expenses for the visit such as accommodation, a licensed tour guide meals, and hiking equipment. A significant portion of the tariff is being used to maintain and develop the country's infrastructure as well as contribute towards the healthcare and educational system.

Figure 4 - Bhutan Breathtaking View[3]

The value and rationale of this practice are worth mentioning and important to examine due to the global phenomenon of over-tourism which has been a hot topic internationally in recent years. Destinations like Barcelona had to impose serious legislation on the rental online marketplace platform Airbnb as the property rental market significantly derailed altering the market dynamics and impacting negatively the younger generations, while in the city of Venice, the number of day visits from cruise ships strained local resources and aggravated local residents to the point that the permanent residents

---

[3] https://www.globalrescue.com/common/blog/detail/bhutan-safe-travel-guide/

are fleeing the city. To understand the magnitude of the problem the resident number is dropping to below 53.000 in a city made for 150.000 people.

The abovementioned examples and phenomena led Bhutan to maintain its high-value low-impact model. The low-volume aspect of the policy ensures that the number of tourist arrivals is decided by the absorptive carrying capacity of our resources and services. It does not necessarily mean that there will be a reduction or restriction on the number of visitor arrivals. The country also struggled in the last decades of the 20th century when the government did not put in place any structural foundations to restrict visitations and travel. The latter led to an exponential increase in the number of tourists visiting Bhutan. These numbers have precipitated a surge in budget hotels and hostels, diluted the nature of several festivals and created unacceptable visitation levels at several landmarks and monuments. These incidents paved the way towards the enforcement of sustainable visitation policies as, in 2018 Nepal surpassed 1 million tourists for the first time in the nation's history.

1.4.2. Key Principles

The core pillars of the model that the Bhutanese policy is enforcing are the following:

- The *Sustainable Development Fee (SDF),* which requires tourists to pay a charge of 100 dollars per person to support Bhutan's development and environmental conservation
- The revenue from this fee has led to numerous successes, significantly enhancing infrastructure, services, and facilities for both nationals and tourists.
- The goals of the specific tourist policy are environmental conservation, preservation and promotion of culture, sustainable socio-economic development, and good governance.
- Limitation of Over-Tourism and its effects (pollution, disruptions, price hikes, infrastructure deficit)
- Protection of rural communities while also protecting the environment.
- Promotion of ecotourism and ecotourism projects as well as socio-economic development in the right direction
- The National Tourism Strategic Plan includes several provisions about poverty reduction, allowing for rural tourism, encouraging village homestays, and recycling fees to buffer zone and forest user committees.
- Generation of local employment opportunities
- Active involvement of local self-governments in tourism development

1.4.3. Barriers and Challenges

The vision and rationale of Bhutan for tourism became trendy but the trend of rapid and mass tourism significantly threatens this narrative. There are advocates that suggest that in the contemporary era, the tourism strategy is headed in the wrong direction. Calls for a significant restructuring in the comprehensive national tourism policy are becoming more and more popular especially when the commercialism of tourism has taken over at the expense of the environment and culture of Bhutan. Therefore, the main challenge for this policy is to keep up with the modern tourist models by adopting mechanisms and policies that other cities and countries have enforced. For instance, the government might consider the caps that were enforced in the case of Taj Mahal in Agra which imposed a threshold

of 40,000 tourists per day and a maximum stay of three hours. In the city of Amsterdam, the Dutch capital authorities have introduced a "City in Balance" program halting buildings of new hotels and tourist shops as well as an "enjoy and respect" campaign to influence tourist behavior. Other mechanisms can include rigid and robust control with trekking companies as well as caps and perhaps local tariffs for visits to monasteries for tourists.

Another significant barrier that exists towards the restructuring of the Bhutanese tourist dogma is the lack of infrastructure in several fields including accommodation, restaurants and hospitality structure. For instance, the hospitality sector still lags behind as in 2012 there were only 45 3-star hotels with the number steadily rising to 105 hotels in the country. There is a significant push for modernization and change as the state policy favors the development of hospitality domes and structures with the banking industry also supporting this effort by granting generous loans with interest rates far lower than for constructing residential buildings. Another trend is the conversion of residential buildings into budget hotels, that provides more options for tourists.

1.4.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The enforcement of this policy by the Bhutanese government had several benefits in the many sectors of the economy, society, and environment. Bhutan aims to promote Ecotourism which is a form of tourism directed towards exotic, often threatened, natural environments intended to support conservation efforts and observe wildfires. The country identifies the tourist industry as a lucrative source of income as tourism today is one of the most dynamic and largest economic sectors in this modern age. Ecotourism in Bhutan was first started to address human-wildlife conflicts by offsetting or compensating the losses for farmers, but much remains to be done to converge the two. For Bhutan's rural communities which bear the daily brunt of strict conservation policies in human-wildlife conflict, ecotourism holds tremendous potential to improve their livelihood. Lessons on ecotourism across the globe show that it is not unusual to confront challenges and issues in the early stages. The Royal Government of Bhutan and its partners, including the United Nations Development Program are implementing ecotourism projects as there are Bhutan's parks and natural areas can generate a capital investment of USD 150million, also generating new jobs with 19.8 million in wages and benefits to staff annually. Initiatives include the CBST in Haa and My Gakidh Village in Punakha where several nature-based activities have been introduced including bird watching rafting botany and mountain biking. The economic benefits to the hitherto excluded in the tourism sector, suitable programs were designed which faced many operational difficulties. Feasible solutions were adopted with stakeholders' participation, which ultimately resulted in institutionalizing the system with well-defined roles and responsibilities. It is estimated that the total economic benefit to the community through local sourcing is around 3.5 million. This tourist model also includes the promotion of ethnic food as there are food restaurants that serve ethnic food instantly becoming major eating spots for tourists.

This policy also helped to decrease the low-spending tourists which is a key characteristic of over tourism. Bhutan is one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in South Asia and it prioritizes the preservation of sacred sites and temples as for example the entrance to sacred places and temples is limited to Hindus and is strictly prohibited to other religions.

1.4.5. Performance Indicators

During the 2010-2017 period, Bhutan's real GDP growth averaged more than 6¾ percent making it one of the fastest-growing low-income countries. Much of that growth has come from the hydropower sector and from tourism receipts with fluctuating contributions from construction mostly related to the building of hydro-related dams.
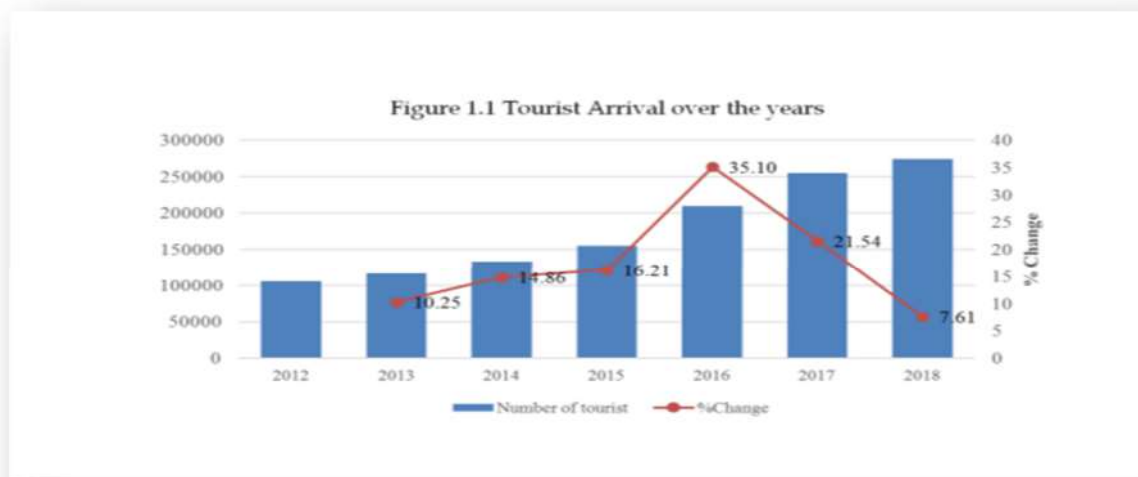
Figure 5 - Tourist arrival over ther years (Tourism Council of Buthan, 2018)

In the abovementioned

Figure 5 it is illustrated that the percentage of tourist arrivals over the years is dropped significantly as a result of the quality-over-quantity policies that are the established dogma of the tourist industry of Bhutan. In this year the total tourism receipt from international leisure rose to record standards of 85.41 million dollars. Additionally, the visitor exits survey highlights that the majority of the visitors to Bhutan are highly educated and employed, and they are visiting Bhutan for the first time.

This decline in growth ratio can be attributed to the lack of licensed operators as there are only 2,500 guides and 53 international tourist class hotels and lodges. The lack of transportation and infrastructure is also a factor that makes the accessibility of certain locations difficult. In conclusion, the practice of prioritizing quality over quantity must be considered by countries that are facing mass tourism problems. The mindset of the government is to encourage tourism, improve the infrastructure and hospitality infrastructure while respecting the environment culture and society of Bhutan. The revenue from tourism is reinvested into the core pillars of the state including education, healthcare and the environment.

1.5. Maribor Tourist Board

Name	Zavod za turizem Maribor (Maribor Tourist Board) Tkalski prehod 4 2000 Maribor PE Najstarejša trta na svetu (The oldest vine in the world)
Subsector	Tourism
Website	Website: www.visitmaribor.si: www.najstarejsatrta.si E-mail: stara-trta@maribor.si Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WorldsOldestVine/?locale=sl_SI Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/oldest_vine_museum/
Country	Slovenia

1.5.1. Background

Their mission is to have and to leave as little carbon footprint as possible. They strive to operate as sustainably as possible, responsibly managing waste, energy and water. In their business they cooperate with local suppliers to the greatest extent possible.

Their mission is also to create sustainable solutions that improve the quality of life, encourage cooperation and support innovation in the community. They are committed to the inclusion of equal opportunities and development that considers the needs of current and future generations.

Their vision is to become a leading example of excellence in sustainable tourism, combining people, technologies and knowledge to shape a better future. They want to be a reliable partner in changes that bring long-term benefits to the environment and society, which is why they are also pioneers in calculating the carbon footprint of a tourist facility and are also the first to receive the Slovenia Green Attraction certificate.

Values followed by the institute:

- sustainability: they are committed to solutions that are responsible for the environment and the community;
- innovation: they constantly strive for new ideas and creative approaches to solving challenges;
- collaboration and networking: they believe in the power of teamwork and building partnerships;
- ethics: they operate honestly, responsibly and with integrity;
- excellence: they strive for high quality in everything they do.

Their good practice example is based on a project that combines the local community and advanced technology for better energy efficiency. The initiative was created in response to rising emissions and the need to save energy.

1.5.2. Key Principles

The aforementioned organization operates in accordance with international standards of sustainable development, as confirmed by the Green Key certificate. They adhere to the principles of environmental responsibility, energy efficiency and waste reduction. Organizational, financial, technical, time, information and social resources are key to developing good practices and obtaining the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates. Management support, trained staff and funding for certification and sustainable improvements are required. Technical tools, such as carbon footprint calculators and energy-efficient technologies, enable emission reduction. Time for planning, adjustments and compliance with requirements are important, as well as access to guidelines, consultants and data. Cooperation with the local community, partners and visitors is the key to spreading sustainable practices.

The Slovenia Green Attraction, as it is exampling the house of old wine in Figure 6, certificate highlights their commitment to providing sustainable experiences for visitors, respecting natural and cultural heritage and supporting local communities. They actively involve the local community and visitors in raising awareness about the importance of sustainable tourism.

Figure 6 - The house of old vine[4]

The main characteristics that define them are:

- Green Key that confirms their sustainable practices in the field of resource management (water, energy), reducing their environmental footprint;
- Slovenia Green Attraction that confirms their contribution to the vision of a green, boutique and sustainable Slovenia;
- they introduce innovative solutions for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources;
- they actively strive to protect natural and cultural attractions that are part of our tourist offer;

---

[4] https://www.visitmaribor.si/media/8276/hisa-stare-trte_maribor_pohorje_slovenija_slovenia_jost_gantar_3.png?anchor=center&mode=crop&width=1200&height=630

- they offer visitors unique, environmentally friendly experiences that include local products and respect sustainable values.

The organization conducted an analysis of existing practices and prepared a plan to improve environmental and social standards. They optimized energy and water consumption, reduced waste and improved resource management. They implemented activities to increase local community involvement, such as cooperation with local providers and the organization of workshops. They participated in the verification process for the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, which included the preparation of documentation, staff training and independent inspections. They have taken care of educating staff and visitors about sustainable practices. Green certificates have become part of their marketing strategy to appeal to eco-conscious guests. They monitor their sustainability indicators and adapt to new challenges and opportunities.

1.5.3. Barriers and Challenges

They did not face any major obstacles in obtaining the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, but the challenge is maintaining and extending the certificates, which requires constant monitoring of standards and adjustments. These obstacles were overcome by regularly recording indicators, internal evaluations and cooperation with experts. When calculating the carbon footprint, the main problem was obtaining data, which was solved by establishing a system for regular information collection and using standardized methods, such as the GHG Protocol. The main challenges were maintaining and extending the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, which require constant monitoring of standards and adjustments, and difficulties in obtaining data for calculating the carbon footprint.

1.5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The organization emphasizes that strategic planning and organization, communication skills, leadership and teamwork, analytical and problem-solving skills, adaptability and flexibility, sustainable and systemic thinking, stakeholder engagement skills, digital and technical skills, measurement and evaluation of results, and ethics and integrity are being of key importance.

Their story is successful because:

- The Green Key Certificate ranks them among the leading sustainable providers on a global level;
- The Slovenia Green Attraction certificate confirms their key role in the development of a green destination in Slovenia;
- their practices serve as an example for other organizations that want to follow sustainable principles;
- with sustainable measures, they reduce costs, improve the visitor experience, and contribute to protecting the environment for future generations.

Obtaining certificates increases competitiveness and paints a positive image of the company. They also reduced costs by adopting sustainable measures. By incorporating sustainable principles into a

company's daily operations, this contributes to long-term success, as sustainable and environmentally friendly business practices are increasingly recognized as the key factor in long-term growth and success.

1.5.5. Performance Indicators

The project contributes to sustainable development by reducing its environmental footprint by implementing energy-efficient solutions, optimizing resource use and promoting recycling. The Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates confirm their commitment to sustainable tourism, while the calculation of the carbon footprint allows for accurate monitoring of emissions and the design of effective measures to reduce them. In addition, the project involves the local community and raises awareness among visitors about the importance of sustainable practices, creating long-term benefits for the environment and society.

Key performance indicators include reduction of energy and water consumption, amount of recycled waste, accuracy of the calculated carbon footprint, successful maintenance of the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, and the level of visitor awareness and local community involvement in sustainable activities.

1.6. ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.

Name	ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://www.atlantide.net/
Country	Italy

1.6.1. Background

Atlantide is a social cooperative dedicated to environmental communication and education for schools and companies, the enhancement of local territories and cultural heritage, and the management of thematic parks and museums, where nature and history intertwine. The cooperative promotes sustainable tourism, and an environmental culture based on responsibility and sharing.

At the core of its mission, Atlantide places cooperative values, aiming to improve service quality, enhance human resources, and implement shared projects. The team is made up of 33 members and 83 employees, of which 76% are women and 80% are university graduates in scientific, cultural, and tourism-related disciplines. Atlantide distinguishes itself by adopting a multidisciplinary approach, with experts in tourism, territorial marketing, environmental education, and hiking guides.

Since 1990, Atlantide has served over 300 clients and involved more than 1,000,000 students in school projects. Its stakeholders include schools, citizens, and companies, through which it promotes awareness campaigns and projects related to sustainability and the 2030 Agenda.

1.6.2. Key Principles

Atlantide's true strength lies in the people who make up the cooperative. The environmental guides and educators are highly qualified and passionate, and they successfully convey this passion to visitors and schools. Thanks to their expertise and dedication, they effectively engage the public on crucial topics such as environmental sustainability and the enhancement of local territories, offering educational experiences that go beyond mere information, fostering genuine interest and awareness.

These professionals, holding degrees in environmental sciences, tourism, and territorial marketing, serve as ambassadors of a green culture, promoting both individual and collective responsibility in the management of natural resources. Their enthusiasm and expertise represent a fundamental asset to the success of Atlantide's educational and awareness-raising projects.

1.6.3. Barriers and Challenges

One of the main challenges Atlantide faces is raising public awareness on environmental issues in a context that often does not favor sustainable practices. Changing people's everyday habits, both

individually and collectively, requires time and continuous effort. Moreover, there is increasing misinformation regarding sustainability and ecology, fueled by fake news and lack of awareness. Atlantide strives to counter this trend through well-grounded educational programs based on solid facts.

Other challenges include managing complex projects that involve a variety of stakeholders, such as schools, public and private entities, as well as the need to adapt to regulatory changes and updates to the 2030 Agenda. Additionally, the logistical management of thematic parks and museums requires efficient organization, particularly in a context where sustainable access must be guaranteed to a diverse audience, including tourists and local communities.

1.6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Despite the challenges, Atlantide's projects bring numerous benefits. The most significant outcome is the growth in environmental awareness among participants, especially the younger generations. The educational programs aim to shape responsible citizens, providing them with the knowledge and tools necessary to adopt more sustainable behaviors. Atlantide has reached over 1,000,000 students through its school projects, as it exemplifies Figure 7, promoting values of ecological responsibility and the protection of both natural and cultural heritage.

Figure 7 - Example of a moment of an environmental education activity[5]

The hiking guides and experts successfully convey their skills and passions, generating a positive impact not only on the educational level but also on the economic and social fronts. The initiatives aimed at territorial enhancement and the promotion of sustainable tourism have helped strengthen the bond between local communities and the environment, improving quality of life and supporting the local

---

[5] www.atlantide.net

economy. Atlantide's activities have also encouraged increased sustainable tourism in thematic parks and museums, promoting a more responsible use of resources.

1.6.5.   *Performance Indicators*

Various performance indicators are employed to evaluate the value and effectiveness of Atlantide's sustainability practices and educational activities. A key element is direct feedback from participants. Visitors and schools participating in the excursions and activities provide reviews on Regiondo, a platform through which guided tours and excursions are purchased. These reviews serve as an important measure of the quality of the user experience.

Another essential tool is social media, where Atlantide monitors public engagement through comments, likes, shares, and reviews, allowing for the evaluation of the impact of awareness campaigns and sustainable tourism promotion.

Lastly, Atlantide uses post-activity questionnaires to gather participant feedback. Visitors are asked to complete surveys at the end of the excursions, providing valuable data on how to improve the offer. For school projects, specific questionnaires for teachers are administered after field trips to measure the effectiveness of the educational program and gather suggestions for possible improvements.

1.7. AlterEco cooperative

Name	AlterEco cooperative
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://grottediequi.it https://lunigiana.travel https://www.visitequiterme.it https://www.altereco.company
Country	Italy

1.7.1. Background

AlterEco is a cooperative founded in 1997 in Casola in Lunigiana, at the stimulus of Legambiente, with the aim of create economic and employment opportunities related to the sustainable enhancement of the naturalistic heritage, historical, ethnological and cultural heritage of the Lunigiana side of the Apuan Alps Regional Park (Municipalities of Casola in Lunigiana and Fivizzano).

It shared with Legambiente the social and cultural project to realize a tangible example of production of eco-sustainable economy and employment, an alternative to obsolete economic models with high environmental impact, primarily marble quarrying, within the Regional Park of the Alps Apuan Alps.

1.7.2. Key Principles

The cooperative has carried out articulated professional and project growth by adopting often the approach of the 'facilitator of sustainable local development,' that is, taking an active part in promoting sustainable planning together with Local Authorities and Communities.

In Equi Terme, a small village in the municipality of Fivizzano and in the Apuan Alps Regional Park, it manages a system of tourist, cultural and educational facilities and services: Karst caves, an archaeological museum, an interactive museum of Geology, a digital community museum of local identity; an adventure park, a bike fleet and excursions in the park. Figure 8 shows an example of an environmental education activity in the park.
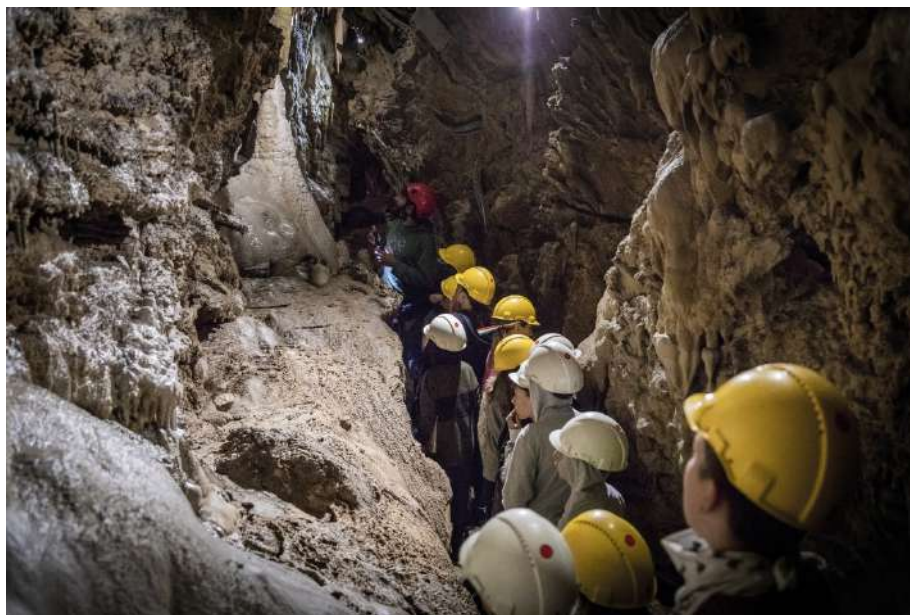
Figure 8 - Example of an environmental education activity[6]

As a Community Cooperative in 2018, it promoted the 'Equi Terme, Hospitable Community' project by involving inhabitants and activities in building a community tourism network, developing a local hospitality and destination marketing system combined with the creation of self-managed welfare services.

With the project, a Community Guest House and Service Centre, a Digital Museum of Local Identity participated in by the inhabitants, a public Wi-Fi network connected with an audio guide system and web treasure hunts, the Community Guest Charter and a destination web portal, narrated with a video-storytelling by the town's inhabitants and economic operators.

In 2021, it internally established a Tour Operator/Travel Agent Online that organizes travel and sustainable experiences in Lunigiana. In 2022 it founded 'Borghi Futuri' an Enterprise Network formed by 10 community cooperatives in Tuscany, extending the activities of Lunigiana Travel to the 'Tosco Travel' project, to promote a network of community tourism proposals in Tuscany.

Its experience in marketing little-known destinations led it to be the leader of the Destination Management Company (DMC) of the newly formed Lunigiana Tourist Area, organizing a network of promo-marketing in collaboration with small local tour operators.

Along the way, it has activated training, professional qualification and specialization initiatives for members with the goal of equipping the cooperative with the appropriate skills to deal with all the necessary activities in the sectors of tourism, environmental, educational, territorial marketing and communication services.

AlterEco's team today consists mainly of women with various qualifications: tourism technicians, marketing, communication, web and social development experts, environmental hiking guides, environmentalist educators, biologists, geologists, and acrobatic trail instructors.

---

[6] www.altereco.company

The working group is not only based on qualifications but is permeated across the board by the guiding principles of the AlterEco cooperative, based on eco-sustainability, rootedness, animation and enhancement of small communities in inland areas.

1.7.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main challenges encountered, typical of mountain communities, are the lack of local services (digital divide and mobility mainly), and the social and cultural approach of the inhabitants, prone to abandonment or fatalism.

Today, these are ever-present challenges, but they are no longer considered insurmountable; on the contrary, they can be addressed with the determination to solve them, mainly with the collaborative economy approach and the activation of positive processes of subsidiarity between private activities and Local Authorities (e.g.: Municipalities, Regional Parks, LAGs).

1.7.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The participatory process supported by AlterEco in Equi Terme, together with the community, has functioned as a stimulus and motivation, fostering the emergence of private activities and initiatives over the past 7 years:

- a new B&B Restaurant;

- 3 new B&Bs;

- re-opening of the village's Circle-Bar, participated in by all activities;

- the purchase and renovation of the spa's wellness section to create a modern spa with an indoor thermal pool;

- a LAG-funded community project, joined by the municipality and 6 activities in Equi, which provides investment for the enhancement of sustainable and community-based tourism;

- the Community Tourism project, implemented with investment from AlterEco and support from the Tuscany Region.

The private initiative was also grafted with a subsidiarity mechanism by the public initiative:

- The renovation and refurbishment of the old spa facility by the Municipality;

- An adventure park for children made by the Apuan Alps Regional Park;

- The renovation of the old railway station with annexed new equipped camper area, realized by the municipality with funds from the SNAI (National Strategy for Inner Areas).

1.7.5. Performance Indicators

Community of Equi Terme has contributed to strengthening the attractiveness of the territory, connoting it as a destination for sustainable tourism in the Parks, materializing a small example that another sustainable economy is possible in Lunigiana and the Apuan Alps, as an alternative to the abandonment or the monoculture of marble mining.

In the past year, the resort has welcomed:

- 10,000 visitors to the Equi Caves Experience Park;

- 1,600 students at the AlterEco educational hub;

- 15,000 access to the swimming pools and spa facilities;

- 7,000 visitors to the living nativity scene;

- Subsequent sustainability of the induced activity on the two restaurants, the small hotel, the four B&Bs and the bar club.

2. Companies and Institutions in the Sector

This section presents examples of private companies or public institutions that implement good practices related to sustainability for tourism and hospitality management, namely environmental initiatives, digital innovation, social responsibility, or cultural sensibility. These organizations develop their activity in the hospitality, tourism, and restaurant sector, or in education and training business.

The examples of sustainability good practices for **hospitality management** presented in this subsection are:

1. **The Sendal Boutique Hotel**
   Located in a historic 18th-century building in Nicosia, Cyprus, exemplifies sustainable hospitality by integrating eco-friendly practices within strict preservation regulations. Its initiatives include participation in an off-site solar energy program, vertical gardens to enhance air quality, and the adoption of digital amenities to reduce waste. Despite facing challenges such as regulatory and space constraints, the hotel has achieved a reduced environmental impact. Performance metrics like energy usage, waste reduction, and guest feedback are used to monitor and improve its sustainability strategies.

2. **Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa**
   Located in the mountain village of Kalopanayiotis, Cyprus, combines traditional charm with pioneering sustainability efforts, including a full-time sustainability manager, composting systems that cut waste by 70%, and 100% renewable energy usage. Despite challenges like its remote setting and cultural shifts in guest expectations, the hotel's commitment to environmental stewardship has significantly reduced its ecological footprint and operational costs.

3. **Aphrodite Hills Resort**
   Aphrodite Hills Resort in Cyprus exemplifies how high-end hospitality can be woven together with sustainability through eco-friendly technologies, waste-reduction measures, and water-saving programs. By sourcing locally and involving the surrounding community, the resort boosts its ecological impact. This holistic approach not only lowers operational costs and resource consumption but also strengthens the resort's appeal to environmentally conscious travelers.

4. **Desa Potato Head**
   Desa Potato Head in Bali seamlessly blends hospitality with near-zero waste initiatives, upcycling efforts, and regenerative farming. Through its dedicated Waste Lab, the resort transforms discarded materials into usable products. Despite infrastructural challenges in Bali, the resort collaborates with local communities and educates guests. By harnessing renewable energy, desalination, and rainwater harvesting, Desa Potato Head has substantially reduced both carbon emissions and reliance on municipal resources.

5. **Valle dei Cavalieri community-based social cooperative**
   Valle dei Cavalieri is a community-based cooperative in Succiso, Reggio Emilia, managing services for both locals and tourists. It offers diverse activities like accommodation, catering, sports rentals, and a National Park visitor center, while integrating disabled employees into its workforce. The cooperative focuses on sustainability, local products, and collaboration with regional authorities, facing challenges like an aging population and workforce shortages. Its

efforts have earned numerous awards, and it has become a model for community-driven cooperation, with growing success in both tourism and environmental innovation.

6. **Ballarò cooperative enterprise**

   Ballarò is a work cooperative managing hostels, catering, and cultural activities with a focus on creating stable, fairly paid work and fostering professional growth. It's deeply integrated into local communities, hosting events like conferences and performances. Committed to environmental, social, and economic sustainability, the cooperative balances its mission with financial challenges, managing historic properties with high costs. Its success is reflected in increased bookings, positive reviews, and a significant turnover, while staying true to its values of mutuality and social impact.

7. **Casa Bellavista B&B**

   Casa Bellavista, the first B&B in Cortona, embraces sustainability through eco-friendly practices for water conservation, waste reduction, and energy-saving initiatives such as solar panels. The philosophy is rooted in respecting nature, people, and the community. Guests are encouraged to participate in sustainability efforts, with rewards for recycling and visits to lesser-known local sites. The B&B's commitment to a low environmental impact, combined with its vegetarian and vegan menu, has not only increased customer awareness but also enhanced its reputation as a sustainable destination.

8. **Hotel and farm Moravsko Selo**

   This best practice focuses on a circular economy approach in hospitality and agriculture management, integrating organic farming with sustainable tourism. The eco-complex minimizes waste through composting, food preservation, and resource-efficient operations, ensuring zero food loss. By eliminating plastic, using renewable energy, and optimizing water usage, it serves as a model for self-sufficient, environmentally responsible tourism.

9. **Park-hotel Sankt Peterburg Plovdiv**

   Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg implements sustainable hospitality management practices by minimizing waste, promoting recycling, and reducing disposable plastics. It fosters long-term employment and career development while ensuring seamless communication between departments for efficient operations. Through customer satisfaction, digital innovation, and environmental responsibility, the hotel enhances its competitiveness and commitment to sustainable tourism.

10. **Hilton Sofia**

    Hilton Sofia integrates sustainable hospitality management practices through energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction, aligning with the "Travel with Purpose" initiative. Investments in eco-friendly renovations, employee training, and carbon footprint monitoring ensure long-term environmental and economic benefits. By fostering sustainability, the hotel enhances guest experience, attracts purpose-driven employees, and promotes responsible tourism.

11. **Scandic Hotels Group**

    This best practice focuses on sustainability in hospitality management, integrating energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing across all hotel operations. Through certified green hotels, staff training, and community engagement, Scandic Hotels fosters environmental responsibility while enhancing guest experiences. Their commitment to carbon

neutrality, circular economy principles, and eco-friendly transportation ensures long-term sustainability and operational efficiency.

12. **Costa Navarino**

Costa Navarino, a luxury sustainable destination in Greece, sets a best practice in hospitality by offering authentic cultural experiences that highlight local heritage and traditions. The resort integrates Messinian culture into its guest experiences through activities like olive oil tastings, cooking classes with local chefs, philosophy walks inspired by ancient Greek thinkers, and pottery workshops with regional artisans.

13. **YOTEL Hotels**

YOTEL hotels are known for their smart hospitality management solutions, emphasizing efficiency, technology, and space optimization. They feature compact, high-tech "cabins" (pods) designed for comfort and functionality, incorporating adjustable SmartBeds, mood lighting, and tech-enabled controls. YOTEL also streamlines the guest experience with self-service check-in kiosks, allowing for fast and hassle-free arrivals and departures.

14. **Pohorje Village Resort**

The Pohorje Village Resort clearly outlines the company's commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism, emphasizing their strong environmental ethos. It effectively highlights the company's dedication to harmony with nature, not just in their operations but also in the attitudes and actions of their employees and guests. The integration of sustainable practices, such as using local products and minimizing environmental impact, is communicated in a way that showcases both social and environmental responsibility. Additionally, the company's emphasis on innovation, such as implementing digital tools to reduce bureaucracy and enhance the guest experience, shows their adaptability and forward-thinking approach. Finally, the focus on teamwork, positive energy, and a shared vision among employees fosters a supportive work environment that contributes to long-term success.

15. **Neya Hotels**

NEYA Hotels is a sustainable hotel group, committed to quality and service excellence daily through a tripartite sustainability concept - environmental, economic and social. The group implements Quality, Environment and Safety Management Systems in all units, which allow an effective minimization of the environmental impact of the activity in all three pillars of sustainability management: environmental, economic and social.

16. **FeelViana Sport Hotel**

FeelViana Sport Hotel is a four-star superior hotel, all dressed in wood and perfectly set in the extensive pine forest of Praia do Cabedelo, in Viana do Castelo, where sport and well-being are in complete harmony. This hotel develops and manages its activities by promoting a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. They endeavor to integrate themselves into the community, nature and environment, from the architecture of their structures to the choice of materials and the care taken in their relationship with their surroundings.

17. **Six Senses Douro Valley**

Six Senses Douro Valley, located in the heart of the Douro Valley, is a luxury resort that combines high-quality hospitality with a solid commitment to sustainability. Their strategy is built on the premises of experiences with purpose, benefiting the local community and protecting the environment; positive environmental impact through sustainable construction practices, reforestation programs and the promotion of sustainable transport; community

Involvement supporting social and economic development initiatives; biodiversity conservation by planting native trees and creating habitats for local fauna; reduce greenhouse gas emissions, using electric vehicles and promotion of sustainable transportation for guests and employees; and local economy impact by creating jobs and supporting small businesses and regional suppliers.

18. **La Ballena Alegre C.B**

La Ballena Alegre Campsite, located in Sant Pere Pescador, Costa Brava, focuses on offering a luxurious camping experience while prioritizing sustainability. It uses renewable energy, collaborates with local suppliers, and educates visitors on environmental importance. Despite challenges like high costs and regulatory adaptation, it works to reduce its carbon footprint. The "Responsible Holidays" project promotes sustainable holidays. It has won awards for its innovative practices.

19. **INOUT Hostel**

INOUT, a non-profit hotel employing 90% staff with disabilities, prioritizes environmental sustainability. Located in a natural park in Barcelona, they focus on water conservation (wastewater treatment), renewable energy (solar, biomass), and responsible consumption (local products, waste reduction). They actively address climate change (CO_2 reduction, electric vehicle charging) and protect ecosystems. Their efforts have resulted in significant CO_2 reduction and numerous awards (e.g., Biosphere certification).

20. **HotelVerse**

HotelVerse is an innovative digital project that increases customer satisfaction and engagement by offering a digital twin immerse experience. The platform supports sustainable tourism by optimizing hotel occupancy and reducing overbooking. It boosts direct bookings, reducing the use of third-party platforms and offers new features to improve the booking experience.

The examples of sustainability good practices for **tourism management** presented in this subsection are:

1. **Farm Tourism Kovačnik**

The Farm Tourism Kovačnik is an example of good practice because it effectively highlights the family's deep connection to their land, traditions, and guests, creating a strong sense of authenticity and care. The integration of three generations within the farm's operations ensures diverse perspectives and fosters intergenerational understanding, which enriches the business. The text also emphasizes the family's commitment to sustainability, with local ingredients, eco-friendly practices, and the Slovenia Green label reflecting their dedication to environmental responsibility. Additionally, the family's proactive approach to learning, attending workshops, and staying engaged in local trends demonstrates their commitment to continuous improvement. Finally, the focus on personal relationships, both within the family and with guests, creates a welcoming and supportive atmosphere that contributes to the farm's success and longevity.

2. **Limassol Marina**

Limassol Marina in Cyprus demonstrates environmental stewardship by partially integrating solar energy, advanced waste management, and water conservation measures. It has achieved a 10% reduction in carbon emissions and earned prestigious accolades like the Blue Flag Award. These initiatives not only enhance visitor satisfaction through cleaner water and quieter operations but also result in long-term cost savings for the Marina.

3. **Play Alghero**

   Play Alghero is the brand that identifies a series of games, in physical and virtual format, created to revolutionize the experiences of tourists to cultural places of less-known sites. Gamification is used as a tool to enhance cultural heritage and innovate the tourist experience of visitors and citizens.

4. **Gil Eannes Hospital Ship**

   The City of Viana do Castelo and several entities and citizens recovered the Gil Eannes Hospital Ship, once a support equipment to cod fishing in the Northern Seas, to save the city and naval construction memories, giving a purpose as a cultural Museum, remaining the memory of the activities once held, avoiding the destruction of the ship and restoring it with sustainable materials, such as new painting systems, with environment friendly materials, with no polluting materials, having new woods and the metals "green" solutions, working with the digital marketing solutions and signalization, having less resources and having more results, having a new governance system as Foundation of and for the City and the Region, and working and cherishing all the people, the locals and the visitors.

5. **ITINERE Incoming**

   ITINERE Incoming is a Destination Management Company specialized in sustainable tourism in Emilia Romagna and Northern Italy. Deeply committed to sustainability, ITINERE carefully selects local partners to work with and participates in the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism. The Charter represents a participatory governance method that fosters responsible tourism in protected areas, ensuring biodiversity protection through structured certification processes involving different local actors.

6. **La Fageda**

   La Fageda is a cooperative that integrates people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues into the workforce. With over 640 employees, it operates in dairy production, gardening, and tourism. The company has a strong social and environmental focus, reducing water and energy consumption. Its mission aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting sustainability, inclusive education, and social integration through meaningful employment.

7. **Identify Travel**

   Identify is a digital guide platform that offers personalized suggestions about cultural heritage. It can be an App for tourists but can also be embedded in hotel websites. This service aims to democratize cultural spots, de-massify the most well-known cultural sites, reduce the use of paper guides, offer updated information, and provide routes based on gamification.

The examples of sustainability good practices for **restaurant management** analyzed in this subsection are:

1. **Ibersol Group**

   The Ibersol Group is a multi-brand organization operating in the catering business across several countries. Committed to quality, safety, and environmental values, it prioritizes customer satisfaction and has adopted the principles of the 2030 Agenda focusing on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The group actively promotes sustainability in its operations by enhancing food safety management systems, reducing ecological footprints through local sourcing, and engaging in community support initiatives. It emphasizes employee development through training programs while continuously monitoring and adapting to

consumer preferences, all within a framework of social responsibility and community engagement to foster a positive impact in the societies it serves.

2. **Blagichka**

The Blagichka - ZERO WASTE best practice focuses on sustainable restaurant operations by eliminating waste through composting, recycling, and reusable packaging. It integrates local food sourcing, supports disadvantaged youth with employment, and promotes environmental education. This approach minimizes environmental impact while fostering social and economic sustainability.

The examples of sustainability good practices for **education and training management in tourism** discussed in this subsection are:

1. **Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection**

The Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection exemplifies a good practice by clearly addressing a pressing global challenge—environmental degradation—and providing a practical, innovative solution through education and self-sufficiency. It demonstrates a strong connection between theoretical academic knowledge and its practical application in real-world situations, making the information highly accessible and actionable. The program promotes sustainability through interdisciplinary learning, focusing on crucial areas such as circular economy, biodiversity, and water conservation, which are vital for both individual and collective well-being. Additionally, the Academy emphasizes personal and environmental health, combining physical, spiritual, and ethical aspects to create holistic well-being for individuals and society. Finally, the innovation is forward-thinking, preparing individuals to thrive in future, unpredictable conditions, while simultaneously fostering a deep respect for nature and the planet.

2. **College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor**

The College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor exemplifies a sustainability good practice in several key areas. It effectively outlines a clear and comprehensive mission to train future professionals in catering, tourism, and wellness, while emphasizing sustainability and responsible tourism. By highlighting real-world examples such as the educational restaurant and collaboration with local suppliers, it shows how hands-on learning and community involvement strengthen both the local economy and educational outcomes. Furthermore, the emphasis on ethical, cultural, and environmental awareness through education illustrates a deep commitment to developing responsible professionals. Finally, the recognition of challenges like staff shortages, along with a focus on flexibility, persistence, and sustainable solutions, shows a pragmatic and forward-thinking approach to overcoming obstacles.

3. **Ecosapiens**

Ecosapiens is a spin-off activity of an important Social Cooperative based in Reggio Emilia involved in developing rehabilitative pathways to people in need through housing and job placement. Ecosapiens provides consulting, training, communication and education services in the context of environmental and social sustainability. They design and implement workshops and educational activities for public bodies, companies and schools, on whose behalf they also take care of communication. In particular, they engage in education, training, and consulting, marked by environmental and social sustainability and they carry out projects that aspire to generate change in people.

2.1. Sendal Boutique Hotel

Name	The Sendal Boutique Hotel
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.thesendal.com
Country	Cyprus

2.1.1. Background

The Sendal Boutique Hotel (Figure 9), housed within a historic 18th-century building in Nicosia, Cyprus, adeptly marries rich cultural heritage with progressive environmental stewardship. As a recognized listed historical building, The Sendal Hotel must comply with stringent preservation laws that restrict many types of modern alterations (Department of Town Planning and Housing, 2020). Despite these limitations, the hotel is committed to offering an eco-friendly lodging experience that does not compromise on luxury or modern amenities. This approach has positioned Sendal as a leader in sustainable practices within the local hospitality industry, offering highly personalized services that cater to environmentally conscious guests.

Figure 9 - Vertical Garden of Sendal Boutique Hotel[7]

2.1.2. Key Principles

---

[7] www.thesendal.com

The Sendal Boutique Hotel has adopted a comprehensive set of sustainability initiatives aimed at reducing its environmental impact, enhancing guest experiences, and optimizing operational efficiency. These practices include:

Innovative Energy Solutions: Given the restrictions on altering its historic façade, The Sendal cannot install traditional solar panels. Instead, it has joined a satellite solar energy program. This initiative allows Sendal to invest in solar panels located off-site, with the energy generated being credited back to the hotel's energy consumption account. This solution not only adheres to the regulatory framework but also significantly reduces the hotel's reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Maximizing Limited Outdoor Spaces: The Sendal has creatively used its limited outdoor space by installing a vertical garden. This garden not only enhances the hotel's aesthetic appeal but also improves urban air quality and reduces the heat effect, providing a cool and pleasant environment for guests to relax in.

Transition to Sustainable Amenities: Sendal is actively replacing single-use plastic amenities with refillable toiletries. This change is part of a broader waste reduction strategy that aligns with global sustainability goals. The initiative has been well received by guests, significantly reducing the hotel's plastic waste output.

Adoption of Digital Innovations: Embracing digital technology, The Sendal provides guests with digital room keys and has developed an app that offers detailed information about local attractions and services. This paperless approach not only enhances guests' convenience but also reduces the hotel's paper consumption, further contributing to its environmental goals.

Smart Energy Management Systems: The hotel has installed advanced sensor-based lighting and HVAC systems (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) systems. These systems are designed to optimize energy use by adjusting automatically to occupancy and ambient conditions, thereby ensuring operational efficiency and comfort tailored to real-time needs.

2.1.3. Barriers and Challenges

Despite its successes, The Sendal faces ongoing challenges in implementing its sustainability initiatives:

Regulatory Challenges: The hotel's status as a listed building imposes several limitations on the types of physical changes that can be made, particularly in terms of adding or altering external structures like solar panels.

Space Limitations: Situated in the heart of a bustling city, The Sendal has limited outdoor space, which complicates efforts to add traditional greenery or large-scale eco-friendly installations.

Waste Management Strategies: Phasing out single-use plastics and transitioning to sustainable amenities require careful management of existing stock and adaptation of new supply chains. Additionally, the local infrastructure for waste management and recycling is not fully developed, placing additional burdens on the hotel to manage its waste responsibly.

Technical Integration: Upgrading the historic building with modern digital and energy-efficient systems involves complex engineering challenges. Ensuring that new technologies blend seamlessly with old infrastructure while preserving the building's historical integrity requires innovative solutions and careful planning.

2.1.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The Sendal hotel's commitment to sustainability has yielded significant benefits:

Reduced Environmental Impact: By leveraging renewable energy and implementing waste reduction strategies, the hotel has made considerable strides in minimizing its ecological footprint.

Enhanced Guest Experience: The integration of sustainable practices and digital innovations has been positively received by guests, who appreciate the convenience and the hotel's commitment to environmental responsibility.

Operational Cost Savings: Energy-efficient systems and waste reduction measures have led to lower operational costs, making the hotel more profitable and allowing it to invest further in sustainable practices.

Competitive Advantage: Sendal stands out in a competitive market by offering a unique combination of luxury, heritage, and sustainability, attracting a niche demographic of eco-aware travelers.

2.1.5. Performance Indicators

The Sendal utilizes several performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of its sustainability strategies:

Energy Consumption and Cost Analysis: Regular monitoring of energy usage and costs associated with the off-site solar program allows the hotel to assess the financial and environmental benefits of its renewable energy investments.

Guest Satisfaction Surveys: The hotel collects feedback on its sustainability initiatives through guest surveys, focusing on areas such as the vertical garden, digital amenities, and the overall eco-friendly approach.

Waste Reduction Metrics: The hotel tracks reductions in single-use plastics and overall waste volume, providing data on the success of its transition to sustainable amenities.

Paper Usage Tracking: By measuring reductions in paper usage through the adoption of digital solutions, The Sendal monitors its progress towards becoming a paperless operation.

Operational Efficiency Metrics: The effectiveness of sensor-equipped lighting and HVAC systems is continuously assessed to ensure they are meeting energy-saving targets and contributing to overall operational efficiency.

2.2. Casale Panayotis Traditional Village

Name	Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.casalepanayiotis.com
Country	Cyprus

2.2.1. Background

Casale Panayiotis, nestled in the tranquil mountain village of Kalopanayiotis, Cyprus, serves as a beacon of sustainable and inclusive hospitality. This boutique hotel seamlessly integrates traditional Cypriot charm with innovative sustainability practices. It aims to lead the hospitality industry toward a greener and more inclusive future by adopting a philosophy that melds environmental consciousness with community engagement and technological advancement, thus redefining the standards of regional tourism.

2.2.2. Key Principles

Dedicated Sustainability Management: The hotel distinguishes itself in the Cypriot hospitality sector by employing a full-time sustainability manager. This role is pivotal in ensuring the focused and consistent implementation of eco-friendly practices, as exemplified in Figure 10, setting a high standard for ongoing environmental stewardship within the industry.

Figure 10 - Usage of candles instead of electricity at Casale Panayiotis[8]

---

[8] www.casalepanayiotis.com

Circular Waste Management: Casale Panayiotis has implemented a pioneering composting initiative that has successfully reduced general waste output by 70%. By transforming organic waste into high-quality compost, the hotel supports its own agricultural needs and enhances local soil quality, exemplifying a sustainable closed-loop system in waste management.

Advanced Water Conservation: The hotel utilizes state-of-the-art greywater recycling systems that repurpose water from showers and sinks for garden irrigation. This system is complemented by the installation of high-pressure, low-flow faucets that significantly reduce water wastage, thus preserving this vital resource without compromising guest comfort.

Energy Efficiency through Smart Technology: Leveraging cutting-edge technology, Casale Panayiotis employs systems like Greenview (https://greenview.sg) to meticulously track and optimize energy consumption. This smart technology enables the hotel to enhance operational efficiency and comply with global sustainability standards, ensuring environmental impact is minimized.

Cultural and Community Engagement: The hotel actively participates in the local community by supporting various initiatives such as local animal shelters and women's organizations. It advocates for cultural preservation and diversity, embedding inclusivity into the core of its business practices.

Digital Transformation: More than 85% of the hotel's operations have transitioned to digital platforms, utilizing advanced software for reservations and guest communications. This paperless approach not only streamlines internal processes but also significantly reduces the hotel's ecological footprint.

Eco-Conscious Guest Experience: From the moment of check-in, guests are introduced to the hotel's sustainable practices. They receive reusable bottles and encounter educational signage throughout the hotel, promoting water and energy conservation, which fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of sustainability among guests.

Customized Energy Solutions: Casale Panayiotis has fully embraced renewable energy, integrating solar, wind, and geothermal sources to achieve 100% renewable energy consumption. This comprehensive approach not only powers the hotel sustainably but also sets a remarkable example of energy independence in the hospitality industry.

2.2.3. Barriers and Challenges

Remote Workforce Dynamics: The serene and secluded nature of Casale Panayiotis, while appealing for tranquility, poses considerable challenges in attracting and retaining a vibrant workforce. The hotel's remote location tends to deter younger professionals who often seek dynamic urban environments for their careers. This demographic mismatch necessitates innovative strategies and incentives to draw and maintain a skilled and motivated staff.

Infrastructure Limitations: Operating in a rural mountain village restricts access to cutting-edge resources and complicates efforts to scale operations. The hotel must creatively adapt state-of-the-art, globally recognized sustainable technologies to a local setting that lacks the typical infrastructure of urban centers. This requires not just innovation but a deep understanding of local constraints and opportunities.

Cultural Shifts in Luxury Perception: Introducing and maintaining sustainable practices such as less frequent linen changes and reduced water usage presents a delicate balance between luxury expectations and environmental responsibility. The hotel must navigate these changes carefully,

educating guests on the value and necessity of such measures without compromising the high standards of luxury hospitality.

Rigorous Certification Processes: Achieving certifications such as those from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) is a demanding process that requires meticulous documentation, regular audits, and the integration of extensive sustainable practices across multiple aspects of hotel operation. This thorough and rigorous process ensures compliance with international standards but demands significant time and effort from the hotel's management team.

2.2.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

Transformative Environmental Impact: Casale Panayiotis has significantly advanced environmental sustainability in rural hospitality by implementing comprehensive recycling, waste management, and energy conservation measures. These initiatives have substantially reduced the hotel's ecological footprint, serving as a model for similar establishments seeking to enhance their environmental stewardship.

Enriched Guest Experiences: By integrating sustainable practices into every aspect of its operation, the hotel provides a unique guest experience that aligns luxury with ecological responsibility. This approach not only meets but often exceeds the expectations of global travellers, who are increasingly seeking accommodations that reflect their personal values of sustainability and ethical travel.

Cost Efficiency and Profitability: The implementation of sustainable technologies and practices has resulted in notable reductions in utility costs and waste management expenses. These savings contribute directly to the hotel's bottom line, proving that environmental responsibility can also drive financial success. The investments in sustainability have not only cut costs but have also attracted a niche market willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly lodging options.

Stronger Community Bonds: Casale Panayiotis has deepened its ties with the local community through various initiatives that promote environmental conservation and social welfare. These activities, ranging from local donations to collaborative environmental projects, not only enhance the hotel's social impact but also build lasting relationships with community members, fostering a sense of partnership and mutual benefit. This community-focused approach enhances the hotel's reputation and supports long-term sustainability goals.

2.2.5.   Performance Indicators

Composting Metrics: The hotel rigorously tracks the volume of waste redirected to its composting facilities, achieving a notable reduction in general waste.

Water Recycling Rates: Systematic monitoring of water recycling efforts provides valuable data on the efficiency of greywater reuse for irrigation purposes.

Energy Efficiency Monitoring: Using Greenview software[9] the hotel conducts detailed analyses of energy usage, which help in optimizing consumption patterns and reducing costs.

Guest Feedback Metrics: Guest reviews and ratings are closely analyzed, particularly those highlighting the hotel's eco-conscious amenities, providing insights into guest perceptions and satisfaction levels.

---

[9]Greenview is based in Singapore and is a leading provider of sustainability programs and data management for hospitality and tourism sector (https://greenview.sg)

Community Impact Reports: The hotel documents its contributions to local projects and collaborations, underscoring its commitment to cultural preservation and community inclusivity.

2.3.   Aphrodite Hills Resort

Name	Aphrodite Hills Resort
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.aphroditehills.com
Country	Cyprus

2.3.1.   Background

Aphrodite Hills Resort is a luxury, eco-friendly destination in Cyprus that aims to balance luxury experiences with a commitment to sustainability. The resort's mission is to preserve Cyprus's natural beauty while offering a world-class experience for its guests (Aphrodite Hills Resort, 2023). By striving to lead the sustainable tourism sector in Cyprus, the resort combines eco-friendly practices with a high standard of service to minimize its environmental impact. The resort exemplifies how sustainable hospitality can be embedded into all aspects of a guest's experience, from accommodation to recreational activities. This holistic approach is rooted in the belief that luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive but can complement each other to create a richer, more meaningful guest experience. Its vision is to set a benchmark for sustainable tourism in the region and inspire other industry players to adopt similar practices (UNWTO, 2020).

Aphrodite Hills Resort has made a concerted effort to be a leader in sustainable tourism. Its philosophy extends beyond minimizing harm to the environment, actively contributing to the preservation of Cyprus's unique natural heritage. The resort works closely with local communities, environmental organizations, and governmental bodies to promote sustainability across the island, ensuring its initiatives are well-aligned with regional conservation goals and fostering a broader culture of environmental awareness and responsibility (Cyprus Tourism Organization, 2022). This collaborative effort has enabled the resort to create a network of partnerships that support its sustainability mission and further its reach beyond the boundaries of the resort itself.

The resort also emphasizes the importance of cultural sustainability. By integrating local culture and heritage into its guest experiences, Aphrodite Hills aims to provide a deeper understanding of Cyprus's history and traditions (Richards, 2021). This commitment to cultural preservation not only enhances the guest experience but also supports the local community by promoting traditional crafts, cuisine, and customs. The resort offers cultural activities, such as traditional cooking classes, local handicraft workshops, and guided tours to nearby heritage sites, which foster a connection between guests and the local culture, enriching their overall experience.

2.3.2.   Key Principles

The resort has implemented several sustainable practices, focusing on waste management, energy conservation, and water-saving initiatives. It has invested in energy-efficient technologies, such as solar power and energy management systems, as well as water conservation infrastructure (European Commission, 2023). Staff members are trained to integrate sustainability into their daily routines, and guests are encouraged to engage in eco-friendly activities. The resort's approach underscores the

importance of both internal resources such as high-end technologies and skilled personnel and external efforts to communicate sustainability effectively to guests. By incorporating sustainability into staff training programs, the resort ensures that every team member understands and contributes to its environmental goals, thereby creating a unified culture of sustainability.

Waste management is another critical aspect of the resort's sustainability strategy. Aphrodite Hills Resort has implemented a comprehensive waste reduction program that includes recycling, composting organic waste, and minimizing single-use plastics (Waste Management Association, 2023). The resort collaborates with local waste management authorities to ensure that its waste disposal practices align with regional regulations and contribute to broader environmental goals. In addition to its internal efforts, the resort encourages guests to participate in waste reduction by providing accessible recycling facilities and promoting awareness of the environmental impact of waste. The resort has also implemented digital check-in and check-out procedures to reduce paper waste, further demonstrating its commitment to minimizing environmental impact.

Energy conservation is at the heart of the resort's sustainability initiatives. The resort utilizes energy-efficient lighting, smart energy management systems, and solar panels to reduce (Figure 11) its reliance on non-renewable energy sources (International Energy Agency, 2022). Renewable energy technologies not only help lower the resort's carbon footprint but also serve as a visible demonstration of its commitment to sustainability. Guests are educated on the importance of energy conservation through informational materials available in their rooms, encouraging them to contribute to the resort's energy-saving efforts during their stay. Additionally, the resort has invested in electric vehicle charging stations to promote the use of electric cars by both guests and staff, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Figure 11 - Usage of alternative source of energy at Aphrodite Hills resort[10]

---

[10] https://www.aphroditehills.com

Water conservation is also a key focus area for Aphrodite Hills Resort. The resort has invested in advanced water-saving technologies, such as low-flow faucets and irrigation systems that use recycled water (Waterwise, 2023). These efforts help reduce overall water consumption and ensure that the resort operates in a manner mindful of Cyprus's limited water resources. The resort engages guests in water conservation efforts by providing information on the importance of preserving water and encouraging them to participate in simple actions, such as reusing towels and limiting water usage during their stay. Furthermore, the resort has developed an on-site greywater recycling system to further reduce freshwater consumption and has implemented drought-resistant landscaping to minimize the need for irrigation.

2.3.3. Barriers and Challenges

Transitioning to sustainable practices in a luxury environment presents distinct challenges. Aphrodite Hills Resort faced higher operational costs and the need for specialized equipment as it implemented eco-friendly technologies (Smith, 2021). Moreover, educating both staff and guests on sustainable practices proved challenging, as many guests initially prioritized luxury amenities over environmental concerns. To address these challenges, the resort adopted a gradual approach to change, emphasizing transparency in its environmental policies and providing incentives for sustainable behavior. One key lesson learned was the importance of clear communication guests and staff need to understand not only what sustainability measures are being implemented but also why they are important and how they contribute to the overall guest experience and the environment (Green Hospitality Journal, 2022).

The resort also learned that incentives play a significant role in encouraging sustainable behavior. For guests, these incentives include offering small rewards or recognition for participating in eco-friendly activities, such as reusing towels or participating in recycling programs (Guest Engagement Strategies, 2022). For staff, incentives may take the form of recognition programs or bonuses tied to the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives. By making sustainability a rewarding and positive experience, the resort has been able to foster greater engagement from both guests and employees. The resort has also implemented an internal sustainability ambassador program, where staff members are designated as sustainability champions to promote eco-friendly practices among their peers and guests.

Another significant challenge was balancing the expectations of high-end clientele with the need for sustainability. Some guests initially viewed eco-friendly measures, such as limiting the frequency of linen changes, as detracting from their luxury experience. To address this, the resort focused on educating guests about the environmental benefits of these practices and framing them as part of a broader commitment to responsible luxury (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2021). This approach has helped shift perceptions, with many guests now viewing sustainability as an integral part of their experience at the resort. The resort also implemented a guest feedback loop, using surveys to understand guest concerns and adjust its practices in ways that maintain luxury standards while promoting sustainability.

2.3.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The results of these sustainable initiatives have been highly positive for Aphrodite Hills Resort. The resort has managed to significantly reduce energy and water consumption, supported by its energy-saving systems and recycling programs (Energy Saving Trust, 2023). Guest satisfaction remains high, with many appreciating the eco-friendly measures integrated into their stay. Staff engagement has

also risen, with employees expressing pride in the resort's sustainability efforts. Financially, the resort has benefited from lowered operational costs linked to reduced energy and water usage. These cost savings have allowed the resort to reinvest in further sustainability initiatives, creating a positive feedback loop that continues to enhance its environmental performance.

In addition to the financial and environmental benefits, the resort has also experienced intangible gains, such as an enhanced brand reputation. The resort's commitment to sustainability has resonated with environmentally conscious travelers, who are increasingly seeking out destinations that align with their values (Sustainable Travel International, 2023). By positioning itself as a leader in sustainable luxury tourism, Aphrodite Hills Resort has attracted a new segment of guests who prioritize environmental responsibility. This has not only strengthened guest loyalty but also differentiated the resort from its competitors in the luxury hospitality market. The resort has received various awards and certifications for its sustainability efforts, further solidifying its reputation as a pioneer in eco-friendly luxury tourism.

Staff engagement has been another significant outcome of the resort's sustainability initiatives. Employees have reported a greater sense of pride and motivation, knowing that their work contributes to positive environmental outcomes. This increased engagement has translated into higher job satisfaction and improved performance, as staff members feel more connected to the resort's mission and values (Employee Engagement Report, 2022). The resort has also seen improvements in employee retention, as workers are more likely to stay with an organization that aligns with their personal values and offers opportunities to contribute to meaningful initiatives. The introduction of staff-led sustainability projects, where employees can propose and lead new eco-friendly initiatives, has further empowered the workforce and fostered a sense of ownership over the resort's sustainability goals.

Another benefit of the resort's sustainability initiatives is its positive impact on the local community. By sourcing products and services locally, the resort supports local businesses and reduces its carbon footprint associated with transportation. The resort has partnered with local farmers to supply fresh, organic produce, ensuring that guests enjoy high-quality, locally sourced meals while also benefiting the community economically (Local Sourcing Initiative, 2022). This commitment to local sourcing not only enhances the guest experience by providing fresh, authentic cuisine but also strengthens the resort's ties to the community and contributes to the local economy.

2.3.5. *Performance Indicators*

To assess its success, Aphrodite Hills Resort uses several performance indicators, such as reductions in energy and water usage, waste recycling rates, guest satisfaction scores related to sustainability, and employee engagement in green initiatives (Performance Metrics in Hospitality, 2023). Additionally, financial savings from energy-efficient systems contribute to the overall assessment of the resort's sustainable practices. These performance indicators are tracked over time to ensure that the resort is making continuous progress towards its sustainability goals. The resort also conducts regular audits to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that its practices remain aligned with the latest advancements in sustainable tourism.

Guest feedback is another important performance indicator. The resort actively solicits input from guests regarding their experiences with its sustainability initiatives, using surveys and feedback forms to gather insights. This feedback helps the resort understand what aspects of its sustainability efforts most are appreciated by guests and where there may be opportunities to enhance the guest experience (Guest Feedback Systems, 2022). By incorporating guest feedback into its sustainability

strategy, the resort ensures that its initiatives remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of its clientele.

The resort also measures its impact on the local community as part of its performance evaluation. Metrics such as the percentage of locally sourced products, the number of partnerships with local businesses, and contributions to local conservation projects help assess the broader impact of the resort's sustainability initiatives. By tracking these indicators, the resort can demonstrate its commitment to not only environmental sustainability but also social responsibility, reinforcing its role as a positive force within the community (Community Impact Report, 2022).

Aphrodite Hills Resort also uses benchmarking to compare its sustainability performance with other similar resorts. This helps the resort identify best practices and areas where it can further improve. By participating in industry-wide sustainability programs and certifications, the resort ensures that it remains at the forefront of sustainable tourism and continually strives to exceed industry standards (Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, 2023). The resort's commitment to ongoing improvement is evident in its dedication to setting new sustainability targets each year, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in luxury eco-tourism.

2.4. Desa Potato Head

Name	Desa Potato Head
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://seminyak.potatohead.co/
Country	Indonesia

2.4.1. Background

Desa Potato Head, located in Seminyak, Bali, Indonesia, is a pioneering eco-resort that seamlessly integrates luxury hospitality with a deep commitment to sustainability and regenerative practices. Founded by Ronald Akili, the resort has evolved from a beach club into a comprehensive creative village, embodying the philosophy of "Good Times, Do Good." Desa Potato Head Hotel in Bali operates within the hospitality and tourism sector, specifically focusing on sustainable luxury tourism. The project aims to blend luxury accommodations, fine dining, entertainment, and eco-conscious tourism. By promoting sustainability alongside upscale services, the hotel has successfully positioned itself in the eco-tourism sector (Vogue, 2024). The official website for Potato Head Hotel is seminyak.potatohead.co, offering detailed information on accommodation options, sustainability practices, and events. Additionally, Potato Head uses social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to highlight its sustainable initiatives and creative projects. External resources also include travel publications such as The Times and Vogue, which have extensively covered the hotel's blend of sustainability and luxury (The Times, 2024).

2.4.2. Key Principles

Mission: Potato Head Hotel aims to deliver a unique and luxurious travel experience that incorporates sustainable practices and promotes cultural exchange (Potato Head, 2024).

Vision: The hotel envisions being a global leader in sustainable luxury, influencing other hospitality businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices (Potato Head, 2024).

Values: Sustainability, creativity, and cultural respect are core values. The hotel strives to create positive environmental impact through eco-friendly operations while showcasing local art and fostering community development (Potato Head, 2024).

Zero Waste Commitment: Desa Potato Head has adopted a comprehensive approach to waste management to achieve near-zero waste. This includes waste segregation: guests and staff are encouraged to separate waste into organic, recyclable, and up cyclable categories, as exemplifies the workshop in Figure 12. Upcycling Initiatives: materials such as discarded plastics and glass are repurposed into functional and decorative items for the resort. For instance, old plastic has been converted into chairs and other furniture pieces, and discarded glass bottles have been turned into glassware.
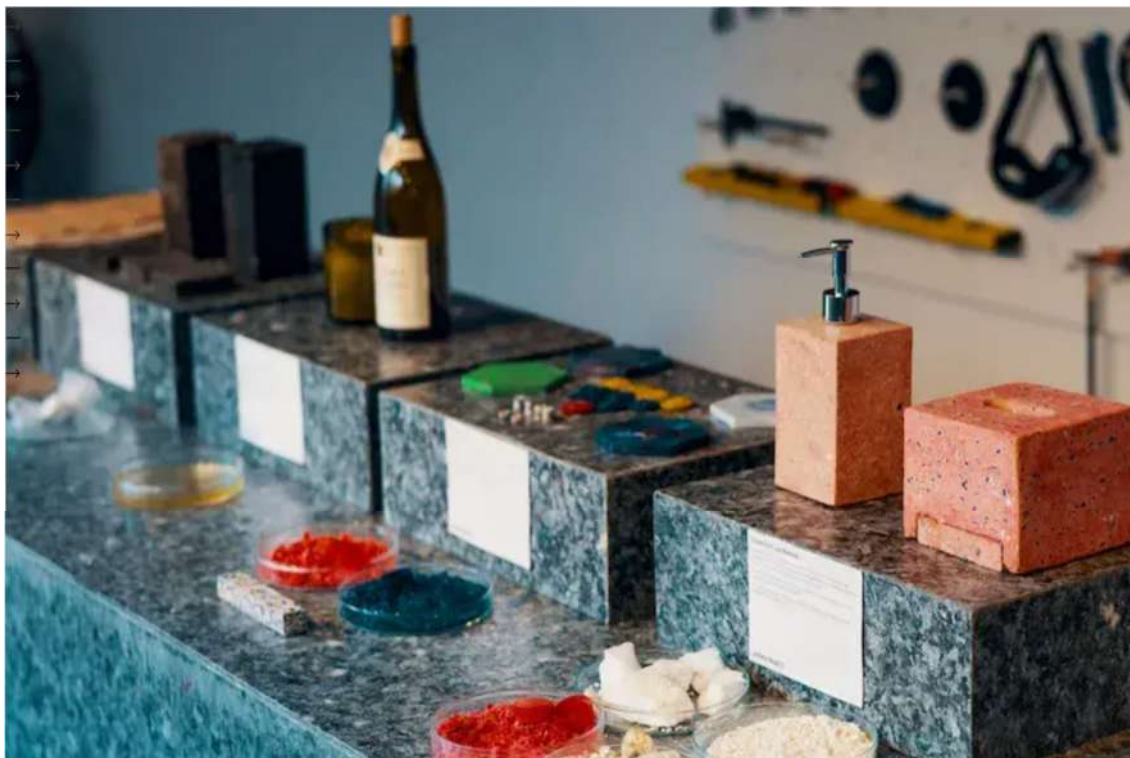
Figure 12 - Zero waste workshop of recycling materials at Desa Potato Head[11]

Community Engagement: The resort educates local businesses and residents on waste segregation and provides resources to replicate its waste management model in surrounding communities.

Waste Lab: The resort operates a dedicated Waste Lab, where discarded materials are transformed into usable products (I G A I M Pertiwi et al, 2019). One example is manufacturing furniture. Leftover plastics are processed and molded into durable, stylish furniture. Another example is creation of building materials: concrete waste is reprocessed into terrazzo for flooring and countertops. Furthermore, art installations are produced out of waste: Artists collaborate with the resort to create eco-art using recycled materials, adding cultural and visual value while emphasizing the importance of waste reduction.

Sustainable Design and Construction

The resort's architecture emphasizes eco-conscious design while maintaining aesthetic appeal. Locally sourced materials: The use of handmade bricks and reclaimed wood reduces the carbon footprint associated with importing materials. Natural Cooling Systems: Buildings are designed to maximize natural airflow, reducing the need for air conditioning. Solar Integration: Renewable energy solutions, such as solar-powered water heating systems, have been integrated to reduce reliance on conventional energy sources.

Regenerative Farming and Community Engagement

The Sweet Potato Project serves as an anchor for community-focused sustainability:

Education: Local farmers and residents receive training on regenerative farming techniques that enhance soil fertility without using synthetic fertilizers.

---

[11] https://seminyak.potatohead.co/

Food Production: Sweet potatoes are cultivated onsite and used in the resort's restaurant menus, creating a farm-to-table experience.

Community Support: The project also provides surplus crops to local families, contributing to food security in the area.

Renewable Energy and Resource Management

The resort's innovative solutions include:

Desalination: A state-of-the-art seawater filtration system produces drinking water, reducing reliance on bottled water.

Energy-efficient Appliances: All facilities are equipped with energy-saving appliances and lighting systems.

Rainwater Harvesting: Captured rainwater is used for irrigation and non-potable purposes, minimizing water wastage.

2.4.3. Barriers and Challenges

Local Waste Management Infrastructure: Bali faces significant challenges in waste disposal, with limited facilities for recycling and composting. To overcome this challenge the Potato Head resort uses in-house solutions: Desa Potato Head compensates for this gap by processing and recycling its own waste on-site.

Advocacy: The resort actively lobbies local authorities to improve waste management infrastructure across the island.

Balancing Luxury with Sustainability: Guests expect premium experiences, which can sometimes conflict with sustainability goals.

Design Innovations: Sustainable materials are carefully curated to meet luxury standards, ensuring that ecofriendly solutions do not compromise aesthetics.

Guest Education: Through signage, workshops, and guided tours, the resort educates guests on how their participation in sustainability initiatives enhances their stay.

Community Collaboration: Encouraging local businesses to adopt similar sustainability practices requires ongoing effort:

Partnerships: The resort collaborates with local artisans and vendors to incorporate recycled and sustainable products into their offerings.

Incentives: Financial and logistical support is provided to local partners willing to adopt waste reduction and sustainable production techniques.

2.4.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Environmental Impact Reduction

By achieving near-zero waste, Desa Potato Head has significantly reduced its carbon footprint:

Landfill Diversion: The resort now spends less than 3% of its waste to landfills, down from over 50% in 2017.

Carbon Savings: Upcycling waste into functional products reduces emissions associated with producing new materials.

Enhanced Guest Experience: The integration of sustainability into the guest experience is a key differentiator:

Interactive Experiences: Guests are invited to tour the Waste Lab and participate in workshops on recycling and upcycling.

Eco-Luxury Amenities: Eco-friendly toiletries and upcycled furniture provide a luxurious yet sustainable atmosphere.

Industry Recognition: Desa Potato Head has received multiple accolades for its pioneering sustainability practices

Awards: Recognition from global hospitality and environmental organizations, further establishing its reputation as a leader in ecotourism.

Media Coverage: Extensive features in prominent publications highlight the resort's innovations, attracting eco-conscious travelers.

Community Development: The Sweet Potato Project and Waste Lab have created tangible benefits for local communities: Economic Opportunities: Training programs enable residents to secure employment in ecotourism and sustainable farming.

Cultural preservation: Collaborations with local artists and craftsmen ensure that Balinese traditions are integrated into modern sustainability efforts.

2.4.5.   Performance Indicators

Water Savings: Desalination and Rainwater Harvesting

Desa Potato Head combines desalination technology and rainwater harvesting, cutting municipal water reliance by 60% and energy use by 30%. Innovative water systems reduce plastic waste and carbon emissions by 20%.

UNFCCC-Certified Projects

The first Asian hospitality company with UNFCCC certification, Desa Potato Head implements renewable energy, energy-efficient retrofits, and waste-to-energy initiatives to combat climate change.

B Corp Certification in Asia

Achieving B Corporation status signifies Desa Potato Head's commitment to sustainability, local development, and stakeholder governance, setting a regional hospitality standard.

CHSE Certification

CHSE certification underscores Desa Potato Head's adherence to safety, hygiene, and environmental standards.

Guest Feedback

Surveys highlight positive responses to eco-conscious design, with 85% of guests supporting sustainable practices in travel.

Community Impact

Through over 50 annual workshops and training for 300+ locals, Desa Potato Head fosters regional development and sustainability awareness.

Recycled Materials and Innovation

The property uses 100% recycled plastics for furniture and discarded materials for art installations, reducing waste and promoting creativity.

Performance Metrics

Key metrics from the 2023 Sustainability Report highlight significant achievements in sustainability across several domains:

Water Efficiency: The facility harvests 1.2 million liters of rainwater annually, significantly reducing dependency on external water sources and supporting local aquifers.

Energy Optimization: Using renewable energy, the property has achieved a 25% reduction in energy consumption compared to industry averages.

Waste Management: An impressive 90% of waste is diverted from landfills through extensive recycling and composting programs.

Carbon Reduction: The sustainability initiatives contribute to an annual reduction of 5,000 metric tons of CO2-equivalent emissions, aligning with global carbon-neutral goals.

2.5.   Valle Dei Cavalieri Community Based Social Cooperative

Name	Valle dei Cavalieri community-based social cooperative
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.valledeicavalieri.it
Country	Italy

2.5.1.   Background

Valle dei Cavalieri (Figure 13) is a community based cooperative that manages services for both the population living in Succiso (Reggio Emilia) and for tourists; the territory has a deep history of collective management of the territory, in fact, in addition to the cooperative, the Pro Loco association, the "civic uses" i.e. the collective ownership of large parts of the territory, the forestry consortium, the widespread museum are operating. The cooperative is a type B social cooperative, i.e. it has disabled people among its employees; there are 63 members.

Figure 13 - Valle dei Cavalieri farmhouse exterior[12]

2.5.2.   Key Principles

The cooperative manages many activities: accommodation in two structures, catering, bar, food shop, National Park visitor center, conference room, mountain bike and snowshoe rental, a fitness center, sheep farming, dairy, an alpine refuge, a bivouac, sports facilities, transport service; in catering it enhances its own products and those of the territory; it has a strong collaborative relationship with the National Park and in the UNESCO MAB; it has staff with adequate professional competence;

---

[12] www.aitr.org

participates in various projects including the COSME First Mile, which has allowed the adoption of some tactics for environmental sustainability.

2.5.3. Barriers and Challenges

The problems are caused by the aging of the local population, the absence of young people; there are difficulties in finding new workers. Innovation and qualification require constant investments; the cooperative has learned to participate in projects at local, regional, international level and in its work, it also makes use of immigrants, who have integrated well into the cooperative.

2.5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The cooperative obtained a prestigious award from the UN in 2018 and many other awards, from the Emilia Romagna Region, from the CIA (green flag); it often receives delegations from Italy and abroad, journalists, local authorities, scholars; it hosts important events especially related to the theme of community based cooperation; its restaurant is very renowned (the pecorino cheese is of high quality).

The cooperative is constantly committed to the diversification of activities and services and to innovation; the economic performance is satisfactory; the cooperative has well understood the need to constantly innovate.

2.5.5. Performance Indicators

The results are the constant growth of meals in the restaurant, which has reached the number of about 15,000 per year; overnight stays are at 2,000 (there are few rooms); the cooperative has already started an energy saving path since 2012 through the installation of a photovoltaic system of about 89 Kw and a second photovoltaic system is in the process of being adopted.

2.6. Ballarò Cooperative

Name	Ballarò cooperative enterprise
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.ballaro.org
Country	Italy

2.6.1. Background

Ballarò is a work cooperative; it manages hostels, catering activities, public shows and entertainment, with the aim of creating stable and fairly paid work opportunities and of promoting the professional growth of employees; the hostels do not only offer overnight accommodation but are strongly rooted in local society, in associative and cultural life; they are places where conferences, book presentations, musical performances, art exhibitions are held; lively, participatory, dynamic places. The cooperative is committed to environmental, social and economic sustainability and is obtaining the Gender Equality Certification. Ballarò is also involved in the management of a CAS in Ferrara where it welcomes around 25 asylum seekers and international protection. Figure 14 shows the student's hostel facilities in Ferrara.

Figure 14 - Student's Hostel Estense in Ferrara[13]

---

[13] www.aitr.org

2.6.2. Key Principles

The cooperative is based on a strong internal cohesion of the members, on their competences and work experience; maintains collaborative relationships with municipal administrations and other public bodies, owners of the properties in Ferrara, Reggio Emilia, Parma, Pisa and Campiglia Marittima (LI); the cooperative has made and continues to make significant investments with its own financial resources to improve the facilities, even if they are rented; it constantly takes care of the accessibility of the places with modernization, renovation and efficiency interventions that make the Student's Hostels in Italy one of the most advanced experiences in the sector. In addition to the typical professionalism of the hospitality sector, significant human and professional resources are employed in marketing and communication.

2.6.3. Barriers and Challenges

The facilities managed for hospitality are all rented and sometimes also have limitations on changes due to their architectural value; the catering activity has seasonal limits as it is managed in outdoor spaces; this involves the need to be flexible in management, in target orientation, in menus and sometimes in strategy changes. More generally, the cooperative manages low-margin activities in structures of monumental historical value that determine high management costs for ordinary and extraordinary maintenance, energy consumption and labor costs. The cooperative, being a commercial enterprise, does not enjoy any tax relief on labor costs except for the prevalent mutuality that it has maintained since its inception. Furthermore, there is no collective labor agreement for its sector and the resulting costs are set at percentages of turnover just under 60%.

The sustainability of the company's balance sheets has been guaranteed by the availability and sacrifice of its members and administrators who are constantly engaged well beyond the working hours provided for by their respective employment contracts.

2.6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The cooperative has managed to create numerous opportunities for fairly paid work and has encouraged the professional growth of a good part of the employees; the management enjoys excellent references; the cooperative is considered serious and reliable, and its commitment is recognized and appreciated. Over the years, the original experience imbued with a strong ideological connotation has had to deal with the needs of a modern cooperative enterprise.

Several corrections have been made with respect to cost management and the identification of new investment sectors. It is laboriously finding an economic-financial balance without betraying the values and inspiring principles that form the basis of its very existence.

2.6.5. Performance Indicators

Useful indicators are certainly the increase in overnight stays (over 60,000), their temporal distribution over the course of the year, the number of meals, revenues, as well as positive reviews on the main instant booking platforms. The turnover recorded its maximum expansion during 2023 (over 2 million euros) and despite the need to rationalize and make labor costs more efficient, employment remained substantially unchanged.

2.7.   Casa Bellavista B & B

Name	Casa Bellavista B&B
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.casabellavista.it
Country	Italy

2.7.1.   Background

Casa Bellavista was the first B&B opened in the town of Cortona (Arezzo) in 2001 (Figure 15). The values of Casa Bellavista were and are respect for people and respecting/safeguarding nature. The idea of hospitality is based on a deep sense of respect for the territory and the role of the staff. Sustainability for Casa Bellavista means respecting the balance of nature, conserving the environment, and showing respect for all creatures around them, but also the constant effort to create a welcoming and inclusive work environment.

The sustainability philosophy is based on three basic pillars: Planet, People and Community.

Figure 15 - Outside and inside view of Casa Bellavista[14]

Over the years, actions have focused primarily on:

- **WASTE**: Many years ago, they started using refill soaps, replacing disposable ones. There has been a shift to the use of ECOLABEL-certified products for cleaning.

- **WATER**: they started saving water for garden irrigation with drip irrigation and by burying the pipes also decreasing evaporation,

---

[14] www.aitr.org

- **ENERGY**: they switched to LED bulbs for the interior and solar panel-powered lighting for the exterior. Flow reducers were put in the faucets, and a photovoltaic system was installed in 2010.

2.7.2. Key Principles

Casa Bellavista has always been committed to an impact as "light" as possible towards the environment respecting nature in its entirety, both in the continuous planting of native plants and in recent years those more resistant to climate change. Great attention is always paid to the preservation of fauna being located within a repopulation reserve.

Containers have long been placed in the rooms to make recycling collection directly from the customer both to give an importance to the waste but also to speed up the cleaning of the room and for a more performing recycling collection. Good behaviors are rewarded with products made by a non-profit association in the area that puts autistic children to work and with Mangrove planting certifications in Mozambique.

Incentives are given to customers to visit little-visited, low-tourist-impact places in the area by handing out maps and suggestions both on the route but also on possible stops to make in places they would never have found on their own.

In 2023, the first sustainability report was done with the desire to put in writing all the strengths and to try to improve the environmental performance of Casa Bellavista.

2.7.3. Barriers and Challenges

The barriers are mainly due to the laziness that many guests have in sorting their garbage, sometimes due to a habit of handling garbage that differs greatly from country to country rather than a specific will.

Another barrier is to avoid food waste as much as possible.

The challenge is to refine communication with customers, making them more aware of the impact of their actions.

2.7.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Involving guests, who are encouraged to sort directly in their rooms and who receive rewards when they achieve good results, allows them to achieve higher recycling collection rates. Many of the tourists who stay at the facility are surprised by the rewards they receive, as well as by the opportunity to visit little-visited places. Finally, many are amazed by the purely vegetarian and vegan cuisine offered at the B&B, because it is as tasty as traditional cuisine, but with a significantly lower environmental impact.

Overall, the benefits in terms of customer awareness and image return for the company are considerable.

2.7.5. Performance Indicators

As a further demonstration of our commitment to "spreading" sustainability, as of February 2023, we have officially joined the Traveleco network of sustainable accommodations.

Finally, they have always noticed in talking with clients a positive impression in discovering that the facility they have chosen for their stay has a low environmental impact, mainly due to the photovoltaic system-which allows for great energy savings - but also to a whole series of small-scale actions to promote sustainable tourism that respects the environment, resources, and the territories.

2.8.   Hotel and farm Moravksko Selo

Name	Hotel and farm „Moravsko selo"
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://eco-hotel.bg/homepage/
Country	Bulgaria

2.8.1.   Background

The Smilen family established their farm more than twenty years ago, and the place has gradually grown into a tourist eco-complex. The hotel was established in 2005 on an area of 15 acres at an altitude of 1100 m in Pirin Mountain. The challenges of the times steered the family towards organic farming and then into the restaurant and hotel business, but in their business approach they have always strived for a circular economy and resource use, just as in their household. In 2007, the New York Times rated the hotel sixth in the world in a sustainability ranking. The family's business model is linked to the family's lifestyle and mindset and forms a natural closed cycle - from farm to fork, providing delicious food for hotel guests, a welcoming natural environment to match the inspiring views of the northern slope of Pirin Mountain, and last but not least, optimizing its profits by making food and agricultural residues more cost-effective and striving for a zero-waste business model.

The Smilen family have built „Moravsko selo" as a sustainable eco-complex with a vision of harmony between nature and man. The main mission of the complex is the promotion of organic farming and the integration of sustainable development principles in tourism. Long-term goals include:

- Development of eco-education by organizing workshops and seminars for visitors and the local community;
- Support organic farming as a model for sustainable land and resource management;
- Creating sustainable jobs and developing the local economy;
- Significant social impact;
- Provide jobs for local residents, with an emphasis on training and professional development;
- Organizing educational initiatives for guests related to organic farming, sustainable practices and healthy living.

2.8.2.   Key Principles

The zero waste concept at Moravsko selo includes a direct link from the production of organic vegetables and fruits to their processing into food - canned, dried, frozen and fresh meals in the hotel restaurant. Food waste from processing is recycled on a small animal farm attached to the farm, which also supplies meat to the restaurant. The complex does not use any plastic bottles or packaging, instead only spring water from its own water source, juices and other beverages of its own production, as well as unpacked tea hand-picked from Pirin and Rila mountains are available in glass bottles. Manure from the livestock farm is used in vegetable production, thus closing the food chain. No food

waste is generated from the farm, the kitchen and the accommodation service, and food loss is minimized.

The energy needed to power the hotel and restaurant is mostly provided by natural gas, while a photovoltaic power plant is installed, whose energy is used entirely for its own needs.

A very important aspect of Moravsko selo is the food offered in the restaurant. The focus there is entirely on sustainability. This sustainability consists in offering food whose raw ingredients are produced on the farm. This reduces the carbon footprint of the entire menu, cutting down on any harmful emissions for delivery and storage in warehouses. As well as guaranteeing the freshness and provenance of the food, which is offered, this approach also adds great value to the existence of the animal and plant farm itself, where transport, distribution and deliveries are also avoided.

The main driving mechanism for Moravsko selo is to serve as a successful example and inspiration for everyone involved in sustainable practices in agriculture, in the production and utilization of agricultural and animal products. The owners hope that they are able to show how a farm is „self-sufficient", confirming Steiner's principles of biodynamic agriculture.

The complex functions as an example of closed-cycle agriculture and tourism:

Composting: Food waste is collected, composted and used as fertiliser for organic crops. The process is strictly organized with the participation of a team trained to respect the principles of sustainability.

Staff integration: day-to-day activities include staff training to optimize kitchen, farm and restaurant operations, as well as involvement in maintaining sustainable processes.

Multiplication model: this business model can be applied on a larger scale using specialized waste and resource management technologies. In addition, the example of Moravsko selo can inspire other hotels and farms to adopt sustainable practices.

2.8.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Undoubtedly, this circular model of food resource use in the Moravsko selo works and brings benefits to the business, but because it was applied spontaneously, dictated by the natural way of life of the family, it has not been professionally organized so far. Accordingly, there is an imbalance between the quantities of incoming produce, the organization of the kitchen staff, the production time and the quantities of finished products. Often it is this imbalance that leads to the generation of waste - spoilage of produce that has not had sufficient time or staff to process. The lack of quantitative measurements and performance evaluation data also contributes to unnecessary waste.

Categories of barriers:

1. **Financial:**

   o Lack of sufficient capital to implement new technologies, such as automated waste management systems.

2. **Operational:**

   o Presence of an imbalance between production quantities and processing staff capacity.

   o Insufficient process automation.

3. **Human Resources:**

- Lack of qualified personnel for organic farming and green economy.

Conclusions:

- Production planning systems need to be put in place which significantly reduces waste.

- Effective time management is needed by allocating tasks according to seasonal needs.

2.8.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The practice is a good example of how a small farm business and family guesthouse can be organized in a fully circular system and how this model can be successful in terms of reducing food waste and making food waste more cost-effective, reducing food packaging waste, implementing resource-efficient food and accommodation services, thereby reducing the impact on the environment and educating guests on how these best practices can be transferred to each household, on the one hand, and to similar business models, on the other. Figure 16 shows an example of food packaging in a Room.

Figure 16 - Moravsko Eco-Hotel Room[15]

Quantitative indicators:

- The complex has reduced waste by 30% through closed-cycle resource use and the elimination of plastic packaging.

- Approximately 10,000 liters of water are saved annually through drip irrigation and the reuse of processed organic materials.

Social benefit:

---

[15] https://eco-hotel.bg/стаи/

- Guests appreciate the high quality local food and sustainable practices in their feedback. Many expressed inspiration to implement these practices in their daily lives.

- By organizing events such as organic gourmet dinners and cultural tours, the complex promotes cultural exchange and environmental education.

This data highlights the role of "Moravsko selo" as a model of sustainability and social responsibility.

„Moravsko selo" makes a significant contribution to the local community by creating jobs and providing training for employees, with a focus on developing skills for sustainable agriculture and tourism. The complex actively supports local culture by organizing events related to traditional cuisine and customs.

In addition, special educational programs inspire guests to apply what they learn to their everyday lives, striving for a more sustainable lifestyle. These initiatives strengthen the links between local culture, tourism and environmental practices.

2.8.5. Performance Indicators

To enforce the zero waste concept is a big challenge, but the whole team believes in its impact and participates consciously in enforcing its beneficial practices. „Moravsko selo" has long said no to disposable plastic items - they serve spring water only in glass jugs. Food leftovers are put to maximum use with on-farm processing. The use of cosmetics and detergents in the complex is optimized. The owners are of the opinion that zero waste is primarily a matter of thinking!

Measurable indicators of success:

- Energy produced: the photovoltaic plant generates approximately 12 000 kWh per year, which covers the main energy needs of the complex.
- Processed waste: around 2 tons of food waste is processed each year, turning it into fertilizer for organic farmland.
- Water saved: 10,000 liters of water per year have been saved by using drip irrigation and manure.

Impact on the local ecosystem and economy:

- Local suppliers are involved in supplying the restaurant, which boosts their business and income.
- Sustainable practices reduce pollution and support biodiversity in the area.
- These indicators highlight "Moravsko selo"'s commitment to environmental responsibility and economic development.

2.9.   Park-hotel Sankt Peterburg Plovdiv

Name	Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg Invest Ltd
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://sphotel.net/
Country	Bulgaria

2.9.1.   Background

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg (Figure 17) is excellent for those looking for luxury hotels in Plovdiv. The four-star complex is in the heart of Plovdiv. It opened more than four decades ago and through its services creates the tradition of style, luxury and comfort combined with the modern dynamics of the city. It has 140 accommodation rooms, and the hotel building has a height of 103 meters, allowing visitors to enjoy spectacular city views and relax with a sense of elevation.

Figure 17 - Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg[16]

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is an excellent solution for business and leisure travel, leisure and work. Its location is communicative and provides access to all key sites in the city. The rooms are spacious with interiors creating the feeling of aristocratic home comfort and providing the necessary privacy to

---

[16] https://sphotel.net/gallery

the guests. The hotel complex also has restaurants, conference rooms, a swimming pool and various activities that help to create an unforgettable experience with maximum satisfaction and comfort.

2.9.2. Key Principles

The staff of Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg have many years of experience in the tourism, restaurant and hotel industry. A loyal policy of good labor relations retains employees at the hotel, many of whom have been with the hotel for over 20 years.

Along with them, the Hotel gives a chance to start the career of young people finishing their higher education who have the desire and aspiration to learn something new, something different, something interesting.

Key is also the approach of „shortened distance" and „easy communication" between all departments- from „Reception" to „Management" and „Owners". We believe that communication and feedback is one of the principles of successful management of any business.

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg management works to minimize waste through separate collection, recycling programs and reduction of disposable plastics.

2.9.3. Barriers and Challenges

In today's hospitality industry, there are many barriers and challenges that require innovative approaches and strategies to overcome.

Competition in the sector: globalization and the rise of online booking platforms are creating pressure to offer competitive prices and services, with a trend for our customers to look for socially responsible policies and measures in place to reduce their carbon footprint on the environment.

Digitalization: Hotels need to invest in technologies such as online booking, process automation and digital service with payment features. This requires a huge number of resources but is now a necessity for a hotel to remain competitive.

Service personalization: Modern guests expect a personalized experience that requires the collection and analysis of customer data, communication and detailed information that often exceeds in real value the services offered. Often, this experience and the additional comfort provided is not calculated in the customer's final price.

Difficulties in finding staff: The hotel, as an employer, gives the chance for long-term employment to the employees, but also in this area finding serious and responsible people is a difficult process.

Economic uncertainty: inflation, rising energy costs and keeping the base in good condition are also an ongoing challenge.

Health crises: Pandemics such as COWID 19 have shown how vulnerable the hotel industry can be to such global health crises.

Seasonality: Fluctuations in occupancy during different times of the year also have an impact on the management and development of the Hotel. Since Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is located in the heart of one of the most ancient cities in the world - Plovdiv, it can secure year-round permanent occupancy.
Reputation Management: Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is a hotel with a long tradition, but also with a modern method of management, advertising and image. We work with specialist agencies to continue

to maintain an excellent reputation but also to spread the good causes and campaigns that the Hotel heads, etc.

Finding solutions to these challenges and more requires proactivity, creativity and long-term strategies that resonate with the market and customers.

2.9.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The hotel strives to enforce a good management policy in all aspects in order to continue to be recognized among the leading hotels in the region. Important indicators for us are:

- Increased customer satisfaction is the most important indicator of service success. Good feedback and attitude make an impression on customers, they remember them and expect them for every next booking.
- Attracting new guests - sharing all news related to the Hotel on social networks and other channels.
- Long-term competitiveness - investments in quality, innovation and sustainability ensure stable development and industry leadership.

2.9.5. Performance Indicators

We can point out the most distinctive benefits that the Hotel has when it comes to an implemented good management policy: high customer satisfaction rate - increased number of satisfied guests are potential guests for the future period. Customer loyalty - the Hotel has built the name of a trusted partner - that is why most of the organized events (cultural, sport, charity) in Plovdiv and the region, accommodate the participants in Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg. As an example from this year we can point out the „World Canoe Kayak Championships" in July 2024, as well as the „European Aerobics Championships for Youth".

For the good cooperation, quality of service and gratitude the Hotel receives various recognitions and certificates - they are also recognition and the result of the teamwork of all departments.

2.10.   Hilton Sofia

Name	Hilton Sofia
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	[Sofia Hotels & Accommodations	Hilton Sofia	Sofia, Bulgaria](#)
Country	Bulgaria

2.10.1.   Background

Mission of Hilton Sofia

- To be the most hospitable company in the world by delivering exceptional experiences for every guest, team member, and community we serve.

Vision of Hilton Sofia

- To fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality, creating meaningful experiences and inspiring connections for guests and team members alike.

Figure 18 shows the outdoor space at the Hilton Sofia hotel.

Figure 18 - Hilton Sofia[17]

---

[17] http//www.hilton.com/en/hotels/sofhihi-hilton-sofia/gallery/

Goals

- To consistently exceed guest expectations by providing personalized and high-quality services.

- To operate with a focus on environmental sustainability, reflecting the Global Hilton's Travel with Purpose initiative, including energy efficiency, waste and water management and support for the local community.

- To empower team members with training, growth opportunities, and a supportive workplace culture.

- To remain a leader in Sofia's hospitality market by offering innovative services, state-of-the-art facilities, and a commitment to luxury and comfort.

- To actively contribute to the local community through partnerships, cultural support, and economic development initiative.

2.10.2.   Key Principles

Characteristics:

A clear understanding of objectives and desired outcomes.

The practice should align with organizational or societal values to ensure sustainability and integrity. Worldwide commitment to lower carbon emissions.

Incorporates new ideas, methods, or technologies to enhance efficiency and impact. Hilton Light Stay Calculator part of our „Travel with purpose" program designed to measure carbon footprint and ensure we are aligned with our goals.

Establish metrics to evaluate effectiveness and progress regularly. Hilton relies on scientifically proven information and resources.

Resources:

- Hilton provides free training to all employees 365 days of the year.
- Budget allocation for contingency planning was a critical aspect of the project. The renovation of Hilton Sofia not only transformed the hotel's exterior but also introduced a complete overhaul of its interior, incorporating sustainable materials throughout the building to align with modern environmental standards.
- Software and systems for planning, execution, and analysis.
- Communication platforms for effective coordination.
- Physical facilities or platforms needed for implementation.
- Access to transportation, utilities, or specialized equipment.
- Up-to-date data to monitor progress and adapt strategies.
- Collaborations with stakeholders, local communities, and organizations for shared resources and expertise.

2.10.3.   Barriers and Challenges

- Sustainable practices often require significant upfront investments in technology, training, or infrastructure.
- Existing systems or infrastructure may be incompatible with sustainable solutions, requiring extensive upgrades.
- If customers don't value or understand the importance of sustainable practices, it may be harder to justify the effort.

2.10.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

- Although upfront investments are high, sustainable practices such as energy-efficient systems, water-saving technologies, and waste reduction lead to significant cost savings in the long run.
- Modernized, sustainable systems and practices position Hilton Sofia to adapt to changing regulations, technologies, and market trends.
- Employees increasingly prefer organizations committed to sustainability, helping attract motivated, purpose-driven talent. More than 40% of Hilton Sofia employees have been with the brand for longer than 5 years.
- Adoption of sustainable practices encourages a broader shift in organizational and societal behavior towards environmental responsibility. Many guests choose to stay with Hilton specifically for their sustainability efforts.

2.10.5.   Performance Indicators

- Guest stays score.
- Analysis of data on water and energy savings to quantify environmental impact.

2.11.   Scandic Hotels Group

Name	Scandic Hotels Group
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.scandichotelsgroup.com
Country	Bulgaria

2.11.1.   Background

Company Overview: Scandic Hotels Group (Figure 19) is one of the leading hotel operators in the Nordic region, with a significant presence in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Germany. Founded in 1963, the group has grown to encompass over 280 hotels and 57,000 rooms. The company is known for its commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility, making it a prominent player in the hospitality industry.
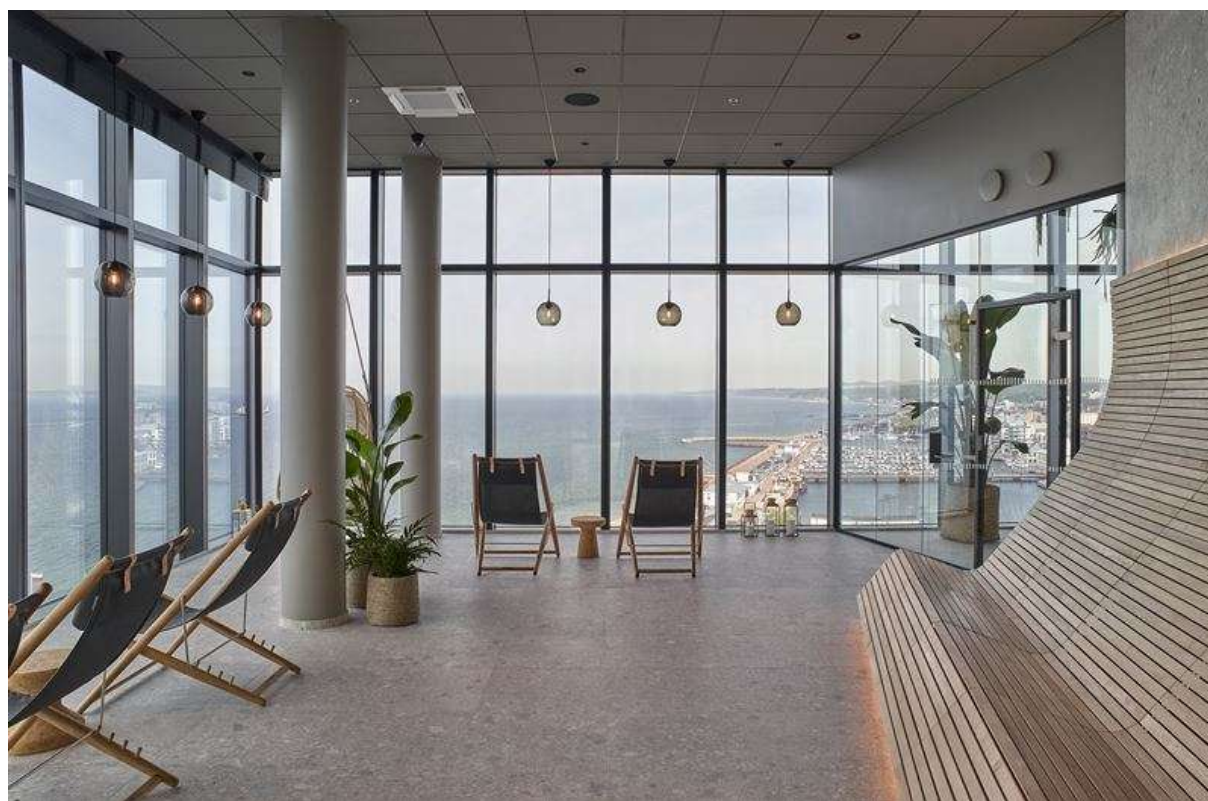

Figure 19 - Scandic Oceanhamnen now open – sustainability plays leading role from quay to rooftop terrace[18]

Mission: Scandic's mission is to create a more sustainable hospitality experience while providing excellent service and quality to its guests.

Vision: The vision of Scandic Hotels is to be the first choice for both business and leisure travelers in the Nordic region, recognized for its dedication to sustainability, quality, and customer experience.

Values: The core values of Scandic Hotels include openness, responsibility, and a passion for service. These values guide their approach to business, employee engagement, and customer interaction.

Green Policies and Sustainability Initiatives

Scandic Hotels Group places a strong emphasis on sustainability and has implemented a variety of green policies:

1. **Sustainability Strategy**: Scandic has a comprehensive sustainability strategy that aims to reduce its environmental impact and promote sustainable practices throughout its operations. This includes goals related to energy consumption, waste management, and sourcing.

2. **Energy Efficiency**: The group is committed to reducing energy consumption in its hotels. Many properties have implemented energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting, smart thermostats, and energy management systems.

3. **Waste Management**: Scandic Hotels focuses on minimizing waste through recycling programs, composting, and reducing single-use plastics. They aim to achieve a circular economy by reusing materials and reducing overall waste.

4. **Sustainable Sourcing**: The hotels prioritize sourcing food and products from local and sustainable suppliers. This includes offering organic food options in their restaurants and using eco-friendly toiletries.

5. **Certified Green Hotels**: Many Scandic properties are certified under various sustainability standards, such as the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and Green Key, which recognise their commitment to environmental practices.

6. **Employee Engagement**: Scandic encourages staff involvement in sustainability initiatives and provides training on green practices to foster a culture of environmental responsibility among employees.

7. **Community Involvement**: The group engages with local communities through various initiatives, including supporting local charities and participating in community events.

8. **Carbon Neutrality Goals**: Scandic has set ambitious targets to become carbon neutral in its operations, with plans to offset emissions through various sustainability projects.

9. **Sustainable Transportation**: The hotels promote sustainable transportation options, including bike rentals, electric vehicle charging stations, and partnerships with public transportation services.

2.11.2. Key Principles

Sustainability Integration: The main characteristic of Scandic's green policies is their holistic approach to sustainability, integrating environmental considerations into every aspect of their operations, from energy use to waste management.

Resources and Skills:

- **Human Resources**: Employee training programs focused on sustainability practices.

- **Technological Resources**: Investment in energy-efficient technologies and sustainable building materials.

- **Partnerships**: Collaboration with local suppliers and sustainability experts to improve practices and reduce environmental impact.

2.11.3. Barriers and Challenges

Main Barriers:

- **Cost of Implementation**: The initial investment in sustainable technologies and practices can be high, which can deter quick adoption.

- **Staff Training**: Ensuring all staff are adequately trained and engaged with sustainability initiatives can be a challenge.

- **Customer Expectations**: Balancing sustainability efforts with customer comfort and expectations can sometimes conflict.

Lessons Learned:

- Stakeholder engagement, including staff and guests, is critical for the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives.

- Continuous evaluation and adjustment of strategies are necessary to overcome financial and operational barriers.

2.11.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Main Benefits:

- **Enhanced Brand Reputation**: commitment to sustainability has strengthened Scandic's brand image and customer loyalty.

- **Operational Efficiency**: Improved energy efficiency and waste management practices have led to cost savings.

- **Employee Engagement**: sustainability initiatives have fostered a culture of responsibility and pride among employees.

Outcomes:

- Increased customer satisfaction due to enhanced service offerings tied to sustainability.

- Recognition and awards for sustainability efforts, establishing Scandic as a leader in eco-friendly hospitality.

Lessons Learned:

- Transparency in sustainability efforts fosters trust and enhances customer loyalty.

- Effective communication of sustainability policies can lead to higher guest engagement and participation in green initiatives.

2.11.5. Performance Indicators

To assess the value of Scandic Hotels' good practices in sustainability, several performance indicators are utilized:

- **Energy Consumption**: Measuring the reduction in energy use per guest night.

- **Water Usage**: Tracking water consumption and implementing reduction strategies.

- **Waste Management**: Percentage of waste recycled compared to total waste generated.

- **Guest Satisfaction Scores**: Surveys to gauge guest awareness and appreciation of sustainability initiatives.

- **Sustainability Certifications**: Number of hotels with recognized certifications (e.g., Green Key, Nordic Swan Ecolabel).

By utilizing these indicators, Scandic Hotels can continuously monitor their sustainability performance and make informed decisions for future improvements.

2.12. Costa Navarino

Name	Costa Navarino
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/
Country	Greece

2.12.1. Background

Costa Navarino is in Messinia in the southwest Peloponnese, in one of the most unspoiled and breathtaking landscapes in the Mediterranean. Its philosophy is driven by a genuine desire to promote Messinia while protecting and preserving not only its natural beauty but also a remarkable cultural heritage spanning 4,500 years. Figure 20 shows an artisan crafting Messinian recipes.

Figure 20 - Artisan Crafting Messinian Recipes[19]

Costa Navarino is currently home to four 5-star premium resorts, Mandarin Oriental Costa Navarino, W Costa Navarino, The Romanos, a Luxury Collection Resort and The Westin Resort Costa Navarino, three spa centers, four signature 18-hole golf courses, over 40 dining venues, a wide range of sports, outdoor and cultural activities, plus an array of 5-star services. The destination is enriched by Navarino Agora, a curated marketplace and incubator of art and culture that combines shopping, dining and entertainment with cultural happenings. The hotel has been characterized as a "World Class Destination" and named "World's Best Emerging Golf Destination 2022" by World Golf Awards. Costa Navarino offers a world-class golf experience with its four 18-hole signature courses: The Dunes Course, set in diverse natural scenery with spectacular sea and river views, takes its name from the tall dunes that separate several holes from a golden beach, the Bay Course offers panoramic sea and mountain views, with two holes playing along the historic Bay of Navarino while The International Olympic Academy Golf Course and The Hills Course offer players a challenging game and breathtaking sunsets The resort emphasizes offering authentic experiences that showcase the region's culture, history, and gastronomy. Activities include olive oil tastings, traditional cooking classes, and guided

---

tours of archaeological sites. Costa Navarino has been recognized for its sustainability efforts, including water conservation, waste management, and energy efficiency. The resort has also undertaken projects to protect local flora and fauna. Lastly, Initiatives such as the Navarino Environmental Observatory, a collaboration with academic institutions, focus on climate change and environmental research.

2.12.2. Key Principles

The Costa Navarino offers a plethora of services and options to its clients including a unique feature that includes authentic experiences that aim to uncover the traditions of the local area through experiences that bring every individual and group closer to everyday life in Messinia. The experiences are guided and provided by the locals who are eager and enthusiastic to share their knowledge and experiences with interested parties and to spread the rich traditions of the region. The authentic experiences entail a variety of options including authentic village cooking that includes the traditional Messinian cooking with the help of local women who will share authentic family recipes passed down from parent to kid. The cooking experience aims to teach people how to prepare and serve a traditional Messinian menu, using regional techniques and fresh ingredients followed by lunch and the opportunity to savor the food prepared. Besides traditional cooking, a spiritual activity that is included is the famous "Philosophy Walk" that draws inspiration from the ancient Greek thinkers. These walks include the famous idyllic scenes and landscapes of the Messininian countryside, which promise to impress and provide a unique experience for everyone that is going to be part of the experience. Another activity that is a component of authentic experiences is the astronomy nights which are a stellar experience that is unique since usually last a couple of hours, when planets glow brightly in the sky and starlight starts to illuminate. The location is ideal because there is no light pollution thus the area marks the ideal spot to look through a telescope and investigate the deep and vast space. Finally, a part of the authentic experience is the olive oil tasting which includes a unique tasting session in which the local experts guide the participants into the subtle flavors of the Messianic virgin olive oil. During the process the local guides elaborate on the history of olive oil and explain the basic features and characteristics that olives need such as quality soil.

In order to set up these practices, the Costa Navarino had to carefully plan and secure the participation of skillful people who would embody the philosophy of the Messinian culture and at the same time be able to attract people's interest. One of the necessities that are required to successfully implement these practices is the skillset of the tutors, especially when it comes to practical activities such as cooking and astronomy observations. The personnel must be well-trained and be able to produce a quality outcome and to achieve a high level of customer satisfaction. Another necessity revolves around the notion of providing the participants with the right type of equipment, especially during the technical activities. For instance, in astronomical activities, a high-quality telescope is required for the participants to be able to grasp the unique experience of understanding and observing the stars. Thus, a high level of skillset and organization is required to effectively provide these experiences to the individuals while maintaining state-of-the-art equipment.

2.12.3. Barriers and Challenges

One of the main challenges is to locate and incorporate the right people into the key positions. In this case, it is challenging to locate a local who must have advanced knowledge and experience in the field of astronomy, while being able to organize the groups and communicate fluently in English. The lack

of workers in the hospitality sector is becoming more and more evident in Greece, resulting in a scarcity of human capital in the industry. Additionally, another challenge is to meet customer expectations where in this specific instance are high due to the brand name of Costa Navarino. Balancing authenticity and luxury with high-end guests can sometimes be at odds with the raw authenticity of local experiences. Therefore, the authentic experiences that are provided must always enjoy positive feedback and achieve high-quality standards, which is a difficult task given the circumstances. The marketing of these activities is also a significant challenge as presenting these activities as authentic as possible is of vital importance, as the management needs to ensure that there is a consistent and steady demand for these experiences. The dissemination of the experiences must target all potential guests without falling into a variety of stereotypes or overgeneralizations.

The lessons that can be drawn from this specific example are multiple and can vary and its benefits can provide valuable lessons for other luxury resorts and tourism enterprises. Firstly, collaboration with the local community is essential as having a good relationship can ensure a steady workflow of individuals while ensuring that the experiences are going to be as authentic as possible. Secondly, balancing the components of practice is a lesson that every business must adhere to, in this instance, this is evident in the balance between luxury and authenticity where flexibility is required in educating the guests about the importance of preserving the local culture and environment while preserving the value of authentic experiences. Finally, effective marketing is important to highlight the uniqueness and authenticity of the activities. The marketing strategies lead to the storytelling of the activities and promoting the true nature of the authentic activities leads to increased participation.

2.12.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The authentic experiences that are offered from the Costa Navarino will provide numerous benefits and positive outcomes for a variety of actors and individuals. The main benefits have an impact on:

The Guests

The guests benefit from the outcomes of authentic experience by being able to grasp the unique culture and dive into the rich local culture through activities such as the traditional cooking classes, the olive oil tasting, and the visits to historical sites, providing a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's heritage. The activities create and foster a sense of personal connection with the local community and environment, creating a mix of memorable and unforgettable vacation experiences. The engagement of guests in the activities is more likely to lead to higher customer satisfaction and create a connection between the region the resort and the guests.

The Local Community

The authentic experiences create and establish a steady and increased demand for skillful personnel that involves artisans, astronomers, cooks, and cultural practitioners creating employment opportunities for the locals and significantly boosting the economy of the region. The Messianic culture and heritage are also promoted through the involvement of locals in the tourism model of Costa Navarino, effectively creating a network that supports local businesses and contributing to the economic sustainability of the region.

The Resort

The Costa Navarino gains a huge advantage by offering authentic experiences establishing the establishments as a unit that offers authenticity and sustainability while promoting culture. Incorporating these experiences, Costa Navarino gains an "advantage" due to the unique services that

can be provided to its clientele. Offering authentic experiences differentiates the resort from other hotels resulting in a comparative advantage. Moreover, the resort benefits from the flow of reviews as guests tend to share their experiences, aiding in the promotion of the resort as a destination that has to offer more than just a simple stay. Additionally, the experiences that the resort provides create satisfied guests that are likely to repeat and return to Messinia, creating a steady flow of tourists which contributes to the long-term sustainability of the resort.

Sustainable Tourism Model

The authentic experiences that are offered at Costa Navarino create a sustainable tourism model that is characterized by balanced development which aims to balance luxury tourism with sustainability and cultural integrity. The resort promotes the unique Messianic culture that contributes to the long-term viability of the resort and to the maintenance of high standards of guest satisfaction while benefiting the local community and environment.

2.12.5. Performance Indicators

To be able to assess the value of the authentic experiences, the impact on guests, the local community, and the overall business performance of the resort. The overall reviews and surveys from clients indicate a positive sentiment most reviews mention authentic experiences as part of the overall experience. For instance, the majority of the reviews on Trip Advisor are mostly positive and the effect of the authentic experiences is mentioned in many comments. Besides the reviews in trip advisor the sustainability report of 2019-2020 emphasizes the customer satisfaction as the resort scored a total of 78.4/100 in the Navarino Dunes, a 77.8/100 in the Westin Resort and a 80.4/100 in the Romanos Resort in 2018 with their numbers improving in 2020[20]. The participation of individuals with authentic experiences is also peaking, especially in the months of July and August, where the influx of tourists is very high. This has resulted in the introduction of additional workshops and experiences while always adding more experiences and events such as the Navarino Challenge and the Messinia Terroirs Wine Festival. The incorporation of experiences has attributed to several awards such *as 'A' Design Award& Competition 2020 Silver Award-The villa in Olive Grove*, and the *Hospitality Awards 2020 Gold Award-Top Greek Resort-Gold Award*.

An important indicator is the value that authentic experiences contribute to the local community and employs. Thus, the evaluation of the company's economic performance is a key factor in order to elaborate on the influence and impact that the resort has in the economy of the region. The business model is based on providing genuine experiences to the guests within the framework of local culture and traditions while contributing to the development of the region. Monitoring the performance of the resort through indicators related to the economic value generated and distributed is vital for understanding the strategy and philosophy of the business.

---

[20] Costa Navarino Sustainability Report 2019-2020-https://www.costanavarino.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/sustainability-2019_20.pdf

Key financial data for 2019 and 2020 in comparison with 2018, TEMES & Real Estate companies
(Values in Million Euro)

	2018	2019	2020
Sales from Operations	50.9	53.6	24.3
Sales from Real Estate	18.8	20.9	42.4
Total Sales (Turnover)	69.7	74.5	66.7
Total Assets	580.2	588.0	633.6
Equity	360.7	366.5	374.6
Liabilities	219.5	221.5	259.0

The abovementioned data, indicates that the resort is committed to connect the company's development with the development of the region of Messinia as a whole, as many of the profits are re-invested in the creation and promotion of sustainable tourism which creates jobs while at the same time promoting local culture and products. Costa Navarino sets a unique paradigm through its employment policies that target the local population, creating business opportunities by promoting local culture and products and working together with several local micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. The creation of quality jobs in a safe working environment that encourages innovation, combined with the provision of high-quality training tailored to the talents and needs of everyone, are essential for any associate to become the ambassadors of the resort's vision, while providing the highest quality of service to the visitors. In addition, the employment policy strengthens the bonds of the local community and contributes both directly and indirectly to the economic and social development of the region.

2.13. YOTEL

Name	YOTEL
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.yotel.com/en/tech
Country	London

2.13.1. Background

The YOTEL hotels were founded by Simon Woodroffe the creator of the YO! Company which includes the sushi chain YO! Woodroffe was inspired by the luxury of first-class airline cabins as he aimed to translate that compact, efficient luxury into affordable hotel accommodation. YOTEL (Figure 21) is a tech-led global hotel group made up of three brands: YOTEL, YOTELAIR, and YOTELPAD.

Figure 21 - Yotel Hotel[21]

Here is a quick explanation of how each of the brands can be defined:

- YOTEL city center hotels include cleverly crafted cabins and feature beautifully designed open spaces with gyms, restaurants, bars, and outdoor terraces. KOMYUNITI is their concept for co-working, informal meetings, and relaxing. Design elements are incorporated within each space to reflect the city in which the hotel is located. You will also find innovative concepts like YOBOT – an automated luggage concierge at YOTEL New York and soon-to-be YOTEL Dubai, as well as delivery robots for amenity requests at YOTEL Singapore and Boston.
- YOTELAIR hotels are located in airport terminals. They are ideal for guests that have long layovers or early flights and wish to book a cabin for a few hours or one night. They are a lighter version of their city center hotels.

---

[21] https://ejsnewyork.com/projects/yotel-new-york-city/

- YOTELPAD is their newest concept. Located in city centers and resort locations, these condo-style residences are perfect for one-week to one-year stays. It is about giving the guests a feeling of "home".

The three brands were created under the same model: being smart by saving space and time to provide guests with a flawless experience. The first hotel was created in Gatwick Airport in London in 2007, offering travelers a comfortable and convenient place to stay within the airport premises. Hotels have self-check-in kiosks and keyless entry, convertible double beds, adjustable mood lighting and systems. Furthermore, the New York hotel is home to the YOBOT, the world's first robotic luggage concierge. The hotels in Boston and Singapore have delivery robots that take amenities to the rooms. These robots are programmed to negotiate lifts and corridors, and they can interact with people. YOTEL hotels target the intelligent use of space offering cabins rather than traditional hotel rooms, these cabins are compact yet highly functional, maximizing every inch of space. The cabins feature a variety of high-tech luxuries and amenities such as adjustable smart beds, mood lighting, smart TVs, and monsoon rain showers. YOTEL is also a pioneer in the system of check-in and check-out as it uses self-service kiosks for check-in and check-out, reducing wait times and enhancing convenience for guests. The company primarily targets transit passengers as the hotels are concentrated in major hotels like Heathrow, Gatwick, and Charles de Gaulle. The hotel chain will target city hotels such as New York, Boston, Singapore and San Francisco, while modifications in the cabins are also planned to make them suitable for longer stays and more appealing to high profile clients.

2.13.2. Key Principles

The Yotel hotels are a startup with an ambitious plan that is going to revolutionize the industry. The YOTEL chain utilizes smart technological solutions to make the experience for the client as simple as possible. For instance, guests will be able to view their reservation details, seamlessly check-in and out, use the app as their room key, request a late check-out, view any charges and payments, and receive messages from the hotel announcing events or special offers. This will be possible through the new applications while self-service kiosks will allow guests to check-in in under a minute. The new service kiosks contribute to the elimination of front-desk lines, boost guest satisfaction and more importantly reduces the likelihood of fraud as it requires verification and identification of the individuals that are going to stay in the premises. Besides the quick check-in option that the YOTEL hotels offer, another smart solution is that each cabin is specially designed to maximize the use of space without compromising comfort. Rejuvenating rain showers and heated towel rails are provided as standard along with SMART TVs to connect your own devices as well as multiple power and USB points. Moreover, the YOTEL hotels are implementing a variety of robots that serve different and multiple functions. For example, robots in New York are aiding guests in storing their luggage while room-service robots are being used to deliver food, towels, and suitcases. The robots are fully functional and interactive as they move freely around the premises of the hotel, and they can even stop for chats or a quick selfie with the guests. The business model of the hotel does not target only traditional travelers but also business travelers, thus in many facilities there are locations that feature co-working spaces that are equipped with modern technology and offer high-speed Wi-Fi to achieve high efficiency and be able to accommodate the needs of the clients.

The implementation of the smart solutions does not require the traditional management approach towards a hotel but rather a more modern approach that is based on a more diverse skillset. The hotel management approach relies heavily on the programming of smart devices thus one of the skills that are required is advanced vendor management. It is paramount to be able to oversee and coordinate

the relationships and interactions with external suppliers to ensure that the robots and the automated check-in are always operational and functional. Apart from the technical capabilities it is paramount to be able to have design skills such as space optimization such as interior design. Design skills are important when creating the pods, to ensure accessibility to a broad audience including people with disabilities.

2.13.3. Barriers and Challenges

The smart solutions that the YOTEL hotels apply face a variety of challenges. Firstly, the integration of self-check-in and check-out has some risks regarding the personal data of the guests as well as the reliability of the online systems. With the extensive use of digital and automated systems, ensuring the security of guest data has become a huge concern for YOTEL hotels. The integration of technologies such as automated check-in kiosks, mobile apps for room control, and the device in rooms enhances convenience and personalization but also introduces significant vulnerabilities. While automation can contribute to the enhancement of efficiency, it can also lead to cyber-attacks and breaches that can lead to severe reputational damage and legal consequences. A data breach can have devastating consequences, leading to severe reputational damage as guests lose confidence in the hotel's ability to safeguard their information. Financial repercussions can also be substantial, including potential fines from regulatory bodies for non-compliance with data protection laws like GDPR and costs associated with remediation efforts. Therefore, a major challenge of the increased automation is to ensure the data security of each individual and compliance by adhering to global and regional data privacy laws such as GDPR which requires data management policies.

Another challenge for this practice is the selective implementation of these practices. The implementation of this innovative model may not be applicable to certain locations and cultures, thus the expansion when using this practice must be very carefully planned and executed. Adapting the YOTEL concept to suit different cultural expectations and preferences while maintaining the brand's core identity is a complex challenge. YOTEL's innovative and smart approach must resonate with diverse guest profiles worldwide, each with unique cultural norms, values, and expectations regarding hospitality. Moreover, the company must also be able to respond swiftly to any technical issues and malfunctions that can disrupt the guest experience. The latter requires extensive technical staff that has experience with systems like robots and check-in systems to be on stand-by and close to the YOTEL locations. The maintenance of all the systems is also a significant cost as the ongoing maintenance of kiosks, smart rooms, and robots requires constant updates.

2.13.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The smart solutions that the YOTEL hotel implements have a variety of benefits that span different areas. Firstly, this practice is eco-friendly as all the smart devices are designed to balance the operational cost of a hotel while contributing to climate and environmental sustainability. The hotel uses LED lighting, automated climate control, and occupancy sensors which significantly lead on lowering its energy consumption. With the integration of these systems into the centralized building management software it allows for real-time monitoring that ensures energy optimization. The latter aids in the decrease of the hotel's carbon footprint which increases the sustainability of the businesses and translates to a significant cost saving, which makes the pricing more affordable to the clients. Lastly, promoting a sustainable model of business makes the promotion and marketing of the business much more efficient and accessible, attracting environmentally conscious travelers.

Secondly, the introduction of a mobile application in the hotels provides the guests with 24/7 access to a wide variety of services that amplifies their stay experience. Through the application, the guests can manage their bookings with ease from making reservations and modifying their stay dates to checking in and out without the need to visit the front desk or interact with the concierge. The application also facilitates the ordering of room service by enabling guests to browse menus, place orders and make special requests at any point during their stay. The application is also used as a tool for the hotels as well since is a means of communication between the client and the hotel. For instance, the hotel can inform the clients about any potential updates, and offers (happy hour, activities), while also ensuring customer satisfaction.

Lastly, YOTEL hotels significantly enhance guest experience through a combination of convenience, efficiency, and innovative amenities. The implementation of automated check-in/check-out processes through the self-service kiosks amplifies guest arrivals and departures, reducing wait times and enhancing overall convenience. In-room technology, such as adjustable mood lighting, smart TVs, and climate control panels, allows guests to easily personalize their environment, ensuring a comfortable and relaxed stay. Additionally, YOTEL's use of robotic services like YOBOT for luggage storage adds a futuristic element and improves operational efficiency, while the provision of free, reliable high-speed Wi-Fi ensures that guests can stay connected for both work and leisure. These features collectively create a modern, tech-savvy, and high-quality experience for guests.

In conclusion, the lessons that can be drawn from this practice:

- Cost management, which is achieved through the investment in smart solutions that can reduce a variety of operational costs.
- System digitalization, through the application that enables the client to get updates and interact with the management neglecting human interaction.
- Sustainability and environmental impact, by implementing energy efficient systems and smart appliances for lighting the overall enterprises and brand reputation becomes more appealing to travelers.

These practices seem to have an impact on the investors, as the hotels are constantly expanding in different regions and areas, indicating that this innovative model seems not only to work but excel in the field of hospitality.

2.13.5. *Performance Indicators*

To assess the value and gravity of the good practice, particularly in the context of YOTEL hotels, it is essential to evaluate and measure several indicators that will elaborate on the efficiency and overall impact that this practice offers to the business. The first fact that must be considered is the overall customer satisfaction, on the review platforms such as Trip Advisor. The reviews are overall positive, and many guests highlight the significance of smart devices and their impact during their stay. The guests indicate how easy and comfortable is the check-in and check-out procedures and how this practice aids them in their time management and organization. Moreover, many guests praise the smart solutions such as the Wi-Fi speed and the robots, as additions that maximize the experience of the guests. Thus, the effectiveness of automated systems highlights the practice's impact on enhancing guest convenience and operational efficiency.

Another major indicator that this model of hotel design is efficient and lucrative is the constant expansion and investments that the hotel chain gets from funds and institutions. The Starwood Capital

Group which is a global private investment firm invested 250$ million dollars in order to support its global expansion plans, including the opening in key cities and airport around the world. The innovative design and model of the hotels, drew attention from the Kuwait Real Estate Company (AQARAT), supporting its expansion in the Middle East and other regions. The most ambitious project is the YOTEL Oxagon which marks the YOTEL's first opening in Saudi Arabia and stands to become a key hospitality development in one of the world's most ambitious projects, set to redefine sustainable urban living. The first hotel in Oxagon will be within the city's Research and Innovation district, scheduled to open its doors in 2026. Lastly, the hotels emphasize and promote environmental sustainability and implement energy systems to keep the carbon footprint as low as possible. Among the measures that the hotel implements to save energy is the eco water flow, showerheads, and taps that are 45% more efficient. The rooms and cabins are also equipped with LED lighting and occupancy sensors for heating, lighting and cooling thus these systems ensure that there is no energy waste.

2.14. Pohorje Village Resort

Name	Pohorje Village Resort - 5 Start d.o.o. - Aneseja Šenveter
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.pohorjevillageresort.si Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pohorjevillageresort/ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/pohorjevillageresort/
Country	Slovenia

2.14.1. Background

The mission of the company 5 Start is to write successful stories in the field of tourism. Only people who live with tourism can work successfully in tourism, who feel tourism as a playground where they can play various games and enjoy it immensely. They point out that it is necessary to be prudent and resourceful at every step (multitasking is nowadays an obligation and, in their opinion, the only possible way of working in tourism, so they welcome like-minded people into their ranks who share their passion for creating stories) and in step with times. They are aware that they must be in harmony with nature at every step, not only in their private lives but also (and above all) in the workplace. All of this is crucial. Having environmental certificates and acting in accordance with them is their privilege and not an obligation. They are oriented in such a way that they work in the midst of untouched nature with as little impact on nature as possible, they believe that nature also gives us back everything good. It is important that every individual employed by the company acts in accordance with nature. In the company, they place great emphasis on transferring this belief to their guests through actions and quality services. Their great satisfaction is shown in the fact that guests accept their mission - to be in harmony with nature and preserve it - with open arms and great respect.

2.14.2. Key Principles

Pohorje Village Resort (Figure 22) boasts the most recognized certificates for responsible, safe and sustainable behavior in tourism, with the Green & Safe sign and the Green Key. The latter assures all guests that by choosing a certified tourist establishment, they directly contribute to the protection of the environment. With the obtained certificate, they pledged to increase the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable business methods and consequently reduce the sharing of resources, raise awareness and change the behavior patterns of all stakeholders in individual tourist establishments and in the tourism industry in general. With the help of strict documentation and frequent inspections, they maintain high environmental standards and ensure the sustainable development and preservation of the green planet for all future generations.

They attach great importance to human resources in their business. By working in a narrow or wider team, with set common goals, with similar values, they work and create for the common good. At work, they need a lot of ideas, good will, critical thinking, studying the competition and "keeping up with the times" - as an example, the time of the Corona Virus epidemic greatly disrupted tourist flows and made working in tourism impossible in short term, but at the same time it opened the door to new ways of work, thinking and acting. There is an even greater emphasis on returning to nature. Realizing

that it would be necessary to do something in terms of operations, the company introduced the digitization of some departments and only introduced this into the operations of the resort itself. They point out that, in the long run, this enables them to operate more easily (especially with a lack of staff) and has a lower impact on the environment. For example, they became agents for an application that enables contactless check-in to a hotel room, ordering items and services and paying for the reservation without waiting in long lines at the reception desk, less impact on the environment, as reservations are made electronically, and at the same time, the receptionist is spared a lot of monotonous bureaucratic work, which allows him to devote more time to guests, to communicate with them more about more pleasant topics, such as how to spend time at them, what to see, visit and taste.

Figure 22 - Pohorje Village[22]

2.14.3. Barriers and Challenges

Business and a friendly working climate are important to the company. At work, they emphasize that work must be done with a lot of positive energy and a positive attitude towards work. That's why they never focus on problems (they define them only as obstacles, which they overcome without problems and with joint efforts).

Challenges arise in tourism on a daily basis, as their operation is largely independent of them - it depends on the environment in which they operate and the people who visit them. In Slovenia, legislation is often an obstacle when you want to create something in tourism. They point out that the legislation imposes on them additional (in their opinion unnecessary) bureaucratic work, to which they must devote a lot of time. This may be something that tourism workers have been pointing out for a long time. A well-known challenge recently (when working in tourism) is the lack of good and trained staff to work in tourism. They are trying to partially solve the problem by introducing digitization, and at the same time they are trying to adapt to it with various changes (searching for people who are capable of multitasking). They connect with various companies (also from abroad) with which they take care of the exchange of personnel, constantly changing the workflow process, connecting with the local environment, etc.

---

[22] https://www.pohorje-slovenija.si/img/b8e7202b-4d5a-4ccf-9c8c-9f7fc6095d7b/329611642.jpg?fm=jpg&q=80&fit=max&crop=1024%2C538%2C0%2C82&w=1200

2.14.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

Connecting - only this enables more of everything for all involved stakeholders. Connecting with the surroundings means that the guest gets a wonderful experience. The guest benefits from accommodation, eats an excellent Styrian breakfast or dinner made from local ingredients, can ride around on a bicycle (with which he protects the environment), and at the same time they direct him to use public transportation with a gondola to the city, where he experiences a panoramic trip that will remain with him for a long time. A pleasant memory, in the evening a guest sits by the fireplace with a glass of good wine in the lobby bar (they only offer local wines, which raise the profile of Styrian winemakers, and at the same time, in their Local shop, you can buy this wine and take it home). They are also sustainable in terms of promoting and selling local products (local honey and other local products, which enable better functioning and visibility for many surrounding farmers and artisans). The awareness that they are not each other's competition from which they have to hide their products and services, but active stakeholders who can achieve more together, by connecting (both for their own good and for the good of every guest), is crucial when working in tourism and after in their opinion, the only way to success.

2.14.5.   Performance Indicators

Above all, reducing the impact on the surroundings, as they operate in the heart of the Pohorje forests, is very important. In their work, they use local products, suppliers, and raw materials, which while reducing the impact on the environment (fewer transport routes, healthier diet) also enable the promotion of individual products/raw materials of local lecturers. So, this way they also ensure that their products/raw materials get higher value, as a result they enable their survival. Last, but not least, they also mention that their services, which they offer to their guests, are of higher quality and authentic, thanks to their effort and work.

Indicators of good practices in sustainable development are tools that enable monitoring, measuring and evaluating the effects of sustainable measures in the social, economic and environmental fields. The indicators are useful for companies, governments and organizations that want to improve their sustainability practices, as they allow quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress.

In the company, the satisfaction of the guests is very important to them. The connection between guest satisfaction and the sustainability aspect is becoming increasingly important, especially in hospitality and tourism management, where guests are increasingly aware of the environmental and social impacts of their travels. By implementing sustainable practices, tourism businesses such as hotels, restaurants and resorts can have a positive impact on the environment, local communities and contribute to a higher level of satisfaction and loyalty of their guests.

2.15. Neya Hotels

Name	Neya Hotels
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://neyahotels.com/
Country	Portugal

2.15.1. Background

NEYA Hotels was born from the vision of providing a sustainable tourism experience. The Group's hotels have been thought out and designed to be a benchmark in sustainability, from construction to day-to-day operations.

As a sustainable hotel group, it is committed to quality and service excellence daily through a tripartite sustainability concept - environmental, economic and social.

A hotel cannot be seen as a body alien to the surrounding society and only accessible to customers: it must be a showcase of values and principles that it shares with the community, with this recognition being given to sustainable offers that minimize their environmental footprint, bringing added value to destinations.

In this way, the Group contributes to reducing the ecological footprint in the tourism sector and believes that everyone's contribution can make tourism more sustainable.

NEYA Porto was born from the restoration of part of the ruins of one of the few buildings of Manueline architecture in the city of Porto, the Madre Deus de Monchique Convent. The construction maintained the original layout of the convent and the garden cloister, preserving the history of the building. From the symbiosis between the historical heritage and the contemporaneity of the project comes a hotel that blends into a setting in perfect harmony between past and present, with a philosophy based on sustainability and thinking about the future.

2.15.2. Key Principles

The Group includes two hotels, the NEYA Lisboa Hotel and the NEYA Porto Hotel, and implements Quality, Environment and Safety Management Systems in the units, which allow for an effective minimization of the environmental impact of the activity in all descriptors, such as waste management, energy and water consumption, carbon emissions, mobility and the use of chemical products.

The NEYA group implements efficient practices daily to reduce its ecological footprint, committed to the quality and excellence of its services through a threefold concept of sustainability: environmental, economic and social.

Therefore, they implement the following policies to accomplish these principles: environmental policy, emissions reduction policy, biodiversity protection policy and waste treatment and/or reduction strategy.

In the field of social responsibility, the NEYA group consistently works to develop partnerships with charities, as is it example presented in Figure 23. This support is not limited to donations or contributions in kind, but to a commitment of time, work and dedication, channelling the resources available within its business structure to help. Partnerships were signed with institutions related with supporting children, such as the Ronald McDonald Children's Foundation, the Acreditar Association and the Ajudaris Association. Besides that, they developed the *Solidary Room* project, with the aim of providing free bed and breakfast to families of needy children who travel from their area of residence for medical appointments, hospital treatment or hospital stays. Moreover, they are involved in actions to donate goods to charities under the HOSPES Program of the Hotel Association of Portugal. It also collaborates with the Local Authorities to provide meals for families in need.

Figure 23 - Solidarity dinner at the NEYA Hotel[23]

About social politics, they implement human rights politics and local suppliers' politics.

The hotel has implemented a supplier selection procedure that includes requirements related to environmental, legal and certification issues.

The NEYA Porto Hotel implements the following Governance politics: anti-corruption and fraud policy; policy for the prevention and management of conflicts of interest; data privacy policy; and a whistleblowing channel for employees.

---

[23] https://porto.neyahotels.com/responsabilidade-social/

2.15.3. *Barriers and Challenges*

The main challenge that NEYA Porto Hotel is facing in implementing their environmental, social and governance (ESG) politics and initiatives is the resistance of employees and customers. Regarding the employees, the resistance to daily, and in every task, apply the ESG politics and initiatives of the hotel. Mainly this resistance is related to bad habits and routines that need time to change and interiorize. Regarding the customers, when we talk about a four stars hotel, usually customers have some resistance to accept some change, for instance, take less time in the shower to reduce water consumption or not having some goods in the meals because they are not in the season, or they are not from local. These issues need time, awareness, and change of habits, from employees and customers, to contribute to better results in applying ESG politics and initiatives.

2.15.4. *Benefits and Outcomes*

As a result of the measures implemented, the Neya Porto hotel has received the following certifications:

- LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Gold: the first hotel in Portugal to receive this certification for the excellence of its construction, designed from the ground up to create an efficient building with reduced consumption of resources. This is a globally recognized symbol of green construction, ensuring savings in electricity costs, reduced carbon emissions and healthier environments.
- Green Key: the hotel received this award in 2021. This is an international distinction that promotes Sustainable Tourism in Portugal by recognizing tourist establishments, local accommodation, campsites and restaurants that implement good environmental and social practices, that value environmental management in their establishments and that promote Environmental Education for Sustainability. The requirements of this certificate are to have an environmental management system aimed at reducing energy and water consumption, to separate waste, to use environmentally friendly cleaning products and to choose mostly organic and locally produced products. The Green Key is a seal of confidence that tells consumers that by choosing one of these establishments they are helping the planet.
- Zero Carbon: the certification was awarded to the hotel by Sociedade Ponto Verde in 2021. This certification was awarded because the hotel is carbon neutral, contributing to the mitigation of global warming and climate change on the planet.
- We Care Environmental Sustainability Seal: seal awarded by the Hotel Association of Portugal for compliance with environmental commitments through participation in the Association's HOSPES program. This seal aims to promote the circular economy, distinguishing hotel units committed to good environmental practices that promote sustainable and responsible growth.
- Safe Travels Seal: awarded by the World Travel & Tourism Council and certifies destinations and spaces that comply with hygiene rules so that all guests feel confident and safe traveling.

2.15.5. Performance Indicators

NEYA Hotel defines performance indicators three main intervention areas:

Environment: water consumption; energy management; greenhouse gas emissions; waste management; and circular economy.

- **Water consumption**
  Measures to promote the water efficiency:
  - ✓ Timers
  - ✓ Flow reducers
  - ✓ Gray waters
  - ✓ Monitoring by sector
  - ✓ Efficient equipment
  - ✓ Employee training
  - ✓ Guest awareness

- **Energy management and greenhouse gas emissions**
  Measures to promote the water efficiency:
  - ✓ Thermal insulation
  - ✓ Photovoltaic solar panels
  - ✓ Solar water heating panels
  - ✓ Centralized technical management
  - ✓ Energy-saving air conditioning
  - ✓ LED lighting
  - ✓ Switch that turns off lighting and electrical equipment in the bedrooms
  - ✓ Presence sensors
  - ✓ Use of water for heating and cooling
  - ✓ Sectoral monitoring of energy consumption
  - ✓ Limiting temperature regulation in guest rooms
  - ✓ Cutting off the air conditioning in the rooms when the windows are opened
  - ✓ Purchasing energy-efficient equipment
  - ✓ 100% green energy consumption

- **Waste management and circular economy**

  Circular economy and waste reduction measures:

  - ✓ Refillable amenities dispensers
  - ✓ Total waste separation, including the provision of waste separation buckets in the rooms
  - ✓ Reduced use of paper
  - ✓ Use of FSC-certified recycled paper
  - ✓ Plastic Free Policy: use of biodegradable straws; water in Tetrapak; wooden room opening card; paper laundry bag
  - ✓ No linen change option for bathroom and bedroom
  - ✓ Consumption of mains water in glass bottles
  - ✓ Employee awareness and training
  - ✓ Guest awareness
  - ✓ Selection of suppliers and goods with sustainability criteria
  - ✓ Raising awareness of food waste among guests in the breakfast area

✓ Valid food leftovers from the kitchen and restaurant are transferred to the staff canteen
✓ Valid food that is not expected to be consumed in the cafeteria is donated to social non-governmental associations
✓ When the Non-Governmental Associations are not available to collect the food, it is made available on the "To Good to Go" platform

Social: hiring model; salary equity; employee qualifications; health and safety in the workplace; reconciling work, personal and family life; local partnerships; and local products.

- **Employees Indicators**

Hotel NEYA Porto has 33 employees, all full-time, 32 permanent and 1 fixed term. All 33 employees are local, with an average absenteeism rate of 1%.

The distribution of employees by function and gender is: in the administration are all women, in management 33% are male and 67% are female; technician are 67% male and 33% female and in operations are 31% male and 69% female. About age, 12% are more than 50 years old, 58% are between 30 and 50 years and 30% are less than 30 years. 6% of the employees have international nationality.

The proportion of employees earning more than the national minimum wage is 73% for men and 50% for women.

The hotel arrange training for the employees by they own and in partnership with universities, professional schools, study centers or other, in the following thematic:
✓ Food hygiene and safety
✓ Bookings and sales
✓ Firefighting
✓ First aid
✓ Concept and Management System for Quality, Environment and Safety
✓ LEED system
✓ Front House
✓ Review of Booking and Sales/Contracting Procedures
✓ Fire Safety

In addition, the hotel regularly receives visits from schools and universities to publicize the hotel's sustainability concept and contribute to a more sustainable tourism sector. The hotel also hosts training or curricular internships and provides support for academic work requested by students.

The hotel offers the following employee benefits:
✓ Health insurance
✓ Social transportation pass
✓ Anniversary day
✓ Parking
✓ Partnerships with various companies for various services

Measures to reconcile professional, personal and family life:

Working time arrangements: overtime; bank hours; split hours; rotating shifts.

Measures to promote work-life balance: bank hours; flexible working hours; working from home/mobile office; teleworking.

- **Local Community Indicators**

  NEYA Porto Hotel is involved in actions to donate goods to charities under the HOSPES Program of the Hotel Association of Portugal. It also collaborates with the Local Authorities to provide meals for families in need.

  About the proportion of purchases from local suppliers, 34% of the total purchases are made to local suppliers.

Governance: legal compliance; ethics; transparency; due diligence in the supply chain; risk management.

- **Legal compliance and ethics Indicators**

  The hotel has a legal department and has implemented a Quality, Environment and Safety Management System, certified to ISO standards, guaranteeing legal compliance with all legislation applicable to the hotel industry. It also has a Legislation Management procedure, which guarantees the internal routine of identifying applicable legal requirements through systematic consultation of Portuguese legislation, legal advice and regular assessment of legal compliance, among other things.

  The hotel has a Code of Ethics, but no ethics training has been carried out.

- **Transparency**

  The hotel communicates its sustainability performance on its website, on social media, in the group newsletter, in the newsletter sent to clients, in the accounts report, in the hotel's quarterly sustainability report, in press releases, in sustainability brochures, in the hotel's physical channels and media, fairs and congresses, working groups and visits to the hotel, among others.

- **Due diligence in the supply chain and risk management**

  NEYA Porto Hotel has implemented a procedure for assessing environmental aspects and risks to identify the environmental aspects of NEYA Hotels' activities, products and services, assessing, whenever possible, the real and potential impacts on the environment, considering a life cycle perspective and establishing the borderline level of significance of environmental aspects. It also defines the process for identifying and assessing the risks and dangers of the activity, as well as OSH (Occupational Safety and Health) opportunities.

  Risks arising from the supply chain:

  - ✓ Unsafe working conditions
  - ✓ Non-compliance with labour legislation
  - ✓ Non-compliance with environmental legislation
  - ✓ Use of hazardous substances

Conclusion

Short and medium-term sustainability commitments and targets for NEYA Hotel Porto over the next 2 years:

- 10% reduction in waste production and 65% of MSW separated for recycling
- 5% reduction in the hotel's energy consumption per occupied room
- 5% reduction in the hotel's water consumption per occupied room
- Installation of two more electric vehicle charging points
- Reduction of 5% in the Hotel's CO_2 emissions and their compensation
- Reduction in the hotel's accident rate
- Increased employee satisfaction
- Biosphere certification
- Bikotel certification

2.16. FeelViana

Name	FeelViana Sport Hotel
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://feelviana.com/
Country	Portugal

2.16.1. Background

FeelViana Sport Hotel is a four-star superior hotel, all dressed in wood and perfectly set in the extensive pine forest of Praia do Cabedelo, in Viana do Castelo, where sport and well-being are in complete harmony.

This hotel defends the concept of sustainability by integrating the three factors known as the "Triple Bottom Line": economic, social and environmental.

Aware of the impact that tourism has, they think of their activity as promoting a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. They endeavor to integrate themselves into the community, nature and environment, from the architecture of their structures to the choice of materials and the care taken in their relationship with their surroundings.

FeelViana is an established brand that intends to continue growing and developing new projects that bring dynamism, reverence and innovation to the city of Viana do Castelo and the northern region of Portugal.

2.16.2. Key Principles

FeelViana is strongly committed to environmentally sustainable practices and the preservation of the environment, which reinforces its socio-economic dimension and the need to assert itself as a socially responsible organization, linked to the general interest and principles of sustainable growth.

The management is committed to adopting a socially responsible and ethical management model, constantly considering economic, social and environmental aspects.

Keeping to the goal set from the outset, FeelViana maintains a path that leads every day to:

- Providing quality services to customers, transforming them into differentiating and innovative experiences, provided by attentive and passionate teams, creating economic and social value.
- FeelViana has a strong commitment to improvement, aimed at customer satisfaction and respect for the environment.
- Ensuring the quality and excellence of the services provided, through constant innovation, training, motivation and professional development of employees and initiatives to inform them about ethics and social responsibility, safety and health at work.
- To add value to the company, guaranteeing that the partners will appreciate the value of their actions in a sustained and continuous manner.

- To study, control and, whenever possible, minimize occupational risks, promoting safety and preventing injuries and damage to health.
- To favor job creation in the region by promoting skills development.

FeelViana is committed to complying with all legal and other requirements applicable to its activity and to continually improving the quality of the services provided and occupational health and safety, involving all stakeholders and respecting the principles of social responsibility, by defining, approving, implementing and periodically reviewing quality objectives and targets.

FeelViana's commitment to the landscape starts right from the choice of design and architecture of the development, thought out in such a way as to blend in naturally, a choice that is reflected in the materials, the design elements chosen to integrate our project.

FeelViana's value the north, the sea, the mountains, the river and the region.

2.16.3.   Barriers and Challenges

FeelViana Sport Hotel defined the next challenges they are willing to develop through the following action plan for next year:

- ✓ Organization of environmental awareness actions: cleaning up the beach, river and others
- ✓ Rehabilitation of the wakepark area, raising awareness among the population and working with local authorities to correct illegal discharges into natural water resources
- ✓ Working with the ICNF and the municipality to remove dead and/or diseased pine trees within the FeelViana space, and at the same time, plan their reforestation with autochthonous species advised by the organizations in question
- ✓ Social solidarity actions with agents in the region
- ✓ Digitalization and innovation to enable more efficient and sustainable processes

2.16.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

- **Waste Management:**
  - ✓ Separation, collection and recycling of cooking oil
  - ✓ Usage of containers for the selective separation of waste produced
  - ✓ Sorting of rubbish, including organic waste
  - ✓ Returning packaging to suppliers
  - ✓ Reduction of single-use plastics
  - ✓ Containers for the selective separation of all waste produced
- **Restaurant:**
  - ✓ Menus are designed with seasonal produce
  - ✓ Respect for sustainable fishing: we don't list fish that are on the "red list".
  - ✓ Benefit from electronic invoices and receipts
  - ✓ Replace plastic straws with biodegradable pasta straws
  - ✓ Replaced bottled water with a zero-carbon filtered water system, served in reusable glass bottles
  - ✓ Reusable glass bottles
- **Suppliers:**
  - ✓ Choosing local suppliers, regional and seasonal products
  - ✓ Preference is given to suppliers and products with ecological certification

- ✓ Avoid buying individually packaged products
- ✓ Purchases and use of disposable consumables are controlled
- **Housekeeping:**
  - ✓ Use of dispensers in our amenities
  - ✓ All cleaning products are certified and accompanied by a technical data sheet
- **Energy:**
  - ✓ Usage of solar energy to power the hotel's operations
  - ✓ Implementation of strategies to reduce our energy consumption
  - ✓ Lights with proximity sensors
  - ✓ Automatic switch-off of all lights and HVAC system when guests leave the room
- **Sports activities:**
  - ✓ Re-use of packaging for online sales shipments
  - ✓ Value sustainable products for sale, such as sun creams, recycled neoprene, own merchandising line
  - ✓ Donation of used neoprene suits to local social organizations
  - ✓ Sanitize of wetsuits with specified amounts of water and always use biodegradable cleaning products
  - ✓ Biodegradable cleaning products
  - ✓ Reuse of bicycle tires
- **Social and Economic Performance:**
  - ✓ Promoting closer ties with the academic community, hosting study visits and motivating innovation through the challenges launched
  - ✓ Focus on sustainability and digitalization, which is why we are constantly looking for new partnerships, initiatives and/or projects

Ecolable Certification: the European Union's ECO-LABEL scheme is a voluntary instrument that aims to reduce the negative impact of production and consumption on environment, health, climate and natural resources by promoting products with a high level of environmental performance.

Some examples of projects and actions that directly benefit the hotel from adopting sustainable practices:

- ✓ Recycled furniture: with the use of torn/unused kite sails, included in the decoration of common areas of the hotel, or staff service areas.
- ✓ Sponsorship of the natural monument "Ribeira de Anha": coordination and internal planning of ecological recovery activities in conjunction with the local authorities of Viana do Castelo. Actions to be carried out under the rehabilitation program:
  - o Eradication of invasive species
  - o Planting autochthonous species
  - o Clearing vegetation
  - o Waste clearance
  - o Monitoring the area adopted
  - o Regarding vegetative growth

✓ Decorative Design Elements: the outdoor hammock on the hotel's terrace (Figure 24) was built with waste textile material collected from European industries. This hammock is made

from non-woven fabric that combines polyester with viscose and/or cotton and/or other fibers. In the production of these fabrics, companies trim the ends of the rolls so that they can fit into the machines for further processing, and therefore these ends are considered waste. This local company, 10 km from the hotel, collects these materials and transforms them into yarn. The material is dyed by partners with energy efficiency and water saving certificates. The dyes are also eco-tex certified. Once dyed, it is plaited, and the hammock is produced using a completely manual knotting technique. The piece was produced by a 100 per cent Portuguese brand, inspired by the city of Viana do Castelo.

Figure 24 - Hotel terrace with handmade hammock (FeelViana Sport Hotel, 2024)

✓ Hotel clothing line: FeelViana's capsule collection was developed on the basis of sustainability, ensuring a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. To this end, partnerships were made with national producers and fashion houses that share the same values, encouraging the economy and national textile production.

   o Textile certifications for the pieces in the collection:
      ▪ GOTS: the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS): internationally recognized standard for fabrics.
      ▪ OEKO-TEX 100 Standard: textile products tested and approved for harmful substances
      ▪ OEKO-TEX 100 Standard GMO: Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) check for cotton and cotton products
      ▪ SA8000: international certification standard that encourages organizations to develop, maintain and apply socially acceptable practices in the workplace
      ▪ Organic Content Standard (OCS): Non-food product containing between 95% and 100% organic material. It verifies the presence and quantity of organic material in a final product and traces the flow of the raw material from its origin to the end product
      ▪ Clear To Wear (CTW): each item must comply to be with strict health and safety standards

2.16.5.   Performance Indicators

FeelViana Sport Hotel defined some main performance indicators to be and maintain their sustainability focus.

Economic

Reduction in costs and consumption in the design and construction of the project (location that respected the natural characteristics of the land, construction company, local materials and labor (zero kilometers))

Environmental

Energy management (renewable energies, lighting, ventilation and natural heating) and the life cycle management of materials (zero waste)

Reduction in water consumption (human consumption and irrigation), etc.

Commitment to "Hybrid" efficiency, with water-saving timer taps

Investing in solar energy by installing solar panels throughout the building (self-sufficiency)

Reducing plastics as much as possible and asking suppliers to replace everything possible (eliminating single-use plastics, replacing drinking straws with pasta straws and plates with bamboo plates).

Waste collection with separation for recycling and reuse

Use of electric cars and electric chargers in the hotel

Social

Employee training every year (ethical and sustainable practices, equal opportunities, gender equality, non-discrimination, active participation and commitment/contribution to our social and environmental commitment)

Support for social and environmental projects. Environmental certification with the European Union Ecolabel (5 hotels in Portugal with this distinction). This label reflects our active policy for sustainability: using renewable energy sources, saving energy and water, reducing waste, contributing to the environment/local community (local suppliers and products), etc.

Activities in nature (promoting active and healthy lifestyles, also for employees), code of good practice, decoration with reused materials, non-polluting board wax, etc.

Specific measures:

- ✓ Daily reduction in energy consumption by 15 per cent, with the aim of continuing the commitment to active sustainability
- ✓ Daily reduction in water consumption by 100 per cent, with timed taps in all locations and their continued maintenance
- ✓ Increase the number of reusable materials by 5% per year, with the aim of reducing waste and reusing materials for decoration and other purposes.
- ✓ Number of social activities supported: 3 per year, with the aim of continuing the program
- ✓ Number of environmental associations supported: 1 per year. Sponsorship of the Ribeira de Anha local monument
- ✓ Number of single-life plastics disposed of reduced by 60 per cent daily, making it necessary to find alternatives to plastic packaging

- ✓ Number of actions to fulfil social commitment: 2 per year, with a commitment to maintain and create new actions
- ✓ Number of actions to fulfil the environmental commitment: 3 per year, with a commitment to maintain and create new actions

Other measures:

- ✓ Control and monitor resource consumption (water, electricity and gas)
- ✓ Promoting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature.
- ✓ Re-using materials at the end of their life cycle with us to produce decoration/furniture items (upcycling).
- ✓ Favor the purchase of decorative elements using upcycled materials, natural, reusable materials
- ✓ Respect for native species
- ✓ No use of pesticides and chemicals in our garden
- ✓ Natural monument sponsorship programs in partnership with local authorities

2.17. Six Senses Douro Valley

Name	Six Senses Douro Valley
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.sixsenses.com/en/hotels-resorts/europe/portugal/douro-valley/
Country	Portugal

2.17.1. Background

Six Senses Douro Valley (Figure 25), located in the heart of the Douro Valley, is a luxury resort that combines high-quality hospitality with a solid commitment to sustainability. This resort is known for its ecological practices and active involvement with the local community.

Figure 25 - Six Senses Douro Valley[24]

Six Senses Douro Valley believes that tourism can and should be a force for good. Its vision includes preserving the environment, supporting the local economy and offering guests authentic and meaningful experiences. These values are central to all its operations.

It was created in 1995, maintaining the same ambition from the beginning: to journey beyond destinations into new experiences and cultures making feel the purpose behind travels. They work to be seen as being environmentally friendly and socially responsible, promoting personal well-being and the health of our planet.

---

[24] https://expresso.pt/boa-cama-boa-mesa/2023-04-22-Hotel-de-luxo-no-Douro-e-o-mais-sustentavel-da-Peninsula-Iberica-5915ba27

Six Senses values

- Local sensitivity, global sensibility: Part of the local fabric and culture, yet in tune with the wider world
- Responsible and caring: Caring for hosts and local communities. Committed to preserving the environment and sustainable operations
- Crafted experiences: An all-encompassing and unique range of experiences to stimulate, energize and restore
- Pioneering wellness: Delivering the latest and most effective wellness programs and experiences in partnership with leading experts
- Emotional hospitality: An emotionally intelligent approach to service that begins with empathy
- Fun & quirky: Aesthetics and experiences which are always unique, often unexpected and sometimes unusual. Delivered out of our constant curiosity and willingness to experiment

2.17.2. Key Principles

At Six Senses, sustainability is more than just a buzzword.

From using local and sustainable building materials to implementing efficient waste management practices, the resort is at the forefront of sustainable tourism.

The Six Senses philosophy is based on sustainability and well-being. The resort is committed to minimizing its environmental impact and improving the quality of life of local communities through responsible and innovative practices.

For Sis Senses, sustainability is a defining characteristic of what luxury means. It's also an area where they want to be a story-doer rather than a storyteller.

Their commitment is to be considerate custodians of the places where they reside was a founding principle when they became a sustainable hospitality brand in 1995, and why they continue their focus on making a net positive impact on local wildlife, ecosystems, culture, and communities.

Therefore, their strategy is built on the following premises:

Experiences with Purpose

Tourism with purpose" is an approach to tourism that goes beyond simply travelling. It involves creating meaningful experiences for visitors, while benefiting the local community and protecting the environment.

Guests at Six Senses Douro Valley are invited to take part in activities that promote well-being and sustainability, such as sustainability workshops, visits to organic wineries and holistic wellness programs. These experiences aim to provide an enriching and conscious stay.

Positive Environmental Impact

Six Senses is committed to minimizing its environmental impact through sustainable construction practices, reforestation programs and the promotion of sustainable transport. The use of recycled materials and the reduction of single-use plastics are some of the initiatives implemented to achieve this goal.

Six Senses supports local organic farming, ensuring that much of the food served is fresh and regionally sourced. This not only reduces the carbon footprint but also supports local farmers and promotes healthy eating.

Community Involvement

Six Senses works closely with the local community, supporting social and economic development initiatives.

Training and employment programs for local residents are examples of how Six Senses contributes to the sustainable development of the region.

Biodiversity Conservation

Six Senses Douro Valley develops projects to protect and restore local biodiversity. Initiatives such as planting native trees and creating habitats for local fauna are fundamental to preserving the Douro Valley ecosystem.

Reducing Emissions

Six Senses implements strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the use of electric vehicles and the promotion of sustainable transportation for guests and employees. These actions help mitigate the impacts of climate change.

Local Economic Impact

Six Senses contributes significantly to the local economy by creating jobs and supporting small businesses and regional suppliers. This approach strengthens the community's economy and promotes sustainable and inclusive development.

2.17.3. Barriers and Challenges

Six senses established national and international commitments to fulfil their sustainability goals and challenges:

United Nations Global Agreement: supports the universal principles of human rights, labor, the environment and the fight against corruption.

Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi): committed to the SBTi initiative, establishing science-based greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP): participation in the CDP, a non-profit organization that supports companies and cities in disclosing the environmental impact of their activities.

Partnership with the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC): collaborates on sustainability initiatives in the travel and tourism sector.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): alignment of business practices with the SDGs, especially the goals related to climate action, terrestrial life and responsible consumption and production.

Commitment to Plastic Reduction: elimination of single-use plastics from its hotels, including the replacement of miniature hygiene products with larger dispensers.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): Six Senses and the GSTC have a significant commitment to sustainability:

- Six Senses' Sustainable Operations Guidelines have earned GSTC Recognized Standard status. This means that the guidelines document has been fully recognized as equivalent to the GSTC Industry Criteria.

- *The Six Senses Sustainable Operations Guidelines have been developed to ensure that all Six Senses properties share the same commitment to balancing economic, environmental and social profitability, while remaining in harmony with local communities and ecosystems.
- *This helps Six Senses actively monitor the environmental footprint of each property to assist in the conservation of cultural and natural heritage and strives to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of neighboring communities through its 'sustainability funds', which are managed at each property, among other things.

2.17.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Six Senses have several projects and initiatives that bring benefits and outcomes, mainly to the environment (carbon emission reduction, energy savings, waste production reduction, recycling, water consume reduction and water recycling) and related with their social commitment (funding local associations and project related with natural conservation and recovering, local suppliers, education and supporting public infrastructures).

Environment

Every Six Senses property hosts an organic garden to give back to the earth through composting and building healthy soil. Our landscapes are made up of local and non-invasive plant varieties, many of which are fundamental ingredients for our restaurants and spa treatments, as well as in natural cleaning products that we create ourselves in our Earth Labs. We continue to explore how we can keep our habitats healthy and their inhabitants (whether human, hornbill or hammerhead) feeling well.

LEED Silver certification: through localized application of our brand standards and aiming for LEED Silver certification for all new hotels, we drive sophisticated design without being formulaic. By blending new ideas with traditional or locally inspired architecture, each property can take on a life and personality of its own and infuse its own touch.

Construction: The Standards for Design and Construction guide our responsible approach and bring economic value to owners through healthy rooms and ventilation, energy efficiency in lighting and equipment, renewable energy production, water efficiency and recycling, passive architecture, building management systems, ozone protection and efficient glazing and building envelopes. Building materials are local and sustainable, and may include certified wood, recycled and rapidly renewable materials as well as natural fibers, fabrics and flooring. In newer properties air conditioning is programmed to automatically turn off when doors are opened, instantly lowering energy consumption.

Plastic free outcomes:

- ✓ 2023: All single-use plastic egg packaging eliminated. To date, 94% of the resorts now receive eggs in plastic-free packaging
- ✓ 2022: All plastic coffee sachets removed, saving around 33,215 pieces of plastic from landfill.
- ✓ 2021: Plastic stickers eliminated, removing around 234,428 items from annual circulation.
- ✓ 2020: All bathroom amenities switched to plastic-free packaging, including toothpaste kits, hair essentials, and more.
- ✓ 2019: Suppliers take back and return program launched, introducing a circular delivery model, which eliminated 29,497 unnecessary plastic packaging items.

✓ 2017: Earth Lab launched; a dedicated place where guests and hosts can learn handy life hacks, such as making do-it-yourself compost, chemical free detergent, or lip balm using homegrown and organic herbs. All in plastic free packaging, of course!

✓ 2016: Plastic straws eliminated and replaced with paper, bamboo, or lemongrass - or no straw at all!

✓ 2003: Drinking water production and reusable glass bottling facilities introduced at every resort. The result: around 1.8 million fewer plastic bottles are in circulation every year.

✓ 1995: Refillable ceramic dispensers for shampoo, conditioner, and shower gel introduced from day one as standard in guest rooms.

Social

Local fabric: We don't build castles on hills. Our architecture and building practices follow indigenous designs from local architects and artisans. Our food comes from local farmers and fishermen. Our knowledge of the best fishing holes, diving spots, underground and pop-up events is founded on our local relationships. After all, we could not hope to care for you if we did not first care for our people, families and communities we are part of.

Education: Six Senses operates in many remote areas, where access to education can often be a challenge for women, children and young adults. Our learning and education projects support community development and help to shape a brighter future for local communities.

Public infrastructure:

- All of us - from our top management to our sustainability managers who drive initiatives, to our hosts at each property, through to our guests - understand that sustainability is about making the most of our natural resources and celebrating what's good in all the locations where we operate. But we're also there when things aren't going well, providing valuable funds and resources for disaster relief or badly needed renovations to public institutions.

- Healthcare: A specific example of public infrastructure spending is in the case of hospitals. In some destinations, health provision is poor, which is why healthcare in communities is one of our top categories for our Sustainability Fund. This enables us to provide vital medical equipment to local hospitals such as incubators for premature babies.

Clean water and sanitation: Clean water access is another challenge for many of our local communities. We provide clean water and sanitation by leveraging our expertise in filtering and bottling our own high-quality drinking water, combined with educational programming. Water access is a cross-cutting issue and increased access also results in reduced single-use plastic for our communities.

Sustainability Funds: are managed at each Six Senses property comprising 0.5 percent of total hotel revenue, in addition to sales from house-bottled water and popular soft toy mascots that represent a project at each location.

Examples of application of sustainability funds:

✓ Support of various projects targeting the **restoration and conservation of natural habitats** such as forests and beaches and work with local farmers, governments and NGOs. Within the resorts chemical use is limited and compost organic matter to regenerate soil and give back to the land.

✓ **Restoring marine habitats** through projects such as growing and replanting coral reefs, controlling overfishing through our purchasing policies, funding conservation research,

planting seagrass, and protecting nesting turtles on our beaches. All water leaving the properties is treated to a safe standard and water is recycled to irrigate plants, ensuring aquatic ecosystems benefit from operations.

✓ **Wildlife projects**: projects to leave natural habitats alone and only intervene if we are convinced, we're helping and on the advice of experts. We have been able to improve the prospects for some critically endangered species.

✓ **Corporate value of 'Global Sensitivity, Local Sensibility'** means addressing worldwide problems at a local level. We cannot achieve success without the collaborative efforts of our partners including the Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Olive Ridley Project (and so many more we are just sorry we can't list them all). We take our hats off to their support and dedication in providing knowledge, expertise and the highest level of commitment to our mutual goals.

The project and initiatives presented result in several impacts. Here are some impacts reported for 2023:

- 28,960 people gained access to clean drinking water and sanitation

- 16,645,347 square meters of protected or restored habitat

- 14,663 kilograms of trash were collected voluntarily by our hosts, community members, and guests

- 31,220 people joined awareness raising events to help the environment and support communities

- 4,336 hours of teaching or hosting was provided surrounding our Sustainability Fund project topics

- 15,002 individual animals were researched, protected, or monitored within our wildlife projects, including Endangered and Critically endangered species

- 12,259 endangered sea turtles hatched on our beaches, including 4,364 hawksbill and 8,165 green turtles

- We provided improved access to education and skill training to 3,989 students and 778 hours of teaching

- 10,967 stray and livestock animals gained improved standard of living

- 25,412 people gained improved access to healthcare

- 9,254 people gained improved public waste management in their community

- 730 people have improved livelihood as a result of our Sustainability Fund projects

2.17.5. Performance Indicators

The Vice President of Sustainability Jeff Smith, initiated in 2012, individual properties monitor and measure their environmental efforts. All of the group's hotels and resorts contribute to Cornell University's Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking program[25], which compares their performance against a global dataset of their peers in carbon, energy, water and waste.

---

[25] https://greenview.sg/services/chsb-index/

Green Host CoVE Project — Co-funded by the European Union

Therefore, Six Senses track everything from the things reduced (energy, water, plastic) to the things regenerate (habitats, endangered and critically endangered species, local economies and prosperity).

In 2023, Six Senses sustainability data reveals that as a group:

- ✓ 69,698 kilograms of vegetables were produced and served in restaurants
- ✓ 120,154 organic eggs contributed from happy Six Senses hens
- ✓ 133,873 kilograms of compost was produced to enrich the soil
- ✓ 47,937 kilograms of upcycled timber products created
- ✓ 1,920,659 plastic bottles avoided by refilling own drinking water
- ✓ 16.40 liters of essential oils produced
- ✓ 5,081 liters of EM cleaning solution produced
- ✓ 47.87 liters of honey produced
- ✓ 1,711,531.89 kwh of renewable energy generated

2.18. La Ballena Alegre C.B.

Name	La Ballena Alegre C.B
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/
Country	Spain

2.18.1.   Background

The La Ballena Alegre Campsite (Figure 26) is located in Sant Pere Pescador, in the heart of the Costa Brava, Catalonia, and is internationally recognized for its commitment to sustainability and respect for the environment. The campsite has 324 buildings, most of which are bungalows and mobile homes, along with 809 pitches covering an area of 24 hectares.

The mission of the campsite is to offer a unique camping experience, combining luxury and modern amenities with a strong commitment to environmental protection.

The vision of La Ballena Alegre is to become a leading reference in the camping sector and a model of internationally recognized sustainable tourism.

Among the campsite's values are a commitment to serving guests, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone is accepted, and maintaining high standards of quality and excellence in all its services. All of this is achieved by promoting sustainable tourism and reducing environmental impact through continuous improvements driven by innovation and technology.

Figure 26 - La Ballena Alegre campsite[26]

---

[26] https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/en/

2.18.2.   Key Principles

La Ballena Alegre Costa Brava has specialized in Eco-Wellness tourism (Nature & Well-being), which is defined as:

- A set of tourist activities where sustainability and appreciation for the natural and cultural environment, as well as the well-being of tourists, are prioritized.
- Responsible tourism that commits to minimizing its environmental impact, sponsoring and promoting environmental projects, and protecting and conserving the environment.
- Offering activities to enjoy local traditions, gastronomy, and culture, promoting and enhancing the social and economic development of the local community by working with local producers and merchants.
- In the Eco-wellness concept of La Ballena Alegre, nature is seen as a constructive and positive commitment, both direct and indirect, preserving it for future generations.

The various initiatives of La Ballena Alegre reflect its commitment to sustainability:

- Sustainable facilities: La Ballena Alegre uses renewable energy such as geothermal energy to heat or cool water, photovoltaic panels to generate electricity, and fast-charging points for electric vehicles. The bungalows are designed to be 85% energy self-sufficient.
- Responsible suppliers: Collaboration with suppliers who practice organic farming and livestock rearing and work to eliminate plastic.
- Engaged staff: Training and raising awareness among staff to encourage sustainable practices within the campsite.
- Education and activities: Activity programs for guests, especially children, to educate them on the importance of sustainability.

2.18.3.   Barriers and Challenges

La Ballena Alegre has encountered a series of barriers and challenges in continuing its commitment to this type of tourism model. Among the different elements, the following stand out:

- Implementation costs: The investments in sustainable technologies and facilities are high.
- Acceptance and awareness: Raising awareness and commitment to sustainability among all participants (customers, suppliers, staff) requires time and ongoing efforts.
- Regulations and norms: Adapting to European and local regulations can be complicated and costly.

However, it is important to note that the main challenge La Ballena Alegre is currently working on is auditing the campsite's carbon footprint with the goal of reducing or offsetting it as much as possible and becoming energy self-sufficient. This is achieved not only through investments but, more importantly, by generating awareness among everyone who is part of the La Ballena Alegre family. This includes proposing children's and family activities with this goal in mind, ensuring that suppliers and campsite events align with these values, and creating an experience for customers that they wish to incorporate into their daily lives.

2.18.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

In 2020, La Ballena Alegre launched a sustainable initiative called Responsible Holidays to promote environmental awareness among customers, suppliers, and campsite staff. The goal was to demonstrate that it is possible to contribute to the preservation of the planet during holidays, and this campaign is part of a four-year project aligned with the company's sustainability values.

The campsite reinforces its commitment to the sustainability model by promoting the energy, environmental, economic, and social benefits of local engagement. The specific actions being implemented at the campsite are:

1. Product actions:

- Eco-design in the construction of bungalows and facilities.
- Use of eco-friendly materials.

2. Service actions:

- Sale and use of local and seasonal products.
- Circular economy workshops as part of children's activities.

3. Environmental actions:

- Reducing water and energy consumption.
- Promoting the minimization and valorization of generated waste.
- Wastewater management.
- Landscape integration.
- Avoiding the introduction of non-native species.
- Planting halophytic species.
- Providing information and raising awareness of good environmental practices among employees and guests.
- Informing suppliers about the environmental commitment and the requirements that this entails for them.

2.18.5.   Performance Indicators

As a result of the actions undertaken, La Ballena Alegre has achieved a set of indicators to minimize pollution. The indicators shown below are linked to the area of action, the real consumption and the improvement actions taken to reduce the previous consumption:

1. **Energy management:**
    1.1. *Electricity:*
    - Electricity consumption during 2020 stood at 1,282.258 MWh + 204.396 MWh solar power (solar power = 14% of total electricity consumption), giving a consumption ratio per person and day of 0.013* MWh/person/day. The consumption ratio in 2020 has increased compared with 2019 (0.010) because occupancy in 2019 was higher. However, solar power consumption has increased considerably, from 73.449 MWh (2019) to 204.396 MWh (2020).
    - Improvement actions:
        a. Energy efficiency in new equipment and LED lighting.

b. Certified 100% renewable from Foener (since 2019)
c. Photovoltaic solar power 39 eDevesa bungalows (188.855 MWh), 79% energy self-sufficient (54% in 2019) (Increased by 12 solar panels in 2020, total 22 panels). 22 solar panels, storage battery (enables power to be shared between all bungalows) and EV charger at every eDevesa bungalow. Customers can view energy use obtained by managing self-consumption in their bungalow. Each year, a prize is given to the bungalow with the lowest consumption, consisting of a free stay the following year.
d. Photovoltaic solar power 10 Tamariu bungalows (15.541 MWh) (Installed in 2020 with 10 panels on each bungalow)

1.2. *Natural gas:*
- Natural gas consumption during 2020 stood at 1,177.633 MWh + 356.792 MWh renewable (renewable = 23.25% of total thermal power consumption), giving a consumption ratio per person and day of 0.014* MWh/person/day. The consumption ratio in 2020 has increased compared with 2019 (0.011) because occupancy in 2019 was higher. Use of renewable energy has increased from 10.206 MWh in 2018 to 356.792 MWh in 2020.
- Improvement actions:
  a. Use of thermal solar power.
  b. Washing facilities: 290.705 MWh (2019 data; the real 2020 reading is not available due to meter failure)
  c. New 2020 GEOTHERMAL POWER: 61.659 MWh (supermarket climate control) + 4.428 MWh (Hot water for staff rooms and kitchen).
  d. In 2019, aerothermal and geothermal power was tested in one eDevesa bungalow in order to determine performance.
  e. Replacement of LPG by Natural Gas (2014)

1.3. *Diesel:*
- Annual consumption during 2020 stood at 10,775 L (109.04 MWh) (1 L/10.12 KWh) Consumption ratio: 0.095 MWh/person/day. Progressive decrease since 2013 by 5,000 litres/year. However, in 2020, the decrease was 1,640 litres due to increased building work to repair damage caused by Storm Gloria.
- Improvement actions:
  a. Decrease since 2013 due to the purchase of electric vehicles (purchase in 2018 for organic waste collection).
  b. Consumption in 2013: Consumption of Diesel A: 9,852.35 L

1.4. *Petrol:*
- Consumption during 2020 stood at 1,082 L (10.95 MWh) (1 L/10.12 KWh) Consumption ratio: 0.00009 MWh/person/day
- Improvement actions:
  a. Decrease since 2013 due to the purchase of electric vehicles (purchase in 2018 for organic waste collection).
  b. Consumption in 2013: Consumption of Petrol: 3,645.06 L

1.5. *Renewable energies:*
- Total energy consumption during 2020 was 3,141 MWh (electricity + natural gas + fuels + renewable energies): 0.028 MWh/person/day. Thus, the % of renewable energy was 58.7% (561 MWh): Mains electricity from renewable sources (1,282.258 MWh) Thermal solar power for washing facilities (290.705 MWh) Photovoltaic solar power Bungalows (204.396 MWh) Geothermal power: Climate control (61.659 MWh) and ACS (4.428 MWh).

2. **Water management:**
   – The annual consumption in 2020 was 39,528 m3. The consumption ratio per person and day was 0.349 m3. Consumption in swimming pools out of total annual consumption was 5,683 m3, corresponding to 14 swimming pools + 2 SPA Oxygen pools (calculated using 2019 meter readings). In 2019, there were 2 new swimming pools with 40 m3 each. Consumption is greater than in previous years due to increased cleaning rendered necessary by Storm Gloria and Covid-19, and the reduced occupancy in 2020.
   – Improvement actions:
      a. Low consumption plant species
      b. Watering scheduling
      c. Low consumption taps and showers
      d. Washing facility 2 was automated in 2018, washing facility 3 was automated in 2019 and washing facility 1 was automated in 2020.
      e. General awareness-raising among the public

3. **Waste management:**
   – In 2020, the % of selective refuse collection was 16% (5% glass, 3% plastic, 4% paper and cardboard, and 5% organic). Total special waste in 2020 amounted to 0.00001% (0.003% in 2018 and 0.04% in 2019), which includes waste products such as building rubble, batteries, light bulbs, pruning waste, fluorescent lamps, oil, and bulky objects.

4. **Product management:**
   – In 2020, the number of suppliers with ISO 14001, ISO 9001, and sanitary certificate increased. Purchases of organic products amounted to 5.95% of the total (increase of 13.3% over 2019). Locally sourced products accounted for 22.85% (increase of 3% over 2019). Sales of organic products accounted for 2.20% (increase of 6% over 2019) and locally sourced products accounted for 20.10% (increase of 1.3% over 2019).

5. **Material management:**
   – Material consumption in 2020, assuming the same number of days open as in previous years, would be 4.64 Tn (less than previous years).
   – Improvement actions:
      a. Cleaning product and sodium hypochlorite (for disinfecting water) containers returned to the supplier

These indicators translate into pollutant emissions into the atmosphere. The carbon footprint of the La Ballena Alegre, in 2020, was the emission of 309.80 Tn of CO_2. However, the campsite's vegetation enables 50% of the emissions caused by energy and coolant gas consumption to be offset. That is, 153.30 Tn of CO_2 is trapped in the campsite's vegetation.

This sustainable management model implemented by the La Ballena Alegre campsite has received several awards:

- 2020 European Solar Prize in the industrial category for the eco-friendly, solar-powered eDevesa bungalows. This prize is the "Champions League of renewable energies".
- EMAS Catalonia 2021 award in the category of Best environmental implementation with the Implementation of different renewable energies in the eDevesa bungalows.

Best sustainable, environment-friendly campsite in Europe in 2022, in the category of Sustainability and Environmental Awareness, awarded by the German association ADAC. The prize has been awarded for the campsite's holistic approach: a successful combination of luxury and modern camping with

sustainable environmental protection. With its broad range of services, this 5-star campsite's managers strive to achieve the noble goal of reducing their CO_2 footprint. And they are doing it very well: every year, they save more than 100 tons of CO_2. The ADAC Camping Awards are Europe's top campsite awards.

2.19. INOUT Hostel

Name	INOUT hostel
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.inouthostel.com/en
Country	Spain

2.19.1.   Background

INOUT (Figure 27) was opened in 2004 by the non-profit organization Icara Social Initiatives. This special employment center for the hotel and catering industry was the first hotel service in Europe to have 90% of its staff with disabilities. Icaria Social Initiatives defines itself as a "non-profit entity whose objective is to provide support and opportunities for the personal, social and labor progress of children and adults with intellectual disabilities". This NGO therefore has strong social commitments and a desire to make tourism services inclusive and accessible to as many people as possible.

In its growth, INOUT has also developed several good environmental practices and made ecological sustainability central to its project. This commitment to protecting the environment stems from its location, in one of Barcelona's major natural parks, Collserola. The hostel's website explains that INOUT is located in a natural park and that the entire team is committed to protecting the environment and minimizing its impact on the immediate surroundings.

Figure 27 - Hostel Inout Barcelona[27]

The company's determination to make environmental protection a key part of its vision is reflected in its engagement to the "Barcelona plastic zero" commitment. This commitment aims at efficiently reducing the amount of single-use plastic in the city. The importance of environmental protection in

---

[27] https://www.facebook.com/INOUTHostel/

its values can also be seen in its determination to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As its website explains, INOUT has joined forces with organizations, businesses and professionals from the tourism sector to declare a climate emergency and act to drastically reduce carbon emissions.

2.19.2. Key Principles

INOUT HOSTEL has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development in several ways, from collaborating on social programs and projects to implementing innovative methods for exploiting renewable energy sources.

According to "Biosphere sustainable", there are 6 main areas in which INOUT implements good environmental practices:

1. Clean water and sanitation

Being in Catalonia, a region that is experiencing severe droughts and a growing shortage of water, water is a key issue for the establishment. Good environmental practices focus mainly on the water collection, supply, purification and treatment stages. To this end, the hostel has set up facilities that encourage reduced water consumption. It is also concerned about the quality and cleanliness of its water systems, implementing measures to avoid contaminating the water with its activity. Finally, it runs information and awareness campaigns on cleanliness and the responsible use of water.

INOUT HOSTEL strives to ensure that water is used responsibly and that every effort is made to encourage its reuse. For example, the entity has installed equipment that collects its wastewater and then treats and purifies it. This advanced wastewater treatment system purifies the water, removing contaminants and waste. Once the water has been purified, INOUT reuses it to water its vegetable patch and gardens.

2. Affordable and Clean Energy

Access to clean, smart and modern energy services is another of INOUT's priorities. To achieve this, the hotel prioritizes the use of green and renewable energy sources. For example, INOUT installed nearly 200 solar panels.

The entity has also installed motion detectors in the lighting to optimize the switching on and off lights. These motion detectors can be found in the hostel's corridors, ensuring that no energy is wasted and that lights are never left on by mistake.

To reduce energy consumption and use cleaner energy, the entity also has a biomass boiler installed for hot water consumption and local wood pellet heating. Sectorial thermostats are also installed to control the temperature, and all the lights are LED. INOUT also runs awareness campaigns on energy use.

3. Responsible Consumption and Production

INOUT's good environmental practices also focus on sustainable consumption patterns. For example, it favors the purchase and consumption of local and sustainable products and services. The hotel tries as much as possible to favor short circuits and to offer local and seasonal food.

It also adopts measures to minimize the waste it generates during its business. To this end, INOUT promotes the 3Rs in its production models: reduce, recycle and reuse. For example, to reduce water consumption to a minimum, INOUT has installed push buttons in the showers to ensure that no water

is wasted. INOUT Hostel also shows its commitment to responsible consumption by trying to only get second-hand furniture and objects instead of buying new ones.

4. Climate Action

One of INOUT's priorities is also to tackle climate change. To this end, the company monitors and compensates for the carbon footprint of its activities. INOUT also encourages sustainable mobility and the use of transport methods that use less CO_2. To this end, it has installed a charging point for electric vehicles. This initiative encourages green modes of transport and is essential for an establishment located outside the city center, in a natural park. These measures enable INOUT to offer transport alternatives that will considerably reduce CO_2 emissions.

5. Life Below Water

INOUT HOSTEL is committed to protecting the oceans with the aim of achieving sustainable underwater life. The entity carries out actions to raise awareness and protect marine ecosystems. It also supports measures for more sustainable use of marine resources and contributes actively to the prevention of pollution of the seas, lakes and rivers.

6. Life on Land

INOUT is developing good practices aimed at protecting the area in which it is located. To do so, the hotel provides data on the area's natural resources. It also adopts actions to reduce the impact of its activities on biodiversity. Finally, it undertakes a range of activities to respect the natural landscape and local wildlife.

Located in a nature park, this is a necessity for INOUT, as it aims to live in harmony with its ecosystem and limit its impact as much as possible. As the director explained to me in an interview, the information gathered is invaluable for understanding current realities such as climate change, as well as the needs of the site. With more data, it's possible to adapt and adopt precise and effective measures.

2.19.3. Barriers and Challenges

In the interview conducted with the INOUT's Technical Director, it was explained that most of the challenges were economic, as all innovative installations are very expensive. INOUT must make high-cost investments, as it was the case with the water purification equipment, the solar panels or the biomass boiler. To overcome these obstacles, INOUT must constantly respond to calls for proposals and apply for grants. However, the director pointed out that it was sometimes impossible to wait for the results and that the establishment had to invest in good environmental practices in the hope that they would get the subventions to be reimbursed.

INOUT's director went on to explain that the lack of information was also a frequent problem. For example, on the question of wastewater treatment systems, it was difficult for them to know which systems were available and which one were the best. There were not many people specialized in this field, and they did not know if it would work. They were concerned because it was a major investment.

They also sometimes have doubts about laws and regulations. For example, the INOUT team is now worried about the swimming pool, because this year, due to the drought in Catalunya, it looked like the municipality was hardly going to let them open it. Therefore, they thought about installing a water reuse system for the pools, but they were not sure how effective the system would be, as it is not

installed in many places, and it is very expensive. Without this information, it is very difficult for them to know where to start and it causes them a lot of uncertainty.

What has helped them a lot to overcome this lack of information is to apply for different European and Chamber of Commerce projects, both to meet suppliers and to find out what options are available to them. These projects help them to find the time to focus on the subject but also to benefit from an audit or consultancy on a certain topic.

2.19.4. Benefits and Outcomes

In the interview conducted, the director of INOUT explained that the biggest advantage of developing good environmental practices is being able to adapt to their ecosystem, the Collserola Natural Park. For example, the hostel is in an area where the risk of fire is high, and the soil is very dry. Therefore, they decided to invest in a water treatment plant that collects grey water from the buildings, treats it and then uses it for irrigation. This practice not only solves the problem of water shortage but also reduces the risk of fire. Indeed, the entity has more water to irrigate the soil, which becomes less dry and therefore less prone to catching fire. In the event of a fire, INOUT can also use the waste it collects to act effectively without using up drinking water. Thanks to these good practices, INOUT adapts to its environment and reduces risks. These good practices also serve to be in line with the values and missions of the project and to help build a more sustainable world, which is in itself a great source of satisfaction for the organization.

2.19.5. Performance Indicators

By 2024, September 10, INOUT had reduced its CO_2 emissions by 1,272 tons thanks to the implementation of its good environmental practices. As calculated by the company, this is equivalent to an annual saving of 5,301 trees, or the daily carbon footprint of 16,1013 people.

These good practices have also brought the company numerous national and international awards, including the "Responsible Tourism Awards for Catalonia" or the "Biosphere Certified label". This label, which is the fruit of certification under the United Nations 2030 Agenda, is awarded by Biosphere Sustainable after "verifying that sustainable practices are correctly implemented. It is a guarantee that the entity respects its commitments".

In 2019, The INOUT Hostel received the "Honourable Mention for Corporate Social Responsibility", awarded by Grupo Habitat Futura and its official partner the Institute for Responsible Tourism. In particular, this distinction rewards establishments that demonstrate 'Global Sustainability': understood as the selective management of waste and recycling, the preservation of the environment or the use of ecological suppliers. It also acknowledges companies that demonstrate 'building sustainability', focusing on the integration of renewable energy systems or even the efficiency of installations.

In 2023, INOUT won a prize awarded by Hostelworld and Red Española de Albergues Juveniles - REAJ, with the project "Helping to reduce CO2 by growing apple trees". "REAJ is a not-for-profit organization whose main objectives are to promote youth mobility, environmental protection, equal opportunities, intercultural understanding and peace." These awards show that the good environmental practices put in place by INOUT have been recognized and praised by various organizations, and it encourages the establishment to continue in this direction.

As the director explained, the whole INOUT team is incredibly grateful for everything they have managed to achieve in recent years, both in terms of accessibility and environmental sustainability. These good practices have been recognized not only by the awards they have won, but also by the comments and opinions of customers, who are often inspired by the efforts made here to protect the environment. INOUT are aware that there is still a long way to go, and many good environmental practices still need to be implemented, which is why they are ready and motivated to achieve the highest level of green sustainability.

2.20. Hotelverse

Name	Hotelverse
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://hotelverse.tech/solutions/
Country	Spain

2.20.1. Background

Hotelverse is an innovative project in the hotel industry that enhances the digital touring experience for users visiting a hotel's website. It offers an immersive 360° virtual tour, allowing users to explore different room types and even reserve the exact room they wish to stay in. This personalized experience meets the growing demand from users seeking unique and customized options when booking hotels or trips. Hotelverse is committed to continuously improving the customer experience through direct channels, focusing on innovation and analyzing tools that help optimize the booking process and enhance overall sales performance. The idea came from entrepreneurs in the hotel industry to solve and improve the booking experience for hotels. Hotelverse decided to launch an innovative spin-off project, which was established as its own company.

2.20.2. Key Principles

Hotelverse offers solutions characterized by cutting-edge digital innovations aimed at enhancing guest experiences and hotel operations. The key features include digital twins' technology, which provides immersive room previews, a direct booking, and personalized booking options for the customers. It offers a specific website with the solutions listed below:

- **Destination Overview**: this feature helps users locate hotels more effectively, improving their understanding of the surrounding area. For urban hotels, it highlights the hotel's position within the city and nearby points of interest, such as shopping areas, museums, and restaurants. For resorts, it provides a detailed view of the entire complex, including all its outlets. This feature enhances guests' familiarity with the destination and encourages exploration of the local area or resort facilities.
- **Content hub:** it offers a solution designed to turn website visits into more profitable bookings by utilizing advanced digital tools like direct booking engines, personalized room selection, and immersive digital experiences. These features help hotels reduce dependency on third-party platforms (OTAs), and increase direct engagement with guests, leading to higher revenue. The platform's customization options, and real-time data improve guest satisfaction and booking efficiency. There is also an option for businesses to request a demo to see how the platform can enhance their operations.

- **Customer insights**: this feature transforms how hotels understand guest behavior by providing valuable data through tools like navigation heat maps that show which areas are most engaged on the website. Additionally, interaction KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) help track user interactions, and data on the most visited items (such as floors, room locations, and bed types) offer insights into guest preferences.
- **Choose your room**: this option allows guests to select their preferred room directly through the hotel's website. Guests can preview room views and select based on specific attributes such as floor, location, or bed type.
- **Claim your sunbed**: this option allows hotel guests to reserve their sunbeds in advance through the hotel's website, eliminating the need to rush. This convenience enhances the guest experience by providing a more relaxed and stress-free option, while also creating an additional revenue opportunity for the hotel by charging for sunbed reservations.
- **Grab your table**: it allows guests to reserve prime seating at hotel restaurants or bars in advance.
- **Book your experience**: this option allows guests to reserve pre-arrival experiences and services through the hotel's website. This could include activities, spa treatments, dining experiences, or others, providing a smooth way for guests to enhance their stay before they arrive.
- **Disintermediation**: this option allows guests to book directly with the hotel, avoiding online travel agencies or OTAs. It offers real-time room availability, and the option to select specific rooms with interior and exterior views to drive more direct bookings.

A deeper description of the project can be watched [here](#).

Figure 28 - Example of digital room booking[28]

For example, Hotelverse explains a case study summarized below of the Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspalomas (Figure 29) where the technology Digital Twins is implemented:

The Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspalomas is the first hotel in the Canary Islands to use Hotelverse's Digital Twin technology, offering guests a highly personalized booking experience. This 5-star hotel allows users to explore its facilities virtually before arrival, enhancing guest engagement and boosting brand reputation. The Digital Twin enables features like room selection, which has increased

---

[28] https://www.hotelverse.tech/

interest in superior rooms, with a 42% conversion rate at the "Choose Your Room" step. Technology has doubled website visit time and improved direct bookings. The overall effect is a more personalized and immersive experience, leading to higher customer satisfaction and booking rates. The hotel's focus on visibility and user interaction with the Digital Twin further strengthens its position in hospitality.

This is an innovative new booking model that offers a new standard in direct sales, which makes customers interact deeply through the platform, and spend more time on the hotel website to explore the different options. It also offers more revenue for the hotel, as customers can identify all the features of the hotel room they are interested in, and highly satisfied guests, as their expectations fit with the reality of their stay.

Figure 29 - Example of Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspaloma booking process[29]

2.20.3.   Barriers and Challenges

One of the key challenges Hotelverse faces is the ongoing evolution of customer expectations and the increasing demand for seamless, personalized experiences. As technology rapidly advances, staying at the forefront of emerging trends is essential for Hotelverse to meet these expectations and maintain a competitive edge. This requires continuous innovation and refinement of their solutions to offer more tailored and convenient services. For instance, Hotelverse is currently developing new features that will enhance guest experience by enabling customers to reserve amenities such as tables at the hotel restaurant or sunbeds in the solarium. These enhancements reflect Hotelverse's commitment to providing a fully integrated digital experience that serves the changing needs of modern travelers, ensuring convenience and satisfaction at every touchpoint.

2.20.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

Hotelverse's technology has garnered multiple awards, including being recognized as the most innovative start-up in Spain at the EmprendeXXI Awards (CaixaBank), winning the Best Customer

---

[29] https://www.hotelverse.tech/case-study/

Experience Award at the 2020 Tourism Innovation Summit, and being featured in the 100 Best Ideas of the Year 2022 by *Actualidad Económica* (El Mundo). They also received the Best Hospitality Digital Solution award from *La Razón* and won the Customer Experience category at the Travolution Awards 2022. Moreover, their founders were recognized in *Forbes*' list of the 100 most creative business leaders. Hotelverse benefits from the backing of ENISA (Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Tourism), a public entity that finances viable and innovative business projects.

Looking ahead, the next steps include scaling the sales force for international expansion, evolving the product to increase market size by offering various levels of service to different types of hotel establishments, and consolidating the brand as the leader in its category worldwide. As part of this strategy, they aim to offer an attractive value proposition where customers can digitally immerse themselves in the hotel and explore the surroundings and everything the area has to offer. This approach focuses on driving direct sales by maximizing conversion, while enhancing the overall digital experience for our customers.

2.20.5.   Performance Indicators

- **Engagement:** your customers can fly over the hotel and explore your facilities taking advantage of all your multimedia content. Display web prices on the buildings and for each room, and redirect customers directly to your booking process enhancing the experience
- **Disintermediation:** differentiate yourself from OTAs with a unique value proposition, let your customers walk into each room and check out its exterior views. Give them the power to choose their exact room and request it after booking.
- **Generate revenue for the hotel:** charge for room selection to guests coming through other channels, increase your ADR with attribute-based selling functionality (bed type, noise level, size, etc.) and even allow them to book a higher category room by understanding the unique value proposition of each room.
- **Plug & play activation:** the Roiback-Hotelverse partnership allows you full integration into the engine, taking advantage of all its benefits.

For example, the KPIs of the Roiback-Hotelverse partnership are the following:
- On website:
    - +30% superior rooms.
    - Users seeing the difference in rates, views or different features end up choosing a superior room.
    - +€ or $ per room selection.
    - An average of two rooms per day.
- In reception:
    - +25% Increase the sale of superior rooms.
    - Improve your sales with a better upselling experience.
    - +70% Superior rooms.
    - Visualizing to the customer the Digital Twin and the views offered by the suggested rooms.
- In contact Center:
    - +10% Contact Center upsell.
    - Improve your sales with a better upselling experience.
    - +30% of superior rooms. For offering exclusive rooms in Digital Twin.

2.1. Farm Tourism Kovačnik

Name	Farm Tourism Kovačnik, Barbara Štern - the holder of complementary activities at the farm
Subsector	Tourism
Website	www.kovacnik.com Facebook: Pri Kovačniku Farm Stay Instagram: kovacnik_farmstay YouTube: Teta Barbka
Country	Slovenia

2.1.1. Background

Farm tourism Kovačnik is located in the heart of green Pohorje, where nature awakens all senses with its heavenly touch. Three generations of the Štern family, known as Kovačniks, take care of the guests: grandmother Angelca, owner Danilo and his wife Barbara, son Aljaž and Kaja, and daughters Julija and Ana. Kovačnik's farm is located 680 meters above sea level, in the Pohora village of Planica above Fram. The basic activity on the 36-hectare estate is livestock farming. They own 12 hectares of arable land, most of which are meadows and pastures. In harmony with nature, they breed 40 cattle in a modern free-range barn. Pigs and laying hens are also reared on the farm, and small animals also roam the property, adding to the variety of events on the farm. Daughter Julija is a big fan of horses. They have been spoiling their guests with traditional cuisine since 1981. Last year, they completely renovated the overall graphic image. Their jams, cookies, poticas, syrups, juices, teas are equipped with new labels (Figure 30).

Figure 30 - Homestead Kovačnik[30]

---

[30] https://kovacnik.com/nasa-zgodba/

The Štern family has been pampering guests with traditional cuisine since 1981 (Figure 31). They are best known for their weekend family lunches. With them, you can experience a real vacation on a farm in comfortable family rooms with a luxurious country breakfast and an excellent dinner. Animal lovers will be impressed by the colorful company of animals, while children will be delighted by the large playground and play area. They did not use European funds during the renewal and expansion of activities.

Figure 31 - Local cuisine[31]

Their story is successful because of their genuine and personal contact. They find inspiration for creating new stories and projects in their love for their way of life. The main processes or the steps for the success of their story are created and implemented on the fly. They divide them into short-term and long-term goals, and they only want to achieve them. Much depends, of course, on the state of the family, both financial and psycho-physical, as a family of seven lives off the activity. They try to satisfy the needs and wishes of the guests and at the same time take care of mutual relations in the family. These are the first steps to a successful story, and they build on them day by day, month by month. The story is already being built on well-laid foundations, which were written down in the history of the homestead by grandmother Angelca and grandfather Ivan, on which they can currently create and grow organically.

2.1.2. Key Principles

Since it is a family activity and such an exposed example of good practice, the family builds on interpersonal relationships and intergenerational understanding, as their team consists of three generations. They are aware of the different perspectives of family members, which often lead to disagreements. They point out that it is important to adapt, understand and accept, while at the same time they are united by the love of work and always welcome help from a neighbor.

The main source is certainly the experience of the older members of the family and at the same time the new wind and youthful energy of the younger generations, who contribute with new knowledge

---

[31] https://kovacnik.com/nasa-zgodba/

to the expansion and improvement of their services. They enrich their experience by participating in additional thematic workshops, participating in fairs and various seminars, thus upgrading their knowledge and broadening the horizons of the tourism and hospitality profession.

2.1.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main shortcoming that has been highlighted is their high aspirations and goals, which are difficult to realize due to insufficient grants for micro-providers.

2.1.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The main challenges are to have control over trends, competition, demand and supply in the service market and, consequently, to keep up with the times. They try to be active on social networks and as much as possible present at events in the local environment, where they observe and witness various trends, which they later follow in their work. Their biggest advantage is that they manage their own time. At the same time, the employees are also members of the family, which makes it easier for them to do business and organize their working hours.

2.1.5. Performance Indicators

The family engaged in complementary activities on the farm are proud recipients of the Slovenia Green label, with which they undertake to respect the principles of the latter label. Therefore, the transport routes are short, as all the ingredients come from their fields or the nearby lush environment. By raising awareness of sustainable development and the production of local and domestic ingredients, the guest, supplier and neighbor are thus satisfied. In this way, they contribute to the sustainable development of the local and wider environment. They pointed out that performance indicators are measured by the visits of regular guests who like to return to them onto the green Pohorje.

2.2. Limassol Marina

Name	Limassol Marina
Subsector	Tourism
Website	www.limassolmarina.com
Country	Cyprus

2.2.1. Background

Located in the Mediterranean coastal city of Limassol, Cyprus, Limassol Marina integrates luxury waterfront living with pioneering environmental practices. The marina exemplifies this integration by using solar panels for energy efficiency, implementing waste recycling programs, and maintaining clear waters certified by the Blue Flag Award an internationally recognized eco-label awarded to marinas and beaches that meet stringent criteria for water quality, environmental education, safety, and management., all while offering world-class residential and commercial facilities. The marina's mission is to promote sustainable and innovative solutions that align with global standards while providing premium services to its residents and visitors.

Limassol Marina is a hub for nautical tourism and waterfront living, hosting over 600 permanent boats, 1,200 annual transiting vessels, 300 residential units, 40 shops, and 15 restaurants. These facilities not only provide luxury and convenience but also present opportunities for implementing sustainable practices such as energy-efficient operations, advanced waste management, and water conservation. However, they also bring unique challenges, including managing high energy and water demands while ensuring compliance with strict environmental standards. The marina embraces its role as a leader in environmental stewardship by adopting proactive measures to ensure sustainability across its operations.

2.2.2. Key Principles

Key sustainability practices at Limassol Marina include:

Renewable Energy Initiatives: Partial implementation of solar panels to cover approximately 5% of the marina's energy needs, with plans for expansion to 20% over the next five years. This will involve phased installation of additional panels and incorporation of advanced energy storage solutions to maximize efficiency.

Energy-Efficient Operations: Use of LED lighting, photocell-controlled systems, and battery-powered equipment for gardening and buggies, reducing emissions.

Water Conservation and Management: Recycling desalinated water for irrigation and implementing advanced water metering to monitor and prevent leaks (Figure 32).

Figure 32 - Measuring and keeping water clean at Limassol Marina[32]

Waste Management Systems: Providing comprehensive waste and recycling facilities for glass, paper, PMD, and general waste, ensuring proper disposal and compliance.

Environmental Awareness Campaigns: Regular communication with residents and businesses to promote reduced energy and water usage and beach-cleaning initiatives.

2.2.3. Barriers and Challenges

Operating sustainably at Limassol Marina presents several challenges:

Energy Supply Limitations: Dependency on mazut-generated electricity due to limited renewable energy infrastructure in Cyprus.

Aesthetic and Structural Constraints: Resistance from architects and stakeholders to implementing solar panels due to perceived visual impact.

Systemic Barriers: Insufficient capacity of green energy providers to meet the marina's extensive energy requirements. Limassol Marina is exploring partnerships with private green energy firms to enhance capacity and plans to collaborate with governmental agencies to advocate for broader renewable energy investments. Additionally, the marina is evaluating the feasibility of on-site wind and solar installations to supplement its energy needs.

Compliance and Regulation: Navigating complex environmental regulations while ensuring smooth marina operations.

---

[32] https://www.limassolmarina.com

2.2.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Limassol Marina's sustainability efforts yield multifaceted benefits:

Environmental Impact Reduction: Achieved a 10% reduction in carbon emissions and a 15% decrease in overall energy consumption since the adoption of efficient technologies and practices. These results are measured annually using advanced monitoring tools and compared to baseline data from pre-implementation years.

Enhanced Reputation: Prestigious awards, including the Blue Flag Award, known for its strict environmental standards for water quality and safety, and the International Clean Marina certification, which highlights exemplary environmental management practices, recognize the marina's environmental efforts.

Increased Customer Satisfaction: Clear waters and reduced noise pollution improve the overall visitor experience.

Operational Savings: Investments in efficient equipment and solar panels lead to long-term cost savings.

2.2.5. Performance Indicators

Performance metrics used by Limassol Marina to measure the success of its sustainability initiatives include:

Energy Savings: Monitoring solar panel output through advanced metering systems and analyzing year-over-year reductions in electricity consumption. Results indicate an incremental decrease of 5% in non-renewable energy dependency since the implementation of solar panels, with projections for further reductions as capacity expands.

Customer Feedback: Evaluations from residents and visitors on environmental practices.

Waste Management Effectiveness: Tracking recycling rates and proper waste disposal receipts from contractors.

Water Conservation Metrics: Data from digital water meters to assess reductions in leakage and overall consumption.

Limassol Marina's commitment to sustainability sets an example for marina operations worldwide, highlighting the importance of innovation and collaboration in achieving environmental goals while maintaining high-quality services.

2.3. Play Alghero

Name	Play Alghero
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://playalghero.it/
Country	Italy

2.3.1. Background

Play Alghero (Figure 33) is the brand that identifies the system of games realised within the European project MED GAIMS *GAmifIcation for Memorable tourist experienceS*, financed by the European Union. MED GAIMS project developed games in physical and virtual format to create experiences for tourists, giving a necessary competitive edge to the attractiveness of less-known sites.

Figure 33 - Physical format game in Alghero[33]

2.3.2. Key Principles

The common objective is to revolutionize the traditional visit to cultural sites by using gamification techniques and technologies, both analogical and digital, to innovate and to make the experience of those visiting the territories involved in the project unique. Gamification therefore becomes a tool to enhance cultural heritage and innovate the tourist experience of visitors and citizens.

---

[33] https://playalghero.it

2.3.3. Barriers and Challenges

The Alghero Foundation was able to create 10 games that contributed to the ideation of Play Alghero. Once the EU-funded Interreg project concluded (in 2023 or 2024), the Foundation integrated Play Alghero into another important municipal project, Alghero Experience - A Heritage to Tell. This multidisciplinary initiative, divided into three areas, aligns with the Municipal Administration's strategic goals and is coordinated by the Alghero Foundation. The goal was to preserve and integrate the content developed by Play Alghero, ensuring its continuity within the broader framework of cultural and territorial promotion.

As part of this ongoing strategy, Play Alghero also seeks to connect various cultural sites between the historic centre and the outskirts of Alghero, helping to better distribute tourist flows, which can often become unmanageable during peak periods. To ensure these benefits continue long-term, it is crucial that both the local authorities and the Alghero Foundation maintain their commitment to supporting and expanding the project even after the initial funding phase, creating a sustainable model for the future.

2.3.4. Benefits and Outcomes

PLAY ALGHERO | CreActive Pathways for a Playable City aims to capitalize on this experience by promoting and strengthening a territorial marketing strategy that positions Alghero as the first Italian Playable City. This will be achieved through the creation of an annual event dedicated to the application of games to heritage, as well as fostering exchanges with national and international experiences. It is a true Festival: three days of itineraries, urban games, and video games, involving young artists, creatives, game designers, local schools, and cultural associations, promoting a dialogue between the city's artistic heritage and digital innovation tools.

The activities of Play Alghero aim to stimulate collaboration between residents and tourists, bringing together two groups that rarely communicate. Some games work only if both local residents and visitors participate on the same team. Another social outcome hoped for by Play Alghero is to connect various cultural sites, situated between the historic centre and the outskirts, in order to better distribute tourist flows that, during certain times of the year, can become unmanageable.

2.3.5. Performance Indicators

Thanks to MED GAIMS, 10 games, 5 physical and 5 digitals, were realised in Alghero with the participation of active citizens, cultural associations, young gaming enthusiasts and professionals.

Among the games created:

- Playful itinerary: A playful itinerary of urban installations through which to discover the main cultural sites of Alghero and its territory, a hub of fun and entertainment for citizens and tourists alike.

- Alghero Quest Box: A physical game of storytelling and urban exploration centred on the journey of two mysterious characters.

- Digital canvas: An immersive and interactive digital environment within the Tower of St. John, which evolves and changes according to the images created by the players.

- Murder in Alguer: An augmented reality digital game in which users will play the role of a detective and have to retrace the places she has been to discover what happened behind her mysterious disappearance.

Alghero urban game: An urban game that involves the cultural sites of Alghero's historic centre and stimulates interaction between citizens, visitors and local businesses, called upon to play out a specific plot.

2.4.   Gil Eannes Hospitality Chip

Name	Gil Eannes Hospital Ship – Fundação Gil Eannes (Gil Eannes Foundation)
Subsector	Tourism
Website	www.fundacaogileannes.pt
Country	Portugal

2.4.1.   Background

The purpose of the Gil Eannes Foundation, which owns the ship, is to transform it into a pole of attraction in the city of Viana do Castelo, and to develop initiatives for a wide range of publics and entities, based on the transmission of values and knowledge of maritime arts, of the important assistance it provided to the cod fleet in the seas of Newfoundland and Greenland, from 1995 to 1973.

Thus, over these twenty-six years as a Museum, several rehabilitation and restoration works have been done, providing visitors with contact with the various spaces and acquiring a little of the history they have to tell.

The investment of Viana do Castelo, recovering the Gil Eannes Hospital Ship, had three main purposes:

1) To save the city and naval construction memories and heritage, saving the ship, one the more advanced one at that time;

2) Giving a purpose as a cultural Museum, remaining the memory of the activities that existed back the days of the support of the cod fishing (northern seas);

3) To avoid the destruction of the ship, built in 1955, with a restore made of sustainable materials, made by the same builder, but with sustainable materials in both of the 4 interventions.

2.4.2.   Key Principles

The ship and museum Gil Eannes is a symbol of the fishing culture and shipbuilding of the city, contributes to the preservation of the collective memory of a people, especially of the cod fishermen of the traditional fishing.

In 1998, it was redeemed for 250 thousand euros. It received deep works, with funds raised from institutions, companies and citizens. In the same year it was open to the public as a Museum Ship.
In 2014, "Centro de Mar" opened its doors on board the ship, representing an investment of 550 thousand euros financed by the Regional Operational Program of the North (ON2) 2007-2013. The Centro de Mar is a space installed on the stern of the Ship, and it includes a museum and interpretative space of the maritime culture of Viana do Castelo, and the Sea Documentation Center.
Visual completely different of the Gil Eannes Museum Ship spaces (Figure 34), the Centro de Mar develop exhibitions and activities related with the sea thematic, and the issues of the sea and the community maritime culture.
With 7 employees, the Gil Eannes Foundation has been to restructure its services, whether in the organic, whether in the needs map definition, being in the process of moving forward with procedures for contracting human resources needs.

Figure 34 - Gil Eannes Ship for Tourism and Culture[34]

2.4.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Total rehabilitation of the Ship areas (already in a final stage, but with the necessity of recovering).

Foundation's finance sustainability, financing the expenditures with the earned income in the ticket office and in the merchandise product.

Not having access for all. Unfortunately, the original structure of the Ship, dating from 1995, makes it impossible for the handicapped people to visit.

After the interventions and recovery, it was needed to rethink the ship, the museum and the governance (Foundation). Mainly by:

a. Providing new painting systems, with materials friendly of the environment (the Ship is at the dock – river Lima), substituting polluting materials, substituting the woods and the metals to better and "green" solutions;

b. Changing the tangible signs and plaques with digital solutions, with and headphones in five languages, creating an app, placing information at each place of interest, with less materials and more digital information, event using QRCode as a solution to upload more detailed information at the ship exhibitions;

c. Studying new goals for the Governance, with the help of a co-creation process, called DEMOLA (Finland), organized by several Portugal Polytechnic Institutes, coordinated by a facilitator (teacher), with a connection at the Foundation and with the work and ideas of Students of several areas (history, IT technology, tourism, teaching and programming), bringing new ideas for the future and sustainability for the ship itself but also for the business project, having the Foundation approved and being implementing 6 new projects, including building networks (with National Museums network and with Fishing & Sea Museums network, like Vigo and Barcelona, both in Spain), but also with clean technologies (app and

---

knowledge platforms) and, finally, changing the physical difficulties of the ship to be more inclusive, meaning that at this point, is being place an immersive visitation house close to the entrance of the ship, that allows all the people have ways to touch the meanings of this Museum.

Also it is very important to state that the ship, the museum and the Foundation is not just a more green resource, as a more inclusive museum and a wider Museum, working with schools, locals, senior tourism, tourists, science visitors, people of sea activities, of the arts and crafts, of the literature, the digital marketing and digital storytellers, and changing the paper with digital solutions.

More results, more visitors, more services, with less resources, less impact.

A new and traditional Ship, a new historical Museum.

All the barriers and challenges faced make the Gil Eannes Foundation want to improve the quality of the services provided to visitors, to overcome these constraints.

2.4.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The population of Viana do Castelo has a great affective connection to the Gil Eannes Ship. On the one hand, it was built on the city's shipyards, where many generations of people from Viana worked, and on the other hand because it supported many fishermen who were from

With the creation of the Ship as a Museum the main purpose of the Foundation is to preserve the Ship. Besides being a museum space, it has a meeting room and exhibition hall. In addition, the Gil Eannes Foundation has integrated some projects that count on community support. There are many filming and events on the Ship.

Over the years the Gil Eannes Ship was stage of national and international movies and soap-operas. In the last five years the Ship has received at least five filming events between soap-operas and movies.

As already written above, the Gil Eannes Foundation has a calendar event filled with different activities as books presentation, anniversary, World Tourism Day celebration, Sea National Day celebration, participation with the City Hall in Tourism Fairs, Book Fair in the city, Europe Heritage Journeys, and external events.

In 2023, also it became part of an Industrial Tourism Network, in industrial heritage typology, with the purpose of meeting the expectation of tourists who seek authentic and original experiences in this segment.

2.4.5. Performance Indicators

According to the latest activity report, 2018 was a year of growth in the number of visitors, reaching a record number of 90 835 thousand visitors, as showed in Figure 35. In addition, it was rated by TripAdvisor as the 7th best Portuguese museum a national level and unique in the north in the top 10 nationals.
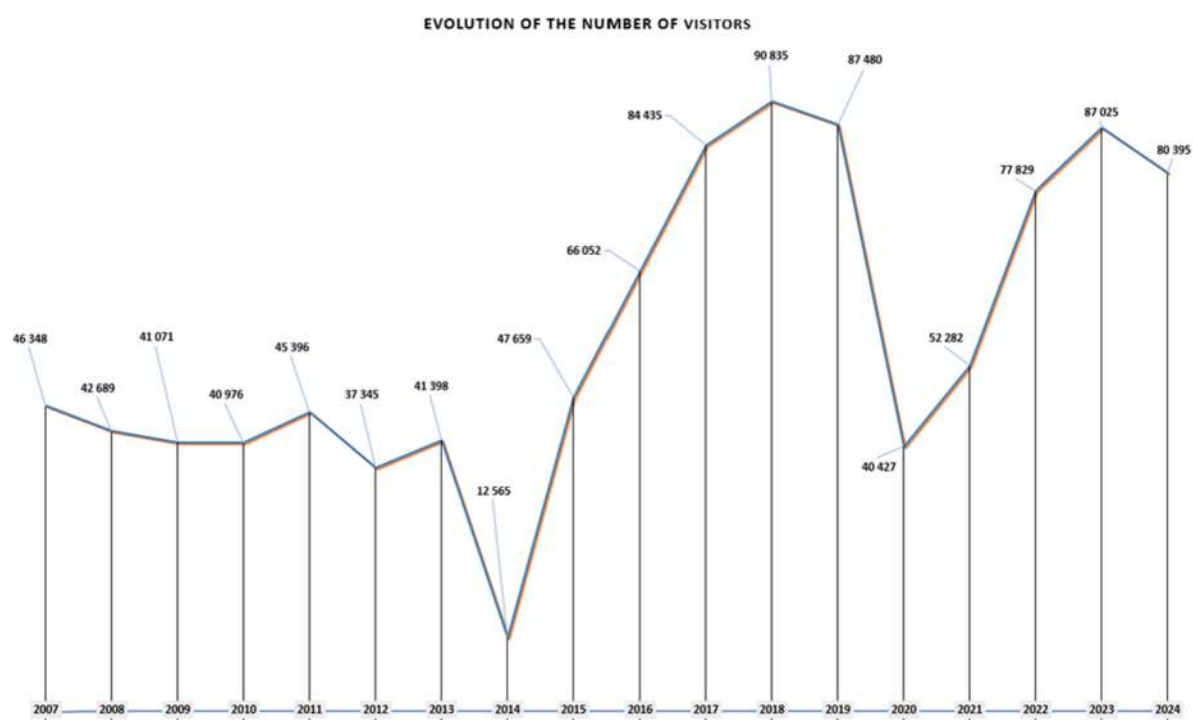

Figure 35 - Evolution of number of visitors on Gil Eannes Ship[35]

Since 1998, it has received more than 1 million visitors. However, in 2014 the number of visitors does not reveal the average of forty thousand visitors due to the time it was closed for visits, and also 2020 and 2021, due to pandemic situation.

2.5.   ITINERE Incoming

Name	ITINERE Incoming
Subsector	Tourism
Website	www.itinere.re.it
Country	Italy

2.5.1.   Background

ITINERE Incoming is a Destination Management Company, working as a tour operator and travel agency, based in Reggio Emilia (Figure 36). It is specialized in territorial promotion through the organization of incoming trips in the Emilia Romagna Region and in the main places of historical, cultural and naturalistic interest in Northern Italy. The tourist offer is aimed at companies and private individuals, inspired by organizational precision for business and leisure trips, but above all the opportunity to come into contact with the authentic Emilian culture.

Figure 36 - Reggio Emilia view from above[36]

The mission is to propose tailor-made experiences capable of creating a natural and spontaneous relationship between the guest and the places visited. The approach connects tradition and authenticity of the destination with an international approach.

Itinere is deeply connected to the territory and the local community, and it was born with a strong attention to sustainability. Itinere carries out careful research and selection of service providers and partners to collaborate effectively, and it aims to promote quality over quantity-oriented tourism.

Among its activities, Itinere participates in local processes in the framework of the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism. The Charter represents a participatory governance method to promote sustainable tourism activities in protected areas compatible with the needs of biodiversity protection,

---

[36] www.itinere.re.it

through the collaboration of local stakeholders. The certification is awarded to Parks and protected areas after a structured process with standards and good practices to implement.

Each protected area has 3 phases to undergo:

1- Certification for the protected area (e.g. social, environmental heritage to be safeguarded)

2- Certification for companies operating in tourism (guides, hotels, producers, ...)

3- Certification for tour operators working in the protected area (e.g. tourism packages to be built with the actors in phase 2).

2.5.2. Key Principles

The main target groups include:

- Leisure customers (private customers and from Tourist information and reservation offices) and "walkers"
- Groups
- Business customers: events, team building, connections with local companies hosting international clients
- Schools, especially private schools, for educational trips
- Other Italian and foreign tour operators for the B2B market
- Municipalities

Staff members in Itinere Incoming are young and dynamic. Each member has a different profile, and a specific education and training path on tourism is not required even if preferable. Languages are a fundamental skill to effectively interact with customers, in fairs and international events.

Now, Itinere is investing in digital competences to develop and support internal and external processes. They do not have management software at the moment, but the increase in bookings and customer numbers will require it in the short term.

2.5.3. Barriers and Challenges

During the process dedicated to the EU Charter on Sustainable Tourism, these are the challenges most frequently faced:

- **Time:** a lot of time is dedicated to contacting suppliers and local realities and to the construction of tourist packages, but little staff is dedicated to activities.
- **Focus on just one area:** focusing on just one protected area is sustainable from an environmental point of view, but this offer does not respond to the needs and expectations of the majority of tourists. A combination of tourist offers is necessary.
- **Relationships and contact with local suppliers:** small local suppliers are not used to intermediate tourism and the contact to an intermediary agency taking care of bookings and payments. Moreover, several local actors do not have management and booking systems, and they do not accept offers in advance (contrary to the working method and needs of travel agencies). It is therefore necessary to build relationships and mutual trust with local suppliers.

- **Sustainable practices:** it is essential to directly visit local suppliers and accommodation facilities to realize critical issues in terms of sustainability.

2.5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The EU Charter demands a strong medium and long term commitment, as the certification process requires at least 3-4 years.

The biggest benefit for the organization itself concerns the training dimension: several meetings are organized during the process with cross-sectoral actors. A great space is dedicated to discussions among stakeholders. The creation of the network and the sharing of practices, information and perspectives is the first outcome.

Moreover, Itinere Incoming benefits from the connection and orientation towards certain types of suppliers focused on a sustainable idea of tourism.

At local level, the certification process (phase 3) will lead to the construction of a Traveler's Charter in protected areas, with guidelines and good practices to be respected when visiting the area (e.g. including a supplier or accommodation facility for a more personal contact with travelers).

The local meetings allow the collaborative work of different tour operators and tourism companies to create the first tourism offer package. The process has been supported by an external consultant, providing help with data collection and analysis and target groups analysis.

2.5.5. Performance Indicators

At the beginning of the certification process, objectives and indicators are selected from a pre-made list. They will be then monitored at the end of the 4 years to evaluate actions and local collaboration. Specifically, both quantitative and qualitative indicators are identified:

- number of yearly meetings
- number of participants
- extent of achievement of results (e.g. Traveler's Charter)
- improvement of intermediate tourism in the area

Other standards, indicators and requirements are imposed by the certification process.

A 3-year projection is requested from the tour operators, in terms of commitment to improvement and collaboration. Commitment of Itinere Incoming include designing and/or selling eco-tourism products in the protected area, supporting the local development in the protected area, adopting as tour operator criteria of sustainable development for the economic, social and environmental improvement of the company.

2.6. La Fageda

Name	Cooperativa La Fageda
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://www.fageda.com/en/
Country	Spain

2.6.1. Background

La Fageda (Figure 37) is a Catalan cooperative recognized for its unique business model, which combines the business sector with a social focus on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues into the workforce.

In the business sector, the project includes a gardening division, a livestock farm, a yogurt and dairy dessert production plant, a jam workshop, and finally, a tourism branch through its Visitor Service.

Figure 37 - La Fageda headquarters[37]

---

[37] https://www.fageda.com/

La Fageda's mission is to improve the quality of life and promote the social integration of people with intellectual disabilities, severe mental disorders, and other groups at risk of social exclusion in the Garrotxa region, by generating meaningful employment, training opportunities, and a wide range of care services through its business activities.

Its vision is to be a solid social and business project that serves as a model of inspiration for creating value in society.

La Fageda's core values include trust, integrity, responsibility, enthusiasm, effort, and quality.

2.6.2. Key Principles

Currently, La Fageda consists of a team of over 640 people. Of these, more than 330 are salaried employees, and half of them (164 people) are in vulnerable situations. The La Fageda team works in the production branch of dairy products, ice creams, and jams, the gardening and livestock branch, and the visitor service. Over 90 people are not salaried employees but are users of various occupational or pre-employment services, classified into four areas: socio-labor, employment insertion services, personal services, specialized care, and training. Additionally, there are 180 students.

The results of La Fageda's business activities for the past year, 2023, are as follows:

- The gardening division has a workforce of over 30 people.
- The farm has 251 cows.
- Dairy production exceeded 86 million units.
- The production of several types of jams reached over 138,000 kg.
- Ice cream production was over 68,000 kg.
- The Visitor Service welcomed more than 45,000 visitors.

Additionally, it is important to note that La Fageda has chosen not to use social integration as a marketing tool, to avoid conflicting with the company's core philosophy.

2.6.3. Barriers and Challenges

La Fageda has faced various barriers and challenges on its path toward sustainability and social inclusion:

- Economic challenges: Ensuring economic viability while maintaining social and environmental commitments.
- Social acceptance: Overcoming prejudices and stigmas associated with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues.
- Technology and infrastructure: Significant investments required to implement renewable energy technologies.

2.6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The benefits and results achieved by La Fageda are numerous and significant:

- Social impact: Improvement in the quality of life for people with disabilities by providing them with work and social integration.
- Environmental sustainability: Reduction of environmental impact through organic farming practices and renewable energy.

- Recognition and reputation: International prestige for its social mission and sustainable practices.

2.6.5.   Performance Indicators

La Fageda makes a profound contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations for 2030. Below is an outline of La Fageda's alignment with the SDGs, showing first the SDG and then, La Fageda's contribution to it:

1) **No poverty:** Eradicate poverty in all its forms, everywhere.
   a) The project includes people who are on the poverty line.
   b) The people with intellectual disability or mental illness who work at La Fageda earn 4 times the non-contributory allowance they would receive from the State if they were not working.
   c) They provide access to housing and other basic services, which lifts a considerable load on the families who look after disabled or mentally ill people.
   d) They have opened a company shop, El Rebost, managed by the La Fageda Cooperative, which sells food at affordable prices.
2) **Zero hunger:** Stop hunger and famine, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and foster sustainable agriculture.
   a) They give products to third-sector organizations. In 2020, they donated 600,000 yoghurts.
3) **Good health:** Guarantee healthy lives and foster wellbeing at all ages.
   a) They work with people suffering from mental illnesses, intellectual disabilities, or drug addictions.
   b) They foster physical activity directly among their employees, with weekly healthy walks.
   c) They have a vegetable garden with 1,600 m2 and they sell the produce at their cooperative's shop. By this means, they contribute to improving their employees' diet, and through the Canteen Service.
   d) They work for their employees' safety and wellbeing.
4) **Quality education:** Guarantee inclusive education for everyone and foster equal access to quality, lasting learning opportunities.
   a) They are in the process of becoming authorized as a Training Centre and they will be able to issue Professionalism Certificates.
   b) They are involved in the New Opportunities School project in Olot.
5) **Gender equality:** Achieve gender equality by empowering adult and young women.
   a) The criteria used in selecting people to work at La Fageda do not discriminate on the grounds of sex or gender identity.
   b) They have an Equality Plan registered with the Catalan Government that includes actions and challenges such as: creation of the equality committee, training courses for employees, parity within the different areas, use of non-discriminating language, etc.
   c) Their services, particularly Housing, provide relief for families in the daily care of vulnerable people. This care, and the domestic work this would entail, is normally provided by women. Consequently, their services release them from having to devote time to costly, time-consuming tasks.
   d) 37% of management positions (Board of Trustees and Executive Committee) are held by women.

6) **Clean water and sanitation:** Guarantee the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation.
   a) They have a physical-chemical and biological water treatment plant that processes La Fageda's wastewater. The quality levels of the water they discharge into the river are very high.
   b) They foster water saving in the treatment plant's internal functioning (from 1.5 m3 in 2019 to 1.4 m3 in 2020).
   c) The robotized milking parlor has reduced water consumption in this activity by 40%.
   d) They mix the sludge from food manufacture with the cows' manure, separating out the liquid fraction. The result is used to fertilize the fields that provide forage for the cows.
   e) In recent years, they have made significant efforts to reduce water consumption for cleaning and cooling. In 2018, they reduced it by 20%, and by 40% in 2019.

7) **Affordable and clean energy:** Guarantee access for everyone to affordable, reliable, sustainable, renewable energy sources.
   a) 99% of the electricity they consume is supplied by renewable energy sources.
   b) 80% of their thermal energy is produced in their biomass boiler, which burns wood chips. As a result, their propane consumption has reduced considerably.
   c) Overall, 86% of the energy they consume comes from renewable sources.
   d) They have also reduced electricity consumption by installing more efficient insulation and LED lights, both indoors and outdoors.
   e) Energy efficiency is a priority issue when choosing industrial machinery.
   f) When choosing vehicles for their fleet, they give priority to low mileage used hybrid vehicles.

8) **Decent work and economic growth:** Foster sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full productive employment, and a decent job for everyone.
   a) They offer work to people at risk of social exclusion in La Garrotxa.
   b) Specifically, at their Special Work Centre, they hire people who have a mental illness or intellectual disability. Unemployment of this population group in the region has fallen drastically, as they give work to 25% of those who are of working age (138 people in 2020).
   c) They also have a work integration company, El Faig, for people in the region who are in a situation of vulnerability for other reasons (33 jobs in 2020).
   d) They have a Pre-Occupational Service for about 15 mentally ill people who need to complete a pre-employment process.
   e) 80% of the employment contracts signed at La Fageda, regardless of their vulnerability status, are long-term.
   f) They are starting a training project to improve the employability of young people in the region who have not found their place in the education system.
   g) They are a member of the Pact for Vocational Training and Employment in La Garrotxa.
   h) They use teleworking whenever possible.
   i) They facilitate work-family balance by organizing play activities on the premises for employees' children during school holidays.
   j) During the last decade, they have modernized infrastructures and technologies to be more competitive, create new jobs, provide machines to help people and not to replace them, support ergonomics and energy efficiency, and improve their cows' wellbeing. They have also started a pilot plant.

9) **Innovation and infrastructure:** Build resilient infrastructures, support inclusive, sustainable industrialization, and foster innovation.
   a) La Fageda project is a story about business innovation.
   b) They support inclusive industrialization, adapting the production lines to their workforce so that machines help people in their work, without replacing them.
   c) They contribute to improving the region's economic development.
   d) They have implemented logistics' model that reduces heavy goods vehicle traffic inside the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve and makes stock management more sustainable.
   e) Using a high-performance film, in recent years they have reduced annual plastic consumption for shrink-wrapping pallets by 31% (1,331 kg).
   f) A pilot plant has been operating within the Innovation Department since 2020.

10) **Reduced inequalities:** Reduce inequality between and within countries.
   a) More than half of the people who work at La Fageda are in a situation of vulnerability.
   b) The inequality experienced by these people is reduced thanks to having a useful, fairly paid job, working in an atmosphere that facilitates genuine human relations and supported by psychologists and social workers.
   c) They foster stable employment contracts: 80% of the contracts are permanent.
   d) The salaries earned by the people with intellectual disability or mental illness who work at La Fageda are 4 times higher than the non-contributory allowance they would receive from the State if they were not working.
   e) They foster inclusive work, irrespective of abilities, gender, provenance, religion, or race.
   f) Their Workplace Integration Service supports people in situations of vulnerability to help them find work in local institutions or businesses.
   g) The Housing services are an opportunity to reduce the inequality experienced by people with intellectual disabilities or mental illnesses and their families.

11) **Sustainable cities and communities:** Create sustainable cities and human communities that are inclusive, safe, and resilient.
   a) They cooperate in reducing negative environmental impacts within the La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park by means of a mobility plan and proposals to disperse tourism from overcrowded areas and deseasonalize tourism.
   b) They provide a transport service by bus from Olot for part of the workforce and they encourage the remainder to share vehicles.
   c) They give priority to efficient waste management.

12) **Responsible consumption:** Guarantee sustainable consumption and production systems.
   a) They combat food wastage with a line of bulk yoghurts and recall sufficiently beforehand those products set to expire or reach their best before date soon. These products can be bought by the organization's employees at discounted prices.
   b) Their new creamy yogurts are packaged in paperboard containers with a thin plastic film. These containers can be disposed of in the paper recycling bin; they have enabled us to reduce the quantity of plastic in each container from 80 to 2 grammes.
   c) All the paperboard and cardboard used for packaging their products is sourced from sustainably managed forests.
   d) They manage the by-products from their processes so that they can be used for animal nutrition.
   e) They have a composting plant for processing the slurry produced by their dairy farm.

    f) They support the circular economy: they use their cows' manure to fertilize the fields on which they plant a large part of the cereals which, in turn, are used to feed the cows.

    g) They separate all the several types of waste.

    h) They publish their Sustainability Report every year.

    i) They foster sustainable tourism through the Visitors Service Office, which manages bookings for visits to their facilities with an access code to the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve.

13) Climate action: Urgently combat climate change and its effects.

    a) They are accredited by the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST) and they publicize all the measures they are taking to improve sustainability.

    b) They have implemented selective waste collection.

    c) They encourage the application of the 3 Rs (reduce, recycle and reuse) in their project.

    d) They support quality tourism.

    e) They support awareness-raising and training new recruits in good environmental practices that are specific to the job.

    f) They publish news about environmental actions.

    g) They engage in sustainable production.

14) Life below water: Preserve and make sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

    a) In 2021, they held an awareness-raising workshop on the problem of microplastics in the sea, organized by the NGO Ocean Cats and attended by 50 La Fageda employees.

15) Life on land: Protect, restore, and foster sustainable use of land ecosystems, manage forests sustainably, combat desertification, stop and reverse soil degradation, and halt the loss of biodiversity.

    a) They organize guided tours that include a stroll through the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve. Their Visitors Service Office provides information about the Park's flora and fauna.

16) Peace and justice: Promote peaceful, inclusive societies to enable sustainable development, provide access to justice for everyone, and develop effective, responsible, inclusive institutions at all levels.

    a) They define themselves as a transparent company; every year, they publish a Sustainability Report in which they give account of their actions.

    b) They have a code of ethics for all employees, governed by the principles of peace and justice.

17) Partnerships for the goals: Increase the resources for implementing and revitalizing global partnerships for sustainable development.

    a) Since the company was formed, they have understood that a social enterprise cannot grow without networking and partnerships with public administrations and entities. Accordingly, they have formed strategic partnerships with multiple players.

    b) They transfer their expertise in social entrepreneurship through training seminars.

    c) They are a member of the Pact for Vocational Training and Employment in La Garrotxa.

La Fageda is a well-recognized social project, as demonstrated by the many awards and distinctions it has received since 1997. The full list of the awards and recognitions are available in the following URL: https://www.fageda.com/es/premios-y-reconocimientos/, some of which have been awarded directly to its founder, Cristóbal Colón.

2.7. Identify Travel

Name	Identify Travel
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://www.identifytravel.app/
Country	Spain

2.7.1. Background

Identify Enjoy Culture is a travel tech startup that offers a tailor-made digital guide platform to let tourists know about the cultural spots in destinations: activities and excursions, cultural routes, and local and quality dining restaurants. It offers a 21st-century alternative to tourist brochures and maps with personalized suggestions about cultural information where the client is the focus. These guides can be used directly by tourists, or they can be embedded in accommodation or destination websites to offer clients unique and high-quality recommendations about the destination. Specifically, Identify is focused in:

- Trusted recommendations: Recommendations to tourists of sites that a local would suggest, improving their travel experience.
- Curated activities and routes: Selection of the routes according to your target (families, friends, couples,…).
- Increase in customer satisfaction: Improve customer satisfaction by providing them with a unique and quality experience in the destination.
- Destination information at your fingertips: reduce the use of paper maps and switch to innovation with the trusted web app to enjoy the destination.

The **mission** of this company is the following:

- To democratize access to information on the cultural heritage of the whole world through mobile technology, increasing the offer of cultural information to contribute to the de-massification of tourism.
- To disseminate unknown heritage sites and to put them in value.
- To distribute the flow in the overcrowded tourist areas and encourage people to move towards less crowded places.
- To be committed to a model of sustainable tourism in which the masses do not degrade or harm the environment of those who live there all year.

The vision of this company is to become the go-to app for cultural tourism, where the community generates trust among travelers by recommending the most relevant points and the most notable routes in each destination. Identify believes that a tourism and cultural model away from overcrowding is possible, but it requires the effort, will, and participation of everyone. They think that society only succeeds in preserving the cultural heritage of each place if both locals and visitors take care of it and

do not exploit it irresponsibly. Through promoting culture, Identify Enjoy Culture drives tourism's de-seasonalization, wealth distribution, and the de-standardization of conventional routes to decentralize tourism and achieve a better and more sustainable experience for all.

The company's values are innovation and digitalization, sustainability, and product personalization. Their objective is to enhance the products they offer in the market. They aim to support the transition to digital versions. Innovation for them means that all technology is developed in-house, with their team and technology ecosystem. This allows them to keep our solutions updated. Personalization means that while products start from a general idea, customization is crucial to ensure each one feels unique to the user. Digitalization, sustainability, and personalization are at the core of their approach. Referring to artificial intelligence, now, they are using AI to optimize their internal processes, not the final products. However, they have enhanced they processes to achieve better outcomes.

Identify's target market consists of people between 25 and 40 years old, primarily women, who live in urban areas, like travelling and exploring the cultures of new places, and like to plan their travel activities.

2.7.2. Key Principles

The company's idea arises from the competitiveness in the sector and the need for companies to stand out not just by offering good service, but by providing a pleasant experience for the client, and that experience is tied to the destination. In this sense, Identify offers different services with particular characteristics and resources:

- **Gamified Routes "CultureQuiz"**: CultureQuiz is an innovative and exciting way to explore every corner of your municipality through routes that can be accessed via mobile. They create challenges and games for all audiences, showcasing each city's true charm and promoting each municipality's heritage and traditions. It also helps to discover local and traditional fairs and festivals while overcoming challenges and earning rewards. CultureQuiz (Figure 38) is a key tool to boost citizen participation in the territory and create unique experiences in the community. It does not require either apps or downloads.

Figure 38 - Example of Gamified Routes CultureQuiz[38]

- **Digital Guide for Travelers**: "Identify Trips and Routes" (Figure 39) is a travel app that lets tourists know what to see, what to do, and where to eat. It allows them to identify all the cultural points around them through gamification. It is possible to use it to play sites to see before a trip and discover new places and cultures. The app contains a repository of worldwide information and updated activities. Users can create their routes by selecting the cultural spots they want to visit. Moreover, they can also share these routes with other platform users. The app is geolocalized so users can learn about cultural spots closer to them. The app is available for Android and iPhone.

Figure 39 - Example of the Digital Guide for travelers[39]

- **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation**: The digital guide allows you to offer the best cultural routes and all the leisure options in the city through your web app without downloading. These digital guides are purchased by accommodation (Figure 40) with the purpose of creating their own digital guide adapted to their clients' needs and preferences to ensure they enjoy their trip. In this case, it is used the digital platform Identify DTX (Destination Traveler Experience), where personalized information about cultural spots, cultural activities, restaurants, transport,… surrounding the hotel can be recommended. Clients can check this digital guide through the hotel website and through emails they receive after the booking. It is remarkable that the digital guide is a web app, not an app. Identify updates the information of each digital guide, although the hotels have access to an intranet where they can add some spots if they like. Hotels periodically receive a report with KPI from Identify.
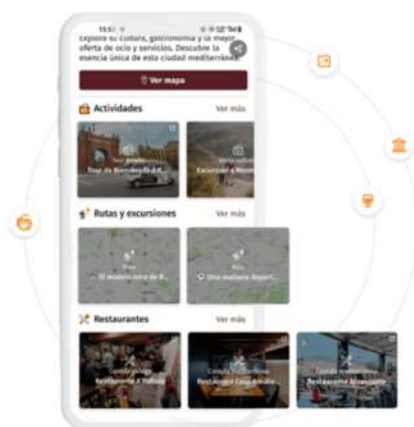

Figure 40 - Example of Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation[40]

---

[39] https://www.identifytravel.app/
[40] https://www.identifytravel.app/

- **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination**: The digital guide for a destination (Figure 41) aims to ensure that every visitor enjoys the city like a local, authentically exploring the culture, gastronomy, and history of the destination. The guide is always updated and conveys the value of every corner. This digital guide is purchased by a destination that aims to promote their culture and gastronomic heritage. This is the latest product, launched in early 2024. They have implemented it at the Port of Barcelona, including on the Nautic Bus. Additionally, they are collaborating with Amics de la Rambla de Barcelona association.
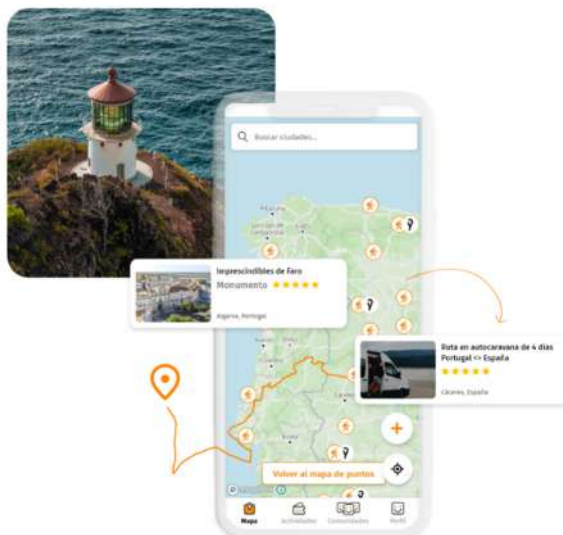

Figure 41 - Example of Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination[41]

The platform is available in Spanish, Catalan, and English, and for hotels, five additional languages are included: French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Arabic, with the possibility of adding more.

To create the database of cultural spots, Identify automatically collected information (audio, text, and images) from multilingual open data sources. The Identify team then filtered and organized this information to be used in a user-friendly manner. They have a large database that is updated and expanded periodically.

Resources

Regarding resources, their foundation is built on technology, but human expertise is essential. They are a team of four, with two focused on the technical side. The key resources are skilled professionals who conduct studies and reviews of their technology and recommend tools for continuous improvement.

Skills

Regarding the skills, on the one hand, soft ones are crucial. The most important include a strong desire for continuous learning and to stay connected to industry, as the world of technology changes rapidly, though not everything is applicable to the sector. Workers need to be proactive, open-minded, and genuinely interested in their work. On the other hand, technical skills are also important, such as technology, programming, language skills (especially English), and agility with AI tools to optimize the time spent on programming and research. On the marketing and sales side, in addition to curiosity and dynamism, understanding the hotel sector and its unique characteristics is vital. This includes the

---

[41] https://www.identifytravel.app/

ability to dive into the specific features of urban hotels, identifying their differentiating points. This knowledge provides them with resources to craft better areas for clients.

2.7.3. Barriers and Challenges

Identify experienced barriers and challenges they needed to face while developing their different services.

Digital Guide for Travelers:

- The digital guide app for travelers is free for users. Consequently, it was difficult to monetize at the beginning. The strategy of Identify was to contact organizations and companies (museums, theatres, hotels,…) that would like to offer the customers a differential value and include them as a spot in the app. The agreement was that these institutions would offer some discounts for users who came to their place through Identify. In contrast, Identify would receive a commission for the number of people that visit a spot through the app. As it is possible to geolocalize the users, it is possible to calculate the corresponding commission.
- Finding new users can be challenging but Identify is trying to disseminate the app through its website, travel blogs, and advertising.

Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation:

- Firstly, the beta version of the digital guide was an app, but after the validation by some hotels, it was decided to create a web app. The web app allows embedding of the digital guide in the hotel's website, whereas, with an app, it was not possible.
- Adapting each digital tourism guide to each hotel is challenging, as it is extremely important to know the client profile in detail (e.g. if they are families, pet-friendly, LGTBI community,…). It is important to work together with the hotel to define this profile and consequently adapt the digital guide to their preferences.
- In recent years, the hotel's and clients' interaction has become online during the booking process. Nevertheless, the interaction between the hotel and clients during customers' stay in the hotel tends to still be face-to-face. Identify aims to incorporate digitalization into this communication to be able to personalize the offer of cultural routes. Some hotels have been reluctant to add this digitalization, as they prefer being focused on hotel occupancy rather than quality. However, there are some hotels that try to prioritize the quality of the service to foster loyalty, so Identify tries to sell their product to this kind of hotel.
- Nowadays, hotels cannot check their KPI information in real-time, so they have to wait until Identify sends them a report. Identify is working to add this functionality in the future.
- The cultural activities and the gastronomic proposals promoted are created through the suppliers and contacts that match the criteria of Identify. Nevertheless, some cultural activities organizers or restaurant owners have contacted Identify to be included in the digital guide. In this case, Identify is trying to avoid being paid for including any kind of proposal but is trying to be selective with them to ensure the quality of the proposals.

Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination:

- Although Identify would like to work with public administration, bureaucratic procedures make it challenging. In this sense, Identify has decided to start working with the private sector to gain clients and experience, and they will try to work with the public sector in the future.

Overall, the main challenge was validation being aware of whether the product is useful. That is why they pivoted from having an end-user product to a private product, as private clients have higher economic capacity than with an end-user. It is important to not become attached to a single product.

Another challenge is to educate the sector, using a language and techniques they are familiar with. Approaching them with very innovative terms and ideas, can be a challenge. Establishing minimum standards, KPIs, and specific indicators is essential to assess your progress.

Finally, financing is necessary to be aware of funding opportunities to expand the resources. It is also challenging to attract talent that shares the same passion for working in a startup at our current level.

2.7.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The digital routes of CultureQuiz offer numerous advantages as they contribute to discovering your municipality's local culture and heritage. Some of the benefits are:

- Energizing local commerce by disseminating cultural spots, historical sites, monuments, restaurants, of different places around the world.
- Building community, as the digital guides include ratings and reviews from other users. Moreover, users can create their own routes with the spots they are interested in and share them with other users.
- Reviving traditions by disseminating local activities in a city or a village.
- Adding value to the territory through gamification. The gamified routes help the audience know cultural points in a recreational way; at the same time, they promote the beaten track place.
- Democratize cultural spots, even the lesser-known ones, which can help to redistribute the flow of tourists in overcrowded areas.
- Geolicalize the user, helping to let them know information about the cultural spots close to them and discovering off the beaten track places.
- De-massification and de-seasonalization of tourism, as the spots are not only of tourist cities. There are spots in urban and rural areas. It is also possible to find spots next to the user's place, which also allows local people to discover their own territory.
- Digital maps without downloads for digital guides for accommodations or destinations. The digital guides can be embedded in the accommodation or destination's official website.
- The Digital Guide for Travelers requires users to download an app, but it is valid worldwide, so users do not have to download an app for each destination visited. Spots can be found around the world, in urban and rural areas, although most of the points are in Europe.
- For the accommodation guides, the main benefit is the reduction and optimization of the time that reception staff spend attending to guests. Moreover, the information is always updated.
- For destinations, gamification allows guests to interact with what they see and hear, which is not possible with paper base, and they receive more feedback on how people are enjoying it. In addition to improving engagement and customer loyalty, the information is always updated dynamically and keeps information more current. If some information is not correct on paper, you must discard the brochures, but now with this digital tool changes can be applied more easily.

2.7.5. Performance Indicators

Some performance indicators of Identify are the following:

- Regarding the information included in the digital guides:
  - ο 331.745 curated cultural spots
  - ο 317.126 leisure and culture activities
  - ο 8.5819 routes
  - ο 782.393 images
  - ο 5.000 audioguide hours
  - ο Rating system assessing user's interest

- Regarding the benefits for the hotels that have included Identify in their website:
  - ο Reduction of the time that reception staff spends recommending activities by up to 70%
  - ο Reduction of 87.99% of paper in tourist guides in accommodation
  - ο Foster guest loyalty through the personalized experience offered
  - ο Increase of the hotel revenue through the sale of activities offered within the platform
  - ο Increase of NPS (Net Promoter Score), related with costumer experience.
  - ο Positive feedback from the receptionists

2.8.   Ibersol Group

Name	Ibersol Group
Subsector	Restaurant
Website	https://www.ibersol.pt/
Country	Portugal

2.8.1.   Background

The Ibersol Group is a multi-brand group with a presence in Iberia and in Portuguese-speaking countries. It is in the organized catering business and respects the values of Quality, Safety and the Environment, relying on qualified and motivated Human Resources who are committed to fully satisfying the needs of the Consumer. Considering its international presence, the Ibersol group has started to identify, from a corporate sustainability perspective, the themes of the 2030 Agenda, namely the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ibersol began its activity in the catering sector in 1989 with the aim of developing the Pizza Hut business. In 1990 it opened Ibersol's first Pizza Hut in Albufeira and in subsequent years, as part of the Sonae Group's Tourism area, it went on to develop other catering sectors and operate hotels. At the end of 1994, Pargeste decided to acquire Ibersol with the aim of developing it as part of a more comprehensive project in the Restaurant and Leisure area. In 1995, Ibersol signed a franchising contract with PEPSICO for the establishment of KFC in Portugal. From that moment on, the group grew and in 2020 the sector was marked by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak that spread worldwide, putting a brake on global economic activity, with profound impacts on consumer behavior and habits. Some restaurants closed, leaving only those that could continue to operate through take-away, drive-thru and delivery, at a much lower level than their normal potential. Throughout this process, Ibersol, following the instructions of the World Health Organization, activated contingency plans aimed primarily at guaranteeing the safety of all customers and employees and ensuring the protection of the entire supply chain, in particular seeking to combine the abrupt reduction in activity with the protection of jobs. The year 2021 was marked by the word resilience, associated with the ability to overcome and recover, and since then it has been in this environment of slow but sustained recovery that Ibersol has built a path of resilience and dynamism, first recovering the restaurant business located in the street and shopping centers, and then in the Travel segment, given the constraints on mobility resulting from the pandemic. During the recovery process it increased its social sustainability profile as a major Group that creates jobs and social cohesion. In this sense, it has managed to protect employment in Portugal and Spain, following a combined strategy of utilizing the state support available and a consistent policy of new restaurant openings for the Group's different brands, reflected in the strong growth in the number of Burger King, Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut units. The Ibersol Group has created thousands and thousands of jobs, is respected by all the international partner brands and has a fantastic team for its dedication and high performance. The Ibersol Group aims to protect the future by promoting environmental, social/economic and governance responsibility, positively influencing the organization's long-term value. At the Ibersol Group, corporate sustainability is a goal that, year after year, has been deepening in the good practices, because always doing better and being enterprising are maxims that also lead the Group to realize an

ambitious agenda for sustainability in its ethical, social and environmental aspects. The Ibersol group has been continuously working on environmental, social and economic sustainability in the markets in which they operate, Portugal, Spain and Angola, always endeavoring to do more and better.

2.8.2. Key Principles

Ibersol is a multi-brand Group with a presence in Iberia and in Portuguese-speaking countries, that aims to maintain its focus on customer satisfaction in all markets, knowing that what matters to customers is 'good value for money' and the positive experiences they have on each visit to one of their restaurants. To ensure continuous improvement, the Ibersol Group promotes excellence and endeavors to always do better, using measurements, monitoring and evaluation systems to continually improve the performance of its management systems. Their values are:

- They believe in and value their people
- They exist for the Customer
- They are happy to share
- They are sustainable and inclusive
- They like to undertake and innovate
- They are creative
- They promote excellence
- They always do better.

Ibersol is pleased with the effective commitment of everyone at different levels of the organization, which reflects the solidity of the values and the shared commitment that is full, dynamic and transversal Sustainability in society.

2.8.3. Barriers and Challenges

All businesses in the restaurant industry come with new challenges, changes, restrictions, and innovations, which have been intensified by the pandemic. It is a highly competitive market that presents unique characteristics that impact the business. For Ibersol, the main challenges in the activity include:

Food Safety

The group is committed to serving safe, quality products. Food safety is a basic principle of the Group's sustainability, and they have implemented a demanding Food Safety Management System, certified by the international standard ISO22000: Food Safety Management Systems. This system involves controlling the entire food chain from the producer to the customer's table. In addition to safe, quality products, the Ibersol Group wants to go further by providing variety, clear and precise information on products and ingredients and advice on healthy lifestyles through the Viva Bem program.

Sustainability

Sustainability involves ensuring customer satisfaction, guaranteeing the safety of customers, people and products, actively promoting health and safety conditions at work, reducing the environmental impact of our activities, taking action to combat food waste and strictly complying with all legal, regulatory and statutory requirements. Regarding people, it is essential to invest in skills, valorization and inclusion, promoting communication between all stakeholders. For the Ibersol Group it is crucial to inform and train all employees, reinforcing skills in the areas of quality, food safety, the environment

and occupational health and safety to standardize individual and collective practices and communicate and promote the participation of employees and other stakeholders so that they can contribute to better efficiency in management systems. Protecting everyone involves maintaining a traceability system, from source to end consumer, with strict control of the supply chain; ensuring control of critical points in the production process; acting diligently, in accordance with the precautionary principle, in the event of emergencies or accidents that could cause harm to people, products or the environment; adopting pollution prevention and reduction practices with specific measures in the areas of climate, energy and preservation of natural capital; and identifying, assessing and controlling the risks faced by employees in order to prevent accidents and near misses at work.

Health and Nutrition

Promoting the health of its employees and customers is the group's biggest concern and challenge. To strengthen the well-being and the sense of belonging of employees, the Ibersol group continued the "Ibersol in Motion" program, under which it develops various initiatives and challenges that promote the interaction between colleagues outside the work context. From a consumer perspective, in 2019 the My HACCP project was launched in the various brands of the Group. Developed to improve the existing food safety management tools in the operation, it is an application that works in an intuitive and interactive way and allows teams to have a view of what is happening, in real time, allowing them to focus on solving critical/urgent issues of action. This project reinforces the investment in the continuous improvement of the culture and the food safety management system implemented in all Ibersol group stores.

Consumer Preferences

This group has the ambition of providing unique dining experiences to all its customers. Positive experiences foster trust-based relationships, which are essential assets that impact the entire organization. The group has clear strategic objectives related to the "Customer" asset, including their level of satisfaction, the responses they expect to receive, and the evolution of their consumption behavior, desires, and expectations regarding the products and services available to them. This focus allows for clearer and faster identification of trends to follow, anticipation of concepts, innovation in offerings, enhancing customer complementarity, and strengthening the company's competitive position.

Human Resources

The need to recruit staff to work in the restaurant industry depends directly on the turnover rate, that is, the number of employees who leave the company's staff, which needs to be replaced. In the Ibersol group there is a concern to put the right person in the right place. It is essential for the group to find qualified and motivated human resources, who are committed to the full satisfaction of the consumer's needs.

Reduction of the Ecological Footprint

The group prioritizes the procurement of local products to help reduce the ecological footprint. The proximity of the suppliers allows the group not only to provide the client with the freshest and nutritionally richest ingredients, but also to ensure that the entire transportation phase is minimized. By reducing transportation time, they lessen CO_2 emissions into the atmosphere, which translates into a very significant reduction in the supply chain over the course of a year.

Sectorial

Operating in the food sector, any food crises or distortions in the raw materials markets, as well as any changes in consumption patterns, can have a significant impact on the financial statements, which requires an equally attentive and preventive approach.

Packaging

In recent years, and particularly in 2019, we have seen pressure to reduce consumption of single-use plastic, raising important challenges in the search for alternative solutions with less environmental impact. To this end, a working group was set up with the aim of identifying and reducing the amount of existing plastic packaging and reinforcing the principles of circularity in the way that Ibersol operates. The production of packaging waste - service packaging delivered to customers and packaging for raw materials and products - is inevitable in an activity sector such as the Ibersol group. To ensure that this waste is correctly channeled and treated, and as in previous periods, the contract to join the Integrated Packaging Waste Management System, coordinated by Sociedade Ponto Verde, was renewed once again.

2.8.4. Benefits and Outcomes

At the Ibersol Group they recognize the importance of protecting the environment and ensuring the sustainable development of the Group's businesses. The Ibersol Group has developed a working model of continuous improvement in management processes that catalyze active sustainability policies, internalizing the dynamics of sustainability at an environmental level and seeking to reduce environmental impacts and operational rationality in its management. It has always been our concern to promote environmental management practices, sensitizing all those who work with us, as well as our clients. In this way they have been reducing our ecological footprint and helping to preserve the planet which is our home. The Ibersol group is becoming more aware all the time, supporting, protecting, undertaking and connecting with the community in favor of a better world. To give back to the world what it gives us every day, the Group participates and contributes to the community and the environment developing positively and keeping the wealth of its resources available for this and future generations. Risk management in the environmental area falls within the remit of the Quality Department, which is responsible for implementing and reinforcing sustainability concepts with a view to adopting more sustainable and efficient practices in all aspects of the Ibersol group's activity. In this context, several measures have been implemented to promote responsible and proactive behavior and procedures that distribute shared value for the business, environment and society, in areas considered to be a priority, namely the Circular Economy and waste management, the preservation of resources and the reduction of the ecological footprint. Also noteworthy is the re-certification in Standard NP EN ISO 14001:2015 - Environmental Management Systems, a certification that attests to the commitment of the entire structure to strengthening its environmental performance in managing the impact of its activities, namely by optimizing the use of natural resources, protecting the environment and reducing the ecological footprint. For the Ibersol group, environmental sustainability is more than a goal, it's a practice in constant development. This is why Ibersol systematically seeks environmentally responsible solutions throughout the organization's value chain. The group is increasingly committed to a vision of a circular economy, which promotes the decoupling of economic growth from increased resource consumption.

This vision has led to the pursuit of rigorous environmental management practices in its different areas. To this end, the Ibersol group invests daily in reducing the environmental impacts of its activities, particularly in terms of:

- Waste production: organic, packaging and used cooking oil;
- Contributions to the Circular Economy: by reducing disposable plastic-based products;
- Consumption of resources: energy and water;
- CO_2 emissions;

and the involvement of all stakeholders in respecting environmental sustainability and the Circular Economy.

Reflecting these concerns, in 2019 the Group renewed its certification in the NP EN ISO 14001:2015 Standard - Environmental Management Systems, a certification that attests to the commitment of the entire structure to strengthening its environmental performance in managing the impact of its activities, by optimizing the use of natural resources, protecting the environment and reducing the ecological footprint. Guaranteeing the principles of efficiency and circularity are elements that Ibersol maintains in their relationship with suppliers and in the development of the processes and products and it was based on these principles that, in 2019, they promoted a Circular Economy session, in a joint action with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Transition.

Customers

Customers are an asset of the utmost importance in modern catering and the Ibersol Group takes this premise very seriously. The trust and preference that characterize the Group are the result of continuous work on customer satisfaction throughout the relationship with the Group's brands. In this context, the Ibersol group dedicates itself daily to in-depth study of each customer profile, endeavoring to identify the best practices for monitoring consumer trends, adapting and changing the different units, both in terms of space, products and services, as well as internal procedures, information systems and new concepts. They also implement campaigns for promoting costumers' environmental behaviour (Figure 42)

Figure 42 - Example of a campaign for promoting customers' environmental behavior[42]

To closely monitor customer experiences, the Group constantly measures and monitors the quality of service in its restaurants and services. Tools capable of providing important indicators of customer satisfaction are regularly applied, namely quality audits, customer satisfaction surveys and the management of complaints received.

Community

Pursuing its own values and principles of sustainability, the Ibersol group maintains an active role in promoting initiatives involving the community in which it operates. Initiatives include:

1. **Porto of the Future**

Launched by Porto City Council with the aim of promoting links between civil society and the school community, the Porto de Futuro program has had the Ibersol group as a partner from the outset.

2. **Junior Achievement**

As part of the 'Porto de Futuro' project, the Junior Achievement Portugal Association challenges the region's schools with training programs focused on entrepreneurship, with the support of partner companies responsible for providing this training for students from primary to secondary school.

3. **Innovation Challenge**

The Innovation Challenge challenges students to solve real problems that companies usually face.

4. **Open Kitchen**

The kitchens of the Ibersol group's brands continue to receive regular visits from groups of children and young people who can get to know the dynamics of the teams and the rigor of the procedures involved in food preparation.

5. **Donation of food and other gifts**

Several of the Ibersol group's brands are associated with multiple initiatives of a social nature, specifically by donating food and equipment to various organizations.

6. **Support for sport and other local initiatives**

The brand supports sports initiatives by donating meals, for example.

7. **Raising awareness of the integration of people with disabilities**

Within the scope of integrating people with disabilities, Ibersol has formed several partnerships with different associations, namely the Salvador Association, the Porto Cerebral Palsy Association, the Portuguese Association of the Disabled and the Gaia Professional Rehabilitation Centre.

Food quality and safety

Food quality and safety are essential values in modern catering. Their full and exhaustive application makes a strong contribution to sustainability. To this end, the group monitors consumer trends and customer expectations so that means and tools are reinforced and perfected every year, thus guaranteeing a consolidated environment of trust for those who visit its restaurants. It is the Ibersol Group's sustainability policy to guarantee its stakeholders the utmost promptness and satisfaction in terms of quality and food safety in all markets, a premise to which the Group responds in an integrated manner with the quality and food safety management systems applied throughout the value chain.

Employees

People's Development at the Ibersol Group has made significant qualitative leaps, gaining increasing prominence in the labor market. Its presence at employability events has been strengthened, with a renewed, bolder image in line with the Ibersol Culture and Values.

1. **Training**

The company has created the Ibersol Academy, a global, inclusive and modern academy capable of equipping employees in various countries with the skills currently most valued in the market. It has a partnership with Porto Business School. A training plan is adapted to each employee so that they can progress in their career.

2. **Satisfaction questionnaire**

To understand employees' needs and perceptions of the organization, the Ibersol group applies a satisfaction questionnaire every year - Tenha a Palavra (Please speak)- which measures the motivation and satisfaction of the professionals at Ibersol's operations in Portugal.

3. **Cohesion and employee motivation**

To maintain group cohesion and employee motivation, ibersol organizes numerous activities such as:

- i-Office Break - a lunch or snack organized by the different businesses, aimed at familiarizing employees with the product range of the Group's various brands and providing a monthly moment for socializing and sharing;
- different Events - for example the Ibersol Group Christmas Dinner, where 25 awards were given to outstanding employees in the most varied areas of intervention.

2.8.5. *Performance Indicators*

The 2019 brought the Ibersol group new indicators that continuous improvement focused on the customer is the right strategy. Evidence of this is the various certifications in the areas of Food Safety, Quality, Environment, and Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, which is a rewarding achievement.

Environmental performance

As far as the environment is concerned, there are countless positive indicators of the activity:

1. **Packaging Waste**

The mission of this system is to guarantee the take-back, recovery and recycling circuit, as well as reducing the volume of waste deposited in landfill. Equally important is the fact that all the Group's units play an active role in the selective separation of waste (paper/cardboard, plastic/metal and glass), a task carried out daily in all the restaurants and also in the offices. It was in this context that in 2019, in partnership with Sociedade Ponto Verde, Ibersol organized several awareness-raising actions with the 'Ibersol Green Day'. 'Always recycle' was the motto of these actions, which involved more than 200 people from the offices in Porto and Lisbon. It has always been their concern to promote environmental management practices, sensitizing all those who work with us, because in small gestures, all of us together can make a difference and contribute to preserving the planet which is our home.

2. **Food Oil**

Likewise, the production of waste cooking oil continued to be managed and monitored, ensuring that 100 per cent of the waste produced was sent, recycled and recovered. For example, in 2019, approximately 600 tons of used cooking oil were sent for biodiesel production.

3. Resource consumption

The Ibersol Group has implemented measures to reduce electricity, gas, and water consumption by modernizing technical systems and enhancing energy efficiency. Key initiatives include: adoption of LED technology in new and existing shops to ensure energy efficiency and longer lifespan while minimizing heating contributions; Light-colored walls and ceilings enhance the use of natural light, reducing the reliance on artificial lighting, Automated Lighting Control, reactive Energy Management, On/Off Control Measures Plan, Energy-efficient refrigeration practices, including using eCubes to stabilize temperatures, resulted in substantial reductions in compressor operation and energy consumption (10-30%), HVAC Adjustments that optimize temperature settings (18ºC in winter and 25ºC in summer) has led to 7% savings in energy consumption for air conditioning. Variable speed drives in exhaust fans reduced energy consumption by 20-25% and extended equipment life, fixed-price energy purchasing from futures markets for optimal pricing resulted in a 1.81% reduction in electricity consumption in 2019 compared to 2018, natural Gas Efficiency: Installation of more efficient equipment contributed to a 0.21% decrease in gas consumption relative to 2018 levels. Overall, these initiatives reflect Ibersol Group's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability.

4. CO2 emissions

The Ibersol group remains committed to reducing CO2 emissions, insisting on finding solutions to minimize the impact of this gas on the atmosphere. Compared to the year 2018, in 2019 emissions of more than 9,000 tons of carbon dioxide were avoided, in total and indirectly.

5. Water

To water consumption and address the economic impacts of rising water prices, several measures have been implemented to reduce the flow, such as installing flow reducers in taps and showers, these devices can reduce water flow by over 50%. They work by introducing air into the water, creating micro-bubbles that maintain the sensation of normal water flow while conserving usage. This approach minimizes water consumption without compromising pressure or user experience.

Product performance

Relating to Product Responsibility (Portugal), 100% of concepts represented in the NP EN certification ISO 22000: 2005 CERTIFICATION, 31 units certified by ISO 22000: 2005, more than + 1,200 external audits safety, more than 2,000 laboratory, 3.51 customer complaints per 100,000 transactions and 178 mystery audits.

Social performance

1. Employees

Regarding training, around 456,206 hours of training were carried out in 2019 for 7307 employees. Based on the results of the 'Have your say' questionnaires, each unit, through its Management and Coordination Teams and respective HR Business Partners, draws up specific action plans to improve its indicators. Also in 2019, Ibersol obtained a 'frankly positive' appraisal from its employees in all the areas analyzed. 'Training' and "Relationship with Management" are the areas that best meet the expectations of the internal public in the same period. In parallel, and to complement the information

obtained, "Have Your Say" also provides a space for sharing, aimed at suggestions for improvement and employee concerns. In 2019, 1,092 free comments were registered.

Regarding employee safety, in 2019 more than 900 audits were carried out to control principles and practices, drills, consultations with employees on Occupational Health and Safety, the revision and updating of the Occupational Health and Safety brochure, training sessions on Occupational Health and Safety.

2. Community

With every moment, the Ibersol Group is more aware, supports, protects, and connects with the community in favor of a better world. To give back to the world what it gives us every day, the Group participates and contributes so that the community and the environment develop positively and develop positively and keep available, in this and future generations, the wealth of its generations and the wealth of its resources. Pursuing its own values and principles of sustainability, the principles, the Ibersol group maintains an active role in promoting initiatives that the community in which it operates. As pioneer of a modern catering concept, characterized by its dedication to excellent customer service and a concern for the permanent its employees, the Ibersol group does not neglect its responsibility its responsibility as a participative agent in the society in which it operates.in the society in which it operates. It is therefore its policy to be society through solidarity actions, donations, training support and other types of initiatives.

2.9. **Blagichka**

Name	Blagichka Ltd.
Subsector	Restaurants
Website	https://blagichka.com
Country	Bulgaria

2.9.1. Background

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is the first zero waste restaurant in Bulgaria, established in 2017, when the founder realized the need for change while carrying another plastic bag with garbage. This experience inspired her to create a restaurant that not only minimizes waste but also sets a new standard for social and environmental responsibility. Here, sustainability and a love of food intertwine with a mission to support disadvantaged youth.

Over the years, the restaurant has provided jobs for 30 young people who have found not only employment but also a chance to build their skills and confidence. Teamwork and social mission are core values that foster both professional development for youth and positive change in society.

In addition to the restaurant, the founder is an active initiator of workshops on sustainable lifestyles, in which about 6000 children from all over the country have participated. These workshops encourage young people to adopt sustainable practices and realize the importance of being responsible towards nature and resources.

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" follows the five principles of the zero waste philosophy: refusal of unnecessary resources, reduce consumption, reuse, recycle and composting. All organic waste is processed in a composter and the resulting compost enriches the soil in the surrounding green spaces. The restaurant also uses alternatives to plastic, such as glass containers and reusable shipping containers (Figure 43).

Figure 43 - Zero waste: Why zero waste?[43]

One of the main goals of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is to support and stimulate local producers. All products used in the restaurant are supplied by producers within a 150 km radius, which not only ensures the freshness and quality of the ingredients but also supports the local economy. In this way, the restaurant combines the philosophy of sustainable development with social responsibility towards the local community.

The restaurant's menu is inspired by Bulgarian traditions and is fully tailored to the seasonality and quality of the products. The food here combines taste, healthiness and respect for nature, which reflects the core values of „Blagichka".

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE is registered as a Class A social enterprise, underlining the commitment to the social and environmental mission. The restaurant's success is a result of the personal dedication of the founder and team who work every day to make a difference - not only in the culinary industry, but also in the way society perceives sustainability and social responsibility.

2.9.2.   Key Principles

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is an example of a sustainable and socially responsible business model that successfully implements practices for conservation and support of disadvantaged youth. The restaurant's core principles are based on sustainability, social responsibility and local support. Here are the characteristics and resources needed to implement best practices:

Staff training

One of the key features of the restaurant is staff training, with the team not relying on already trained staff, but creating specialists themselves. The founder, who is also a teacher by profession, uses her vocation to pass on knowledge and skills to young employees. This approach provides not only employment but also professional development for these young people. The training process is

---

[43] https://blagichka.com/Zero-waste/zashto_zero_waste

structured and includes both theoretical knowledge about sustainable nutrition and practical skills for working in the restaurant industry. This requires appropriate skills development programs, an expert approach and time to work individually with each employee.

Own gardens

The restaurant relies on its own gardens, located 70 km from the site, which provide much of the necessary herbs, fruits and vegetables. This practice guarantees quality, freshness and control over how the products are grown. It requires agricultural resources, well-maintained gardens and well-organized logistics for transporting the produce.

Employment of disadvantaged young people

The restaurant provides jobs exclusively to disadvantaged youth, which requires a suitable working environment. This practice supports the social integration and professional development of employees by creating an environment where youth can learn, develop and succeed. This practice requires patience, social skills and effective communication to create a supportive and motivating work environment.

Zero waste

The zero waste philosophy is fundamental to the restaurant. Every process is organized to minimize waste. Organic waste is composted, reusable packaging is used, and careful planning prevents food waste. Composting equipment, sustainable alternatives to plastics, and staff training are necessary to successfully implement this practice.

Local food

The restaurant is supplied with products from producers within a 150km radius, supporting the local economy and reducing the carbon footprint of transport. Partnering with local producers is a key element of this practice and requires good relationships, timely coordination and a focus on seasonal and high quality products.

Development and inspiration approach

On a voluntary basis, the founder has initiated sustainable lifestyle workshops in which about 6000 children from all over the country have participated. These initiatives inspire young people to adopt sustainable practices and to realize the importance of responsibility towards nature.

Implementing these practices requires physical resources such as gardens, equipment and logistics, but also relies on the personal dedication, expertise and commitment of the team. „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is an example of how sustainability, social responsibility and support for the local community can come together in a successful and inspiring model.

2.9.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main challenges for „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" in implementing sustainable practices are related to securing resources, creating local partnerships and optimizing logistics in the context of a zero waste philosophy.

1. Securing financial resources

One of the first and biggest challenges is finding the financial means to create the commercial part of the restaurant. This includes furnishing and equipment to meet the concept of sustainability. IKEA's

support played a key role, as the company recognized the restaurant's mission and provided what was needed for the launch. This strategic partnership allows Blagicka to focus on its real goals and build its sustainability model.

2. Maintenance and management of own gardens

The restaurant's own gardens, located 70 km away, are an essential part of its sustainability, providing fresh and high-quality herbs, fruits and vegetables. Managing the gardens, however, is a challenge that requires significant resources - agricultural maintenance, transport organization and synchronization with the restaurant's needs. In addition, balancing sustainable production and efficient logistics creates additional pressure on the team.

3. Difficulty in finding suitable suppliers

Another major issue is finding suppliers that meet the restaurant's high standards for local and sustainable production. In the initial stages, the choice was very limited, requiring considerable research and the building of new partnerships. However, over time there has been an increase in the number of suppliers adopting sustainable practices, making the process easier.

4. Minimize the environmental impact of the supply chain

Minimizing the carbon footprint of logistics processes presents a significant challenge. The restaurant's policy of only working with manufacturers within a 150km radius helps reduce transport costs and emissions but requires careful planning and coordination with partners.

Lessons learned:

- The support of strategic partners such as IKEA is crucial to overcome initial financial difficulties and build a solid foundation.

- Managing your own gardens, although challenging, ensures quality and control, which contributes to the sustainability of the whole model.

- Consistency in seeking suppliers with shared values leads to long-term and successful partnerships.

- A local approach to logistics and supplies is an effective way to reduce environmental impact but requires flexibility and commitment.

Despite the challenges, „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" has managed to turn them into a driving force of innovation and development, creating a sustainable model that inspires and proves that social and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

2.9.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

The implemented sustainable practices and social mission of the restaurant „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" lead to significant results and multiple benefits, both for the business, society and the environment:

Results:

1. **Creating employment for disadvantaged young people:** The restaurant has provided employment for 30 disadvantaged young people, supporting them to build vocational skills, work habits and self-confidence. This has significantly improved their quality of life and promoted their integration into society.

2. **Reduce waste to zero:** Thanks to strictly following a zero-waste philosophy, the restaurant has completely minimized its waste, with organic scraps being composted and the remaining materials reused or recycled. This results in a significant contribution to environmental protection.

3. **Supporting local producers:** Collaborating with producers within a 150km radius has led to strong partnerships with local farmers and producers, boosting the local economy and reducing the carbon footprint of transport.

4. **Sustainable supply of own vegetables:** The restaurant's own gardens provide most of the vegetables used, ensuring high quality, freshness and control over the production processes.

5. **Educational initiatives:** The workshops on sustainable lifestyle organized by the founder have involved over 6000 children from all over the country. These events have raised awareness of sustainability and responsible consumption among the younger generation.

Benefits:

1. **Positive environmental impact:** Minimizing waste and using local resources have reduced the restaurant's carbon footprint and contributed to nature conservation.

2. **Social change:** Creating opportunities for disadvantaged young people and their development in a supportive environment has contributed to real social change.

3. **Strengthening the local economy:** Working with local producers has helped strengthen the region's economy and promote sustainable farming practices.

4. **High quality products:** Direct supply from own gardens and local producers ensures quality and freshness of products, which increases customer satisfaction.

5. **Increased sustainability awareness:** Educational initiatives and the restaurant's example as a business model have inspired both customers and partners to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives.

The practices of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" are an example of how sustainability and social responsibility can create real added value. They not only lead to positive results for business but also inspire change in society and care for the environment.

2.9.5.   Performance Indicators

The main indicators of success of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" are manifested in the overall transformation of the approach to sustainable nutrition, social responsibility and the integration of vulnerable groups. The uniqueness of the restaurant is that it goes beyond traditional business models by focusing on building sustainable lifestyles and social change.

The restaurant demonstrates how using a zero-waste philosophy can be not only an environmental solution, but also a resource optimization tool. By turning food waste into edible and delicious products, the restaurant reduces waste to zero and simultaneously increases profits by 20-25%. This proves that sustainability can be cost-effective.

Another important dimension of success is the social mission of the restaurant. Providing 30 disadvantaged young people with employment is a direct contribution to improving their social integration and professional development. This practice shows how business can be a vehicle for social change and support for vulnerable groups.

The educational role of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is also a key indicator. More than 6,000 children from all over the country have participated in workshops on sustainable living organized by the founder. These events not only educate but also inspire the younger generation to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives, encouraging changes in attitudes and behavior.

The restaurant's recognition as a Class A social enterprise highlights its unique contribution to social sustainability. This official recognition is a testament to the importance of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" in the context of the development of the social economy.

„ZERO WASTE" is a visionary model that addresses questions about how we can live more sustainably in the future. By using local resources, supporting the local economy and fully utilizing nature's bounty, the restaurant is not only changing the business model, but also setting an example for how we can reduce pressure on ecosystems and create a better life for generations to come.

2.10. Institute for Promotion of Environmental Protection

Name	Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection, prof. dr. Ana Vovk
Subsector	Education
Website	www.ipvo.si Facebook Ana Vovk
Country	Slovenia

2.10.1. Background

The Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection operates as a non-profit organization for connecting the coexistence of man and nature. Ever since a human developed his/her activities in nature, he/she changed it into an environment that needs more and more help to restore the ecosystem services that enable human life. That's why we develop innovations based on academic knowledge and transfer them into practice to help people live a safe, healthy, self-sufficient life, both for the physical and the spiritual body. Our mission is to connect mankind with nature in the care of planet Earth, which we, as a human species, want to preserve. That's why we developed the Academy of Integrated Self-Care learning program. It is an alternative school for living and gaining practical experience about life today and in the future with all the challenges that surround us. It is a social innovation and responds to the low levels of self-sufficiency in Slovenia, deterioration of the quality of soil, water and biodiversity, dependence on digitization, consumerism and motivation in life. At the Academy, we educate different generations, from school-aged, students and the working and retired generation on how to connect with nature, where we live and how to be self-sufficient in this connection. Only this is an important pillar of life safety. The Academy is an independent school of life based on academic science, which includes lectures and practical work, as well as consulting for users.

Short description: The Academy of Integrated Self-Care is an alternative school for life for the quick and useful acquisition of professional knowledge and their application in everyday life. We found that people have different educational levels, but most of them lack new scientific knowledge about self-care, water, soil, plants and animals, as well as about radiation, the risk of floods, landslides, droughts and diseases. Also, people need knowledge for their own vital life and care for their physical and spiritual bodies, and we offer this at the Academy of Holistic Self-Care. A challenge that innovation solves: The Academy of Holistic Self-Care is a private school for a vital life. It is an alternative way of education for a safe life from the point of view of settlement, food production and processing, one's own health and care for oneself and planet Earth. Current education systems do not yet offer top academic skills adapted to users both in theoretical form and through practical experiences. In innovation, we combine both, follow and supplement new scientific knowledge and transform it into direct use based on 10 years of experience. More and more people have problems with anthropogenic disasters such as floods, droughts, winds, landslides, various diseases and also with themselves. Through innovation, we teach them to coexist with nature and develop their potential for self-realization. Innovation is international. The innovation is designed to raise the consciousness of people to be more self-sufficient and to develop their potential, their mission and be trained to care for planet

Earth. The Academy enables individuals to develop their personal skills, upgrade their skills, interdisciplinary knowledge, opens up new marketing avenues and is therefore a help in creating their business paths. The content of the innovation is completely sustainable. The contents, which are horizontal, are circular economy, efficient use of materials, energy, waste management, care for water, land, biodiversity. A sustainably designed learning program is based on the promotion of savings both for oneself and for imparting these values to others. It also incorporates an ethical aspect, care for oneself, for others and for the planet Earth, because using dowsing it opens communication with the beyond, which gives a person inner insight, activates intuition and, through the transition to the 5th dimension, makes him responsible and righteous, which is what today's world urgently needs.

2.10.2. Key Principles

The academy was chosen as an innovation, and innovation comes from the activation of the higher consciousness of a man, so that people can reconnect with the rhythms of nature, with its limitations, with its gifts, regardless of whether we live in cities or in the countryside. This connection creates a sense of completeness in a person and he experiences vitality in himself, he again feels the motivation for the goals he wants to achieve as his mission, and when he is satisfied with himself, he has fewer physical problems, less need for medical care, more contribution to his own supplies, connects with others, so the last part of the innovation is dedicated to living in bioregions, which are zones of comfortable life when man is part of nature. The idea comes from the trust we have as a human species to take care of our planet Earth and that is the originality of this innovation.

To implement the Academy, it was first necessary to establish the Dola self-sufficiency training ground, which is an activator of self-sufficiency processes in Slovenia and abroad. With ecosystem approaches to food production, care for biodiversity, reuse, circular economy, development of new skills and transfer of academic knowledge into direct practice, and by advocating food security based on a sustainable way of life with nomadic jobs. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground was established as response to the decline of self-sufficiency in Slovenia and the lack of experiential knowledge, as many practices have died out over generations, new real conditions such as long droughts, rains, diseases and the dying of biodiversity and fertile land require different approaches to food production and also different methods of passing on knowledge and experience to different generations with the goal of creating a free, independent and nutritionally secure country. Activating self-sufficiency through ecosystem approaches, which is the basis of the Dole Learning Site, operates on a global level, as many scientific, professional and popular articles, books and films have been written in a foreign language, as well as project and connecting partnerships have been established to share experiences of a sustainable way of life all over the world.

For the development of the Academy, it was necessary to establish an innovative learning environment. It manifests itself in transcending the material, digital, social component, because it is a way of life. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground (Figure 44) shows that we can live in sustainable facilities (yurt, dugout, wooden houses) that have a zero CO_2 footprint, that we can grow food in a completely natural way without pesticides and poisons, which is essential for water conservation and life on earth, that by reusing water we can satisfy all the needs of plants and life and that there is no need for additional burden on water ecosystems, that with the permaculture way of life we can restore life to the soil, which is dying extremely quickly precisely because of conventional methods of cultivation, and that with plant-based oriented nutrition significantly reduces the pressure on our planet Earth and we can also live in less favorable areas, which unfortunately are increasing. So, it

answers the challenge of how we will live in the next decades, because the conditions will be different from today, so it contains a look ahead, so it prepares the way for a vital life in advance.

Figure 44 - Plan of the training ground for visiting tourists[44]

2.10.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main obstacle was obtaining financial resources for the development of the idea, i.e. for the establishment of an open learning environment, the Dola self-care training ground, and the associated equipment for the implementation of the Academy for integral self-care.

The challenge is low awareness and people's awareness of the need for self-care, but in this area, things have changed considerably in recent years, not only in Slovenia but also throughout Europe and the world.

2.10.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Teaching within the Academy is based on the development of new nomadic green workplaces, and with a practical example at the Dola self-care training ground (Figure 45), the entire cycle, including the theoretical basis, is given (the interviewee runs the Academy of integral self-care, where participants get both theoretical and practical advice). The result of this alone is the creation of many new jobs in the countryside. The Academy is designed to raise the consciousness of people to be more self-sufficient and to develop their potential, their mission and be trained to care for planet Earth. Innovation enables individuals to develop their personal skills, upgrade their skills, interdisciplinary knowledge, opens up new ways of marketing and is therefore a help in creating their business paths. The content of the innovation is completely sustainable. Such contents, which are horizontal, are circular economy, efficient use of materials, energy, waste management, care for water, land, biodiversity. A sustainably designed learning program is based on the promotion of savings both for oneself and for imparting these values to others. It also incorporates an ethical aspect, care for oneself, for others and for the planet Earth, because using dowsing it opens communication with the beyond, which gives a person inner insight, activates intuition and makes him responsible and righteous, which is what today's world urgently needs.

---

[44] http://ipvo.si/slo/mednarodni-center-za-samooskrbo

Figure 45 - The training ground for visiting tourists[45]

2.10.5.   Performance Indicators

The main indicators are visible in the changes in people's way of life and the need to connect with nature. The uniqueness of the project is manifested in going beyond the material, digital, social component, because it is a way of life. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground shows that we can live in sustainable facilities (yurt, dugout, wooden houses) that have a zero C02 footprint, that we can grow food in a completely natural way without pesticides and poisons, which is essential for water conservation and life on earth, that by reusing water we can satisfy all the needs of plants and life and that there is no need for an additional burden on water ecosystems, that with the permaculture way of life we can restore life to the soil, which is dying extremely quickly precisely because of conventional methods of cultivation, and that with plant-based oriented nutrition significantly reduces the pressure on our planet Earth and we can also live in less favorable areas, which unfortunately are increasing. So, it answers the challenge of how we will live in the next decades, because the conditions will be different from today, so it contains a look ahead, so it prepares the way for a vital life in advance. Independent science, practical work, the latest findings, the principle of ecoremediation, NBS, comprehensive, physical and spiritual, motivates, includes visualization, brings a vital independent life, is the answer to excessive globalization, is the way to a safe and independent life, upgrades professional skills, is sustainably designed.

---

[45] http://ipvo.si/slo/ucni-poligon-za-samooskrbo-dole

2.11. College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor

Name	College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor (Višja strokovna šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor - contact person Tadej Ljubec)
Subsector	Education
Website	www.sedem.si www.vsgt.si
Country	Slovenia

2.11.1. Background

The mission of their institution is certainly to train the best possible future professionals in catering, tourism and wellness. Future staff who understand and know trends and dictate them. They place great emphasis on a green future, sustainable human resource management and sustainable development. As part of the school, they opened an educational restaurant called Restaurant Sedem (Figure 46). Over the course of nine years, as many as 840 students did internships at the restaurant, gaining first-hand knowledge and thus strengthening the local economy with new energy, views and thinking. As a result, they meet their graduates in almost all catering establishments in the area.

Figure 46 - Educational restaurant[46]

They also point out sustainable tourism as a key direction and effort. Sustainable tourism and education represent a combination of tourism with sustainable values and approaches that educate visitors about the importance of nature conservation, respect for local culture and responsible travel. Sustainable tourism tries to reduce the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and local communities, while at the same time promoting sustainable management of resources and the involvement of the local population.

They highlight the key elements of sustainable tourism, such as the protection of natural and cultural heritage, which means that sustainable tourism strives to protect natural resources and cultural

---

[46] https://educational-training.si/visja-strokovna-sola-za-gostinstvo-in-turizem-maribor/

heritage. This reduces the negative impact on nature and preserves the cultural identity of the destination, which makes it possible to preserve the beauty and uniqueness for future generations. It is very important to support the local economy so that sustainable tourism includes local communities, businesses and products. Instead of large hotel chains, it encourages accommodation with local providers, buying local products and working with local guides, which strengthens the local economy.

They also highlight the reduction of the ecological footprint, which means that sustainable tourism encourages practices such as the use of public transport, waste reduction, energy and water conservation and the use of renewable energy sources. It thereby contributes to reducing the environmental impact of tourists.

In any case, ethical and cultural sensitivity is also important, encouraging visitors to respect local cultures, customs and values and emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior that does not harm the local population or nature.

The role of education in sustainable tourism is essential for the success of sustainable tourism, as it makes tourists, local residents and tourism workers aware of the importance of responsible and sustainable behavior.

Sustainable education in tourism includes the education of tourists. Through educational programs, tourists can learn about the impact of tourism on the environment, responsible behavior in nature parks, respect for local customs and responsible waste management. For example, guides can share knowledge about the importance of nature conservation and highlight how tourists can reduce their impact.

Programs for local communities focus on the local population, who can be trained to sustainably manage tourism activities, manage natural resources and promote their cultural heritage. This makes them active partners in tourism, which strengthens their economic independence and preserves local resources.

Sustainable training of tourism workers is a key. Tourism workers such as guides, hoteliers and catering workers can engage in sustainability education that teaches them how to reduce the environmental impact of their services, creates a positive experience for tourists and promotes sustainable values.

When raising children and young people, it is necessary to include this topic in educational programs. Schools and universities in tourist regions can include topics related to sustainable tourism and environmental protection in their curricula. Children and young people are the key, as they will become responsible tourists and guardians of nature in the future.

Sustainable tourism through education not only reduces the negative impacts of tourism but also plays a key role in raising awareness and promoting a sustainable lifestyle. Educational programs ensure that tourists understand their responsibility towards nature and the local community, thus contributing to sustainable development, conservation of natural resources and a better quality of life in the destinations they visit.

2.11.2. Key Principles

There are certainly several key principles, the most important areas that we need to understand in the educational sphere when working with young people - communication with them is important, as well as their values and habits. It is necessary to stay in trend and in touch with new things; we can partly dictate them ourselves. At the same time, this is a very big challenge, since they are "entry" students,

at an increasingly lower level of knowledge. This fact represents a great challenge, so it is necessary to awaken their will, desire and meaning for all these things that we do at the institution. We present their example of good knowledge transfer practice - the latter takes place as part of several projects, such as table etiquette, when second-year students independently cook for first-year students, and the latter, in addition to a meal, also learn how to dine, according to all the rules. Although this seems like a small, insignificant project, it turned out to be the key to understanding our work and a key foundation in their professional growth. Of course, this is enhanced by a system of exercises that all students complete before entering the restaurant. In this way, they can more easily provide the expected level of service in the restaurant. The restaurant staff is also a very important aspect. They put a lot of emphasis on "home grown staff", which in practice means that all employees in the professional field were once students at the school. Thus, they know the work structure, values and expectations. At the same time, they successfully involve young colleagues in this process. The average age of employees at Restaurant Sedem is 24 or 25 years. They are very proud that for the fifth year in a row they are the recipients of the Michelin recommendation for Restaurant Sedem, especially considering that there is a different shift of students in the restaurant every day, and that there are almost 100 of them during the year.

For sustainable cooperation and development, cooperation with local suppliers and winemakers is necessary, and this aspect is also part of the learning process, where everyone listed is also involved. They enable students to get to know local suppliers, and suppliers to gain access to future customers.

2.11.3.   Barriers and Challenges

For the past three years, we have been facing the biggest problem so far, which is a steady decline in interest in the profession. This is reflected in high school enrolment, which is steadily falling. As a result, we also have problems in higher education.

The problem of staff shortages in hospitality and tourism is an increasingly pressing challenge in many countries, as the industry faces difficulties in attracting and retaining employees. This issue has become even more pronounced following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected tourism destinations and the hospitality industry, prompting many workers to seek more stable employment outside the industry.

The reasons for the lack of staff in hospitality and tourism are manifested in low wages and unattractive working conditions. Hospitality and tourism often offer relatively low wages compared to other sectors, and involve a lot of physical work, long working hours and unstable schedules. These conditions make jobs less attractive to job seekers. Tourism and hospitality are often seasonal, which means that many workers do not have the possibility of long-term employment and a stable income. During periods of the low tourist season, they often encounter work interruptions, which makes it difficult to plan and ensure a regular income. Workers in catering and tourism often change jobs or leave the industry due to demanding work and unattractive conditions. This means that it is more difficult to retain experienced personnel, which directly affects the quality of services. Hospitality and tourism require certain knowledge and skills such as communication, language skills, cultural understanding and quality service. Trained personnel are scarce, and training programs often fail to fill gaps in the labor market. Uncertainty, due to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has drastically affected the tourism sector, as many establishments have closed or restricted operations. This has led to mass redundancies and uncertainty in the industry, which has deterred many from returning to hospitality and tourism. The lack of personnel in hospitality and tourism is a complex problem that

requires multifaceted solutions. By investing in better working conditions, education and digitization, it is possible to create a more stable, more attractive and sustainable working environment that will help improve the industry in the long term.

2.11.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

Persistence, persistence and more persistence, along with flexibility. It is important to understand that every day brings new challenges, and that our "fellow students" are often more sensitive to personal problems than we are. Therefore, they need more support and guidance, included at a wider level. The key is to set clear goals and values that guide them. It is also important to identify key individuals-enthusiasts who will be willing to invest more than just their time in this project. Adequate financial resources were and are necessary for the successful establishment of the system and bridging critical periods in which we may not have been financially stable enough.

2.11.5.   Performance Indicators

One of the key strengths of our mission is working with a large number of students, which enables the spread of influence and the transfer of knowledge between different groups. Students from different backgrounds bring different perspectives, which enriches the experience and increases opportunities for innovation. Also, exchanges with other students from different countries and cultures are an extremely valuable opportunity to develop global competences, expand horizons and strengthen intercultural skills. Connecting with different institutions and cultures around the world allows them to share best practices and expand their influence internationally, enabling sustainable development through different approaches and solutions.

Our education contributes significantly to sustainable development by enabling students to understand the importance of sustainability and its impact in various fields. By focusing on training young people for sustainable practices, education helps to create personnel who will be able to develop and implement sustainable models in various sectors. By incorporating sustainable principles into the educational process, they create a multiplier effect, as their students transfer the acquired knowledge and values to their communities, companies and future generations. Thus, they enable a long-term impact on the sustainable development of the local and wider environment.

2.12.   Ecosapiens

Name	Ecosapiens
Subsector	Training
Website	www.ecosapiens.it
Country	Italy

2.12.1.   Background

Ecosapiens (Figure 47) is a spin-off activity of L'Ovile Social Cooperative, an important cooperative based in Reggio Emilia involved in developing rehabilitative pathways to people in need through housing and job placement. Ecosapiens provides consulting, training, communication and education services in the context of environmental and social sustainability. They design and implement workshops and educational activities for public bodies, companies and schools, on whose behalf they also take care of communication. They engage in education, training, and consulting, marked by environmental and social sustainability and they carry out projects that aspire to generate change in people. Through our proposal of educational experiences for companies, schools, public agencies and citizenship we promote a new way of relating to the environment and people. Their strength is networking among the various recipients of their offerings.

Figure 47 - Ecosapiens website with logo and slogan[47]

---

[47] www.ecosapiens.it

2.12.2. Key Principles

Ecosapiens like the experiential approach, learning by doing that starts with exploration and discovery. They prefer outdoor education because it is more spontaneous, emotional and challenging.

Cooperative learning is important to them, whereby they learn by dialoguing with themselves and other people. They love co-designing together with people, activating them in educational experiences and concrete actions.

They are stakeholder oriented, putting the needs of people and communities at the center.

In all its actions and projects Ecosapiens is committed to contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda goals. To strengthen the message, they spread to schools and citizens, they have adopted and translated the "Good Life Goals" project into more direct and clear terms on how to approach the Sustainable Development Goals.

The main target groups include:

- **Companies:** they offer educational marketing services to enhance the reputation of companies. They help integrate production purposes with the social and environmental function that every business is called upon to fulfil. Investing in environmental sustainability is not just a responsible act; it is also a long-term strategy for business success and competitiveness.

- **Public entities:** they propose projects to public entities to stimulate citizen participation and the enhancement of the territory. With their educational experiences they want to help institutions raise awareness of environmental issues.

- **Schools:** they carry out sustainability and food education workshops and activities with schools of all levels. Their specialization is outdoor education, whereby they take classes to green and natural areas.

- **Citizenship and families**: they respond to concrete needs of families by offering exclusive services such as environmental summer centers. They facilitate bottom-up participation processes in neighborhood communities.

2.12.3. Barriers and Challenges

Ecosapiens works with very different stakeholders in different contexts, these are the challenges most frequently faced:

- **Companies:** several companies approach environmental sustainability or ask to be helped in writing social and sustainability reports for convenience or with the idea of having quick and easy feedback from customers/consumers, it can be challenging to convince them in developing long and sincere sustainability paths. Ecosapiens does not develop and manage projects requiring coated paper and non-recycled paper.

- **Schools**: classrooms are brought to parks and natural reserves, prioritizing an experiential approach over traditional classroom lectures. Additionally, efforts are made to provide teachers with tools and resources, rather than simply offering ready-made activities. The teacher must be motivated to participate and take responsibility. Naturally, there are positive cases, as well as others where establishing a responsible collaboration proves more

challenging. There are teachers who oversee challenging classrooms and students and do not want to take on additional responsibilities.

- **Citizenship and families**: projects involving citizens can be inconsistent because they are often one-off activities (workshops, events for the community). These initiatives require a level of awareness that varies among individuals, as some adults may not be interested in certain activities.

Every social responsibility initiative must demonstrate continuity and should be carried on by consistency; it is not feasible to start an activity and then leave it paused or unfinished. This principle applies to both businesses and the public sector.

An appropriate level of environmental awareness is required, consistent with the demands. Ecosapiens aims to avoid facilitating the production of branded merchandise with the client's logo.

Given the tangible nature of many of Ecosapiens activities and the preference for experiential approaches, the COVID-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge. It was a time of great difficulty, requiring them to continue their work in entirely new ways and to redesign activities from the ground up.

2.12.4. Benefits and Outcomes

In recent years, a wide variety of methodologies have been introduced without excluding any: digital, experiential, and even the inclusion of a philosopher in school activities. The philosopher creates a conceptual map based on ideas developed by the students. There have also been projects focused on material circularity and waste management.

The dimension of territoriality is crucial; work is conducted with local companies, and collaborations are established with experts. Ecosapiens works alongside environmental technicians, chemists, biologists, educators, philosophers, and theatre training specialists. Internally, the development of both specific and cross-disciplinary skills is strongly encouraged.

Companies aiming for environmental sustainability and social responsibility can reap numerous benefits. Investing in environmental sustainability is not just a responsible act; it is also a long-term strategy for business success and competitiveness.

2.12.5. Performance Indicators

Both at the level of public administrations and among businesses and private individuals, it is necessary to collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative indicators, as:

- detailed feedback forms filled out by coordinators or teachers, focusing particularly on the quality of the planning and implementation of the activities carried out;
- number of yearly activities;
- number of participants;
- number of schools and classrooms involved.

Other standards, indicators and requirements can be imposed by the certification processes when required, during the development of projects with companies or public bodies.

Ecosapiens is ISO 14001 certified and provides a management framework for integrating environmental management practices, focusing on environmental protection, pollution prevention, and the reduction of energy and resource consumption.

Conclusions

Sustainability is essential for all industries, but particularly for the hospitality and tourism sectors. Significant developments in sustainable practices are highlighted in this consolidated report, namely in tourism and hospitality management. Growing awareness and proactive measures to reduce negative effects on the environment, the economy, and society are reflected in the dedication to responsible tourism. Therefore, the content of this report is in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To develop this consolidated report, all partners from the consortium developed a research based on desk research and semi-structured interviews to identify good practices in the context of tourism sustainability and hotel management. It was presented 39 good practices: 7 related to policies and practices implemented and that can be adopted by the country as a all, and 32 examples of good practices implemented by companies and institutions individually.

We can conclude that there are several policies and practices implemented in different countries to promote and facilitate the implementation of sustainability practices. These policies seem to be a good strategy for the adoption and maintenance of sustainability practices on tourism and hospitality management.

Regarding the examples of best practices implemented by companies and institutions in the hospitality, tourism, restaurant, and other activity sector, key findings suggested the inclusion of:

Integration of Sustainability Principles: By incorporating environmental, social, and economic factors into their fundamental business plans, management and operations, the highlighted companies exhibit a comprehensive approach to sustainability. Their dedication to lowering environmental impact, interacting with local communities, conserving cultural heritage, and fostering economic viability is indicative of this integrated strategy.

Innovation and Adaptability: The report emphasizes how crucial innovation is to meet the unique opportunities and challenges that each context presents, especially when concerning management of tourism and hospitality activities.

Emphasis on Replicability: The report offers comprehensive insights into the tactics, tools, and methods used, highlighting elements that stakeholders in other areas and situations can modify and apply to promote the global adoption of sustainable tourism practices.

Focus on Measurable Outcomes: The report's featured organizations stress the value of gathering and analyzing data when evaluating the success of their sustainability projects. Performance indicators are used to track advancement, pinpoint areas for development, and illustrate the observable advantages of sustainable practices in tourism and hospitality management. Examples of these include the management and planning of energy and water use, waste reduction measurements, and guest satisfaction surveys.

Zero-Waste as an Emerging Trend: The increased interest in zero-waste models and the possibility of sharing best practices and knowledge in tourism and hospitality management across geographic borders are acknowledged in the report.

Challenges and obstacles have surfaced when discussing sustainability in tourism and hospitality management. Numerous of these issues are prevalent in various industries, underscoring the intricacy and promise of sustainable tourism programs.

One issue is the sustainability of the workforce, especially in internal locations with few services. Furthermore, many still find it difficult to involve target groups in sustainable activities. However,

modest first actions—such as encouraging visitors to recycle or doing away with disposable items in the hospitality industry—act as springboards for more significant behavioral shifts.

The challenge of overseeing projects with a wide variety of stakeholders is a major obstacle. This can make coordination more difficult and necessitate the use of several communication channels, but it can also work to the area's advantage by promoting it and exposing the most genuine local customs for a fully engaging visitor experience.

Additionally, it is important to implement communication and awareness-raising initiatives, whether they take the form of student education programs or promoting environmentally friendly visitor behavior. Businesses are coming up with creative ways to appeal to sustainability, such as creating award programs for sustainable behavior or providing menus that feature local and plant-based items.

Another recurring theme is the attempt to improve the relationship between communities and locations, whether through educational programs, the marketing of regional goods, or tour operators' tourism packages.

Lastly, creating networks and exchanging best practices and experiences have been shown to be crucial tactics for conquering obstacles. In addition to encouraging mutual support, collaborative activities facilitate knowledge sharing, opening the door for a tourist model that is sustainable and closely aligned with the assets and values of local communities.

The successful actions carried out by the featured organizations support the report's conclusion that the shift to sustainable and responsible management of tourism and hotels is both feasible and advantageous and it is aligned with the SGD's. Despite the difficulties, the research highlights the value of constant innovation, teamwork, and dedication to continuous progress. The report hopes to encourage and enable players in the tourism sector to embrace sustainability management as a catalyst for positive change and help create a more economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable future by disseminating these best practices.

References

ACN (2024). Territori ordena retirar 89 'bungalows' y derribar cuatro piscinas del cámping Ballena Alegre de Sant Pere Pescador. https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20240509/territori-retirar-bungalows-derribar-cuatro-piscinas-camping-ballena-alegre-sant-pere-pescador-102150482

Alpha Bank, (2020). Insights, Alpha Banck Economic Research. https://www.alpha.gr/-/media/alphagr/files/group/agores/insights/2022/insights_tourism_052022.pdf.

Aphrodite Hills Resort. (2023). About Us. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com.

Banjac, Marinko (2020). Uvod v kvalitativne metode zbiranja podatkov. Opazovanje, intervju in fokusna skupina. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, Založba FDV.

B Corporation Certification Standards for Asia. Retrieved from https://bcorporation.net/certification/asia on December 16, 2024.

Bhutan Travel Bureau. Bhutan Tourism Policy. https://www.bhutantravelbureau.com/getting-to-bhutan/bhutan-tourism-policy/.

Bhutan Tourism Monitor, (2018). https://www.tourism.gov.bt/uploads/attachment_files/tcb_sZjMpdQJ_BTM_2018.pdf.

Blagichka. (n.d.). Homepage. Blagichka. Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://blagichka.com

Blue Flag initiative. https://www.blueflag.global/.

Blue Flags, (2022). https://www.visitgreece.gr/blog/visit-greece/1416/blue-flags-2022/.

Blue Flag Award, Retrieved from https://www.blueflag.global on December 10, 2024.

Bohdanowicz, P. (2006). Implementing sustainability in service operations at Scandic Hotels. ResearchGate. Retrieved December 4, 2024, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247823783_Implementing_Sustainability_in_Service_Operations_at_Scandic_Hotels

Bohdanowicz, P., Simanic, B., & Martinac, I. (2004). Scandic hotels' sustainable business practices. Green the Hotels. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from http://www.greenthehotels.com/eng/BohdanowiczSimanicMartinacScandicSB04.pdf

Càmping La Ballena Alegre (2022). Declaració medioambiental. https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/wp-content/uploads/Declaracio%CC%81-medi-ambiental-2020web.pdf

Càmping La Ballena Alegre Costa Brava (2021). Responsible holidays at La Ballena Alegre Campiste. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBlzZW-Qvek

Catalunya (2015). Catalonia, a responsible tourism destination. https://act.gencat.cat/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Turisme_responsable_ENG.pdf

Casale Panayiotis GSTC Certification Announcement, Retrieved from https://ucsl.eu/technews/012 on December 15, 2024.

Casale Panayiotis Sustainability Management Plan (2023), Retrieved on December 15th 2024, from https://www.casalepanayiotis.com/media/pdfs/casale-sustainability-management-system-web-version-en-2025.pdf

CETT (2022). Toni Castellar (Ballena Alegre): "Estando de vacaciones también se puede contribuir a la preservación del planeta". https://www.cett.es/es/camping-sostenibilidad-ballena-alegre-alimara

CETT (2023). I CETT Smart Tourism Summit Barcelona - Cinta Massó (Hotel Verse). https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wRUOrRf1PM

CETT (2024). Oferim una manera diferent de fidelitzar als hostes i visitants, mitjançant activitats i rutes culturals creades a mida dels seus interessos. https://www.cett.es/ca/noticia-premis-emprenedors-identify

CETT (n.d.). "La tecnología y la innovación están en el ADN de Hotelverse" https://www.cett.es/es/noticia-entrevista-hotelverse

CHSE Certification Guidelines, Ministry of Tourism, Indonesia. Retrieved from https://chse.kemenparekraf.go.id/en/guidelines on December 14, 2024.

Community Impact Report. (2022). Aphrodite Hills Resort: Sustainability and Community Engagement. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/reports

CityAm, Yotel checks in for global growth with $250m private equity backing. https://www.cityam.com/272667-yotel-checks-global-growth-250m-private-equity-backing/.

Computing UK, Case Study-Yotel, https://www.computing.co.uk/feature/1843555/case-study-yotel.

Costa Navarino, LocaL Delicacies. https://www.costanavarino.com/local-delicacies/.

Costa Navarino, Authentic Experiences. https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/.

Costa Navarino, Sustainability Development. https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/.

Corrêa, C., & Kitano, C. (2015). Gamification in tourism: Analysis of Brazil Quest Game. e-Review of Tourism, 6, 1-5.

Cyprus Tourism Organization. (2022). Regional Conservation and Tourism Initiatives. Retrieved from https://www.visitcyprus.com

Daily Bhutan, Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future: Bhutan's Tourism Turns 50. https://www.dailybhutan.com/article/honoring-the-past-embracing-the-future-bhutans-tourism-turns-50.

DayOne Premios Emprende (2023). Entrevista Hotelverse. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdO-y_cPOgY

Department of Town Planning and Housing (2020). Laws and regulations for listed buildings. Ministry of Interior. Retrieved December 27, 2024, https://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/tph/tph.nsf/lawsregulations_en/lawsregulations_en?opendocument

Desa Potato Head Sustainability Report (2023). Retrieved from https://seminyak.potatohead.co/journal/sustainability-report-2023 on December 12, 2024.

Dimitrios Buhalis, School of Management Studies for the Service Sector, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 7XH,UK. https://sete.gr/files/Media/Ebook/TourisminGreeceBuhalisinCurrentIssues.pdf.

Direção-Geral do Consumidor, & AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (2023). Guia – Regras e Boas Práticas na Restauração. https://magazineahresp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Guia-Regras-e-boas-praticas-na-restauracao_2023.pdf.

Eco Hotel. (n.d.). Homepage. Eco Hotel. Retrieved November 20, 2024, from https://eco-hotel.bg/homepage/

Edge Venues. (n.d.). Sustainability is beyond "hang up your towel" at Scandic Hotels. Edge Venues. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from https://portal.edgevenues.com/community/sustainability-is-beyond-hang-up-your-towel-at-scandic-hotels

Employee Engagement Report. (2022). Staff Satisfaction and Engagement Metrics. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/reports

Energy Saving Trust. (2023). Energy Efficiency in Hospitality. Retrieved from https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

European Commission. (2023). Sustainable Tourism Practices in Europe. Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/tourism

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism: https://www.federparchi.it/pagina.php?id=27

FeelViana Sport Hotel (2024). Sustentabilidade 2024: Boas práticas e Plano de Ação. https://feelviana.com/site/public/paginas/sustainability-en_1722435606.pdf.

FeelViana Sport Hotel | Sustainability. https://feelviana.com/en/sustainability.

FeelViana Sport Hotel. https://feelviana.com/.

Fundação Gil Eannes (1998). https://www.fundacaogileannes.pt.

G A I M Pertiwi et al. (2019). IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 351, 012005.Retrieved from https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1755-1315/351/1/012005 on December 10, 2024.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org on December 15, 2024.

Green Hospitality Journal. (2022). Engaging Guests and Staff in Sustainability. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 34(3), 22-36.

Greenview (2023) Retrieved December 27, 2024, https://greenview.sg

Grupo Ibersol. GRUPO IBERSOL. https://www.ibersol.pt

Grupo Ibersol (2019). GRUPO IBERSOL. https://www.ibersol.pt/investidores/relatorio-sustentabilidade/2019/Ibersol_RS_2019_pt/

GSTC Accreditation for Certification Bodies. Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org/accreditation/ on December 19, 2024.

GSTC Criteria, Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/ on December 4, 2024.

Guest Engagement Strategies. (2022). Incentives for Sustainable Practices in Hotels. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15(4), 87-101.

Guest Feedback Systems. (2022). Importance of Feedback in Hospitality Sustainability. Journal of Tourism Studies, 28(1), 45-56.

Guide to Sustainable Travel Certifications, Retrieved on December 15, 2023, from https://www.cntraveler.com/story/sustainable-travel-certifications-guide

Hammer, J., & Pivo, G. (2017). The Triple Bottom Line and Sustainable Economic Development Theory and Practice. Economic Development Quarterly, 31(1), 25–36. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891242416674808

Hilton. (n.d.). Homepage. Hilton. Retrieved November 21, 2024, from https://www.hilton.com/

HotelVerse (2022). HotelVerse. https://hotelverse.tech/

HotelVerse (2023). The reinvention of hotel bookings: Digital Twins for a luxury experience. https://hotelversewebcomm.azurewebsites.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EN-Salobre-Case-Study.pdf

Icària iniciatives socials (2024). INOUT Hostel Centro Especial de Trabajo. https://www.icaria.biz/

Identify APP (2023). Identify Travel - Pitch BTM Lloret de Mar 2023. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2DSZTece7U

Identify Travel (2024). Tecnología para el turismo de hoy. https://www.identifytravel.app/

INOUT Hostel (2020). Mención honorifica. https://www.inouthostel.com/es/menci%C3%B3-honorifica

INOUT Hostel (2024). INOUT Hostel Barcelona. https://www.inouthostel.com/en

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). Ambiental Sustainability. https://www.inouthostel.com/en/sostenibilitat-ambiental

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). Biosphere Sustainable. https://www.biospheresustainable.com/es/comunidad/inout-hostel/518

International Clean Marina Certification, Retrieved from https://cleanmarina.org on December 12, 2024.

International Energy Agency. (2022). Renewable Energy Use in Hotels. Retrieved from https://www.iea.org

ISO Certification Overview, Retrieved from https://www.iso.org/iso-standards.html on December 9, 2024.

La Fageda Fundació (2022). La Fageda, compromesa amb la sostenibilitat Resum d'accions 2022. https://www.fageda.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ODS_la_fageda_2022.pdf

Limassol Marina Official Website, Retrieved from https://www.limassolmarina.com on December 1, 2024.

Local Sourcing Initiative. (2022). Aphrodite Hills Resort's Partnership with Local Farmers. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/initiatives

Mediterranean Marine Awards, Retrieved from https://www.mediterraneanmarineawards.com on December 26, 2024.

Nación Innovación (2023). Cultura e innovación #NaciónInnovación391. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inWOp4Stb60

NEYA Porto Hotel (2022). Relatório de Sustentabilidade | ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance. https://porto.neyahotels.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/relatorio-esg-neya-porto-2022-final_low-300x169.pdf.

NEYA Porto Hotel (2023). Quarto Solidário. https://porto.neyahotels.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/neya-hotels-quarto-solidario.pdf.

NEYA Porto Hotel. https://porto.neyahotels.com/

Nyaupane, G. P., & Timothy, D., (2016). Bhutan's Low-volume, High-yield Tourism: The Influence of Power and Regionalism. Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally.

Performance Metrics in Hospitality. (2023). Measuring Sustainability Performance. Hospitality Management Review, 29(2), 15-28.

Renewable Energy in Cyprus, Retrieved from https://www.energy.gov.cy on December 15, 2024.

Responsible Tourism Partnership. (2021). Responsible Luxury: Balancing Guest Expectations and Environmental Impact. Retrieved from https://www.responsibletourismpartnership.org

Red Española de Albergues Juveniles (2023). Albergues REAJ ganadores de 16.000€ en ayudas para proyectos de sostenibilidad y accesibilidad. https://noticias.reaj.com/albergues-reaj-ganadores-de-16-000e-en-ayudas-para-proyectos-de-sostenibilidad-y-accesibilidad/

Richards, G. (2021). Cultural Sustainability in Tourism. Annals of Tourism Research, 39(1), 89-103.

Roiback (n.d.). Hotelverse – Partners. Roiback. https://en.roiback.com/partners/hotelverse

Russell B. Williams, De Gruyter, 10 Pokemon Go: Serious Leisure and Game-Playing Tourists. https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.21832/9781845418236-012/html?lang=en&srsltid=AfmBOoptSjdGYSb33Yw8SstA4aXjS5Wq-6KMiI9lVfAPN0RLjB6Xpqvy

Sailer, M., Hense, J. U., Mayr, S. K. & Mandl, H. (2017). How gamification motivates: an experimental study of the effects of specific game design elements on psychological need satisfaction. Computers in Human Behavior, Vol. 69, pp. 371-380.

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). Homepage. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved December 5, 2024, from http://www.scandichotelsgroup.com

Scandic Hotels. (n.d.). Our commitment. Scandic Hotels. Retrieved November 29, 2024, from https://www.scandichotels.com/work-with-us/our-commitment

Scandic Hotels. (n.d.). Sustainability case study. International Hotel and Restaurant Association. Retrieved November 29, 2024, from https://www.ih-ra.org/public/images/document/scandic-sustainability-case.study_.pdf

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). Environmental policy: Scandic Hotels Group AB (publ). Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved December 3, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/files/Reports/Policies/Environmental-Policy-Scandic-Hotels-Group-AB-publ.pdf

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). Governance and reports: Environmental policy. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/sustainability/governance-and-reports/environmental-policy/

Scandic Hotels Group. (2024). Environmental policy. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved November 18, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/files/Reports/Policies/2024/Scandic-Policy_Environmental-Policy_ENG.pdf

Seaborn, K. and Fels, D.I. (2015). *Gamification in theory and action: a survey*. International Journal of Human-Computer Studies, Vol. 74, pp. 14-31.

Selfbook, Yotel Grows Direct Booking and Rewards Loyal Guests. https://selfbook.com/case-study/yotel-grows-direct-bookings.

Six Senses Douro Valley. Six Senses History. https://www.sixsenses.com/en/about-us/history/.

Six Senses Douro Valley. Six Senses Sustainability. https://www.sixsenses.com/en/sustainability/.

Smart Travel News (2024). Identify Travel: innovación digital al servicio del turismo cultural. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nk-vX5au9F4

Smith, A. (2021). Costs and Challenges of Implementing Eco-Friendly Technologies in Hotels. Journal of Hospitality Management, 31(3), 52-64.

Sustainability Metrics in Hospitality. Retrieved from https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/resources/sustainability-metrics on December 18, 2024.

Sustainable Hotel News. (n.d.). Scandic recertifies hotels according to tougher requirements. Sustainable Hotel News. Retrieved November 20, 2024, from https://sustainablehotelnews.com/scandic-recertifies-hotels-according-to-tougher-requirements/

Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. (2023). Industry Standards and Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism. Retrieved https://www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org

Sustainable Practices in Marinas, Retrieved from https://www.sustainablemarinas.org on December 18, 2024.

Sustainable Travel International. (2023). The Growing Demand for Sustainable Tourism. Retrieved from https://www.sustainabletravel.org

Sustentabilidade Social, Económica e Ambiental do Hotel FeelViana: https://odslocal.pt/projetos/sustentabilidade-social-economica-e-ambiental-do-hotel-feelviana-1544?lang=EN.

The Arbinger Institute (2019). La Fageda | Turn the World Outward. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoI052QdkM8

The Diplomat, Bhutan's Tourism Dilemma: Balancing Economy and Sustainability. https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/bhutans-tourism-dilemma-balancing-economy-and-sustainability/.

The Guardian, Urban gamification: Can Pokemon GO transform our public spaces?. https://www.theguardian.com/cities/2016/jul/22/urban-gamification-pokemon-go-transform-public-spaces.

The Globe and Mail, New wave of low-cost lodging trades shabby for stylish. https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/travel/travel-news/new-wave-of-low-cost-lodging-trade-shabby-for-stylish/article17853738/.

TripAdvisor, The Westin Resort, Costa Navarino. https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g11805595-d1569170-Reviews-The_Westin_Resort_Costa_Navarino-Costa_Navarino_Messenia_Region_Peloponnese.html.

Tobon, S., Ruiz-Alba, J. L. & García-Madariaga, J. (2020). *Gamification and online consumer decisions: is the game over?*. Decision Support Systems, Vol. 128, p. 113167.

Travel, Blue Flag Honours: Greece Clinches Second Place Globally. https://www.travel.gr/en/how-to-travel-en/travel-news-en/blue-flag-honours-greece-clinches-second-place-globally/.

The Diplomat, Bhutan's Tourism Dilemma: Balancing Economy and Sustainability. https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/bhutans-tourism-dilemma-balancing-economy-and-sustainability/.

Tourism Council of Buthan (2018). Bhutan Tourism Monitor 2018. https://www.tourism.gov.bt/uploads/attachment_files/tcb_xx8r_BTM%202018%20_final.pdf

Turismo de Portugal (2021). Empresas Turismo 360. https://empresasturismo360.turismodeportugal.pt/EmpTur360/.

Unites Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Sustainable Development Group.

UNTWTO, Gamification in Tourism: Pokemon Go and Beyond. https://medium.com/@unwto/gamification-in-tourism-pok%C3%A9mon-go-and-beyond-2045acea2c1e.

UNFCCC Official Documentation. Retrieved from https://unfccc.int/documents on December 15, 2024.

UNWTO. (2020). Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism. United Nations World Tourism Organization. Retrieved from https://www.unwto.org

Waste Management Association. (2023). Waste Reduction Strategies in Hospitality. Journal of Environmental Management, 44(2), 31-46.

Waterwise. (2023). Water Conservation Techniques for Hotels. Retrieved from https://www.waterwise.org.uk

World Golf Awards.https://worldgolfawards.com/award/world-best-emerging-golf-destination/2022.

Yotel Hotel, Yotel Pad. https://www.yotel.com/en/yotelpad-hotels.

Yotel Hotel, Yotel Air Hotels. https://www.yotel.com/en/yotelair-hotels.

Annex A - Country Report of Bulgaria

GreenHost - Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: Euro-Alliance Ltd.

Country Bulgaria

Date: December 2024

Contents

3. Introduction

The present study was conducted in Bulgaria through interviews of various representatives of the hotel and restaurant business. Five representatives from the travel, accommodation and food service sector participated in the study. Three of the suppliers are from the tourism and hospitality industry, and two are from the restaurant industry. Two of the service providers are part of international tourist chains Hotel Hilton Sofia and Scandic Hotels Group.

The aim of the study was to collect information and summarize the results on the best practices and methods applied for environmental protection in the activities of the interviewed representatives. The data provided identify the ideas, principles and measures of the interviewed companies for responsible use of natural resources and environmental protection, as well as socially responsible behaviour towards employees and society.

The ultimate goal of the study is to present how the negative effect of human activities on the environment and society can be reduced by integrating sustainable practices in the tourism sector.

Such examples of good practice not only raise awareness of environmental issues, but also prove that sustainable initiatives are feasible and can make a significant positive difference in the long term. This way we can inspire other organisations and users to rethink their activities to reduce human impact on the environment and promote sustainable change in society.

In the preparation of the report related to obtaining responses to examples of good practice, we used a structured interview with the same questions to all respondents. The structured interview method is considered to be one of the most common and effective data collection methods. The interview is particularly useful for obtaining insightful and in-depth information as it allows the researcher to gain insight into the respondent's personal experiences and opinions. This approach allows for easier comparison of responses and statistical analysis.

4. Good Practice 2: Blagichka - ZERO WASTE

Identification

Name	Blagichka Ltd.
Subsector	Restaurants
Website	https://blagichka.com

4.1. Background

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is the first zero waste restaurant in Bulgaria, established in 2017, when the founder realized the need for change while carrying another plastic bag with garbage. This experience inspired her to create a restaurant that not only minimizes waste, but also sets a new standard for social and environmental responsibility. Here, sustainability and a love of food intertwine with a mission to support disadvantaged youth.

Over the years, the restaurant has provided jobs for 30 young people who have found not only employment but also a chance to build their skills and confidence. Teamwork and social mission are core values that foster both professional development for youth and positive change in the society.

In addition to the restaurant, the founder is an active initiator of workshops on sustainable lifestyles, in which about 6000 children from all over the country have participated. These workshops encourage young people to adopt sustainable practices and realise the importance of being responsible towards nature and resources.

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" follows the five principles of the zero waste philosophy: refusal of unnecessary resources, reduce consumption, reuse, recycle and composting. All organic waste is processed in a composter and the resulting compost enriches the soil in the surrounding green spaces. The restaurant also uses alternatives to plastic, such as glass containers and reusable shipping containers.

One of the main goals of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is to support and stimulate local producers. All products used in the restaurant are supplied by producers within a 150 km radius, which not only ensures the freshness and quality of the ingredients, but also supports the local economy. In this way, the restaurant combines the philosophy of sustainable development with social responsibility towards the local community.

The restaurant's menu is inspired by Bulgarian traditions and is fully tailored to the seasonality and quality of the products. The food here combines taste, healthiness and respect for nature, which reflects the core values of „Blagichka".

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE is registered as a Class A social enterprise, underlining the commitment to the social and environmental mission. The restaurant's success is a result of the personal dedication of the founder and team who work every day to make a difference - not only in the culinary industry, but also in the way society perceives sustainability and social responsibility.

4.2. Key Principles

„Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is an example of a sustainable and socially responsible business model that successfully implements practices for conservation and support of disadvantaged youth. The restaurant's core principles are based on sustainability, social responsibility and local support. Here are the characteristics and resources needed to implement best practices:

Staff training

One of the key features of the restaurant is staff training, with the team not relying on already trained staff, but creating specialists themselves. The founder, who is also a teacher by profession, uses her vocation to pass on knowledge and skills to young employees. This approach provides not only employment but also professional development for these young people. The training process is structured and includes both theoretical knowledge about sustainable nutrition and practical skills for working in the restaurant industry. This requires appropriate skills development programmes, an expert approach and time to work individually with each employee.

Own gardens

The restaurant relies on its own gardens, located 70 km from the site, which provide much of the necessary herbs, fruits and vegetables. This practice guarantees quality, freshness and control over how the products are grown. It requires agricultural resources, well-maintained gardens and well-organised logistics for transporting the produce.

Employment of disadvantaged young people

The restaurant provides jobs exclusively to disadvantaged youth, which requires a suitable working environment. This practice supports the social integration and professional development of employees by creating an environment where youth can learn, develop and succeed. This practice requires patience, social skills and effective communication to create a supportive and motivating work environment.

Zero waste

The zero waste philosophy is fundamental to the restaurant. Every process is organized to minimize waste. Organic waste is composted, reusable packaging is used, and careful planning prevents food waste. Composting equipment, sustainable alternatives to plastics, and staff training are necessary to successfully implement this practice.

Local food

The restaurant is supplied with products from producers within a 150km radius, supporting the local economy and reducing the carbon footprint of transport. Partnering with local producers is a key element of this practice and requires good relationships, timely coordination and a focus on seasonal and high quality prodicts.

Development and inspiration approach

On a voluntary basis, the founder has initiated sustainable lifestyle workshops in which about 6000 children from all over the country have participated. These initiatives inspire young people to adopt sustainable practices and to realise the importance of responsibility towards nature.

Implementing these practices requires physical resources such as gardens, equipment and logistics, but also relies on the personal dedication, expertise and commitment of the team. „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is an example of how sustainability, social responsibility and support for the local community can come together in a successful and inspiring model.

4.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main challenges for „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" in implementing sustainable practices are related to securing resources, creating local partnerships and optimizing logistics in the context of a zero waste philosophy.

1. Securing financial resources

One of the first and biggest challenges is finding the financial means to create the commercial part of the restaurant. This includes furnishing and equipment to meet the concept of sustainability. IKEA's support played a key role, as the company recognized the restaurant's mission and provided what was needed for the launch. This strategic partnership allows Blagicka to focus on its real goals and build its sustainability model.

2. Maintenance and management of own gardens

The restaurant's own gardens, located 70 km away, are an essential part of its sustainability, providing fresh and high quality herbs, fruits and vegetables. Managing the gardens, however, is a challenge that requires significant resources - agricultural maintenance, transport organisation and synchronisation with the restaurant's needs. In addition, balancing sustainable production and efficient logistics creates additional pressure on the team.

3. Difficulty in finding suitable suppliers

Another major issue is finding suppliers that meet the restaurant's high standards for local and sustainable production. In the initial stages, the choice was very limited, requiring considerable research and building of new partnerships. However, over time there has been an increase in the number of suppliers adopting sustainable practices, making the process easier.

4. Minimise the environmental impact of the supply chain

Minimising the carbon footprint of logistics processes presents a significant challenge. The restaurant's policy of only working with manufacturers within a 150km radius helps reduce transport costs and emissions, but requires careful planning and coordination with partners.

Lessons learned:

- The support of strategic partners such as **IKEA** is crucial to overcome initial financial difficulties and build a solid foundation.

- Managing your own gardens, although challenging, ensures quality and control, which contributes to the sustainability of the whole model.

- Consistency in seeking suppliers with shared values leads to long-term and successful partnerships.

- A local approach to logistics and supplies is an effective way to reduce environmental impact, but requires flexibility and commitment.

Despite the challenges, „**Blagichka - ZERO WASTE"** has managed to turn them into a driving force of innovation and development, creating a sustainable model that inspires and proves that social and environmental responsibility can go hand in hand.

4.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The implemented sustainable practices and social mission of the restaurant „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" lead to significant results and multiple benefits, both for the business, society and the environment:

Results:

6. Creating employment for disadvantaged young people
   The restaurant has provided employment for 30 disadvantaged young people, supporting them to build vocational skills, work habits and self-confidence. This has significantly improved their quality of life and promoted their integration into society.

7. Reduce waste to zero
   Thanks to strictly following a zero-waste philosophy, the restaurant has completely minimized its waste, with organic scraps being composted and the remaining materials reused or recycled. This results in a significant contribution to environmental protection.

8. Supporting local producers
   Collaborating with producers within a 150 km radius has led to strong partnerships with local farmers and producers, boosting the local economy and reducing the carbon footprint of transport.

9. Sustainable supply of own vegetables
   The restaurant's own gardens provide most of the vegetables used, ensuring high quality, freshness and control over the production processes.

10. Educational initiatives
    The workshops on sustainable lifestyle organized by the founder have involved over 6000 children from all over the country. These events have raised awareness of sustainability and responsible consumption among the younger generation.

Benefits:

6. Positive environmental impact
   Minimising waste and using local resources have reduced the restaurant's carbon footprint and contributed to nature conservation.

7. Social change
   Creating opportunities for disadvantaged young people and their development in a supportive environment has contributed to real social change.

8. Strengthening the local economy
   Working with local producers has helped strengthen the region's economy and promote sustainable farming practices.

9. High quality products
   Direct supply from own gardens and local producers ensures quality and freshness of products, which increases customer satisfaction.

10. Increased sustainability awareness
    Educational initiatives and the restaurant's example as a business model have inspired both customers and partners to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives.

The practices of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" are an example of how sustainability and social responsibility can create real added value. They not only lead to positive results for the business, but also inspire change in society and care for the environment.

4.5. Performance Indicators

The main indicators of success of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" are manifested in the overall transformation of the approach to sustainable nutrition, social responsibility and the integration of vulnerable groups. The uniqueness of the restaurant is that it goes beyond traditional business models by focusing on building sustainable lifestyles and social change.

The restaurant demonstrates how using a zero-waste philosophy can be not only an environmental solution, but also a resource optimization tool. By turning food waste into edible and delicious products, the restaurant reduces waste to zero and simultaneously increases profits by 20-25%. This proves that sustainability can be cost-effective.

Another important dimension of success is the social mission of the restaurant. Providing 30 disadvantaged young people with employment is a direct contribution to

improving their social integration and professional development. This practice shows how business can be a vehicle for social change and support for vulnerable groups.

The educational role of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" is also a key indicator. More than 6,000 children from all over the country have participated in workshops on sustainable living organised by the founder. These events not only educate but also inspire the younger generation to adopt sustainable practices in their daily lives, encouraging changes in attitudes and behaviour.

The restaurant's recognition as a Class A social enterprise highlights its unique contribution to social sustainability. This official recognition is a testament to the importance of „Blagichka - ZERO WASTE" in the context of the development of the social economy.

„ZERO WASTE" is a visionary model that addresses questions about how we can live more sustainably in the future. By using local resources, supporting the local economy and fully utilizing nature's bounty, the restaurant is not only changing the business model, but also setting an example for how we can reduce pressure on ecosystems and create a better life for generations to come.

4.6. Picture

Blagichka. (n.d.). Zero waste: Why zero waste? Blagichka. Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://blagichka.com/Zero-waste/zashto_zero_waste

5. Good Practice 2: Moravsko selo Hotel and Farm

Identification

Name	Hotel and farm „Moravsko selo"
Subsector	Restaurant and hotel
Website	https://eco-hotel.bg/homepage/

5.1. Background

The Smilen family established their farm more than twenty years ago, and the place has gradually grown into a tourist eco-complex. The hotel was established on an area of 15 acres at an altitude of 1100 m in Pirin Mountain. The challenges of the times steered the family towards organic farming and then into the restaurant and hotel business, but in their business approach they have always strived for a circular economy and resource use, just as in their household. The New York Times rated the hotel sixth in the world in a sustainability ranking. The family's business model is linked to the family's lifestyle and mindset and forms a natural closed cycle - from farm to fork, providing delicious food for hotel guests, a welcoming natural environment to match the inspiring views of the northern slope of Pirin Mountain, and last but not least, optimising its profits by making food and agricultural residues more cost-effective and striving for a zero-waste business model.

The Smilen family have built „Moravsko selo" as a sustainable eco-complex with a vision of harmony between nature and man. The main mission of the complex is the promotion of organic farming and the integration of sustainable development principles in tourism. Long-term goals include:

- Development of eco-education by organizing workshops and seminars for visitors and the local community.
- Support organic farming as a model for sustainable land and resource management.
- Creating sustainable jobs and developing the local economy.
- Significant social impact:
- Provide jobs for local residents, with an emphasis on training and professional development.

- Organizing educational initiatives for guests related to organic farming, sustainable practices and healthy living.

5.2.   Key Principles

The zero waste concept at Moravsko selo includes a direct link from the production of organic vegetables and fruits to their processing into food - canned, dried, frozen and fresh meals in the hotel restaurant. Food waste from processing is recycled on a small animal farm attached to the farm, which also supplies meat to the restaurant. The complex does not use any plastic bottles or packaging, instead only spring water from its own water source, juices and other beverages of its own production, as well as unpacked tea hand-picked from Pirin and Rila mountains are available in glass bottles. Manure from the livestock farm is used in vegetable production, thus closing the food chain. No food waste is generated from the farm, the kitchen and the accommodation service, and food loss is minimised.

The energy needed to power the hotel and restaurant is mostly provided by natural gas, while a photovoltaic power plant is installed, whose energy is used entirely for its own needs.

A very important aspect of Moravsko selo is the food offered in the restaurant. The focus there is entirely on sustainability. This sustainability consists in offering food whose raw ingredients are produced on the farm. This reduces the carbon footprint of the entire menu, cutting down on any harmful emissions for delivery and storage in warehouses. As well as guaranteeing the freshness and provenance of the food which is offered, this approach also adds great value to the existence of the animal and plant farm itself, where transport, distribution and deliveries are also avoided.

The main driving mechanism for Moravsko selo is to serve as a successful example and inspiration for everyone involved in sustainable practices in agriculture, in the production and utilization of agricultural and animal products. The owners hope that they are able to show how a farm is „self-sufficient", confirming Steiner's principles of biodynamic agriculture.

The complex functions as an example of closed-cycle agriculture and tourism:

Composting: Food waste is collected, composted and used as fertiliser for organic crops. The process is strictly organised with the participation of a team trained to respect the principles of sustainability.

Staff integration: day-to-day activities include staff training to optimise kitchen, farm and restaurant operations, as well as involvement in maintaining sustainable processes.

Multiplication model: this business model can be applied on a larger scale using specialised waste and resource management technologies. In addition, the example of Moravsko selo can inspire other hotels and farms to adapt sustainable practices.

5.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Undoubtedly, this circular model of food resource use in the Moravsko selo works and brings benefits to the business, but because it was applied spontaneously, dictated by the natural way of life of the family, it has not been professionally organized so far. Accordingly, there is an imbalance between the quantities of incoming produce, the organisation of the kitchen staff, the production time and the quantities of finished products. Often it is this imbalance that leads to the generation of waste - spoilage of produce that has not had sufficient time or staff to process. The lack of quantitative measurements and performance evaluation data also contributes to unnecessary waste.

Categories of barriers:

4. **Financial:**

   o Lack of sufficient capital to implement new technologies, such as automated waste management systems.

5. **Operational:**

   o Presence of an imbalance between production quantities and processing staff capacity.

   o Insufficient process automation.

6. **Human Resources:**

   o Lack of qualified personnel for organic farming and green economy.

Conclusions:

- Production planning systems need to be put in place which significantly reduces waste.

- Effective time management is needed by allocating tasks according to seasonal needs.

5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The practice is a good example of how a small farm business and family guesthouse can be organized in a fully circular system and how this model can be successful in terms of reducing food waste and making food waste more cost-effective, reducing food packaging waste, implementing resource-efficient food and accommodation services, thereby reducing the impact on the environment and educating guests on how these best practices can be transferred to each household, on the one hand, and to similar business models, on the other.

Quantitative indicators:

- The complex has reduced waste by 30% through closed-cycle resource use and the elimination of plastic packaging.

- Approximately 10,000 litres of water are saved annually through drip irrigation and the reuse of processed organic materials.

Social benefit:

- Guests appreciate the high quality local food and sustainable practices in their feedback. Many expressed inspiration to implement these practices in their daily lives.

- By organising events such as organic gourmet dinners and cultural tours, the complex promotes cultural exchange and environmental education.

This data highlights the role of "Moravsko selo" as a model of sustainability and social responsibility.

„Moravsko selo" makes a significant contribution to the local community by creating jobs and providing training for employees, with a focus on developing skills for sustainable agriculture and tourism. The complex actively supports local culture by organising events related to traditional cuisine and customs.

In addition, special educational programs inspire guests to apply what they learn to their everyday lives, striving for a more sustainable lifestyle. These initiatives strengthen the links between local culture, tourism and environmental practices.

5.5.   Performance Indicators

To enforce the zero waste concept is a big challenge, but the whole team believes in its impact and participates consciously in enforcing its beneficial practices. „Moravsko selo" has long said no to disposable plastic items - they serve spring water only in glass jugs. Food leftovers are put to maximum use with on-farm processing. The use of cosmetics and detergents in the complex is optimised. The owners are of the opinion that zero waste is primarily a matter of thinking!

Measurable indicators of success:

- Energy produced: the photovoltaic plant generates approximately 12 000 kWh per year, which covers the main energy needs of the complex.
- Processed waste: around 2 tonnes of food waste is processed each year, turning it into fertiliser for organic farmland.
- Water saved: 10,000 litres of water per year have been saved by using drip irrigation and manure.

Impact on the local ecosystem and economy:

- Local suppliers are involved in supplying the restaurant, which boosts their business and income.
- Sustainable practices reduce pollution and support biodiversity in the area.
- These indicators highlight "Moravsko selo"'s commitment to environmental responsibility and economic development.

5.6.   Picture

Moravsko Selo. (n.d.). *Rooms.* Eco-Hotel. Retrieved November 20, 2024, from https://eco-hotel.bg/стаи/

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

14

6. Good Practice 3: Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg Plovdiv

Identification

Name	Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg Invest Ltd
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://sphotel.net/

6.1. Background

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is excellent for those looking for luxury hotels in Plovdiv. The four-star complex is located in the heart of Plovdiv. It opened more than four decades ago and through its services creates the tradition of style, luxury and comfort combined with the modern dynamics of the city. It has 140 accommodation rooms and the hotel building has a height of 103 meters, allowing visitors to enjoy spectacular city views and relax with a sense of elevation.

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is an excellent solution for business and leisure travel, leisure and work. Its location is communicative and provides access to all key sites in the city. The rooms are spacious with interiors creating the feeling of aristocratic home comfort and providing the necessary privacy to the guests. The hotel complex also has restaurants, conference rooms, a swimming pool and various activities that help to create an unforgettable experience with maximum satisfaction and comfort.

6.2. Key Principles

The staff of Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg have many years of experience in the tourism, restaurant and hotel industry. A loyal policy of good labor relations retains employees at the hotel, many of whom have been with the hotel for over 20 years.

Along with them, the Hotel gives a chance to start the career of young people finishing their heigher education who have the desire and aspiration to learn something new, something different, something interesting.

Key is also the approach of „shortened distance" and „easy communication" between all departments- from „Reception" to „Management" and „Owners". We believe that

GreenHost CoVE Project
Co-funded by the European Union

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

15

communication and feedback is one of the principles of successful management of any business.

Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg management works to minimize waste through separate collection, recycling programs and reduction of disposable plastics.

6.3. Barriers and Challenges

In today's hospitality industry, there are many barriers and challenges that require innovative approaches and strategies to overcome.

* <u>Competition in the sector -</u> globalisation and the rise of online booking platforms are creating pressure to offer competitive prices and services, with a trend for our customers to look for socially responsible policies and measures in place to reduce their carbon footprint on the environment.

*<u>Digitalisation</u> - Hotels need to invest in technologies such as online booking, process automation and digital service with payment features. This requires a huge amount of resources but is now a necessity for a hotel to remain competitive.

* <u>Service personalization -</u> Modern guests expect a personalized experience that requires the collection and analysis of customer data, communication and detailed information that often exceeds in real value the services offered. Often, this experience and the additional comfort provided   is   not   calculated   into   the   customer's   final   price.
* <u>Difficulties in finding staff -</u> The hotel, as an employer, gives the chance for long-term employment to the employees, but also in this area finding serious and responsible people is a difficult process.

* <u>Economic uncertainty -</u> inflation, rising energy costs and keeping the base in good condition are also an ongoing challenge.

*<u>Health crises -</u> Pandemics such as COVID 19 have shown how vulnerable the hotel industry can be to such global health crises.

*<u>Seasonality -</u> Fluctuations in occupancy during different times of the year also have an impact on the management and development of the Hotel. Due to the fact that Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is located in the heart of one of the most ancient cities of the world - Plovdiv, it can secure   year-round   permanent   occupancy.
* <u>Reputation Management</u> - Park - Hotel Sankt Peterburg is a hotel with a long tradition, but also with a modern method of management, advertising and image. We work with specialist agencies to continue to maintain an excellent reputation but also to spread the good causes and campaigns that the Hotel heads, etc.

Finding solutions to these challenges and more requires proactivity, creativity and long-term strategies that resonate with the market and customers.

6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The hotel strives to enforce a good management policy in all aspects in order to continue to be recognized among the leading hotels in the region. Important indicators for us are:

- Increased customer satisfaction is the most important indicator of service success. Good feedback and attitude make an impression on customers, they remember them and expect them for every next booking.
- Attracting new guests - sharing all news related to the Hotel on social networks and other channels.
- Long-term competitiveness - investments in quality, innovation and sustainability ensure stable development and industry leadership.

6.5. Performance Indicators

We can point out the most distinctive benefits that the Hotel has when it comes to implemented good management policy: high customer satisfaction rate - increased number of satisfied guests are potential guests for the future period. Customer loyalty - the Hotel has built a name of a trusted partner - that is why most of the organized events (cultural, sport, charity) in Plovdiv and the region, accommodate the participants in Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg. As an example from this year we can point out the „World Canoe Kayak Championships" in July 2024, as well as the „European Aerobics Championships for Youth".

For the good cooperation, quality of service and gratitude the Hotel receives various recognitions and certificates - they are also recognition and result of the teamwork of all departments.

6.6. Picture

Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg. (n.d.). Gallery. SP Hotel. Retrieved December 4, 2024, from https://sphotel.net/gallery

7. Good Practice 4: Hilton Sofia

Identification

Name	Hilton Sofia
Subsector	Tourism & Hospitality
Website	https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/sofhihi-hilton-sofia/

7.1. Background

Mission of Hilton Sofia

- To be the most hospitable company in the world by delivering exceptional experiences for every guest, team member, and community we serve.

Vision of Hilton Sofia

- To fill the earth with the light and warmth of hospitality, creating meaningful experiences and inspiring connections for guests and team members alike.

Goals

- To consistently exceed guest expectations by providing personalized and high-quality services.

- To operate with a focus on environmental sustainability, reflecting the Global Hilton's Travel with Purpose initiative, including energy efficiency, waste and water management and support for the local community.

- To empower team members with training, growth opportunities, and a supportive workplace culture.

- To remain a leader in Sofia's hospitality market by offering innovative services, state-of-the-art facilities, and a commitment to luxury and comfort.

- To actively contribute to the local community through partnerships, cultural support, and economic development initiative

7.2. Key Principles

Characteristics:

A clear understanding of objectives and desired outcomes.

The practice should align with organisational or societal values to ensure sustainability and integrity. Worldwide commitment to lower carbon emissions.

Incorporates new ideas, methods, or technologies to enhance efficiency and impact. Hilton Light Stay Calculator part of our „Travel with purpose" program designed to measure carbon footprint and ensure we are aligned with our goals.
Establish metrics to evaluate effectiveness and progress regularly. Hilton relies on scientifically proven information and resources.

Resources:

- Hilton provides free training to all employees 365 days of the year.

- Budget allocation for contingency planning was a critical aspect of the project. The renovation of Hilton Sofia not only transformed the hotel's exterior but also introduced a complete overhaul of its interior, incorporating sustainable materials throughout the building to align with modern environmental standards.

- Software and systems for planning, execution, and analysis.
- Communication platforms for effective coordination.
- Physical facilities or platforms needed for implementation.
- Access to transportation, utilities, or specialized equipment.
- Up-to-date data to monitor progress and adapt strategies.
- Collaborations with stakeholders, local communities, and organizations for shared resources and expertise.

7.3. Barriers and Challenges
- Sustainable practices often require significant upfront investments in technology, training, or infrastructure.
- Existing systems or infrastructure may be incompatible with sustainable solutions, requiring extensive upgrades.
- If customers don't value or understand the importance of sustainable practices, it may be harder to justify the effort.

7.4. Benefits and Outcomes
- Although upfront investments are high, sustainable practices such as energy-efficient systems, water-saving technologies, and waste reduction lead to significant cost savings in the long run.
- Modernized, sustainable systems and practices position Hilton Sofia to adapt to changing regulations, technologies, and market trends.

- Employees increasingly prefer organizations committed to sustainability, helping attract motivated, purpose-driven talent. More than 40% of Hilton Sofia employees have been with the brand for longer than 5 years
- Adoption of sustainable practices encourages a broader shift in organisational and societal behaviour towards environmental responsibility. Many guests choose to stay with Hilton specifically for their sustainability efforts

7.5. Performance Indicators
- Guest stay score
- Analysis of data on water and energy savings to quantify environmental impact.

7.6. Picture

Hilton Sofia. (n.d.). Gallery. Hilton. Retrieved November 21, 2024, from https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/sofhihi-hilton-sofia/gallery/

8. Good Practice 5: Scandic Hotels Group

Identification

Name	Scandic Hotels Group
Subsector	hospitality
Website	www.scandichotelsgroup.com

8.1. Background

Company Overview: Scandic Hotels Group is one of the leading hotel operators in the Nordic region, with a significant presence in Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Finland, and Germany. The group has grown to encompass over 280 hotels and 57,000 rooms. The company is known for its commitment to sustainability and environmental responsibility, making it a prominent player in the hospitality industry.

Mission: Scandic's mission is to create a more sustainable hospitality experience while providing excellent service and quality to its guests.

Vision: The vision of Scandic Hotels is to be the first choice for both business and leisure travelers in the Nordic region, recognized for its dedication to sustainability, quality, and customer experience.

Values: The core values of Scandic Hotels include openness, responsibility, and a passion for service. These values guide their approach to business, employee engagement, and customer interaction.

Green Policies and Sustainability Initiatives

Scandic Hotels Group places a strong emphasis on sustainability and has implemented a variety of green policies:

10. **Sustainability Strategy**: Scandic has a comprehensive sustainability strategy that aims to reduce its environmental impact and promote sustainable practices throughout its operations. This includes goals related to energy consumption, waste management, and sourcing.
11. **Energy Efficiency**: The group is committed to reducing energy consumption in its hotels. Many properties have implemented energy-efficient technologies, such as LED lighting, smart thermostats, and energy management systems.
12. **Waste Management**: Scandic Hotels focuses on minimizing waste through recycling programs, composting, and reducing single-use plastics. They aim to achieve a circular economy by reusing materials and reducing overall waste.

13. **Sustainable Sourcing**: The hotels prioritize sourcing food and products from local and sustainable suppliers. This includes offering organic food options in their restaurants and using eco-friendly toiletries.
14. **Certified Green Hotels**: Many Scandic properties are certified under various sustainability standards, such as the Nordic Swan Ecolabel and Green Key, which recognise their commitment to environmental practices.
15. **Employee Engagement**: Scandic encourages staff involvement in sustainability initiatives and provides training on green practices to foster a culture of environmental responsibility among employees.
16. **Community Involvement**: The group engages with local communities through various initiatives, including supporting local charities and participating in community events.
17. **Carbon Neutrality Goals**: Scandic has set ambitious targets to become carbon neutral in its operations, with plans to offset emissions through various sustainability projects.
18. **Sustainable Transportation**: The hotels promote sustainable transportation options, including bike rentals, electric vehicle charging stations, and partnerships with public transportation services.

8.2.   Key Principles

Sustainability Integration: The main characteristic of Scandic's green policies is their holistic approach to sustainability, integrating environmental considerations into every aspect of their operations, from energy use to waste management.

Resources and Skills:

- **Human Resources**: Employee training programs focused on sustainability practices.
- **Technological Resources**: Investment in energy-efficient technologies and sustainable building materials.
- **Partnerships**: Collaboration with local suppliers and sustainability experts to improve practices and reduce environmental impact.

8.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Main Barriers:

- **Cost of Implementation**: The initial investment in sustainable technologies and practices can be high, which can deter quick adoption.
- **Staff Training**: Ensuring all staff are adequately trained and engaged with sustainability initiatives can be a challenge.
- **Customer Expectations**: Balancing sustainability efforts with customer comfort and expectations can sometimes conflict.

Lessons Learned:

- Stakeholder engagement, including staff and guests, is critical for the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives.
- Continuous evaluation and adjustment of strategies are necessary to overcome financial and operational barriers.

8.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Main Benefits:

- **Enhanced Brand Reputation**: commitment to sustainability has strengthened Scandic's brand image and customer loyalty.
- **Operational Efficiency**: Improved energy efficiency and waste management practices have led to cost savings.
- **Employee Engagement**: sustainability initiatives have fostered a culture of responsibility and pride among employees.

Outcomes:

- Increased customer satisfaction due to enhanced service offerings tied to sustainability.
- Recognition and awards for sustainability efforts, establishing Scandic as a leader in eco-friendly hospitality.

Lessons Learned:

- Transparency in sustainability efforts fosters trust and enhances customer loyalty.
- Effective communication of sustainability policies can lead to higher guest engagement and participation in green initiatives.

8.5. Performance Indicators

To assess the value of Scandic Hotels' good practices in sustainability, several performance indicators are utilized:

- **Energy Consumption**: Measuring the reduction in energy use per guest night.
- **Water Usage**: Tracking water consumption and implementing reduction strategies.
- **Waste Management**: Percentage of waste recycled compared to total waste generated.
- **Guest Satisfaction Scores**: Surveys to gauge guest awareness and appreciation of sustainability initiatives.
- **Sustainability Certifications**: Number of hotels with recognized certifications (e.g., Green Key, Nordic Swan Ecolabel).

By utilizing these indicators, Scandic Hotels can continuously monitor their sustainability performance and make informed decisions for future improvements.

8.6. Picture

Scandic Hotels Group. (2022). *Scandic Oceanhamnen now open – sustainability plays leading role from quay to rooftop terrace.* Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved November 29, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/media/press-releases/2022/scandic-oceanhamnen-now-open--sustainability-plays-leading-role-from-quay-to-rooftop-terrace/

25

9. Conclusions

In Bulgaria, the research in the form of interviews on best practices in the local environment was conducted on 5 providers of tourist, accommodation and catering services. From the data provided, we obtained information on the specific activities and actions that the providers implement to meet the requirements and expectations of their guests and the environmental and energy efficiency activities.

In the General Information section, suppliers highlight the tradition, advantages and innovations that distinguish their business from similar enterprises with brief information on the establishment, development and practices they are implementing or are about to implement.

The basic principles (section X.2.) for all providers are oriented towards offering quality services and products, meeting individual customer requirements, introducing new services and products, developing labour relations and staff qualifications, introducing innovations in the field of digitalization and environmental protection, waste management, and interaction with the local community.

In the section on Barriers and Challenges (section X.3.), suppliers highlighted: the need for significant financial resources to establish new or upgraded operations, the shortage of skilled labour and turnover in the sector, uncertainty caused by health crises and epidemic restrictions, seasonality of tourism services and increasing inflationary processes, lack of customer empathy and environmental thinking, allying with suppliers who share common values with the hotel/restaurant for successful long-term partnerships, and last but not least - the increasing competition from bookings, through online platforms.

In the Results and Benefits section (section X.4.) the tourism service providers have indicated their achievements in their field of activity: customer satisfaction with the hotel services and food received, the savings achieved in raw materials, electricity, water and fuels as a result of innovations and energy-efficient systems implemented, the implementation of sustainable practices to reduce waste, the retention and development of professional skills and work habits, both for long-serving staff and new recruits, including disadvantaged ones.

The outcome indicators identified by providers can be summarised in the following aspects:

Achieving significant savings on electricity and water („Moravsko selo"), the use of energy efficient appliances (Scandic Hotels) , achieving zero food waste (Blagichka - ZERO WASTE) or converting waste into bio-fertiliser, increased percentage of recycled waste through a separate collection system, minimisation of the use or replacement of single-use plastic packaging („Moravsko selo"), development of the local economy through contracts with local product suppliers, high customer satisfaction and loyalty to the hotel/restaurant as a consequence of the socially and environmentally responsible behaviour of the supplier.

As a result of the analysis of the results, it can be summarized that the interviewed hotel service providers and restaurants are oriented towards modern business and environmental thinking, applying the principles of reducing environmental impact, responsible use of natural resources and socially responsible business. Implementing good sustainability practices contribute to spreading environmental thinking in society, for greater

guest loyalty as they are willing to support businesses that share their values, leading to long-term benefits for the tourism sector. In conclusion, Bulgarian tourism is improving its reputation by investing more in competitiveness, sustainability and innovation.

Good Practice	Abstract
Blagichka - ZERO WASTE	The Blagichka - ZERO WASTE best practice focuses on sustainable restaurant operations by eliminating waste through composting, recycling, and reusable packaging. It integrates local food sourcing, supports disadvantaged youth with employment, and promotes environmental education. This approach minimizes environmental impact while fostering social and economic sustainability.
Moravsko selo Hotel and Farm	This best practice focuses on a circular economy approach in hospitality and agriculture, integrating organic farming with sustainable tourism. The eco-complex minimizes waste through composting, food preservation, and resource-efficient operations, ensuring zero food loss. By eliminating plastic, using renewable energy, and optimizing water usage, it serves as a model for self-sufficient, environmentally responsible tourism.
Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg	Park Hotel Sankt Peterburg implements sustainable hospitality practices by minimizing waste, promoting recycling, and reducing disposable plastics. It fosters long-term employment and career development while ensuring seamless communication between departments for efficient operations. Through customer satisfaction, digital innovation, and environmental responsibility, the hotel enhances its competitiveness and commitment to sustainable tourism.
Hilton Sofia	Hilton Sofia integrates sustainable hospitality practices through energy efficiency, water conservation, and waste reduction, aligning with the "Travel with Purpose" initiative. Investments in eco-friendly renovations, employee training, and carbon footprint monitoring ensure long-term environmental and economic benefits. By fostering sustainability, the hotel enhances guest experiences, attracts purpose-driven employees, and promotes responsible tourism.
Scandic Hotels Group	This best practice focuses on sustainability in hospitality, integrating energy efficiency, waste reduction, and sustainable sourcing across all hotel operations. Through certified green hotels, staff training, and community engagement, Scandic Hotels fosters environmental responsibility while enhancing guest experiences. Their commitment to carbon neutrality, circular economy principles, and eco-friendly transportation ensures long-term sustainability and operational efficiency.

10.   References

Eco Hotel. (n.d.). *Homepage*. Eco Hotel. Retrieved November 20, 2024, from https://eco-hotel.bg/homepage/

Blagichka. (n.d.). *Homepage*. Blagichka. Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://blagichka.com

SP Hotel. (n.d.). *About*. SP Hotel. Retrieved December 4, 2024, from https://sphotel.net/en/about

Hilton. (n.d.). *Homepage*. Hilton. Retrieved November 21, 2024, from https://www.hilton.com/

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). *Homepage*. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved December 5, 2024, from http://www.scandichotelsgroup.com

Scandic Hotels. (n.d.). *Our commitment*. Scandic Hotels. Retrieved November 29, 2024, from https://www.scandichotels.com/work-with-us/our-commitment

Scandic Hotels. (n.d.). *Sustainability case study*. International Hotel and Restaurant Association. Retrieved November 29, 2024, from https://www.ih-ra.org/public/images/document/scandic-sustainability-case.study_.pdf

Edge Venues. (n.d.). *Sustainability is beyond "hang up your towel" at Scandic Hotels*. Edge Venues. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from https://portal.edgevenues.com/community/sustainability-is-beyond-hang-up-your-towel-at-scandic-hotels

Sustainable Hotel News. (n.d.). *Scandic recertifies hotels according to tougher requirements*. Sustainable Hotel News. Retrieved November 20, 2024, from https://sustainablehotelnews.com/scandic-recertifies-hotels-according-to-tougher-requirements/

Bohdanowicz, P. (2006). *Implementing sustainability in service operations at Scandic Hotels*. ResearchGate. Retrieved December 4, 2024, from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/247823783_Implementing_Sustainability_in_Service_Operations_at_Scandic_Hotels

Bohdanowicz, P., Simanic, B., & Martinac, I. (2004). *Scandic hotels' sustainable business practices*. Green the Hotels. Retrieved December 2, 2024, from http://www.greenthehotels.com/eng/BohdanowiczSimanicMartinacScandicSB04.pdf

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). *Environmental policy: Scandic Hotels Group AB (publ)*. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved December 3, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/files/Reports/Policies/Environmental-Policy-Scandic-Hotels-Group-AB-publ.pdf

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

28

Scandic Hotels Group. (n.d.). *Governance and reports: Environmental policy*. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved November 22, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/sustainability/governance-and-reports/environmental-policy/

Scandic Hotels Group. (2024). *Environmental policy*. Scandic Hotels Group. Retrieved November 18, 2024, from https://www.scandichotelsgroup.com/files/Reports/Policies/2024/Scandic-Policy_Environmental-Policy_ENG.pdf

Annex B - Country Report of Cyprus

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: Frederick University

Country: Cyprus

Date: December 27th 2024

Contents

Table of Figures

1. Introduction

This report presents a compilation of exemplary practices in sustainable and responsible tourism in Cyprus, illustrating how innovative approaches can effectively address **environmental, cultural, and social** issues within the global tourism industry. The report showcases diverse methods employed by stakeholders to strike a balance between economic, environmental, and social priorities in tourism and hospitality development through the identification and analysis of practices across different organizations and legal forms.

The practices included in this report were identified through a combination of interviews and online research. Specifically, **The Sendal Boutique Hotel, Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa, and Limassol Marina** good practices were identified and developed through in-depth interviews with key individuals involved in the implementation and management of sustainability initiatives.

The good practices for **Aphrodite Hills Resort** were identified and developed through comprehensive desk research, utilizing publicly available information from the resort's official websites, sustainability reports, press releases, media coverage, and academic publications.

The inclusion of **Desa Potato Head**, a resort located in Bali, Indonesia, in this report was motivated by its unique and ambitious commitment to a **zero-waste policy**. There is a growing interest in understanding the feasibility of replicating such practices within the context of Mediterranean countries, where tourism plays a significant economic role but also presents environmental challenges. Given the limited examples of hotels successfully implementing zero-waste policies in the Mediterranean region, Desa Potato Head provides a valuable case study to examine the potential for adapting these practices to different cultural and geographical contexts.

The report delves into a variety of sustainable practices, encompassing:

Environmental initiatives: such as energy efficiency, water conservation, waste management, and the use of renewable energy sources.

Digital innovations: such as smart technology for monitoring resource consumption, online platforms for guest communication, and paperless operations.

Culturally sensitive approaches: including the preservation of local heritage, the promotion of traditional crafts and cuisine, and community engagement.

The aim of this report is to highlight replicable solutions that can inspire stakeholders in other countries and regions. Special attention is given to the replicability of the best practices, emphasizing elements that can be adapted and implemented in different contexts. The report aims to inspire stakeholders to embrace sustainable tourism as a driver of positive change, fostering greater collaboration with local stakeholders and innovation across borders and sectors. We begin with the short summary of each good practice:

The summary

Sendal Boutique Hotel

Located in a historic 18th-century building in Nicosia, Cyprus, exemplifies sustainable hospitality by integrating eco-friendly practices within strict preservation regulations. Its initiatives include participation in an off-site solar energy program, vertical gardens to enhance air quality, and the adoption of digital amenities to reduce waste. Despite facing challenges such as regulatory and space constraints, the hotel has achieved reduced environmental impact. Performance metrics like energy usage, waste reduction, and guest feedback are used to monitor and improve its sustainability strategies.

Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa

Located in the mountain village of Kalopanayiotis, Cyprus, combines traditional charm with pioneering sustainability efforts, including a full-time sustainability manager, composting systems that cut waste by 70%, and 100% renewable energy usage. Despite challenges like its remote setting and cultural shifts in guest expectations, the hotel's commitment to environmental stewardship has significantly reduced its ecological footprint and operational costs.

Limassol Marina

Limassol Marina in Cyprus demonstrates environmental stewardship by partially integrating solar energy, advanced waste management, and water conservation measures.It has achieved a 10% reduction in carbon emissions and earned prestigious accolades like the Blue Flag Award. These initiatives not only enhance visitor satisfaction through cleaner water and quieter operations but also result in long-term cost savings for the Marina.

Aphrodite Hills Resort

Aphrodite Hills Resort in Cyprus exemplifies how high-end hospitality can be woven together with sustainability through eco-friendly technologies, waste-reduction measures, and water-saving programs. By sourcing locally and involving the surrounding community, the resort boosts its ecological impact. This holistic approach not only lowers operational costs and resource consumption but also strengthens the resort's appeal to environmentally conscious travelers.

Desa Potato Head

Desa Potato Head in Bali seamlessly blends hospitality with near-zero waste initiatives, upcycling efforts, and regenerative farming. Through its dedicated Waste Lab, the resort transforms discarded materials into usable products. Despite infrastructural challenges in Bali, the resort collaborates with local communities and educates guests. By harnessing renewable energy, desalination, and rainwater harvesting, Desa Potato Head has substantially reduced both carbon emissions and reliance on municipal resources.

2. Good Practice 1: The Sendal Boutique Hotel

Identification

Name	The Sendal Boutique Hotel
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.thesendal.com

2.1. Background

The Sendal Boutique Hotel, housed within a historic 18th-century building in Nicosia, Cyprus, adeptly marries rich cultural heritage with progressive environmental stewardship. As a recognized listed historical building, The Sendal Hotel must comply with stringent preservation laws that restrict many types of modern alterations (Department of Town Planning and Housing, 2020). Despite these limitations, the hotel is committed to offering an eco-friendly lodging experience that does not compromise on luxury or modern amenities. This approach has positioned Sendal as a leader in sustainable practices within the local hospitality industry, offering highly personalized services that cater to environmentally conscious guests.

2.2. Key Principles

The Sendal Boutique Hotel has adopted a comprehensive set of sustainability initiatives aimed at reducing its environmental impact, enhancing guest experiences, and optimizing operational efficiency. These practices include:

Innovative Energy Solutions: Given the restrictions on altering its historic façade, The Sendal cannot install traditional solar panels. Instead, it has joined a satellite solar energy program. This initiative allows Sendal to invest in solar panels located off-site, with the energy generated being credited back to the hotel's energy consumption account. This solution not only adheres to the regulatory framework but also significantly reduces the hotel's reliance on non-renewable energy sources.

Maximizing Limited Outdoor Spaces: The Sendal has creatively used its limited outdoor space by installing a vertical garden. This garden not only enhances the hotel's aesthetic appeal but also improves urban air quality and reduces the heat effect, providing a cool and pleasant environment for guests to relax in.

Transition to Sustainable Amenities: Sendal is actively replacing single-use plastic amenities with refillable toiletries. This change is part of a broader waste reduction strategy that aligns with global sustainability goals. The initiative has been well received by guests, significantly reducing the hotel's plastic waste output.

Adoption of Digital Innovations: Embracing digital technology, The Sendal provides guests with digital room keys and has developed an app that offers detailed information about local attractions and

services. This paperless approach not only enhances guests' convenience but also reduces the hotel's paper consumption, further contributing to its environmental goals.

Smart Energy Management Systems: The hotel has installed advanced sensor-based lighting and HVAC systems (Heating, Ventilation, and Air Conditioning) systems. These systems are designed to optimize energy use by adjusting automatically to occupancy and ambient conditions, thereby, ensuring operational efficiency and comfort tailored to real-time needs.

2.3. Barriers and Challenges

Despite its successes, The Sendal faces ongoing challenges in implementing its sustainability initiatives:

Regulatory Challenges: The hotel's status as a listed building imposes several limitations on the types of physical changes that can be made, particularly in terms of adding or altering external structures like solar panels.

Space Limitations: Situated in the heart of a bustling city, The Sendal has limited outdoor space, which complicates efforts to add traditional greenery or large-scale eco-friendly installations.

Waste Management Strategies: Phasing out single-use plastics and transitioning to sustainable amenities require careful management of existing stock and adaptation of new supply chains. Additionally, the local infrastructure for waste management and recycling is not fully developed, placing additional burdens on the hotel to manage its waste responsibly.

Technical Integration: Upgrading the historic building with modern digital and energy-efficient systems involves complex engineering challenges. Ensuring that new technologies blend seamlessly with old infrastructure while preserving the building's historical integrity requires innovative solutions and careful planning.

2.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The Sendal hotel's commitment to sustainability has yielded significant benefits:

Reduced Environmental Impact: By leveraging renewable energy and implementing waste reduction strategies, the hotel has made considerable strides in minimizing its ecological footprint.

Enhanced Guest Experience: The integration of sustainable practices and digital innovations has been positively received by guests, who appreciate the convenience and the hotel's commitment to environmental responsibility.

Operational Cost Savings: Energy-efficient systems and waste reduction measures have led to lower operational costs, making the hotel more profitable and allowing it to invest further in sustainable practices.

Competitive Advantage: Sendal stands out in a competitive market by offering a unique combination of luxury, heritage, and sustainability, attracting a niche demographic of eco-aware travellers.

2.5. Performance Indicators

The Sendal utilizes several performance indicators to measure the effectiveness of its sustainability strategies:

Energy Consumption and Cost Analysis: Regular monitoring of energy usage and costs associated with the off-site solar program allows the hotel to assess the financial and environmental benefits of its renewable energy investments.

Guest Satisfaction Surveys: The hotel collects feedback on its sustainability initiatives through guest surveys, focusing on areas such as the vertical garden, digital amenities, and the overall eco-friendly approach.

Waste Reduction Metrics: The hotel tracks reductions in single-use plastics and overall waste volume, providing data on the success of its transition to sustainable amenities.

Paper Usage Tracking: By measuring reductions in paper usage through the adoption of digital solutions, The Sendal monitors its progress towards becoming a paperless operation.

Operational Efficiency Metrics: The effectiveness of sensor-equipped lighting and HVAC systems is continuously assessed to ensure they are meeting energy-saving targets and contributing to overall operational efficiency.

Figure 48: Vertical Garden of Sendal Boutique Hotel

Retrieved from: www.thesendal.com

3. Good Practice 2: Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa

Identification

Name	Casale Panayiotis Traditional Village Hotel & Spa
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.casalepanayiotis.com

3.1. Background

Casale Panayiotis, nestled in the tranquil mountain village of Kalopanayiotis, Cyprus, serves as a beacon of sustainable and inclusive hospitality. This boutique hotel seamlessly integrates traditional Cypriot charm with innovative sustainability practices. It aims to lead the hospitality industry toward a greener and more inclusive future by adopting a philosophy that melds environmental consciousness with community engagement and technological advancement, thus, redefining the standards of regional tourism.

3.2. Key Principles

Dedicated Sustainability Management: The hotel distinguishes itself in the Cypriot hospitality sector by employing a full-time sustainability manager. This role is pivotal in ensuring the focused and consistent implementation of eco-friendly practices, setting a high standard for ongoing environmental stewardship within the industry.

Circular Waste Management: Casale Panayiotis has implemented a pioneering composting initiative that has successfully reduced general waste output by 70%. By transforming organic waste into high-quality compost, the hotel supports its own agricultural needs and enhances local soil quality, exemplifying a sustainable closed-loop system in waste management.

Advanced Water Conservation: The hotel utilizes state-of-the-art greywater recycling systems that repurpose water from showers and sinks for garden irrigation. This system is complemented by the installation of high-pressure, low-flow faucets that significantly reduce water wastage, thus preserving this vital resource without compromising guest comfort.

Energy Efficiency through Smart Technology: Leveraging cutting-edge technology, Casale Panayiotis employs systems like Greenview (https://greenview.sg) to meticulously track and optimize energy consumption. This smart technology enables the hotel to enhance operational efficiency and comply with global sustainability standards, ensuring environmental impact is minimized.

Cultural and Community Engagement: The hotel actively participates in the local community by supporting various initiatives such as local animal shelters and women's organizations. It advocates for cultural preservation and diversity, embedding inclusivity into the core of its business practices.

Digital Transformation: More than 85% of the hotel's operations have transitioned to digital platforms, utilizing advanced software for reservations and guest communications. This paperless approach not only streamlines internal processes but also significantly reduces the hotel's ecological footprint.

Eco-Conscious Guest Experience: From the moment of check-in, guests are introduced to the hotel's sustainable practices. They receive reusable bottles and encounter educational signage throughout the hotel, promoting water and energy conservation, which fosters a deeper understanding and appreciation of sustainability among guests.

Customized Energy Solutions: Casale Panayiotis has fully embraced renewable energy, integrating solar, wind, and geothermal sources to achieve 100% renewable energy consumption. This comprehensive approach not only powers the hotel sustainably but also sets a remarkable example of energy independence in the hospitality industry.

3.3. Barriers and Challenges

Remote Workforce Dynamics: The serene and secluded nature of Casale Panayiotis, while appealing for tranquillity, poses considerable challenges in attracting and retaining a vibrant workforce. The hotel's remote location tends to deter younger professionals who often seek dynamic urban environments for their careers. This demographic mismatch necessitates innovative strategies and incentives to draw and maintain a skilled and motivated staff.

Infrastructure Limitations: Operating in a rural mountain village restricts access to cutting-edge resources and complicates efforts to scale operations. The hotel must creatively adapt state-of-the-art, globally recognized sustainable technologies to a local setting that lacks the typical infrastructure of urban centres. This requires not just innovation but a deep understanding of local constraints and opportunities.

Cultural Shifts in Luxury Perception: Introducing and maintaining sustainable practices such as less frequent linen changes and reduced water usage presents a delicate balance between luxury expectations and environmental responsibility. The hotel must navigate these changes carefully, educating guests on the value and necessity of such measures without compromising the high standards of luxury hospitality.

Rigorous Certification Processes: Achieving certifications such as those from the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) is a demanding process that requires meticulous documentation, regular audits, and the integration of extensive sustainable practices across multiple aspects of hotel operation. This thorough and rigorous process ensures compliance with international standards but demands significant time and effort from the hotel's management team.

3.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Transformative Environmental Impact: Casale Panayiotis has significantly advanced environmental sustainability in rural hospitality by implementing comprehensive recycling, waste management, and energy conservation measures. These initiatives have substantially reduced the hotel's ecological footprint, serving as a model for similar establishments seeking to enhance their environmental stewardship.

Enriched Guest Experiences: By integrating sustainable practices into every aspect of its operation, the hotel provides a unique guest experience that aligns luxury with ecological responsibility. This approach not only meets but often exceeds the expectations of global travellers, who are increasingly seeking accommodations that reflect their personal values of sustainability and ethical travel.

Cost Efficiency and Profitability: The implementation of sustainable technologies and practices has resulted in notable reductions in utility costs and waste management expenses. These savings contribute directly to the hotel's bottom line, proving that environmental responsibility can also drive financial success. The investments in sustainability have not only cut costs but have also attracted a niche market willing to pay a premium for environmentally friendly lodging options.

Stronger Community Bonds: Casale Panayiotis has deepened its ties with the local community through various initiatives that promote environmental conservation and social welfare. These activities, ranging from local donations to collaborative environmental projects, not only enhance the hotel's social impact but also build lasting relationships with community members, fostering a sense of partnership and mutual benefit. This community-focused approach enhances the hotel's reputation and supports long-term sustainability goals.

3.5. Performance Indicators

Composting Metrics: The hotel rigorously tracks the volume of waste redirected to its composting facilities, achieving a notable reduction in general waste.

Water Recycling Rates: Systematic monitoring of water recycling efforts provides valuable data on the efficiency of greywater reuse for irrigation purposes.

Energy Efficiency Monitoring: Through the use of Greenview software[48] the hotel conducts detailed analyses of energy usage, which help in optimizing consumption patterns and reducing costs.

Guest Feedback Metrics: Guest reviews and ratings are closely analysed, particularly those highlighting the hotel's eco-conscious amenities, providing insights into guest perceptions and satisfaction levels.

Community Impact Reports: The hotel documents its contributions to local projects and collaborations, underscoring its commitment to cultural preservation and community inclusivity.

---

[48]Greenview is based in Singapore and is a leading provider of sustainability programs and data management for hospitality and tourism sector (https://greenview.sg)

Figure 49: Usage of candles instead of electricity at Casale Panayiotis

Retrieved from: www.casalepanayiotis.com

4. Good Practice 3: Limassol Marina

Identification

Name	Limassol Marina
Subsector	Marina Operations
Website	www.limassolmarina.com

4.1. Background

Located in the Mediterranean coastal city of Limassol, Cyprus, Limassol Marina integrates luxury waterfront living with pioneering environmental practices. The marina exemplifies this integration by using solar panels for energy efficiency, implementing waste recycling programs, and maintaining clear waters certified by the Blue Flag Award an internationally recognized eco-label awarded to marinas and beaches that meet stringent criteria for water quality, environmental education, safety, and management., all while offering world-class residential and commercial facilities. The marina's mission is to promote sustainable and innovative solutions that align with global standards while providing premium services to its residents and visitors.

Limassol Marina is a hub for nautical tourism and waterfront living, hosting over 600 permanent boats, 1,200 annual transiting vessels, 300 residential units, 40 shops, and 15 restaurants. These facilities not only provide luxury and convenience but also present opportunities for implementing sustainable practices such as energy-efficient operations, advanced waste management, and water conservation. However, they also bring unique challenges, including managing high energy and water demands while ensuring compliance with strict environmental standards. The marina embraces its role as a leader in environmental stewardship by adopting proactive measures to ensure sustainability across its operations.

4.2. Key Principles

Key sustainability practices at Limassol Marina include:

Renewable Energy Initiatives: Partial implementation of solar panels to cover approximately 5% of the marina's energy needs, with plans for expansion to 20% over the next five years. This will involve phased installation of additional panels and incorporation of advanced energy storage solutions to maximize efficiency.

Energy-Efficient Operations: Use of LED lighting, photocell-controlled systems, and battery-powered equipment for gardening and buggies, reducing emissions.

Water Conservation and Management: Recycling desalinated water for irrigation and implementing advanced water metering to monitor and prevent leaks.

Waste Management Systems: Providing comprehensive waste and recycling facilities for glass, paper, PMD, and general waste, ensuring proper disposal and compliance.

Environmental Awareness Campaigns: Regular communication with residents and businesses to promote reduced energy and water usage and beach-cleaning initiatives.

4.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Operating sustainably at Limassol Marina presents several challenges:

Energy Supply Limitations: Dependency on mazut-generated electricity due to limited renewable energy infrastructure in Cyprus.

Aesthetic and Structural Constraints: Resistance from architects and stakeholders to implementing solar panels due to perceived visual impact.

Systemic Barriers: Insufficient capacity of green energy providers to meet the marina's extensive energy requirements. Limassol Marina is exploring partnerships with private green energy firms to enhance capacity and plans to collaborate with governmental agencies to advocate for broader renewable energy investments. Additionally, the marina is evaluating the feasibility of on-site wind and solar installations to supplement its energy needs.

Compliance and Regulation: Navigating complex environmental regulations while ensuring smooth marina operations.

4.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

Limassol Marina's sustainability efforts yield multifaceted benefits:

Environmental Impact Reduction: Achieved a 10% reduction in carbon emissions and a 15% decrease in overall energy consumption since the adoption of efficient technologies and practices. These results are measured annually using advanced monitoring tools and compared to baseline data from pre-implementation years.

Enhanced Reputation: Prestigious awards, including the Blue Flag Award, known for its strict environmental standards for water quality and safety, and the International Clean Marina certification, which highlights exemplary environmental management practices, recognize the marina's environmental efforts.

Increased Customer Satisfaction: Clear waters and reduced noise pollution improve the overall visitor experience.

Operational Savings: Investments in efficient equipment and solar panels lead to long-term cost savings.

4.5.   Performance Indicators

Performance metrics used by Limassol Marina to measure the success of its sustainability initiatives include:

Energy Savings: Monitoring solar panel output through advanced metering systems and analysing year-over-year reductions in electricity consumption. Results indicate an incremental decrease of 5% in non-renewable energy dependency since the implementation of solar panels, with projections for further reductions as capacity expands.

Customer Feedback: Evaluations from residents and visitors on environmental practices.

Waste Management Effectiveness: Tracking recycling rates and proper waste disposal receipts from contractors.

Water Conservation Metrics: Data from digital water meters to assess reductions in leakage and overall consumption.

Limassol Marina's commitment to sustainability sets an example for marina operations worldwide, highlighting the importance of innovation and collaboration in achieving environmental goals while maintaining high-quality services.

Figure 50: Measuring and keeping water clean at Limassol Marina

Retrieved from: https://www.limassolmarina.com

5. Good Practice 4: Aphrodite Hills Resort

Identification

Name	Aphrodite Hills Resort
Subsector	Tourism, Hospitality
Website	https://www.aphroditehills.com

5.1. Background

Aphrodite Hills Resort is a luxury, eco-friendly destination in Cyprus that aims to balance luxury experiences with a commitment to sustainability. The resort's mission is to preserve Cyprus's natural beauty while offering a world-class experience for its guests (Aphrodite Hills Resort, 2023). By striving to lead the sustainable tourism sector in Cyprus, the resort combines eco-friendly practices with a high standard of service to minimize its environmental impact. The resort exemplifies how sustainable hospitality can be embedded into all aspects of a guest's experience, from accommodation to recreational activities. This holistic approach is rooted in the belief that luxury and sustainability are not mutually exclusive but can complement each other to create a richer, more meaningful guest experience. Its vision is to set a benchmark for sustainable tourism in the region and inspire other industry players to adopt similar practices (UNWTO, 2020).

Aphrodite Hills Resort has made a concerted effort to be a leader in sustainable tourism. Its philosophy extends beyond minimizing harm to the environment, actively contributing to the preservation of Cyprus's unique natural heritage. The resort works closely with local communities, environmental organizations, and governmental bodies to promote sustainability across the island, ensuring its initiatives are well-aligned with regional conservation goals and fostering a broader culture of environmental awareness and responsibility (Cyprus Tourism Organization, 2022). This collaborative effort has enabled the resort to create a network of partnerships that support its sustainability mission and further its reach beyond the boundaries of the resort itself.

The resort also emphasizes the importance of cultural sustainability. By integrating local culture and heritage into its guest experiences, Aphrodite Hills aims to provide a deeper understanding of Cyprus's history and traditions (Richards, 2021). This commitment to cultural preservation not only enhances the guest experience but also supports the local community by promoting traditional crafts, cuisine, and customs. The resort offers cultural activities, such as traditional cooking classes, local handicraft workshops, and guided tours to nearby heritage sites, which foster a connection between guests and the local culture, enriching their overall experience.

5.2. Key Principles

The resort has implemented several sustainable practices, focusing on waste management, energy conservation, and water-saving initiatives. It has invested in energy-efficient technologies, such as solar power and energy management systems, as well as water conservation infrastructure (European Commission, 2023). Staff members are trained to integrate sustainability into their daily routines, and

guests are encouraged to engage in eco-friendly activities. The resort's approach underscores the importance of both internal resources such as high-end technologies and skilled personnel and external efforts to communicate sustainability effectively to guests. By incorporating sustainability into staff training programs, the resort ensures that every team member understands and contributes to its environmental goals, thereby creating a unified culture of sustainability.

Waste management is another critical aspect of the resort's sustainability strategy. Aphrodite Hills Resort has implemented a comprehensive waste reduction program that includes recycling, composting organic waste, and minimizing single-use plastics (Waste Management Association, 2023). The resort collaborates with local waste management authorities to ensure that its waste disposal practices align with regional regulations and contribute to broader environmental goals. In addition to its internal efforts, the resort encourages guests to participate in waste reduction by providing accessible recycling facilities and promoting awareness of the environmental impact of waste. The resort has also implemented digital check-in and check-out procedures to reduce paper waste, further demonstrating its commitment to minimizing environmental impact.

Energy conservation is at the heart of the resort's sustainability initiatives. The resort utilizes energy-efficient lighting, smart energy management systems, and solar panels to reduce its reliance on non-renewable energy sources (International Energy Agency, 2022). Renewable energy technologies not only help lower the resort's carbon footprint but also serve as a visible demonstration of its commitment to sustainability. Guests are educated on the importance of energy conservation through informational materials available in their rooms, encouraging them to contribute to the resort's energy-saving efforts during their stay. Additionally, the resort has invested in electric vehicle charging stations to promote the use of electric cars by both guests and staff, contributing to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Water conservation is also a key focus area for Aphrodite Hills Resort. The resort has invested in advanced water-saving technologies, such as low-flow faucets and irrigation systems that use recycled water (Waterwise, 2023). These efforts help reduce overall water consumption and ensure that the resort operates in a manner mindful of Cyprus's limited water resources. The resort engages guests in water conservation efforts by providing information on the importance of preserving water and encouraging them to participate in simple actions, such as reusing towels and limiting water usage during their stay. Furthermore, the resort has developed an on-site greywater recycling system to further reduce freshwater consumption and has implemented drought-resistant landscaping to minimize the need for irrigation.

5.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Transitioning to sustainable practices in a luxury environment presents distinct challenges. Aphrodite Hills Resort faced higher operational costs and the need for specialized equipment as it implemented eco-friendly technologies (Smith, 2021). Moreover, educating both staff and guests on sustainable practices proved challenging, as many guests initially prioritized luxury amenities over environmental concerns. To address these challenges, the resort adopted a gradual approach to change, emphasizing transparency in its environmental policies and providing incentives for sustainable behaviour. One key lesson learned was the importance of clear communication guests and staff need to understand not only what sustainability measures are being implemented but also why they are important and how they contribute to the overall guest experience and the environment (Green Hospitality Journal, 2022).

The resort also learned that incentives play a significant role in encouraging sustainable behaviour. For guests, these incentives include offering small rewards or recognition for participating in eco-friendly activities, such as reusing towels or participating in recycling programs (Guest Engagement Strategies, 2022). For staff, incentives may take the form of recognition programs or bonuses tied to the successful implementation of sustainability initiatives. By making sustainability a rewarding and positive experience, the resort has been able to foster greater engagement from both guests and employees. The resort has also implemented an internal sustainability ambassador program, where staff members are designated as sustainability champions to promote eco-friendly practices among their peers and guests.

Another significant challenge was balancing the expectations of high-end clientele with the need for sustainability. Some guests initially viewed eco-friendly measures, such as limiting the frequency of linen changes, as detracting from their luxury experience. To address this, the resort focused on educating guests about the environmental benefits of these practices and framing them as part of a broader commitment to responsible luxury (Responsible Tourism Partnership, 2021). This approach has helped shift perceptions, with many guests now viewing sustainability as an integral part of their experience at the resort. The resort also implemented a guest feedback loop, using surveys to understand guest concerns and adjust its practices in ways that maintain luxury standards while promoting sustainability.

5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The results of these sustainable initiatives have been highly positive for Aphrodite Hills Resort. The resort has managed to significantly reduce energy and water consumption, supported by its energy-saving systems and recycling programs (Energy Saving Trust, 2023). Guest satisfaction remains high, with many appreciating the eco-friendly measures integrated into their stay. Staff engagement has also risen, with employees expressing pride in the resort's sustainability efforts. Financially, the resort has benefited from lowered operational costs linked to reduced energy and water usage. These cost savings have allowed the resort to reinvest in further sustainability initiatives, creating a positive feedback loop that continues to enhance its environmental performance.

In addition to the financial and environmental benefits, the resort has also experienced intangible gains, such as an enhanced brand reputation. The resort's commitment to sustainability has resonated with environmentally conscious travellers, who are increasingly seeking out destinations that align with their values (Sustainable Travel International, 2023). By positioning itself as a leader in sustainable luxury tourism, Aphrodite Hills Resort has attracted a new segment of guests who prioritize environmental responsibility. This has not only strengthened guest loyalty but also differentiated the resort from its competitors in the luxury hospitality market. The resort has received various awards and certifications for its sustainability efforts, further solidifying its reputation as a pioneer in eco-friendly luxury tourism.

Staff engagement has been another significant outcome of the resort's sustainability initiatives. Employees have reported a greater sense of pride and motivation, knowing that their work contributes to positive environmental outcomes. This increased engagement has translated into higher job satisfaction and improved performance, as staff members feel more connected to the resort's mission and values (Employee Engagement Report, 2022). The resort has also seen improvements in employee retention, as workers are more likely to stay with an organization that aligns with their personal values and offers opportunities to contribute to meaningful initiatives. The introduction of staff-led sustainability projects, where employees can propose and lead new eco-friendly initiatives, has further empowered the workforce and fostered a sense of ownership over the resort's sustainability goals.

Another benefit of the resort's sustainability initiatives is its positive impact on the local community. By sourcing products and services locally, the resort supports local businesses and reduces its carbon footprint associated with transportation. The resort has partnered with local farmers to supply fresh, organic produce, ensuring that guests enjoy high-quality, locally sourced meals while also benefiting the community economically (Local Sourcing Initiative, 2022). This commitment to local sourcing not only enhances the guest experience by providing fresh, authentic cuisine but also strengthens the resort's ties to the community and contributes to the local economy.

5.5. Performance Indicators

To assess its success, Aphrodite Hills Resort uses several performance indicators, such as reductions in energy and water usage, waste recycling rates, guest satisfaction scores related to sustainability, and employee engagement in green initiatives (Performance Metrics in Hospitality, 2023). Additionally, financial savings from energy-efficient systems contribute to the overall assessment of the resort's sustainable practices. These performance indicators are tracked over time to ensure that the resort is making continuous progress towards its sustainability goals. The resort also conducts regular audits to identify areas for improvement and to ensure that its practices remain aligned with the latest advancements in sustainable tourism.

Guest feedback is another important performance indicator. The resort actively solicits input from guests regarding their experiences with its sustainability initiatives, using surveys and feedback forms to gather insights. This feedback helps the resort understand what aspects of its sustainability efforts most are appreciated by guests and where there may be opportunities to enhance the guest experience (Guest Feedback Systems, 2022). By incorporating guest feedback into its sustainability strategy, the resort ensures that its initiatives remain relevant and effective in meeting the needs of its clientele.

The resort also measures its impact on the local community as part of its performance evaluation. Metrics such as the percentage of locally sourced products, the number of partnerships with local businesses, and contributions to local conservation projects help assess the broader impact of the resort's sustainability initiatives. By tracking these indicators, the resort can demonstrate its commitment to not only environmental sustainability but also social responsibility, reinforcing its role as a positive force within the community (Community Impact Report, 2022).

Aphrodite Hills Resort also uses benchmarking to compare its sustainability performance with other similar resorts. This helps the resort identify best practices and areas where it can further improve. By participating in industry-wide sustainability programs and certifications, the resort ensures that it remains at the forefront of sustainable tourism and continually strives to exceed industry standards (Sustainable Hospitality Alliance, 2023). The resort's commitment to ongoing improvement is evident in its dedication to setting new sustainability targets each year, pushing the boundaries of what is possible in luxury eco-tourism.

Figure 51: Usage of alternative source of energy at Aphrodite Hills resort

Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com

6. Good Practice 5: Desa Potato Head (Indonesia)

Identification

Name	Desa Potato Head
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://seminyak.potatohead.co/

6.1. Background

Desa Potato Head, located in Seminyak, Bali, Indonesia, is a pioneering eco-resort that seamlessly integrates luxury hospitality with a deep commitment to sustainability and regenerative practices. Founded by Ronald Akili, the resort has evolved from a beach club into a comprehensive creative village, embodying the philosophy of "Good Times, Do Good." Desa Potato Head Hotel in Bali operates within the hospitality and tourism sector, specifically focusing on sustainable luxury tourism. The project aims to blend luxury accommodations, fine dining, entertainment, and eco-conscious tourism. By promoting sustainability alongside upscale services, the hotel has successfully positioned itself in the eco-tourism sector (Vogue, 2024). The official website for Potato Head Hotel is seminyak.potatohead.co, offering detailed information on accommodation options, sustainability practices, and events. Additionally, Potato Head uses social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter to highlight its sustainable initiatives and creative projects. External resources also include travel publications such as The Times and Vogue, which have extensively covered the hotel's blend of sustainability and luxury (The Times, 2024).

6.2. Key Principles

Mission: Potato Head Hotel aims to deliver a unique and luxurious travel experience that incorporates sustainable practices and promotes cultural exchange (Potato Head, 2024). Vision: The hotel envisions being a global leader in sustainable luxury, influencing other hospitality businesses to adopt eco-friendly practices (Potato Head, 2024). Values: Sustainability, creativity, and cultural respect are core values. The hotel strives to create positive environmental impact through eco-friendly operations while showcasing local art and fostering community development (Potato Head, 2024).

Zero Waste Commitment: Desa Potato Head has adopted a comprehensive approach to waste management to achieve near-zero waste. This includes waste segregation: guests and staff are encouraged to separate waste into organic, recyclable, and up cyclable categories. Upcycling Initiatives: materials such as discarded plastics and glass are repurposed into functional and decorative items for the resort. For instance, old plastic has been converted into chairs and other furniture pieces, and discarded glass bottles have been turned into glassware.

Community Engagement: The resort educates local businesses and residents on waste segregation and provides resources to replicate its waste management model in surrounding communities.

Waste Lab: The resort operates a dedicated Waste Lab, where discarded materials are transformed into usable products (I G A I M Pertiwi et al, 2019). One example is manufacturing furniture. Leftover plastics are processed and moulded into durable, stylish furniture. Another example is creation of building materials: concrete waste is reprocessed into terrazzo for flooring and countertops. Furthermore, art installations are produced out of waste: Artists collaborate with the resort to create eco-art using recycled materials, adding cultural and visual value while emphasizing the importance of waste reduction.

Sustainable Design and Construction

The resort's architecture emphasizes eco-conscious design while maintaining aesthetic appeal. Locally sourced materials: The use of handmade bricks and reclaimed wood reduces the carbon footprint associated with importing materials. Natural Cooling Systems: Buildings are designed to maximize natural airflow, reducing the need for air conditioning. Solar Integration: Renewable energy solutions, such as solar-powered water heating systems, have been integrated to reduce reliance on conventional energy sources.

Regenerative Farming and Community Engagement
The Sweet Potato Project serves as an anchor for community-focused sustainability: Education: Local farmers and residents receive training on regenerative farming techniques that enhance soil fertility without using synthetic fertilizers.

Food Production: Sweet potatoes are cultivated onsite and used in the resort's restaurant menus, creating a farm-to-table experience.

Community Support: The project also provides surplus crops to local families, contributing to food security in the area.

Renewable Energy and Resource Management

The resort's innovative solutions include:

Desalination: A state-of-the-art seawater filtration system produces drinking water, reducing reliance on bottled water.

Energy-efficient Appliances: All facilities are equipped with energy-saving appliances and lighting systems.

Rainwater Harvesting: Captured rainwater is used for irrigation and non-potable purposes, minimizing water wastage.

6.3. Barriers and Challenges

Local Waste Management Infrastructure

Bali faces significant challenges in waste disposal, with limited facilities for recycling and composting. To overcome this challenge the Potato Head resort uses in-house solutions: Desa Potato Head compensates for this gap by processing and recycling its own waste on-site.

Advocacy: The resort actively lobbies local authorities to improve waste management infrastructure across the island.

Balancing Luxury with Sustainability
Guests expect premium experiences, which can sometimes conflict with sustainability goals:

Design Innovations: Sustainable materials are carefully curated to meet luxury standards, ensuring that ecofriendly solutions do not compromise aesthetics.

Guest Education: Through signage, workshops, and guided tours, the resort educates guests on how their participation in sustainability initiatives enhances their stay.

Community **Collaboration**
Encouraging local businesses to adopt similar sustainability practices requires ongoing effort: Partnerships: The resort collaborates with local artisans and vendors to incorporate recycled and sustainable products into their offerings.

Incentives: Financial and logistical support is provided to local partners willing to adopt waste reduction and sustainable production techniques.

6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Environmental Impact Reduction

By achieving near-zero waste, Desa Potato Head has significantly reduced its carbon footprint:

Landfill Diversion: The resort now sends less than 3% of its waste to landfills, down from over 50% in 2017.

Carbon Savings: Upcycling waste into functional products reduces emissions associated with producing new materials.

Enhanced **Guest** **Experience**
The integration of sustainability into the guest experience is a key differentiator: Interactive Experiences: Guests are invited to tour the Waste Lab and participate in workshops on recycling and upcycling.

Eco-Luxury Amenities: Eco-friendly toiletries and upcycled furniture provide a luxurious yet sustainable atmosphere.

Industry Recognition

Desa Potato Head has received multiple accolades for its pioneering sustainability practices

Awards: Recognition from global hospitality and environmental organizations, further establishing its reputation as a leader in ecotourism.

Media Coverage: Extensive features in prominent publications highlight the resort's innovations, attracting eco-conscious travellers.

Community **Development**
The Sweet Potato Project and Waste Lab have created tangible benefits for local communities: Economic Opportunities: Training programs enable residents to secure employment in ecotourism and sustainable farming.

Cultural preservation: Collaborations with local artists and craftsmen ensure that Balinese traditions are integrated into modern sustainability efforts.

6.5. Performance Indicators
Water Savings: Desalination and Rainwater Harvesting

Desa Potato Head combines desalination technology and rainwater harvesting, cutting municipal water reliance by 60% and energy use by 30%. Innovative water systems reduce plastic waste and carbon emissions by 20%.

UNFCCC-Certified Projects

The first Asian hospitality company with UNFCCC certification, Desa Potato Head implements renewable energy, energy-efficient retrofits, and waste-to-energy initiatives to combat climate change.

B Corp Certification in Asia

Achieving B Corporation status signifies Desa Potato Head's commitment to sustainability, local development, and stakeholder governance, setting a regional hospitality standard.

CHSE Certification

CHSE certification underscores Desa Potato Head's adherence to safety, hygiene, and environmental standards.

Guest Feedback

Surveys highlight positive responses to eco-conscious design, with 85% of guests supporting sustainable practices in travel.

Community Impact

Through over 50 annual workshops and training for 300+ locals, Desa Potato Head fosters regional development and sustainability awareness.

Recycled Materials and Innovation

The property uses 100% recycled plastics for furniture and discarded materials for art installations, reducing waste and promoting creativity.

Performance Metrics

Key metrics from the 2023 Sustainability Report highlight significant achievements in sustainability across several domains:

Water Efficiency: The facility harvests 1.2 million litres of rainwater annually, significantly reducing dependency on external water sources and supporting local aquifers.

Energy Optimization: Through the use of renewable energy, the property has achieved a 25% reduction in energy consumption compared to industry averages.

Waste Management: An impressive 90% of waste is diverted from landfills through extensive recycling and composting programs.

Carbon Reduction: The sustainability initiatives contribute to an annual reduction of 5,000 metric tons of CO_2-equivalent emissions, aligning with global carbon-neutral goals.

Figure 52: Zero waste workshop of recycling materials at Desa Potato Head (Indonesia)

Retrieved from: https://seminyak.potatohead.co/
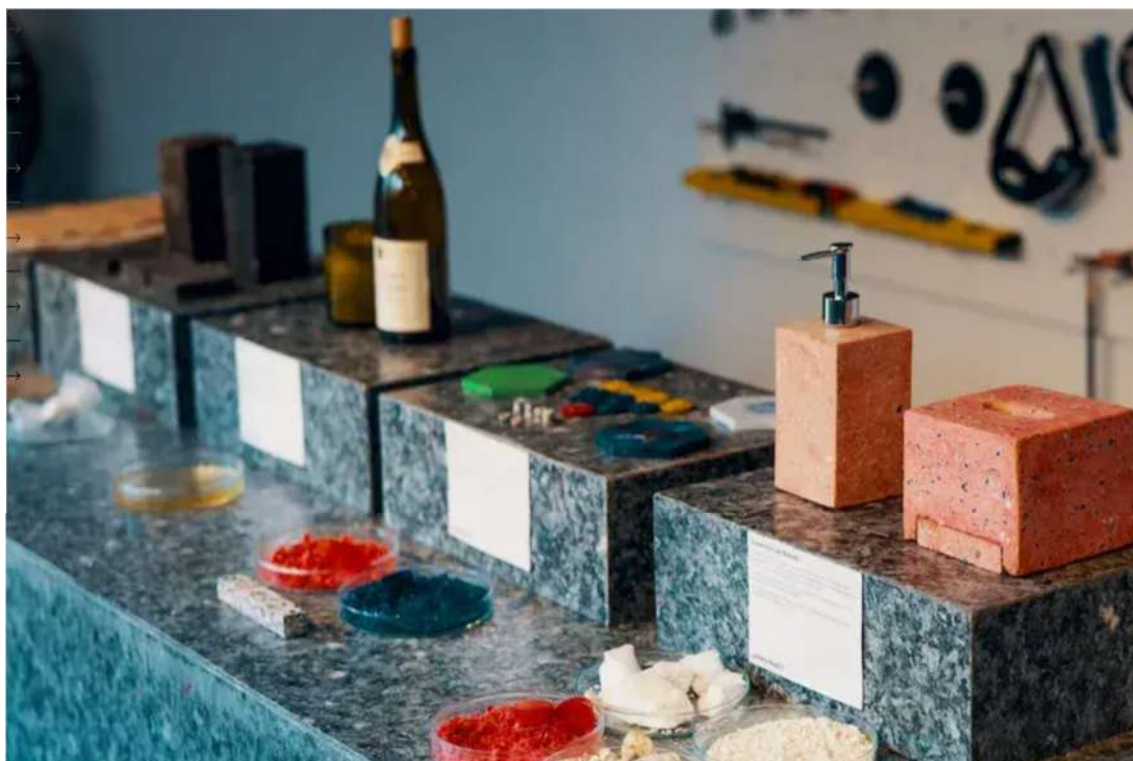
7. Conclusions

This report showcases a diverse set of sustainable and responsible tourism practices implemented by various stakeholders in Cyprus and, notably, includes an international best practice example from Bali, Indonesia. The report underscores the commitment of these organizations to balancing economic viability with environmental stewardship and social responsibility.

Key findings from the analysis of these good practices include:

Integration of Sustainability Principles: The featured organizations demonstrate a holistic approach to sustainability, integrating environmental, social, and economic considerations into their core strategies and operations. This integrated approach is evident in their commitment to reducing environmental impact, engaging with local communities, preserving cultural heritage, and promoting economic viability.

Innovation and Adaptability: The report highlights the importance of innovation in addressing the specific challenges and opportunities presented by each context. For example, The Sendal Boutique Hotel, being a listed historical building, overcame restrictions on structural modifications by participating in an off-site solar energy program, showcasing adaptability within regulatory constraints.

Emphasis on Replicability: A key focus of this report is the identification of replicable elements within each good practice. The report provides detailed insights into the specific strategies, technologies, and approaches employed, emphasizing aspects that can be adapted and implemented by stakeholders in other regions and contexts, furthering the global adoption of sustainable tourism practices.

Focus on Measurable Outcomes: The organizations featured in the report emphasize the importance of data collection and analysis in assessing the effectiveness of their sustainability initiatives. Performance indicators, such as energy and water consumption, waste reduction metrics, and guest satisfaction surveys, are utilized to monitor progress, identify areas for improvement, and demonstrate the tangible benefits of sustainable practices.

Zero-Waste as an Emerging Trend: The inclusion of Desa Potato Head, a resort in Bali, Indonesia, renowned for its ambitious zero-waste policy, introduces a valuable case study for exploring the feasibility and adaptability of such practices in the Mediterranean context. The report acknowledges the growing interest in zero-waste models and the potential for transferring knowledge and best practices across geographical boundaries.

The report concludes that the transition towards sustainable and responsible tourism is achievable and beneficial, as evidenced by the successful initiatives implemented by the featured organizations. While challenges exist, the report emphasizes the importance of ongoing innovation, collaboration, and a commitment to continuous improvement. By sharing these good practices, the report aims to inspire and empower stakeholders across the tourism industry to embrace sustainability as a driver of positive change, contributing to a more environmentally, socially, and economically sustainable future.

8. References

Aphrodite Hills Resort. (2023). About Us. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com

B Corporation Certification Standards for Asia.
Retrieved from https://bcorporation.net/certification/asia on December 16, 2024.

Blue Flag Award, Retrieved from https://www.blueflag.global on December 10, 2024.

Casale Panayiotis GSTC Certification Announcement, Retrieved from
https://ucsl.eu/technews/012 on December 15, 2024.

Casale Panayiotis Sustainability Management Plan (2023), Retrieved on December 15th
2024, from https://www.casalepanayiotis.com/media/pdfs/casale-sustainability-management-system-web-version-en-2025.pdf

CHSE Certification Guidelines, Ministry of Tourism, Indonesia.
Retrieved from https://chse.kemenparekraf.go.id/en/guidelines on December 14, 2024.

Community Impact Report. (2022). Aphrodite Hills Resort: Sustainability and Community
Engagement. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/reports

Cyprus Tourism Organization. (2022). Regional Conservation and Tourism Initiatives.
Retrieved from https://www.visitcyprus.com

Department of Town Planning and Housing (2020). *Laws and regulations for listed buildings*.
Ministry of Interior. Retrieved December 27, 2024, https://www.moi.gov.cy/moi/tph/tph.nsf/lawsregulations_en/lawsregulations_en?opendocument

Desa Potato Head Sustainability Report (2023). Retrieved from
https://seminyak.potatohead.co/journal/sustainability-report-2023 on December 12, 2024.

Employee Engagement Report. (2022). Staff Satisfaction and Engagement Metrics.
Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/reports

Energy Saving Trust. (2023). Energy Efficiency in Hospitality. Retrieved from
https://www.energysavingtrust.org.uk

European Commission. (2023). Sustainable Tourism Practices in Europe. Retrieved from
https://ec.europa.eu/tourism

G A I M Pertiwi et al. (2019). IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science, 351,
012005.Retrieved from https://iopscience.iop.org/article/10.1088/1755-1315/351/1/012005 on December 10, 2024.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC), Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org on December 15, 2024.

Green Hospitality Journal. (2022). Engaging Guests and Staff in Sustainability. Journal of Hospitality and Tourism, 34(3), 22-36.

Greenview (2023) Retrieved December 27, 2024, https://greenview.sg

GSTC Accreditation for Certification Bodies Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org/accreditation/ on December 19, 2024.

GSTC Criteria, Retrieved from https://www.gstcouncil.org/gstc-criteria/ on December 4, 2024.

Guest Engagement Strategies. (2022). Incentives for Sustainable Practices in Hotels. Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 15(4), 87-101.

Guest Feedback Systems. (2022). Importance of Feedback in Hospitality Sustainability. Journal of Tourism Studies, 28(1), 45-56.

Guide to Sustainable Travel Certifications, Retrieved on December 15, 2023, from https://www.cntraveler.com/story/sustainable-travel-certifications-guide

International Clean Marina Certification, Retrieved from https://cleanmarina.org on December 12, 2024.

International Energy Agency. (2022). Renewable Energy Use in Hotels. Retrieved from https://www.iea.org

ISO Certification Overview, Retrieved from https://www.iso.org/iso-standards.html on December 9, 2024.

Limassol Marina Official Website, Retrieved from https://www.limassolmarina.com on December 1, 2024.

Local Sourcing Initiative. (2022). Aphrodite Hills Resort's Partnership with Local Farmers. Retrieved from https://www.aphroditehills.com/initiatives

Mediterranean Marine Awards, Retrieved from https://www.mediterraneanmarineawards.com on December 26, 2024.

Performance Metrics in Hospitality. (2023). Measuring Sustainability Performance. Hospitality Management Review, 29(2), 15-28.

Renewable Energy in Cyprus, Retrieved from https://www.energy.gov.cy on December 15, 2024.

Responsible Tourism Partnership. (2021). Responsible Luxury: Balancing Guest Expectations and Environmental Impact. Retrieved from https://www.responsibletourismpartnership.org

Richards, G. (2021). Cultural Sustainability in Tourism. Annals of Tourism Research, 39(1), 89-103.

Smith, A. (2021). Costs and Challenges of Implementing Eco-Friendly Technologies in Hotels. Journal of Hospitality Management, 31(3), 52-64.

Sustainability Metrics in Hospitality.Retrieved from https://sustainablehospitalityalliance.org/resources/sustainability-metrics on December 18, 2024.

Sustainable Hospitality Alliance. (2023). Industry Standards and Best Practices in Sustainable Tourism. Retrieved https://www.sustainablehospitalityalliance.org

Sustainable Practices in Marinas, Retrieved from https://www.sustainablemarinas.org on December 18, 2024.

Sustainable Travel International. (2023). The Growing Demand for Sustainable Tourism. Retrieved from https://www.sustainabletravel.org

UNFCCC Official Documentation. Retrieved from https://unfccc.int/documents on December 15, 2024.

UNWTO. (2020). Guidelines for Sustainable Tourism. United Nations World Tourism Organization. Retrieved from https://www.unwto.org

Waste Management Association. (2023). Waste Reduction Strategies in Hospitality. Journal of Environmental Management, 44(2), 31-46.

Waterwise. (2023). Water Conservation Techniques for Hotels. Retrieved from https://www.waterwise.org.uk

Annex C - Country Report of Greece

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: UOM, EPIHAL, TIHC, OECON

Country: GREECE

Date: December 2024

Contents

9. Introduction

In the modern world, businesses and sectors are forced to keep up with a variety of challenges and problems through innovation and modernization. The intense competition among individuals and businesses is forcing them to adopt different strategies to get an edge over the competition. This document presents a variety of best practices that have been utilized by organizations and individuals to revolutionize their operational structures. In presenting these practices, the goal is to provide valuable insights and actionable methods that can be adapted to similar enterprises. Acknowledging the practices allows us to build on what has been tried and tested effectively saving time, reducing risk, and increasing our chances of achieving impactful results.

In the hospitality sector, offering authentic experiences provides a sentiment of cultural Immersion as Costa Navarino a famous hotel in the region of Messinia goes beyond the traditional hospitality "guidebook" and provides its guests with a local touch. Costa Navarino offers guests unique insights and opportunities to engage with Messinia's history and culture through activities such as olive oil tastings, traditional cooking classes, and visits to ancient archaeological sites including many historical landmarks. Additionally, there are several workshops that allow the guests to participate in traditional Messinian cooking classes or experience local delicacies prepared with time-honored recipes. Recent changes and restructures in the field of hospitality (rise of Airbnb, intense competition, and raising operational costs) have forced many hotels and businesses to restructure and redefine their operational models. This is the case of YOTEL hotels, where the rooms and space are designed is such a way to maximize space as YOTEL employs a cabin-inspired design influenced by airline cabins making efficient use of limited space without sacrificing functionality or comfort. The hotels incorporate many technical and technological innovations such as seamless check-in and check-out procedures, reducing waiting times and enhancing customer convenience. The rooms are equipped with smart room features with advanced technology such as adjustable lighting touchscreen controls and lastly, there is the YOBOT a robotic luggage storage system that adds a futuristic and engaging element to the guest experience. Hence YOTEL hotels demonstrate how the hospitality industry is adapting to the new model of high-quality services at a lower cost while creating memorable experiences for the guests. The rise of gamification is a recent concept that has multiple applications in the field of tourism as many countries have utilized a variety of games to attract people and individuals to visit landmarks and monuments. Augmented Reality applications have started to impact traditional tourist models by offering more interactive options and boosting significantly the popularity of certain landmarks and attractions. Furthermore, the induction of Blue Flags, in certain beaches and areas that are unique can significantly boost the popularity of certain areas and beaches. This concept acts as an official certification that the designated area is worth visiting and that the waters are unique and special. Last but not least, the "quality-over-quantity" scheme which Bhutan employs has proven to be effective as the country does not struggle with the effects of over-tourism which has devasted many modern cities with disastrous results.

In essence, the document elaborates a plethora of cases illustrating the effect of different strategies that can be the answer to complex issues and problems that the sector is currently facing.

10.   Authentic Experiences

Identification

Name	Costa Navarino
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/

Summary

Costa Navarino, a luxury sustainable destination in Greece, sets a best practice in hospitality by offering **authentic cultural experiences** that highlight local heritage and traditions. The resort integrates **Messinian culture** into its guest experiences through activities like olive oil tastings, cooking classes with local chefs, philosophy walks inspired by ancient Greek thinkers, and pottery workshops with regional artisans.

Artisan Crafting Messinian Recipes https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/

10.1. Background

Costa Navarino is located in Messinia in the southwest Peloponnese, in one of the most unspoiled and breathtaking landscapes in the Mediterranean. Its philosophy is driven by a genuine desire to promote Messinia while protecting and preserving not only its natural beauty but also a remarkable cultural heritage spanning 4,500 years.

Costa Navarino is currently home to four 5-star premium resorts, Mandarin Oriental Costa Navarino, W Costa Navarino, The Romanos, a Luxury Collection Resort and The Westin Resort Costa Navarino, three spa centers, four signature 18-hole golf courses, over 40 dining venues, a wide range of sports, outdoor and cultural activities, plus an array of 5-star services. The destination is enriched by Navarino Agora, a curated marketplace and incubator of art and culture that combines shopping, dining and entertainment with cultural happenings. The hotel has been characterized as a "World Class Destination" and named "World's Best Emerging Golf Destination 2022" by World Golf Awards. Costa Navarino offers a world-class golf experience with its four 18-hole signature courses: The Dunes Course, set in diverse natural scenery with spectacular sea and river views, takes its name from the tall dunes that separate several holes from a golden beach, the Bay Course offers panoramic sea and mountain views, with two holes playing along the historic Bay of Navarino while The International Olympic Academy Golf Course and The Hills Course offer players a challenging game and breathtaking sunsets The resort emphasizes offering authentic experiences that showcase the region's culture, history, and gastronomy. Activities include olive oil tastings, traditional cooking classes, and guided tours of archaeological sites. Costa Navarino has been recognized for its sustainability efforts, including water conservation, waste management, and energy efficiency, the resort has also undertaken projects to protect local flora and fauna. Lastly, Initiatives such as the Navarino Environmental Observatory, a collaboration with academic institutions, focus on climate change and environmental research.

10.2. Key Principles

The Costa Navarino offers a plethora of services and options to its clients including a unique feature that includes **authentic experiences** that aim to uncover the traditions of the local area through experiences that bring every individual and group closer to everyday life in Messinia. The experiences are guided and provided by the locals who are eager and enthusiastic to share their knowledge and experiences with interested parties and to spread the rich traditions of the region. The authentic experiences entail a variety of options including **authentic village cooking** that includes the traditional Messinian cooking with the help of local women who will share authentic family recipes passed down from parent to kid. The cooking experience aims to teach people how to prepare and serve a traditional Messinian menu, using regional techniques and fresh ingredients followed by lunch and the opportunity to savor the food prepared. Besides traditional cooking, a spiritual activity that is included is the famous **"Philosophy Walk"** that draws inspiration from the ancient Greek thinkers. These walks include the famous idyllic scenes and landscapes of the Messininian countryside, which promise to impress and provide a unique experience for everyone that is going to be part of the experience. Another activity that is a component of the authentic experiences is the **astronomy nights** which are a stellar experience that is unique due to the fact that usually lasts a couple of hours, when planets glow brightly in the sky and starlight starts to illuminate. The location is ideal due to the fact that there is no light pollution thus the area marks the ideal spot to look through a telescope and investigate the

deep and vast space. Last but not least, a part of the authentic experience is the **olive oil tasting** which includes a unique tasting session in which the local experts guide the participants into the subtle flavors of the Messianic virgin olive oil. During the process the local guides, elaborate on the history of olive oil and explain the basic features and characteristics that olives need such as quality soil.

In order to set up these practices, the Costa Navarino had to carefully plan and secure the participation of skillful people who would embody the philosophy of the Messinian culture and at the same time be able to attract people's interest. One of the necessities that are required to successfully implement these practices is the **skillset of the tutors**, especially when it comes to practical activities such as cooking and astronomy observations. The personnel must be well-trained and be able to produce a quality outcome and to achieve a high-level of customer satisfaction. Another necessity revolves around the notion of providing the participants with the **right type of equipment**, especially during the technical activities. For instance, in astronomical activities, a high-quality telescope is required in order for the participants to be able to grasp the unique experience of understanding and observing the stars. Thus a high level of skillset and organization is required in order to effectively provide these experiences to the individuals while maintaining a state of the art equipment.

10.3. Barriers and Challenges

One of the main challenges is to locate and incorporate the right people into the key-positions. In this case, it is challenging to locate a local who must have advanced knowledge and experience in the field of astronomy, while being able to organize the groups and communicate fluently in English. The lack of workers in the hospitality sector is becoming more and more evident in Greece, resulting in a **scarcity of human capital** in the industry. Additionally, another challenge is to meet customer expectations where in this specific instance are high due to the brand name of Costa Navarino. Balancing **authenticity and luxury** with high-end guests can sometimes be at odds with the raw authenticity of local experiences. Therefore, the authentic experiences that are provided must always enjoy positive feedback and achieve the high-quality standards, which is a difficult task provided the circumstances. The marketing of these activities is also a significant challenge as presenting these activities as authentic as possible is of vital importance, as the management needs to insure that there is a consistent and steady demand for these experiences. The dissemination of the experiences must target all potential guests without falling into a variety of stereotypes or overgeneralizations.

The lessons that can be drawn from this specific example are multiple and can vary and its benefits can provide valuable lessons for other luxury resorts and tourism enterprises. Firstly, **collaboration with the local community** is essential as having a good relationship can ensure a steady workflow of individuals while ensuring that the experiences are going to be as authentic as possible. Secondly, balancing the components of practice is a lesson that every business must adhere to, in this instance, this is evident in the balance between luxury and authenticity where **flexibility** is required in educating the guests about the importance of preserving the local culture and environment while preserving the value of authentic experiences. Last but not least, effective marketing is **important to highlight the uniqueness and authenticity** of the activities. The marketing strategies lead to the storytelling of the activities and promoting the true nature of the authentic activities leads to increased participation.

10.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The authentic experiences that are offered from the Costa Navarino will provide numerous benefits and positive outcomes for a variety of actors and individuals. The main benefits have an impact on:

- **The Guests**

The guests benefit from the outcomes of authentic experience by being able to grasp the **unique culture** and dive into the rich local culture through activities such as the traditional cooking classes, the olive oil tasting, and the visits to historical sites, providing a deeper understanding and appreciation of the region's heritage. The activities create and foster a sense of personal connection with the local community and environment, creating a mix of memorable and unforgettable vacation experiences. The engagement of guests in the activities is more likely to lead into higher customer satisfaction and create a connection between the region the resort and the guests.

- **The Local Community**

The authentic experiences create and establish a steady and **increased demand for skillful personnel** that involve artisans, astronomers, cooks, and cultural practitioners creating employment opportunities for the locals and significantly boosting the economy of the region. The Messianic culture and heritage are also promoted through the involvement of locals in the tourism model of Costa Navarino, effectively creating a network that supports local businesses and contributing to the economic sustainability of the region.

- **The Resort**

The Costa Navarino gains a huge advantage by offering authentic experiences establishing the establishments as a unit that offers authenticity and sustainability while promoting culture. Incorporating these experiences, Costa Navarino gains an "advantage" due to the unique services that can provide to its clientele. Offering authentic experiences differentiates the resort from other hotels resulting in a comparative advantage. Moreover, the resort benefits from the flow of reviews as guests tend to share their experiences aiding in the promotion of the resort as a destination that has to offer more than just a simple stay. Additionally, the experiences that the resort provides create satisfied guests that are likely to repeat and return to Messinia, creating a steady flow of tourists which contributes to the long-term sustainability of the resort.

- **Sustainable Tourism Model**

The authentic experiences that are offered at Costa Navarino create a sustainable tourism model that is characterized by balanced development which aims to balance luxury tourism with sustainability and cultural integrity. The resort promotes the unique Messianic culture that contributes to the long-term viability of the resort and to the maintenance of high standards of guest satisfaction while benefiting the local community and environment.

10.5. Performance Indicators

To be able to assess the value of the authentic experiences, the impact on guests, the local community, and the overall business performance of the resort. The overall reviews and surveys from clients indicate a positive sentiment most reviews mention authentic experiences as part of the overall experience. For instance, the majority of the reviews on Trip Advisor are mostly positive and the effect of the authentic experiences is mentioned in many comments. Besides the reviews in trip advisor the sustainability report of 2019-2020 emphasizes the customer satisfaction as the resort scored a total of 78.4/100 in the Navarino Dunes, a 77.8/100 in the Westin Resort and a 80.4/100 in the Romanos Resort in 2018 with their numbers improving in 2020[49]. The participation of individuals with authentic experiences is also peeking especially towards the months of July and August, where the influx of tourists is very high. This has resulted in the introduction of additional workshops and experiences while always adding more experiences and events such as the Navarino Challenge and the Messinia Terroirs Wine Festival. The incorporation of experiences has attributed to several awards such *as 'A' Design Award& Competition 2020 Silver Award-The villa in Olive Grove*, and the *Hospitality Awards 2020 Gold Award-Top Greek Resort-Gold Award*.

An important indicator is the value that authentic experiences contribute to the local community and employs. Thus, the evaluation of the company's economic performance is a key factor in order to elaborate on the influence and impact that the resort has in the economy of the region. The business model is based on providing genuine experiences to the guests within the framework of local culture and traditions while contributing to the development of the region. Monitoring the performance of the resort through indicators related to the economic value generated and distributed is vital for understanding the strategy and philosophy of the business.

Key financial data for 2019 and 2020 in comparison with 2018, TEMES & Real Estate companies
(Values in Million Euro)

	2018	2019	2020
Sales from Operations	50.9	53.6	24.3
Sales from Real Estate	18.8	20.9	42.4
Total Sales (Turnover)	69.7	74.5	66.7
Total Assets	580.2	588.0	633.6
Equity	360.7	366.5	374.6
Liabilities	219.5	221.5	259.0

Sustainability Report of Costa Navarino https://www.costanavarino.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/sustainability-report-2021-22-1.pdf

---

[49] Costa Navarino Sustainability Report 2019-2020-https://www.costanavarino.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/sustainability-2019_20.pdf

The abovementioned data, indicates that the resort is committed to connect the company's development with the development of the region of Messinia as a whole, as many of the profits are re-invested in the creation and promotion of sustainable tourism which creates jobs while at the same time promoting local culture and products. Costa Navarino sets a unique paradigm through its employment policies that target the local population, creating business opportunities by promoting local culture and products and working together with a number of local micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises. The creation of quality jobs in a safe working environment that encourages innovation, combined with the provision of high-quality training tailored to the talents and needs of each individual, are essential for any associate to become the ambassadors of the resort's vision, while providing the highest quality of service to the visitors. In addition, the employment policy strengthens the bonds of the local community and contributes both directly and indirectly to the economic and social development of the region.

11.   Smart technology in hotels

Identification

Name	YOTEL
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	https://www.yotel.com/en/tech

<u>Summary</u>

YOTEL hotels are known for their **smart hospitality management solutions**, emphasizing efficiency, technology, and space optimization. They feature **compact, high-tech "cabins" (pods)** designed for comfort and functionality, incorporating adjustable SmartBeds, mood lighting, and tech-enabled controls. YOTEL also streamlines the guest experience with **self-service check-in kiosks**, allowing for fast and hassle-free arrivals and departures.

Yotel Hotel https://ejsnewyork.com/projects/yotel-new-york-city/

11.1. Background

The YOTEL hotels were founded by Simon Woodroffe the creator of the YO! Company which includes the sushi chain YO! Woodroffe was inspired by the luxury of first-class airline cabins as he aimed to translate that compact, efficient luxury into affordable hotel accommodation. YOTEL is a tech-led global hotel group made up of three brands: YOTEL, YOTELAIR, and YOTELPAD. Here is a quick explanation of how each of the brands can be defined:

- YOTEL city center hotels include cleverly crafted cabins and feature beautifully designed open spaces with gyms, restaurants, bars, and outdoor terraces. KOMYUNITI is their concept for co-working, informal meetings, and relaxing. Design elements are incorporated within each space to reflect the city in which the hotel is located. You will also find innovative concepts like YOBOT – an automated luggage concierge at YOTEL New York and soon-to-be YOTEL Dubai, as well as delivery robots for amenity requests at YOTEL Singapore and Boston.
- YOTELAIR hotels are located in airport terminals. They are ideal for guests that have long layovers or early flights and wish to book a cabin for a few hours or one night. They are a lighter version of their city center hotels.
- YOTELPAD is their newest concept. Located in city centers and resort locations, these condo-style residences are perfect for one-week to one-year stays. It is about giving the guests a feeling of "home".

The three brands were created under the same model: being smart by saving space and time to provide guests with a flawless experience. The first hotel was created in Gatwick Airport in London in 2007, offering travelers a comfortable and convenient place to stay within the airport premises. Hotels have self-check-in kiosks and keyless entry, convertible double beds, adjustable mood lighting and systems. Furthermore, the New York hotel is home to the YOBOT, the world's first robotic luggage concierge. The hotels in Boston and Singapore have delivery robots that take amenities to the rooms. These robots are programmed to negotiate lifts and corridors and they can interact with people. YOTEL hotels target the intelligent use of space offering cabins rather than traditional hotel rooms, these cabins are compact yet highly functional, maximizing every inch of space. The cabins feature a variety of high-tech luxuries and amenities such as adjustable smart beds, mood lighting, smart TVs, and monsoon rain showers. YOTEL is also pioneers in the system of check-in and check-out as it uses self-service kiosks for check-in and check-out reducing wait times and enhancing convenience for guests. The company primarily targets transit passengers as the hotels are concentrated in major hotels like Heathrow, Gatwick, and Charles de Gaulle. The hotel chain will target city hotels such as New York, Boston, Singapore and San Francisco, while modifications in the cabins are also planned in order to make them suitable for longer stays and more appealing to high profile clients.

11.2. Key Principles

The Yotel hotels are a startup with an ambitious plan that is going to revolutionize the industry. The YOTEL chain utilizes smart technological solutions in order to make the experience for the client as simple as possible. For instance, guests will be able to view their reservation details, seamlessly check-in and out, use the app as their room key, request a late check-out, view any charges and payments, and receive messages from the hotel announcing events or special offers. This will be possible through the new applications while self-service kiosks will allow guests to **check-in under a minute.** The new service kiosks contribute to the elimination of front-desk lines, boost guest satisfaction and more importantly reduce the likelihood of fraud as it requires verification and identification of the individuals that are going to stay in the premises. Besides the quick check-in option that the YOTEL hotels offer, another smart solution is that each cabin is specially designed to **maximize the use of space** without compromising comfort. Rejuvenating rain showers and heated towel rails are provided as standard along with SMART TVs to connect your own devices as well as multiple power and USB points. Moreover, the YOTEL hotels are implementing a variety of robots that serve different and multiple functions. For example, **robots** in New York are aiding guests in storing their luggage while room-service robots are being used to deliver food, towels, and suitcases. The robots are fully functional and interactive as they move freely around the premises of the hotel and they can even stop for chats or a quick selfie with the guests. The business model of the hotel does not target only traditional travelers but also business travelers, thus in many facilities there are locations that feature co-working spaces that are equipped with modern technology and offer high-speed Wi-Fi in order to achieve high efficiency and be able to accommodate the needs of the clients.

The implementation of smart solutions does not require the traditional management approach towards a hotel but rather a more modern approach that is based on a more diverse skillset. The hotel management approach relies heavily on the programming of smart devices thus one of the skills that are required is advanced **vendor management**. It is paramount to be able to oversee and coordinate the relationships and interactions with external suppliers to ensure that the robots and the automated check-in are always operational and functional. Apart from the technical capabilities it is paramount to be able to have design skills such as **space optimization** such as interior design. Design skills are important when creating the pods, in order to ensure accessibility to a broad audience including people with disabilities.

11.3. Barriers and Challenges

The smart solutions that the YOTEL hotels apply face a variety of challenges. Firstly, the integration of self-check-in and check-out has some risks regarding the **personal data of the guests** as well as the reliability of the online systems. With the extensive use of digital and automated systems, ensuring the security of guest data has become a huge concern for YOTEL hotels. The integration of technologies such as automated check-in kiosks, mobile apps for room control, and the device in rooms enhances convenience and personalization but also introduces significant vulnerabilities. While automation can contribute to the enhancement of efficiency, it can also lead to cyber-attacks and breaches that can lead to **severe reputational damage and legal consequences**. A data breach can have devastating consequences, leading to severe reputational damage as guests lose confidence in the hotel's ability to safeguard their information. Financial repercussions can also be substantial, including potential fines from regulatory bodies for non-compliance with data protection laws like GDPR and costs associated with remediation efforts. Therefore, a major challenge of the increased automation is to ensure the

data security of each individual and compliance by adhering to global and regional data privacy laws such as GDPR which requires data management policies.

Another challenge for this practice is the selective implementation of these practices. The implementation of this innovative model may not be **applicable to certain locations and cultures,** thus the expansion when using this practice must be very carefully planned and executed. Adapting the YOTEL concept to suit different cultural expectations and preferences while maintaining the brand's core identity is a complex challenge. YOTEL's innovative and smart approach must resonate with diverse guest profiles worldwide, each with unique cultural norms, values, and expectations regarding hospitality. Moreover, the company must also be able to respond swiftly to any technical issues and malfunctions that can disrupt the guest experience. The latter requires an extensive technical staff that has experience with systems like robots and check-in systems to be on stand-by and close to the YOTEL locations. The maintenance of all the aforementioned systems is also a significant cost as the ongoing maintenance of kiosks, smart rooms, and robots requires constant updates.

11.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The smart solutions that the YOTEL hotel implements has a variety of benefits that span different areas. Firstly, this practice is **eco-friendly** as all the smart devices are designed to balance the operational cost of a hotel while contributing to climate and environmental sustainability. The hotel uses LED lighting, automated climate control, and occupancy sensors which significantly lead on lowering its energy consumption. With the integration of these systems into the centralized building management software it allows for a real-time monitoring that ensures energy optimization. The latter aids in the decrease of the hotel's carbon footprint which increases the sustainability of the businesses and translates to a significant cost saving, which makes the pricing more affordable to the clients. Lastly, by promoting a sustainable model of business makes the promotion and marketing of the business much more efficient and accessible, attracting environmentally conscious travelers.

Secondly, the introduction of a mobile application in the hotels provides the guests **with 24/7 all around access** to a wide variety of services that amplifies their stay experience. Through the application, the guests can manage their bookings with ease from making reservations and modifying their stay dates to checking in and out without the need to visit the front desk or interact with the concierge. The application also facilitates the ordering of room service by enabling guests to browse menus, place orders and make special requests at any point during their stay. The application is also used as a tool from the hotels as well due to the fact that is a mean of communication between the client and the hotel. For instance, the hotel can inform the clients about any potential updates, and offers (happy hour, activities), while also ensure customer satisfaction.

Lastly, YOTEL hotels significantly enhance guest experience through a combination of convenience, efficiency, and innovative amenities. The implementation of automated check-in/check-out processes through the self-service kiosks amplifies guest arrivals and departures, reducing wait times and enhancing overall convenience. In-room technology, such as adjustable mood lighting, smart TVs, and climate control panels, allows guests to easily personalize their environment, ensuring a comfortable and relaxed stay. Additionally, YOTEL's use of robotic services like YOBOT for luggage storage adds a futuristic element and improves operational efficiency, while the provision of free, reliable high-speed Wi-Fi ensures that guests can stay connected for both work and leisure. These features collectively create a modern, tech-savvy, and high quality experience for guests.

In conclusion, the lessons that can be drawn from this practice:

- Cost management, which is achieve through the investment in smart solutions that can reduce a variety of operational costs.
- System digitalization, through the application that enables the client to get updates and interact with the management neglecting human interaction.
- Sustainability and environmental impact, by implementing energy efficient systems and smart appliances for lighting the overall enterprises and brand reputation becomes more appealing to travellers.

These practices seem to have an impact on the investors, as the hotels are constantly expanding in different regions and areas, indicating that this innovative model seems not only to work but excel in the field of hospitality.

11.5. Performance Indicators

To assess the value and gravity of the good practice, particularly in the context of YOTEL hotels, it is essential to evaluate and measure several indicators that will elaborate on the efficiency and overall impact that this practice offers to the business. The first fact that must be taken into account is the overall customer satisfaction, in the review platforms such as Trip Advisor. The reviews are overall positive, and many guests highlight the significance of smart devices and their impact during their stay. The guests indicate how easy and comfortable is the check-in and check-out procedures and how this practice aids them in their time management and organization. Moreover, many guests praise the smart solutions such as the Wi-Fi speed and the robots, as additions that maximize the experience of the guests. Thus, the effectiveness of automated systems highlights the practice's impact on enhancing guest convenience and operational efficiency.

Another major indicator that this model of hotel design is efficient and lucrative is the constant expansion and investments that the hotel chain gets from funds and institutions. The Starwood Capital Group which is a global private investment firm invested 250$ million dollars in order to support its global expansion plans, including the opening in key cities and airport around the world. The innovative design and model of the hotels, drew attention from the Kuwait Real Estate Company (AQARAT), supporting its expansion in the Middle East and other regions. The most ambitious project is the YOTEL Oxagon which marks the YOTEL's first opening in Saudi Arabia and stands to become a key hospitality development in one of the world's most ambitious projects, set to redefine sustainable urban living. The first hotel in Oxagon will be within the city's Research and Innovation district, scheduled to open its doors in 2026. Lastly, the hotels emphasize and promote environmental sustainability and implement energy systems in order to keep the carbon footprint as low as possible. Among the measures that the hotel implements to save energy is the eco water flow, showerheads, and taps that are 45% more efficient. The rooms and cabins are also equipped with LED lighting and occupancy sensors for heating lighting and cooling thus these systems ensure that there is no energy waste.

12.　　Blue Flag

Identification

Name	Blue Flag
Subsector	Sustainable Tourism
Website	https://www.blueflag.gr/

Summary

The **Blue Flag Initiative** is a global certification promoting sustainable tourism through environmental management, water quality, safety, and education at beaches and marinas. It sets strict standards to protect natural ecosystems while enhancing visitor experiences. Challenges include financial constraints, enforcement difficulties, and climate change impacts. Benefits include improved environmental quality, safety, and increased community engagement. The program also raises awareness and boosts sustainable tourism.

Blue Flag overview https://lerosmarina.gr/blue-flag-2020/

12.1. Background

The Blue Flag Initiative is an internationally recognized certification program that promotes sustainable development in both freshwater and marine environments through rigorous environmental management, education, and sustainable tourism practices. Managed by the Foundation for Environmental Education (FEE), the initiative aims to safeguard natural resources by improving water quality, enhancing safety, and encouraging responsible environmental practices at beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators worldwide. The Blue Flag certification is a prestigious eco-label awarded to beaches, marinas, and tourism boats that meet strict criteria in four main areas: environmental education and information, water quality, environmental management, and safety and services. To earn the Blue Flag, sites must demonstrate excellence in these areas, ensuring that visitors have access to clean, safe, and environmentally friendly recreational spaces. The program also fosters a sense of environmental stewardship by encouraging local authorities, communities, and tourism operators to engage in sustainable management practices. By maintaining high standards, the Blue Flag program supports the overarching mission to protect natural environments while promoting sustainable tourism and recreation. In doing so, it plays a vital role in environmental conservation within the context of global tourism.

12.2. Key Principles

The Blue Flag initiative is cantered on promoting sustainable development in freshwater and marine environments by upholding high standards in environmental management, water quality, safety, and environmental education. To achieve these standards, the program requires specific resources and skills. Essential resources include skilled environmental managers, water quality testing equipment, lifeguards, and educational materials aimed at educating the public about sustainable practices. Key skills required for the program's success encompass environmental assessment, public engagement, safety training, and the implementation of sustainable management practices. The key principles of the Blue Flag program, as detailed on the Blue Flag Greece program, include:

- Environmental Education and Information: The program prioritizes educating visitors and local communities about environmental stewardship. This involves disseminating information on local ecosystems, responsible environmental behavior, and sustainable practices, which fosters a greater appreciation for natural resources and encourages sustainable interactions with the environment.
- Water Quality: Maintaining high water quality is fundamental to the Blue Flag certification. The program mandates regular monitoring and rigorous testing to ensure that water at beaches and marinas meets strict quality standards, thereby safeguarding public health and protecting marine life.
- Environmental Management: The program emphasizes the importance of effective environmental management to preserve the natural environment. This includes proper waste management, habitat protection, and minimizing human impact on the ecosystem, ensuring that beaches, marinas, and boating areas remain unspoiled for future generations.
- Safety and Services: Ensuring visitor safety is a cornerstone of the Blue Flag program. It requires the presence of trained lifeguards, readily available safety equipment, and comprehensive

emergency response plans. Additionally, the program mandates clean, well-maintained, and accessible facilities, such as toilets, showers, and walkways, making these sites safe and enjoyable for all visitors.

- Accessibility: The Blue Flag initiative advocates for the inclusivity of beaches, marinas, and boating areas, ensuring they are accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities. This includes providing accessible facilities and clear information about accessibility features to enhance the experience for all visitors.

12.3. Barriers and Challenges

The Blue Flag program faces several barriers and challenges in its efforts to promote sustainable development and environmental protection at beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators. One of the primary challenges is maintaining high standards across diverse locations. Each location presents unique geographical and environmental conditions, regulations, and challenges, making it difficult to apply a uniform set of standards universally. Additionally, resource availability varies significantly, particularly in developing countries or remote areas, where communities may lack the necessary infrastructure, expertise, or funding to meet the stringent criteria set by the Blue Flag program. Financial constraints are another significant barrier. Achieving and maintaining Blue Flag certification can be costly, requiring substantial investment in infrastructure, environmental management systems, and ongoing monitoring and assessments. These costs can be a considerable burden for smaller communities or regions with limited budgets. Furthermore, promoting environmental education and awareness, which is a core component of the Blue Flag program, often requires additional funding and resources that may not always be available. Enforcement and monitoring present further challenges. Ensuring continuous compliance with Blue Flag standards necessitates regular and rigorous monitoring and assessment, which can be logistically challenging and resource-intensive. The program's success also depends on the commitment of local authorities, communities, and stakeholders to uphold these standards. A lack of engagement or support from these groups can significantly hinder compliance and enforcement efforts. Climate change and environmental threats also pose substantial challenges to the Blue Flag program. Rising sea levels, increased frequency of storms, and other climate-related impacts threaten the quality and safety of beaches and marinas. In addition, pollution, marine litter, water contamination, and habitat destruction require ongoing effort and collaboration to manage effectively, particularly in areas with high tourist traffic or inadequate waste management infrastructure.

Balancing tourism and conservation is another critical challenge. In popular destinations, high levels of tourism can lead to environmental degradation, resource depletion, and strain on local infrastructure, which runs counter to the objectives of the Blue Flag program. There is often a tension between promoting sustainable practices and catering to local economic interests that prioritize tourism growth, which can lead to conflicts over resource use and environmental priorities. Public awareness and participation are crucial for the program's success but also present challenges. The Blue Flag program relies heavily on public awareness and understanding of its goals and criteria. If tourists and local residents are not aware of or do not value the Blue Flag status, maintaining high standards becomes more difficult. Moreover, encouraging sustainable behaviors among tourists and local communities, such as proper waste disposal and responsible resource use, is an ongoing challenge that requires continuous education and engagement. Lastly, regulatory and political challenges can impede the effectiveness of the Blue Flag program. Inconsistent environmental regulations and enforcement across different countries and regions create difficulties in maintaining a consistent standard for Blue

Flag sites. Additionally, achieving and maintaining certification often requires strong political commitment and support from government bodies, which can be affected by changing political priorities and leadership. These barriers and challenges highlight the complexities involved in managing a global initiative like the Blue Flag program, which requires coordination, funding, and cooperation from multiple stakeholders to achieve its goals of promoting sustainable tourism and protecting the environment.

12.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The Blue Flag program offers numerous benefits and positive outcomes, contributing significantly to environmental protection, sustainable tourism, and community well-being. One of the primary benefits is the enhancement of environmental quality at certified beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators. By adhering to the strict criteria set by the program, such as maintaining high standards of water quality, waste management, and ecological conservation, participating sites help protect natural ecosystems and biodiversity. This focus on environmental management reduces pollution, promotes the conservation of local wildlife and habitats, and ensures that natural resources are used sustainably. Another key outcome of the Blue Flag program is the improvement of safety and services at certified locations. The program's standards require that beaches and marinas provide safe, accessible, and well-maintained facilities, including lifeguards, first aid, and clear signage. These measures enhance the safety and overall experience for visitors, making Blue Flag sites attractive destinations for tourists. This improved experience can lead to increased visitor satisfaction and repeat tourism, which can boost local economies. The Blue Flag certification also plays a significant role in raising environmental awareness and education among both locals and tourists. The program encourages educational activities and the dissemination of information about the environment, fostering a greater understanding of ecological issues and promoting responsible behavior. By engaging communities and tourists in environmental education, the program helps cultivate a culture of environmental stewardship and sustainability, which can have lasting positive impacts. Moreover, achieving Blue Flag status can enhance the reputation and visibility of a beach, marina, or boating tourism operator. The Blue Flag is an internationally recognized eco-label that symbolizes high environmental and quality standards. As a result, certified sites often enjoy increased media attention and recognition, which can attract more visitors who prioritize sustainable and environmentally friendly destinations. This increased visibility can contribute to the growth of sustainable tourism, providing economic benefits to local communities while encouraging the adoption of environmentally responsible practices.

In addition to these direct benefits, the Blue Flag program fosters greater community pride and involvement. Local communities often take pride in their Blue Flag status, which can lead to increased community engagement in environmental protection and sustainable tourism efforts. This sense of pride and ownership can drive local initiatives to maintain and improve environmental standards, ensuring the long-term sustainability of the site. Overall, the Blue Flag program generates multiple positive outcomes by enhancing environmental quality, promoting safety, raising awareness, boosting local economies, and fostering community pride. By encouraging sustainable practices and providing a framework for environmental stewardship, the program contributes significantly to the protection of natural resources and the promotion of sustainable tourism worldwide.

12.5. Performance Indicators

The performance indicators of the Blue Flag program are designed to assess the quality, safety, and sustainability of beaches, marinas, and boating tourism operators, ensuring they meet the high standards required for certification. Water quality is a primary indicator, necessitating regular testing to guarantee cleanliness and safety for recreational use. Environmental management focuses on effective waste management, the conservation of natural areas, and the reduction of ecological impact. Safety and services are assessed by the availability of lifeguards, lifesaving equipment, clearly marked swimming zones, and accessible facilities for all visitors, including those with disabilities. Additionally, environmental education and information are crucial indicators, aimed at increasing public awareness and engagement regarding environmental protection and sustainability. Further performance indicators include the number of sites certified annually, compliance rates with environmental management criteria, water quality metrics, the number of environmental education activities conducted, and stakeholder satisfaction levels. These comprehensive indicators collectively help maintain the high standards of the Blue Flag program and evaluate its effectiveness in promoting sustainable tourism and environmental stewardship.

13.   High-Value Low Volume

Identification

Name	Tourism Policy-the Way Forward
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://bhutan.travel/visit

Summary

Bhutan follows a **High-Value, Low-Volume** tourism policy, aiming to preserve its culture, environment, and traditions while maximizing economic benefits. This hospitality management model limits mass tourism by imposing a variety of rules that require visitors to book through licensed tour operators. The strategy ensures that tourism contributes to **sustainability, cultural preservation, and local well-being** while offering travellers a **unique, exclusive, and immersive experience**. By prioritizing **quality over quantity**, Bhutan maintains its pristine landscapes, rich heritage, and Gross National Happiness philosophy.

Bhutan Breathtaking View https://www.globalrescue.com/common/blog/detail/bhutan-safe-travel-guide/

13.1. Background

Bhutan, a country located in Asia, East of the Himalayas, is known as one of the happiest countries in the world. The country's past is not so turbulent as its neighbors as the state of Bhutan remained relatively untouched by the long-lasting effects of colonialism which has ensured that the people's sustainable way of life has remained intact. Bhutan tourism operates a scarce model as it incorporates the principle of high value, and low impact which enforces a strict framework of entry requirements and a daily visitor tariff. The daily tariff includes necessary expenses for the visit such as accommodation, a licensed tour guide meal, and hiking equipment. A significant portion of the tariff is being used to maintain and develop the country's infrastructure as well as contribute towards the healthcare and educational system.

The value and rationale of this practice are worth mentioning and important to examine due to the global phenomenon of over-tourism which has been a hot topic internationally in recent years. Destinations like Barcelona had to impose serious legislation on the rental online marketplace platform Airbnb as the property rental market significantly derailed altering the market dynamics and impacting negatively the younger generations, while in the city of Venice, the number of day visits from cruise ships strained local resources and aggravated local residents to the point that the permanent residents are fleeing the city. To understand the magnitude of the problem the resident number is dropping to below 53.000 in a city made for 150.000 people.

The abovementioned examples and phenomena led Bhutan to maintain its high-value low-impact model. The low-volume aspect of the policy ensures that the number of tourist arrivals is decided by the absorptive carrying capacity of our resources and services. It does not necessarily mean that there will be a reduction or restriction on the number of visitor arrivals. The country also struggled in the last decades of the 20th century when the government did not put in place any structural foundations to restrict visits and travel. The latter led to an exponential increase in the number of tourists visiting Bhutan. These numbers have precipitated a surge in budget hotels and hostels diluted the nature of several festivals and created unacceptable visitation levels at several landmarks and monuments. These incidents paved the way towards the enforcement of sustainable visitation policies as, in 2018 Nepal surpassed 1 million tourists for the first time in the nation's history.

13.2. Key Principles

The core pillars of the model that the Bhutanese policy is enforcing are the following:

- The **Sustainable Development Fee (SDF),** which requires tourists to pay a charge of 100 dollars per person to support Bhutan's development and environmental conservation
- The revenue from this fee has led to numerous successes, significantly enhancing infrastructure, services, and facilities for both nationals and tourists.
- The goals of the specific tourist policy are environmental conservation, preservation and promotion of culture, sustainable socio-economic development, and good governance.
- Limitation of Over-Tourism and its effects (pollution, disruptions, price hikes, infrastructure deficit)
- Protection of rural communities while also protecting the environment.

- Promotion of ecotourism and ecotourism projects as well as socio-economic development in the right direction
- The **National Tourism Strategic Plan** includes several provisions about poverty reduction, allowing for rural tourism, encouraging village homestays, and recycling fees to buffer zone and forest user committees.
- Generation of local employment opportunities
- Active involvement of local self-governments in tourism development

13.3. Barriers and Challenges

The vision and rationale of Bhutan for tourism became trendy but the trend of rapid and mass tourism significantly threatens this narrative. There are advocates that suggest that in the contemporary era, the tourism strategy is headed in the wrong direction. Calls for a significant restructuring in the comprehensive national tourism policy are becoming more and more popular especially when the commercialism of tourism has taken over at the expense of the environment and culture of Bhutan. Therefore, the main challenge for this policy is to keep up with the modern tourist models by adopting mechanisms and policies that other cities and countries have enforced. For instance, the government might consider the caps that were enforced in the case of Taj Mahal in Agra which imposed a threshold of 40,000 tourists per day and a maximum stay of three hours. In the city of Amsterdam, the Dutch capital authorities have introduced a "City in Balance" programme halting buildings of new hotels and tourist shops as well as an "enjoy and respect" campaign to influence tourist behavior. Other mechanisms can include rigid and robust control with trekking companies as well as caps and perhaps local tariffs for visits to monasteries for tourists.

Another significant barrier that exists towards the restructuring of the Bhutanese tourist dogma is the lack of infrastructure in several fields including accommodation, restaurants and hospitality structure. For instance, the hospitality sector still lags behind as in 2012 there were only 45 3-star hotels with the number steadily rising to 105 hotels in the country. There is a significant push for modernization and change as the state policy favors the development of hospitality domes and structures with the banking industry also supporting this effort by granting generous loans with interest rates far lower than for constructing residential buildings. Another trend is the conversion of residential buildings into budget hotels, that provides more options for tourists.

13.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The enforcement of this policy by the Bhutanese government had several benefits in the many sectors of the economy, society, and environment. Bhutan aims to promote **Ecotourism** which is a form of tourism directed towards exotic, often threatened, natural environments intended to support conservation efforts and observe wildfires. The country identifies the tourist industry as a lucrative source of income as tourism today is one of the most dynamic and largest economic sectors in this modern age. **Ecotourism** in Bhutan was first started to address human-wildlife conflicts by offsetting or compensating the losses for farmers but much remains to be done to converge the two. For Bhutan's rural communities which bear the daily brunt of strict conservation policies in human-wildlife conflict, ecotourism holds tremendous potential to improve their livelihood. Lessons on ecotourism across the globe shows that it is not unusual to confront challenges and issues in the early stages. The Royal Government of Bhutan and its partners, including the United Nations Development Programme are implementing ecotourism projects as there are Bhutan's parks and natural areas can generate a capital

investment of USD 150million, also generating new jobs with 19.8 million in wages and benefits to staff annually. Initiatives include the CBST in Haa and My Gakidh Village in Punakha where several nature-based activities have been introduced including bird watching rafting botany and mountain biking. The economic benefits to the hitherto excluded in the tourism sector, suitable programmes were designed which faced many operational difficulties. Feasible solutions were adopted with stakeholders' participation, which ultimately resulted in institutionalizing the system with well-defined roles and responsibilities. It is estimated that the total economic benefit to the community through local sourcing is around 3.5 million. This tourist model also includes the promotion of ethnic food as there are food restaurants that serve ethnic food instantly becoming major eating spots for tourists.

This policy also helped to decrease the low-spending tourists which is a key characteristic of over tourism. Bhutan is one of the most rapidly urbanizing countries in South Asia and it prioritizes the preservation of sacred sites and temples as for example the entrance to sacred places and temples is limited to Hindus and is strictly prohibited to other religions.

13.5. Performance Indicators

During the 2010-2017 period, Bhutan's real GDP growth averaged more than 6¾ percent making it one of the fastest-growing low-income countries. Much of that growth has come from the hydropower sector and from tourism receipts with fluctuating contributions from construction mostly related to the building of hydro-related dams.

Figure 1.1 Tourist Arrival over the years
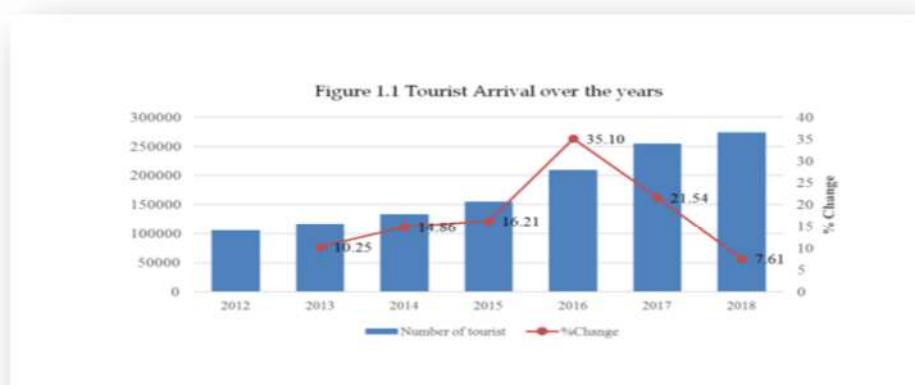
Tourism Council of Bhutan https://www.tourism.gov.bt/uploads/attachment_files/tcb_xx8r_BTM%202018%20_final.pdf

In the abovementioned **Figure 1** it is illustrated that the percentage of tourist arrivals over the years is dropped significantly as a result of the quality-over-quantity policies that are the established dogma of the tourist industry of Bhutan. In this year the total tourism receipt from international leisure rose to record standards of 85.41 million dollars. Additionally, the visitor exit survey highlights that the majority of the visitors to Bhutan are highly educated and employed and they are visiting Bhutan for the first time.

This decline in growth ratio can be attributed to the lack of license operators as there are only 2,500 guides and 53 international tourist class hotels and lodges. The lack of transportation and infrastructure is also a factor that makes the accessibility of certain locations difficult. In conclusion, the practice of prioritizing quality over quantity must be considered by countries that are facing mass

tourism problems. The mindset of the government is to encourage tourism, improve the infrastructure and hospitality infrastructure while respecting the environment culture and society of Bhutan. The revenue from tourism is reinvested into the core pillars of the state including education, healthcare and the environment.

14.   Conclusions

The abovementioned best practices, serve as an important resource for fostering innovation and efficiency across the fields of hospitality, management, and tourism. These practices aim to redefine strategies and demonstrate their effectiveness by illustrating ways and methodologies that can have practical applications with astonishing results.

The first practice had a positive impact on making Costa Navarino an attractive destination that provides its guests with authentic experiences that are difficult to replicate by another non-local hospitality unit. This option serves as the perfect tool for both the provider and the receiver as the hotel gains marketing exposure and the guests receive a unique experience that is non-replicable from similar institutions.

The second practice, emphasizes the increasing need for modernization in the traditional hotel units, by incorporating devices and tools that will automate the procedures and improve guests' experiences. YOTEL is a success story that should, be studied more explicitly as modern hotels will follow the same structure and business model.

The third practice, concerns the upcoming digitalization of tourism, with positive impacts in the case of Japan as POKEMON GO helped some cities, to recover from massive earthquakes boosting tourist activities and creating a new culture redefining the traditional notion of tourism.

The fourth practice revolves around the categorization of certain beaches and areas with blue flags indicating their uniqueness marking them as a place worth visiting. Similar initiatives can be enforced by other countries in similar areas or different places (mountains, hills).

The last practice is the incorporation of quality tourism of quantity examining in depth the case of Bhutan where the government voluntarily enforces a variety of tariffs and barriers that help control and prevent over-tourism.

In summary, the best practices illustrate efficient and unique tactics that enterprises, governments or individuals can incorporate in order to revolutionize and modernize their impact on their target groups.

15.   References

Alpha Bank Economic Research, May 2020, https://www.alpha.gr/-/media/alphagr/files/group/agores/insights/2022/insights_tourism_052022.pdf

Bhutan Travel Bureau, Bhutan Tourism Policy, https://www.bhutantravelbureau.com/getting-to-bhutan/bhutan-tourism-policy/

Bhutan Tourism Monitor 2018, https://www.tourism.gov.bt/uploads/attachment_files/tcb_sZjMpdQJ_BTM_2018.pdf

Blue Flag initiative, https://www.blueflag.global/

Blue Flags 2022, https://www.visitgreece.gr/blog/visit-greece/1416/blue-flags-2022/

Costa Navarino, LocaL Delicacies, https://www.costanavarino.com/local-delicacies/

Costa Navarino, Authentic Experiences, https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/

Costa Navarino, Sustainability Development, https://www.costanavarino.com/messinian-authenticity/

Computing UK, Case Study-Yotel, https://www.computing.co.uk/feature/1843555/case-study-yotel

CityAm, Yotel checks in for global growth with $250m private equity backing, https://www.cityam.com/272667-yotel-checks-global-growth-250m-private-equity-backing/

Dimitrios Buhalis, School of Management Studies for the Service Sector, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 7XH, UK, https://sete.gr/files/Media/Ebook/TourisminGreeceBuhalisinCurrentIssues.pdf

Daily Bhutan, Honoring the Past, Embracing the Future: Bhutan's Tourism Turns 50, https://www.dailybhutan.com/article/honoring-the-past-embracing-the-future-bhutans-tourism-turns-50

Nyaupane, Gyan P. and Timothy, Dallen (2016) "Bhutan's Low-volume, High-yield Tourism: The Influence of Power and Regionalism". Travel and Tourism Research Association: Advancing Tourism Research Globally.

Selfbook, Yotel Grows Direct Booking and Rewards Loyal Guests, https://selfbook.com/case-study/yotel-grows-direct-bookings

The Diplomat, Bhutan's Tourism Dilemma: Balancing Economy and Sustainability, https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/bhutans-tourism-dilemma-balancing-economy-and-sustainability/

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

25

The Globe and Mail, New wave of low-cost lodging trades shabby for stylish, https://www.theglobeandmail.com/life/travel/travel-news/new-wave-of-low-cost-lodging-trade-shabby-for-stylish/article17853738/

TripAdvisor, The Westin Resort, Costa Navarino, https://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g11805595-d1569170-Reviews-The_Westin_Resort_Costa_Navarino-Costa_Navarino_Messenia_Region_Peloponnese.html

Travel, Blue Flag Honours: Greece Clinches Second Place Globally, https://www.travel.gr/en/how-to-travel-en/travel-news-en/blue-flag-honours-greece-clinches-second-place-globally/

The Diplomat, Bhutan's Tourism Dilemma: Balancing Economy and Sustainability, https://thediplomat.com/2024/05/bhutans-tourism-dilemma-balancing-economy-and-sustainability/

UNTWTO, Gamification in Tourism: Pokemon Go and Beyond, https://medium.com/@unwto/gamification-in-tourism-pok%C3%A9mon-go-and-beyond-2045acea2c1e

World Golf Awards, https://worldgolfawards.com/award/world-best-emerging-golf-destination/2022

Yotel Hotel, Yotel Pad, https://www.yotel.com/en/yotelpad-hotels

Yotel Hotel, Yotel Air Hotels, https://www.yotel.com/en/yotelair-hotels

Annex D - Country Report of Italy

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by:

AITR - Associazione Italiana Turismo Responsabile, CSL La Cremeria

Country: Italy

Date: December 2024

Contents

1. Introduction

This report brings together a collection of best practices in sustainable and responsible tourism, presenting how innovative approaches can address environmental, cultural, and social challenges faced by the global tourism industry. By identifying and analyzing practices across different sectors, activities, and legal forms, the report highlights different ways in which stakeholders can balance economic, environmental, and social priorities in tourism development.

The best practices included in this report were identified through a combination of **interviews** and **online research**, with the specific aim of uncovering replicable solutions that could inspire stakeholders in other countries and regions. In some cases, the online research was complemented by targeted interviews and follow-up questions to deepen the understanding of specific initiatives. Furthermore, the network of AITR (Italian Association for Responsible Tourism) played a crucial role as a representative actor in the tourism sector at national level, providing valuable insights and expertise to inform this collection.

In selecting the best practices, particular attention was given to three **core competences** (green, digital, and socio-cultural) at the basis of the GreenHost project. Additionally, the report places a specific focus on certification pathways with environmental and socio-cultural components, such as the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (CETS), which offer replicable frameworks for other contexts.

The collected best practices focus on key areas such as hospitality and food services, the creation of tourism packages and services, territorial communication and marketing, and environmental education. The initiatives include social cooperatives, tour operators, and community cooperatives - a uniquely Italian model where members from the same community collectively manage activities to promote local development and social cohesion. For some cases, a specific initiative has been identified as the best practice, while for others, the best practice lies in the overall way the activity is conducted.

A central focus of this report is the **replicability** of the best practices, emphasizing elements that can be adapted and implemented in different territories and contexts. By sharing these examples, we aim to inspire stakeholders to embrace sustainable tourism as a driver of positive change, fostering greater collaboration and innovation across borders and sectors.

Name	Subsector	Description
ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.	Tourism	Atlantide is a social cooperative focused on environmental education and sustainable tourism, with a team of experts in ecology, tourism, and cultural heritage. It engages over 1 million students through impactful educational programs and promotes responsible environmental practices. By fostering collaboration among schools, local communities, and companies, Atlantide enhances both environmental awareness and the local economy. The cooperative faces challenges like misinformation and the need for continuous education, but its results

		are evident in increased sustainability adoption and local support. Key to its success is its highly qualified, passionate team, which drives the cooperative's mission.
Casa Bellavista B&B	Hospitality	Casa Bellavista, the first B&B in Cortona, embraces sustainability through eco-friendly practices for water conservation, waste reduction, and energy-saving initiatives such as solar panels. The philosophy is rooted in respecting nature, people, and the community. Guests are encouraged to participate in sustainability efforts, with rewards for recycling and visits to lesser-known local sites. The B&B's commitment to a low environmental impact, combined with its vegetarian and vegan menu, has not only increased customer awareness but also enhanced its reputation as a sustainable destination.
AlterEco cooperative	Cultural and tourism services	AlterEco, founded in 1997, is a cooperative that promotes sustainable tourism and local development in the Lunigiana region. By revitalizing local heritage and supporting eco-friendly tourism, it has fostered community-driven initiatives like eco-tourism, educational hubs, and the creation of local businesses. AlterEco's projects have empowered local residents and improved infrastructure, offering an alternative to the area's traditional marble quarrying economy. Through collaboration with local authorities, it has successfully attracted visitors, supporting a thriving sustainable economy.
Valle dei Cavalieri community-based social cooperative	Hospitality and restaurant	Valle dei Cavalieri is a community-based cooperative in Succiso, Reggio Emilia, managing services for both locals and tourists. It offers diverse activities like accommodation, catering, sports rentals, and a National Park visitor center, while integrating disabled employees into its workforce. The cooperative focuses on sustainability, local products, and collaboration with regional authorities, facing challenges like an aging population and workforce shortages. Its efforts have earned numerous awards, and it has become a model for community-driven cooperation, with growing success in both tourism and environmental innovation.
Ballarò cooperative	Hospitality and restaurant	Ballarò is a work cooperative managing hostels, catering, and cultural activities with a focus on creating stable, fairly paid work and fostering professional growth. It's deeply integrated into local communities, hosting events like conferences and performances. Committed to environmental, social, and economic sustainability, the cooperative balances its mission with financial challenges, managing historic properties with high costs. Its success is reflected in increased bookings, positive reviews, and a significant turnover, while staying true to its values of mutuality and social impact.
Itinere Incoming and the EU	Tour operator	ITINERE Incoming is a Destination Management Company specialized in sustainable tourism in Emilia Romagna and Northern Italy. Deeply committed to sustainability, ITINERE carefully selects local partners to

Charter for Sustainable Tourism		work with and participates in the European Charter of Sustainable Tourism. The Charter represents a participatory governance method that fosters responsible tourism in protected areas, ensuring biodiversity protection through structured certification processes involving different local actors.
Ecosapiens	Cultural services, communication and territorial marketing	Ecosapiens is a spin-off activity of an important Social Cooperative based in Reggio Emilia involved in developing rehabilitative pathways to people in need through housing and job placement. Ecosapiens provides consulting, training, communication and education services in the context of environmental and social sustainability. They design and implement workshops and educational activities for public bodies, companies and schools, on whose behalf they also take care of communication. In particular they engage in education, training, and consulting, marked by environmental and social sustainability and they carry out projects that aspire to generate change in people
Play Alghero	Tourism	Play Alghero is the brand that identifies a series of games, in physical and virtual format, created to revolutionize the experiences of tourists to cultural places of less-known sites. Gamification is used as a tool to enhance cultural heritage and innovate the tourist experience of visitors and citizens.

2. ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.

Figure 1: a moment of an environmental education activity (www.atlantide.net).

Identification

Name	ATLANTIDE Soc. Coop. Sociale p.a.
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://www.atlantide.net/

2.1. Background

Atlantide is a social cooperative dedicated to **environmental communication and education** for schools and companies, the **enhancement of local territories and cultural heritage**, and the management of **thematic parks and museums**, where nature and history intertwine. The cooperative promotes **sustainable tourism** and an environmental culture based on **responsibility** and **sharing**.

At the core of its mission, Atlantide places **cooperative values**, aiming to improve service quality, enhance human resources, and implement shared projects. The team is made up of **33 members** and **83 employees**, of which **76% are women** and **80% are university graduates** in scientific, cultural, and tourism-related disciplines. Atlantide distinguishes itself by adopting a **multidisciplinary approach**, with experts in tourism, territorial marketing, environmental education, and hiking guides.

Since 1990, Atlantide has served over **300 clients** and involved more than **1,000,000 students** in school projects. Its stakeholders include schools, citizens, and companies, through which it promotes **awareness campaigns** and projects related to **sustainability** and the **2030 Agenda**.

2.2. Key Principles

Atlantide's true strength lies in the **people** who make up the cooperative. The **environmental guides** and **educators** are highly qualified and passionate, and they successfully convey this passion to visitors and schools. Thanks to their expertise and dedication, they effectively engage the public on crucial topics such as **environmental sustainability** and the **enhancement of local territories**, offering educational experiences that go beyond mere information, fostering genuine interest and awareness.

These professionals, holding degrees in **environmental sciences, tourism, and territorial marketing**, serve as ambassadors of a **green culture**, promoting both individual and collective responsibility in the management of natural resources. Their enthusiasm and expertise represent a fundamental asset to the success of Atlantide's educational and awareness-raising projects.

2.3. Barriers and Challenges

One of the main challenges Atlantide faces is **raising public awareness** on environmental issues in a context that often does not favor sustainable practices. Changing people's everyday habits, both individually and collectively, requires **time and continuous effort**. Moreover, there is increasing **misinformation** regarding sustainability and ecology, fueled by **fake news** and lack of awareness. Atlantide strives to counter this trend through well-grounded **educational programs** based on solid facts.

Other challenges include managing complex projects that involve a variety of **stakeholders**, such as schools, public and private entities, as well as the need to adapt to **regulatory changes** and updates to the **2030 Agenda**. Additionally, the logistical management of **thematic parks** and **museums** requires efficient organization, particularly in a context where **sustainable access** must be guaranteed to a diverse audience, including tourists and local communities.

2.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Despite the challenges, Atlantide's projects bring numerous benefits. The most significant outcome is the **growth in environmental awareness** among participants, especially the younger generations. The educational programs aim to shape **responsible citizens**, providing them with the knowledge and tools necessary to adopt more sustainable behaviors. Atlantide has reached over **1,000,000 students** through its school projects, promoting values of **ecological responsibility** and the protection of both **natural and cultural heritage**.

The **hiking guides** and experts successfully convey their skills and passions, generating a positive impact not only on the educational level but also on the **economic** and **social** fronts. The initiatives aimed at **territorial enhancement** and the promotion of **sustainable tourism** have helped strengthen the bond between local communities and the environment, improving quality of life and supporting the local economy. Atlantide's activities have also encouraged increased **sustainable tourism** in **thematic parks** and **museums**, promoting a more **responsible use of resources**.

2.5. Performance Indicators

Various performance indicators are employed to evaluate the value and effectiveness of Atlantide's sustainability practices and educational activities. A key element is direct feedback from participants. Visitors and schools participating in the excursions and activities provide reviews on Regiondo, a platform through which guided tours and excursions are purchased. These reviews serve as an important measure of the quality of the user experience.

Another essential tool is social media, where Atlantide monitors public engagement through comments, likes, shares, and reviews, allowing for the evaluation of the impact of awareness campaigns and sustainable tourism promotion.

Lastly, Atlantide uses post-activity questionnaires to gather participant feedback. Visitors are asked to complete surveys at the end of the excursions, providing valuable data on how to improve the offer. For school projects, specific questionnaires for teachers are administered after field trips to measure the effectiveness of the educational program and gather suggestions for possible improvements.

3. Casa Bellavista B&B

Figure 2: outside and inside view of Casa Bellavista (www.aitr.org).

Identification

Name	Casa Bellavista B&B
Subsector	Hospitality
Website	www.casabellavista.it

3.1. Background

Casa Bellavista was the first B&B opened in the town of Cortona (Arezzo) in 2001. The values of Casa Bellavista were and are the respect for **people** and respecting/safeguarding **nature**. The idea of hospitality is based on a deep sense of **respect for the territory** and the role of the **staff**. Sustainability for Casa Bellavista means respecting the balance of nature, conserving the environment, and showing respect for all creatures around them, but also the constant effort to create a **welcoming and inclusive work environment**.

The sustainability philosophy is based on three basic pillars: Planet, People and Community.

Over the years, actions have focused primarily on:
- **WASTE**: Many years ago they started using refill soaps, replacing disposable ones. There has been a shift to the use of ECOLABEL-certified products for cleaning.
- **WATER**: they started saving water for garden irrigation with drip irrigation and by burying the pipes also decreasing evaporation,
- **ENERGY**: they switched to LED bulbs for the interior and solar panel-powered lighting for the exterior. Flow reducers were put in the faucets, and a photovoltaic system was installed in 2010.

3.2. Key Principles

Casa Bellavista has always been committed to an impact as "light" as possible towards the environment respecting nature in its entirety, both in the continuous **planting of native plants** and in recent years those **more resistant to climate chang**e. Great attention is always paid to the preservation of fauna being located within a repopulation reserve.

Containers have long been placed in the rooms to make **recycling collection directly from the customer** both to give an importance to the waste but also to speed up the cleaning of the room and for a more performing recycling collection. **Good behaviors are rewarded** with products made by a non-profit association in the area that puts autistic children to work and with Mangrove planting certifications in Mozambique.
Incentives are given to customers to visit **little-visited, low-tourist-impact places** in the area by handing out maps and suggestions both on the route but also on possible stops to make in places they would never have found on their own.

In 2023, the first **sustainability report** was done with the desire to put in writing all the strengths and to try to improve the environmental performance of Casa Bellavista.

3.3. Barriers and Challenges

The barriers are mainly due to the laziness that many guests have in sorting their garbage, sometimes due to a **habit** in handling garbage that differs greatly from country to country rather than a specific will.
Another barrier is to avoid **food waste** as much as possible.
The challenge is to **refine communication with customers**, making them more aware of the impact of their actions.

3.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Involving guests, who are encouraged to sort directly in their rooms and who receive rewards when they achieve good results, allows them to achieve higher recycling collection rates. Many of the tourists who stay at the facility are surprised by the rewards they receive, as well as by the opportunity to visit little-visited places. Finally, many are amazed by the **purely vegetarian and vegan cuisine** offered at the B&B, because it is as tasty as traditional cuisine, but with a significantly lower environmental impact.

Overall, the benefits in terms of **customer awareness** and **image return** for the company are considerable.

3.5. Performance Indicators

As a further demonstration of our commitment to "spreading" sustainability, as of February 2023, we have officially joined the **Traveleco network of sustainable accommodations**.

Finally, they have always noticed in talking with clients a positive impression in discovering that the facility they have chosen for their stay has a low environmental impact, mainly due to the photovoltaic system-which allows for **great energy savings** - but also to a whole series of **small-scale actions** to promote sustainable tourism that respects the environment, resources, and the territories.

4. AlterEco cooperative

Figure 3: an environmental education activity (www.altereco.company)

Identification

Name	AlterEco cooperative
Subsector	Cultural and tourism services, travel arrangements, communication and territorial marketing
Website	https://grottediequi.it https://lunigiana.travel https://www.visitequiterme.it https://www.altereco.company

4.1. Background

AlterEco is a cooperative founded in 1997 in Casola in Lunigiana, at the stimulus of Legambiente, with the aim of create **economic and employment opportunities** related to the sustainable enhancement of the naturalistic heritage, historical, ethnological and cultural heritage of the Lunigiana side of the **Apuan Alps Regional Park** (Municipalities of Casola in Lunigiana and Fivizzano).

It shared with Legambiente the social and cultural project to realize a tangible example of production of eco-sustainable economy and employment, an alternative to obsolete economic models with high environmental impact, primarily marble quarrying, within the Regional Park of the Alps Apuan Alps.

4.2. Key Principles

The cooperative has carried out articulated **professional and project growth** by adopting often the approach of the '**facilitator of sustainable local development**,' that is, taking an active part in promoting sustainable planning together with Local Authorities and Communities.

In Equi Terme, a small village in the municipality of Fivizzano and in the Apuan Alps Regional Park, it manages a system of **tourist, cultural and educational facilities and services**: Karst caves, an archaeological museum, an interactive museum of Geology, a digital community museum of local identity; an adventure park, a e-bike fleet and excursions in the park.

As a Community Cooperative in 2018, it promoted the 'Equi Terme, Hospitable Community' project by **involving inhabitants** and activities in building a community tourism network, developing a local hospitality and destination marketing system combined with the creation of self-managed welfare services.

With the project, a Community Guest House and Service Center, a Digital Museum of Local Identity participated in by the inhabitants, a public Wifi network connected with an audio guide system and web treasure hunts, the Community Guest Charter and a destination web portal, narrated with a video-storytelling by the town's inhabitants and economic operators.

In 2021, it internally established a Tour Operator/Travel Agent Online that organizes **travel and sustainable experiences** in Lunigiana. In 2022 it founded 'Borghi Futuri' an Enterprise Network formed

by 10 community cooperatives in Tuscany, extending the activities of Lunigiana Travel to the 'Tosco Travel' project, to promote a network of community tourism proposals in Tuscany.

Its experience in **marketing little-known destinations** led it to be the leader of the **Destination Management Company** (DMC) of the newly formed Lunigiana Tourist Area, organizing a network of promo-marketing in collaboration with small local tour operators.

Along the way, it has activated **training, professional qualification and specialization initiatives** for members with the goal of equipping the cooperative with the appropriate skills to deal with all the necessary activities in the sectors of tourism, environmental, educational, territorial marketing and communication services.

AlterEco's team today consists mainly of women with various qualifications: tourism technicians, marketing, communication, web and social development experts, environmental hiking guides, environmentalist educators, biologists, geologists, and acrobatic trail instructors.

The working group is not only based on qualifications, but is permeated across the board by the guiding principles of the AlterEco cooperative, based on eco-sustainability, rootedness, animation and enhancement of small communities in inland areas.

4.3.   Barriers and Challenges

The main challenges encountered, typical of mountain communities, are the **lack of local services** (digital divide and mobility mainly), and the **social and cultural approach of the inhabitants**, prone to abandonment or fatalism.

Today, these are ever-present challenges, but they are no longer considered insurmountable; on the contrary, they can be addressed with the determination to solve them, mainly with the **collaborative economy approach** and the activation of positive processes of subsidiarity between **private activities and Local Authorities** (e.g.: Municipalities, Regional Parks, LAGs).

4.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

The participatory process supported by AlterEco in Equi Terme, together with the community, has functioned as a stimulus and motivation, fostering the emergence of private **activities and initiatives over the past 7 years**:

- a new B&B Restaurant;
- 3 new B&Bs;
- re-opening of the village's Circle-Bar, participated in by all activities;
- the purchase and renovation of the spa's wellness section to create a modern spa with an indoor thermal pool;
- a LAG-funded community project, joined by the municipality and 6 activities in Equi, which provides investment for the enhancement of sustainable and community-based tourism;
- the Community Tourism project, implemented with investment from AlterEco and support from the Tuscany Region.

The private initiative was also grafted with a **subsidiarity mechanism** by the public initiative:

- The renovation and refurbishment of the old spa facility by the Municipality;
- An adventure park for children made by the Apuan Alps Regional Park;
- The renovation of the old railway station with annexed new equipped camper area, realized by the municipality with funds from the SNAI (National Strategy for Inner Areas)

4.5.   Performance Indicators

Community of Equi Terme has contributed to **strengthening the attractiveness of the territory**, connoting it as a destination for sustainable tourism in the Parks, materializing a small example that another sustainable economy is possible in Lunigiana and the Apuan Alps, as an alternative to the abandonment or the monoculture of marble mining.

In the past year, the resort has welcomed:

- 10,000 visitors to the Equi Caves Experience Park
- 1,600 students at the AlterEco educational hub
- 15,000 access to the swimming pools and spa facilities
- 7,000 visitors to the living nativity scene
- Subsequent sustainability of the induced activity on the two restaurants, the small hotel, the four B&Bs and the bar club

5. Valle dei Cavalieri community-based social cooperative

Figure 4: Valle dei Cavalieri farmhouse exterior (www.aitr.org).

Identification

Name	Valle dei Cavalieri community-based social cooperative
Subsector	Hospitality and restaurant
Website	www.valledeicavalieri.it

5.1. Background

Valle dei Cavalieri is a community based cooperative that manages services for both the population living in Succiso (Reggio Emilia) and for tourists; the territory has a deep history of **collective management of the territory**, in fact, in addition to the cooperative, the Pro Loco association, the "civic uses" i.e. the collective ownership of large parts of the territory, the forestry consortium, the widespread museum are operating. The cooperative is a type B social cooperative, i.e. it has disabled people among its employees; there are 63 members.

5.2. Key Principles

The cooperative manages **many activities**: accommodation in two structures, catering, bar, food shop, National Park visitor center, conference room, mountain bike and snowshoe rental, a fitness center, sheep farming, dairy, an alpine refuge, a bivouac, sports facilities, transport service; in catering it enhances its own products and those of the territory; it has a **strong collaborative relationship** with the National Park and in the UNESCO MAB; it has staff with adequate professional competence; **participates in various projects** including the COSME First Mile, which has allowed the adoption of some tactics for environmental sustainability.

5.3. Barriers and Challenges

The problems are caused by the aging of the local population, the **absence of young people**; there are difficulties in finding new workers. Innovation and qualification require constant **investments**; the cooperative has learned to participate in **projects** at local, regional, international level and in its work it also makes use of immigrants, who have integrated well into the cooperative.

5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The cooperative obtained a prestigious award from the UN in 2018 and many other **awards**, from the Emilia Romagna Region, from the CIA (green flag); it often receives delegations from Italy and abroad, journalists, local authorities, scholars; it hosts **important events** especially related to the theme of community based cooperation; its restaurant is very renowned (the pecorino cheese is of high quality).

The cooperative is constantly committed to the diversification of activities and services and to innovation; the economic performance is satisfactory; the cooperative has well understood the need to constantly innovate.

5.5. Performance Indicators

The results are the **constant growth** of meals in the restaurant, which has reached the number of about 15,000 per year; overnight stays are at 2,000 (there are few rooms); the cooperative has already started an energy saving path since 2012 through the installation of a photovoltaic system of about 89 Kw and a second photovoltaic system is in the process of being adopted.

6. Ballarò cooperative

Figure 5: Student's Hostel Estense in Ferrara (www.aitr.org).

Identification

Name	Ballarò cooperative enterprise
Subsector	Hospitality and restaurant
Website	www.ballaro.org

6.1. Background

Ballarò is a **work cooperative**; it manages hostels, catering activities, public shows and entertainment, with the aim of creating stable and fairly paid work opportunities and of promoting the professional growth of employees; the hostels do not only offer overnight accommodation but are strongly rooted in local society, in associative and cultural life; they are places where conferences, book presentations, musical performances, art exhibitions are held; lively, participatory, dynamic places. The cooperative is committed to **environmental**, **social** and **economic sustainability** and is obtaining the Gender

Equality Certification. Ballarò is also involved in the management of a CAS in Ferrara where it welcomes around 25 asylum seekers and international protection.

6.2. Key Principles

The cooperative is based on a strong **internal cohesion of the members**, on their **competences** and work experience; maintains **collaborative relationships** with municipal administrations and other **public bodies**, owners of the properties in Ferrara, Reggio Emilia, Parma, Pisa and Campiglia Marittima (LI); the cooperative has made and continues to make significant **investments** with its own financial resources to improve the facilities, even if they are rented; it constantly takes care of the **accessibility** of the places with modernization, renovation and efficiency interventions that make the Student's Hostels in Italy one of the most advanced experiences in the sector. In addition to the typical professionalism of the hospitality sector, significant human and professional resources are employed in marketing and communication.

6.3. Barriers and Challenges

The facilities managed for hospitality are all rented and sometimes also have limitations on changes due to their architectural value; the catering activity has **seasonal limits** as it is managed in outdoor spaces; this involves the need to be flexible in management, in target orientation, in menus and sometimes in strategy changes. More generally, the cooperative manages **low-margin activities** in structures of monumental historical value that determine **high management costs** for ordinary and extraordinary maintenance, energy consumption and labor costs. The cooperative, being a commercial enterprise, does not enjoy any tax relief on labor costs except for the prevalent mutuality that it has maintained since its inception. Furthermore, there is no collective labor agreement for its sector and the resulting costs are set at percentages of turnover just under 60%.

The sustainability of the company's balance sheets has been guaranteed by the availability and sacrifice of its members and administrators who are constantly engaged well beyond the working hours provided for by their respective employment contracts.

6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The cooperative has managed to create numerous opportunities for **fairly paid work** and has encouraged the **professional growth** of a good part of the employees; the management enjoys excellent references, the cooperative is considered serious and reliable and its commitment is recognized and appreciated. Over the years, the original experience imbued with a strong ideological connotation has had to deal with the needs of a modern cooperative enterprise.

Several corrections have been made with respect to cost management and the identification of new investment sectors. It is laboriously finding an economic-financial balance without betraying the values and inspiring principles that form the basis of its very existence.

6.5. Performance Indicators

Useful indicators are certainly the **increase in overnight stays** (over 60,000), their temporal distribution over the course of the year, the number of meals, revenues, as well as **positive reviews** on the main instant booking platforms. The turnover recorded its maximum expansion during 2023 (over 2 million euros) and despite the need to rationalize and make labor costs more efficient, employment remained substantially unchanged.

7. Itinere Incoming and the EU Charter for Sustainable Tourism

Figure 6: Reggio Emilia view from above (www.itinere.re.it)

Identification

Name	Itinere Incoming
Subsector	Tour operator
Website	www.itinere.re.it

7.1. Background

ITINERE Incoming is a **Destination Management Company**, working as tour operator and travel agency, based in Reggio Emilia. It is specialised in **territorial promotion through the organisation of incoming trips** in the Emilia Romagna Region and in the main places of historical, cultural and naturalistic interest in Northern Italy. The tourist offer is aimed at companies and private individuals, inspired by organisational precision for business and leisure trips, but above all the opportunity to come into contact with the authentic Emilian culture.

The mission is to propose **tailor-made experiences capable of creating a natural and spontaneous relationship between the guest and the places visited.** The approach connects tradition and authenticity of the destination with an international approach.

Itinere is deeply connected to the territory and the local community, and it was born with a strong **attention to sustainability.** Itinere carries out a careful research and selection of service providers and partners to collaborate effectively, and it aims to promote quality over quantity-oriented tourism.

Among its activities, Itinere participates in local processes in the framework of the **European Charter of Sustainable Tourism**. The Charter represents a participatory governance method to promote sustainable tourism activities in protected areas compatible with the needs of biodiversity protection, through the collaboration of local stakeholders. The certification is awarded to Parks and protected areas after a structured process with standards and good practices to implement.

Each protected area has **3 phases to undergo:**

1- Certification for the protected area (e.g. social, environmental heritage to be safeguarded)

2- Certification for companies operating in tourism (guides, hotels, producers, ...)

3- Certification for tour operators working in the protected area (e.g. tourism packages to be built with the actors in phase 2).

7.2.   Key Principles

The main **target groups** include:

- Leisure customers (private customers and from Tourist information and reservation offices) and "walkers"
- Groups
- Business customers: events, team building, connections with local companies hosting international clients
- Schools, especially private schools, for educational trips
- Other Italian and foreign tour operators for the B2B market
- Municipalities

Staff members in Itinere Incoming are young and dynamic. Each member has a different profile, and a specific education and training path on tourism is not required even if preferable. Languages are a fundamental skill in order to effectively interact with customers, in fairs and international events.

At the moment, Itinere is **investing in digital competences** to develop and support internal and external processes. They do not have management software at the moment, but the increase in bookings and customer numbers will require it in the short term.

7.3.   Barriers and Challenges

During the process dedicated to the EU Charter on Sustainable Tourism, these are the **challenges** most frequently faced:

- **Time:** a lot of time is dedicated to contacting suppliers and local realities and to the construction of tourist packages, but little staff is dedicated to activities.
- **Focus on just one area:** focusing on just one protected area is sustainable from an environmental point of view, but this offer does not respond to needs and expectations of the majority of tourists. A combination of tourist offers is necessary.

- **Relationships and contact with local suppliers:** small local suppliers are not used to intermediate tourism and the contact to an intermediary agency taking care of bookings and payments. Moreover, several local actors do not have management and booking systems, and they do not accept offers in advance (contrary to the working method and needs of travel agencies). It is therefore necessary to build relationships and mutual trust with local suppliers.
- **Sustainable practices:** it is essential to directly visit local suppliers and accommodation facilities to realise critical issues in terms of sustainability.

7.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The EU Charter demands a strong medium and long term commitment, as the certification process requires at least 3-4 years.

The biggest benefit for the organisation itself concerns the training dimension: several meetings are organised during the process with cross-sectoral actors. A great space is dedicated to discussions among stakeholders. The creation of the network and the sharing of practices, information and perspectives is the first outcome.

Moreover, Itinere Incoming benefits from the connection and orientation towards **certain types of suppliers** focused on a sustainable idea of tourism.

At local level, the certification process (phase 3) will lead to the construction of a **Traveller's Charter** in protected areas, with guidelines and good practices to be respected when visiting the area (e.g. including a supplier or accommodation facility for a more personal contact with travellers).

The local meetings allow the collaborative work of different tour operators and tourism companies to create the first tourism offer package. The process has been supported by an external consultant, providing help with data collection and analysis and target groups analysis.

7.5. Performance Indicators

At the beginning of the certification process, objectives and indicators are selected from a pre-made list. They will be then monitored at the end of the 4 years to evaluate actions and local collaboration. Specifically, **both quantitative and qualitative indicators are identified:**

- number of yearly meetings
- number of participants
- extent of achievement of results (e.g. Traveller's Charter)
- improvement of intermediate tourism in the area

Other standards, indicators and requirements are imposed by the certification process.

A 3-year projection is requested from the tour operators, in terms of commitment to improvement and collaboration. Commitment of Itinere Incoming include: designing and/or selling eco-tourism products in the protected area, supporting the local development in the protected area, adopting as tour operator criteria of sustainable development for the economic, social and environmental improvement of the company.

8. Ecosapiens

Figure 7: Ecosapiens website with logo and slogan (www.ecosapiens.it).

Identification

Name	Ecosapiens
Subsector	Cultural services, communication and territorial marketing
Website	www.ecosapiens.it

16.1. 8.1 Background

Ecosapiens is a spin-off activity of L'Ovile Social Cooperative, an important cooperative based in Reggio Emilia involved in developing rehabilitative pathways to people in need through housing and job placement. Ecosapiens provides consulting, training, communication and education services in the context of environmental and social sustainability. They design and implement workshops and educational activities for public bodies, companies and schools, on whose behalf they also take care of communication. In particular they engage in education, training, and consulting, marked by

environmental and social sustainability and they carry out projects that aspire to generate change in people. Through their proposal of educational experiences for companies, schools, public agencies and citizenship they promote a new way of relating to the environment and people. Their strength is networking among the various recipients of their offerings.

16.2.

16.3. 8.2 Key Principles

Ecosapiens likes the experiential approach, learning by doing that starts with exploration and discovery. They have a preference for outdoor education because it is more spontaneous, emotional and challenging.
Cooperative learning is important to them, whereby they learn by dialoguing with themselves and other people. They love co-designing together with people, activating them in educational experiences and concrete actions.
They are stakeholder oriented, putting the needs of people and communities at the center.

In all its actions and projects Ecosapiens is committed to contributing to the achievement of the 2030 Agenda goals. To strengthen the message they spread to schools and citizens, they have adopted and translated the "Good Life Goals" project into more direct and clear terms on how to approach the Sustainable Development Goals.

The main **target groups** include:

- **Companies:** they offer educational marketing services to enhance the reputation of companies. They help integrate production purposes with the social and environmental function that every business is called upon to fulfill. Investing in environmental sustainability is not just a responsible act; it is also a long-term strategy for business success and competitiveness.
- **Public entities:** they propose projects to public entities to stimulate citizen participation and the enhancement of the territory. With their educational experiences they want to help institutions raise awareness of environmental issues.
- **Schools:** they carry out sustainability and food education workshops and activities with schools of all levels. Their specialization is outdoor education, whereby they take classes to green and natural areas.
- **Citizenship and families**: they respond to concrete needs of families by offering exclusive services such as environmental summer centers. They facilitate bottom-up participation processes in neighborhood communities.

16.4. 8.3 Barriers and Challenges

Ecosapiens works with very different stakeholders in different contexts, these are the **challenges** most frequently faced:

- **Companies:** several companies approach environmental sustainability or ask to be helped in writing social and sustainability reports for convenience or with the idea of having quick and easy feedback from customers/consumers, it can be challenging to convince them in

developing long and sincere sustainability paths. Ecosapiens does not develop and manage projects requiring coated paper and non-recycled paper.

- **Schools**: classrooms are brought to parks and natural reserves, prioritizing an experiential approach over traditional classroom lectures. Additionally, efforts are made to provide teachers with tools and resources, rather than simply offering ready-made activities. The teacher must be motivated to participate and take responsibility. Naturally, there are positive cases, as well as others where establishing a responsible collaboration proves more challenging. There are teachers who are in charge of challenging classrooms and students and do not want to take on additional responsibilities.
- **Citizenship and families**: projects involving citizens can be inconsistent because they are often one-off activities (workshops, events for the community). These initiatives require a level of awareness that varies among individuals, as some adults may not be interested in certain activities.

Every social responsibility initiative must demonstrate continuity and should be carried on by consistency; it is not feasible to start an activity and then leave it paused or unfinished. This principle applies to both businesses and the public sector.

An appropriate level of environmental awareness is required, consistent with the demands. Ecosapiens aims to avoid facilitating the production of branded merchandise with the client's logo.

Given the tangible nature of many of Ecosapiens activities and the preference for experiential approaches, the COVID-19 pandemic presented a significant challenge. It was a time of great difficulty, requiring them to continue their work in entirely new ways and to redesign activities from the ground up.

16.5.

16.6. 8.4 Benefits and Outcomes

In recent years, a wide variety of methodologies have been introduced without excluding any: digital, experiential, and even the inclusion of a philosopher in school activities. The philosopher creates a conceptual map based on ideas developed with the students. There have also been projects focused on material circularity and waste management.

The dimension of territoriality is crucial; work is conducted with local companies, and collaborations are established with experts. Ecosapiens works alongside environmental technicians, chemists, biologists, educators, philosophers, and theater training specialists. Internally, the development of both specific and cross-disciplinary skills is strongly encouraged.

Companies aiming for environmental sustainability and social responsibility can reap numerous benefits. Investing in environmental sustainability is not just a responsible act; it is also a long-term strategy for business success and competitiveness.

16.7.

16.8. 8.5 Performance Indicators

16.9.

Both at the level of public administrations and among businesses and private individuals, it is necessary to collect and analyze both **quantitative and qualitative indicators,** as:

- detailed feedback forms filled out by coordinators or teachers, focusing particularly on the quality of the planning and implementation of the activities carried out.
- number of yearly activities
- number of participants
- number of schools and classrooms involved

Other standards, indicators and requirements can be imposed by the certification processes when required, during the development of projects with companies or public bodies.

Ecosapiens is ISO 14001 certified and provides a management framework for integrating environmental management practices, focusing on environmental protection, pollution prevention, and the reduction of energy and resource consumption.

9. Play Alghero

Figure 8: physical format game in Alghero (https://playalghero.it)

Identification

Name	Play Alghero
Subsector	Tourism
Website	https://playalghero.it/

9.1. Background

Play Alghero is the brand that identifies the system of games realised within the European project MED GAIMS GAmifIcation for Memorable tourist experienceS, financed by the European Union. MED GAIMS project developed games in physical and virtual format to create experiences for tourists, giving a necessary competitive edge to the attractiveness of less-known sites.

9.2. Key Principles

The common objective is to revolutionize the traditional visit to cultural sites by using gamification techniques and technologies, both analogical and digital, to innovate and to make the experience of those visiting the territories involved in the project unique. Gamification therefore becomes a tool to enhance cultural heritage and innovate the tourist experience of visitors and citizens.

9.3. Barriers and Challenges

The Alghero Foundation was able to create 10 games that contributed to the ideation of Play Alghero. Once the EU-funded Interreg project concluded (in 2023 or 2024), the Foundation integrated Play Alghero into another important municipal project, Alghero Experience - A Heritage to Tell. This multidisciplinary initiative, divided into three areas, aligns with the Municipal Administration's strategic goals and is coordinated by the Alghero Foundation. The goal was to preserve and integrate the content developed by Play Alghero, ensuring its continuity within the broader framework of cultural and territorial promotion.

As part of this ongoing strategy, Play Alghero also seeks to connect various cultural sites between the historic center and the outskirts of Alghero, helping to better distribute tourist flows, which can often become unmanageable during peak periods. To ensure these benefits continue long-term, it is crucial that both the local authorities and the Alghero Foundation maintain their commitment to supporting and expanding the project even after the initial funding phase, creating a sustainable model for the future.

9.4. Benefits and Outcomes

PLAY ALGHERO | CreActive Pathways for a Playable City aims to capitalize on this experience by promoting and strengthening a territorial marketing strategy that positions Alghero as the first Italian Playable City. This will be achieved through the creation of an annual event dedicated to the application of games to heritage, as well as fostering exchanges with national and international experiences. It is a true Festival: three days of itineraries, urban games, and video games, involving young artists, creatives, game designers, local schools, and cultural associations, promoting a dialogue between the city's artistic heritage and digital innovation tools.

The activities of Play Alghero aim to stimulate collaboration between residents and tourists, bringing together two groups that rarely communicate. Some games work only if both local residents and visitors participate on the same team. Another social outcome hoped for by Play Alghero is to connect

various cultural sites, situated between the historic center and the outskirts, in order to better distribute tourist flows that, during certain times of the year, can become unmanageable.

9.5. Performance Indicators

Thanks to MED GAIMS, 10 games, 5 physical and 5 digital, were realised in Alghero with the participation of active citizens, cultural associations, young gaming enthusiasts and professionals.

Among the games created:

- Playful itinerary: A playful itinerary of urban installations through which to discover the main cultural sites of Alghero and its territory, a hub of fun and entertainment for citizens and tourists alike.
- Alghero Quest Box: A physical game of storytelling and urban exploration centred on the journey of two mysterious characters.
- Digital canvas: An immersive and interactive digital environment within the Tower of St. John, which evolves and changes according to the images created by the players.
- Murder in Alguer: An augmented reality digital game in which users will play the role of a detective and have to retrace the places she has been to discover what happened behind her mysterious disappearance.
- Alghero urban game: An urban game that involves the cultural sites of Alghero's historic centre and stimulates interaction between citizens, visitors and local businesses, called upon to play out a specific plot.

17.   10. Conclusions

The commitment to becoming more sustainable is a shared goal among the actors identified for this report, operating in different fields and with diverse instruments.

When addressing the topic of sustainability, barriers and challenges have emerged. Many of these challenges are common across different sectors, highlighting both the complexity and the potential of sustainable tourism initiatives.

The first challenge concerns **workforce sustainability**, particularly in internal areas with limited services. Finding young professionals to replace retiring workers or reducing reliance on volunteer labour can be especially difficult.

Additionally, **engaging target groups** in sustainable practices remains a struggle for many. However, small initial steps - such as eliminating disposable products in hospitality or encouraging guests to recycle—serve as starting points for broader behavioural change.

A key barrier lies in the difficulty of managing projects that involve a **diverse range of stakeholders**. While this can complicate coordination and requires different communication mechanisms, it also becomes a strength, helping to promote the territory and reveal the most authentic community practices for a truly immersive tourist experience.

Community engagement in fact proves to be a valuable resource, and constitutes the basis for territorial promotion and development, for example through models like community cooperatives, which offer a structured framework for community collaboration.

Other shared resources have emerged as strengths. Many organizations benefit from highly **qualified** and **motivated personnel**, a deep commitment to their values and mission, and a **multidisciplinary approach** that combines complementary skills.

Visibility also plays a crucial role, with tools like sustainability reports, participation in collaborative projects, and membership in networks, which helps organizations in positioning themselves on the national and international market.

Public-private partnerships, including local communities and institutions, further enhance the sustainable development of the territory and can ensure continuity of projects.

Shared commitments among the actors also reflect their focus on long-term sustainability. Investments in continuous **staff training**, particularly to engage and train younger generations, are seen as critical to addressing future needs.

Communication and awareness-raising activities are also central, whether through educational programs for students or by encouraging sustainable behaviors among guests. Organizations are finding innovative ways to make sustainability appealing—for example, offering menus with plant-based and local products, or introducing rewarding systems for sustainable actions.

Similarly, efforts to strengthen the bond between communities and places, whether through educational initiatives, the promotion of local products, or touristic packages of tour operators, - are another common thread.

Finally, building **networks** and **sharing experiences** and **best practices** have proven to be essential strategies for overcoming challenges. Collaborative efforts not only foster mutual support but also enable the exchange of knowledge, paving the way for a tourism model that is both sustainable and deeply connected to the values and strengths of local communities.

18. 10. References

European Charter for Sustainable Tourism: https://www.federparchi.it/pagina.php?id=27

Annex E - Country Report of Portugal

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: IPP, TPNP

Country: Portugal

Date: December 2024

Contents

Index of Figures

19.   Introduction

The United Nations Commission defined, in 1987, sustainability as "meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs."[50]. This board definition includes everything and everybody, from individuals, in their daily life, to companies and governments, to local societies, to countries and continents, and the whole planet. With this concern, and with the worsening of the climate changes, the UN members stablished, in 2015, 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)[51] as an urgent call for action by all countries - developed and developing - in a global partnership. This call to action by the SDGs involves governance authorities and companies, in joint and individual initiatives, to trace a path towards improving sustainability and people's living conditions.

The UN presented a model to analyse sustainability implementation that included all the fundamental dimensions of living and taking care of society and the planet called of 5 Ps, in line with the board sustainability definition. The 5Ps stand for people (society), planet (environment), prosperity (economic), peace, and partnerships (Unites Nations, 2015). Nevertheless, literature shows that companies and governments still using the Triple Bottom Line (TPL) model, which is focused on three pillars, economic, environmental, and social (Hammer & Pivo, 2017). Although this model develops only three dimensions compared with the five dimensions of 5Ps, there is a concern to have a comprehensive view of business economic interactions with all stakeholders, including shareholders, customers, employees, governments, the community, and the general public (Hammer & Pivo, 2017).

Following these guidelines and establishments, sustainability is a current concern for society as a whole and for all sectors of activity and the tourism industry is no exception, as it involves the temporary use of various resources. In 2023, Portugal's main demand indicators reached their highest levels, and this becomes a concern for the sector of hospitality and tourism when we talk about sustainability.

The **current report** forms part **of the Greenhost Project** and attempts to identify best practices in Portugal with respect to finance viability, social requirements, and the green transition in the travel, hospitality, and restaurant sector. Compiling these requirements will help with the subsequent stages of project, which will provide hands-on and exchange experiences.

Desk research and literature review were carried out to identify **best practices** and how do they manage the given economic, environmental, and social criteria. These best practices offered knowledge and practical insights into each of the processes under analysis.

This report presents 7 best practices in Portugal. The first two best practices are relative to initiatives designed to support companies and institutions in their sustainability development processes and the following five (1 from tourism, 3 from hospitality and 1 from restaurant subsectors) are concrete sustainability practices developed by institutions and companies.

---

[50] https://www.un.org/en/academic-impact/sustainability
[51] https://sdgs.un.org/goals

The good practices related with supporting companies and institutions in managing their sustainability development processes are:

1. AHRESP's Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages
   AHRESP is a national association of tourism companies and worked with the Governmental Division for the Consumer, to define several practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages and measures to solve and enhance those practices and situations, with 25 recommendations, giving consumers conditions for better practices, clarify their doubts and to have more responsible and professional companies at the food and beverage sector.

2. Companies Tourism 360º Program
   The National Tourism Board, Turismo de Portugal, developed a system to evolve the vision regarding the responsibility of companies in the sector as an agent of value creation (shareholders, workers, suppliers, community, territory and for the environment), creating a smarter sector, more sustainable and more responsible, giving conditions to companies to have more growth (intelligent growth), based on innovation and qualification, starting with 486 companies, hence 100 already have their ESG Engaged.

The five good practices related with concrete sustainability practices developed by institutions and companies are:

1. Gil Eannes Hospital Ship
   The City of Viana do Castelo and several entities and citizens recovered the Gil Eannes Hospital Ship, once a support equipment to cod fishing in the Northern Seas, to save the city and naval construction memories, giving a purpose as a cultural Museum, remaining the memory of the activities once held, avoiding the destruction of the ship and restoring it with sustainable materials, such as new painting systems, with environment friendly materials, with no polluting materials, having new woods and the metals "green" solutions, working with the digital marketing solutions and signalization, having less resources and having more results, having a new governance system as Foundation of and for the City and the Region, and working and cherishing all the people, the locals and the visitors.

2. Neya Hotels
   NEYA Hotels is a sustainable hotel group, committed to quality and service excellence daily through a tripartite sustainability concept - environmental, economic and social. The group implements Quality, Environment and Safety Management Systems in all units, which allow an effective minimization of the environmental impact of the activity in all three pillars of sustainability management: environmental, economic and social.

3. FeelViana Sport Hotel
   FeelViana Sport Hotel is a four-star superior hotel, all dressed in wood and perfectly set in the extensive pine forest of Praia do Cabedelo, in Viana do Castelo, where sport and well-being are in complete harmony. This hotel develops and manages its activities by promoting a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. They endeavor to integrate themselves into the community, nature and environment, from the architecture of their structures to the choice of materials and the care taken in their relationship with their surroundings.

4. Six Senses Douro Valley

    Six Senses Douro Valley, located in the heart of the Douro Valley, is a luxury resort that combines high-quality hospitality with a solid commitment to sustainability. Their strategy is built on the premises of experiences with purpose, benefiting the local community and protecting the environment; positive environmental impact through sustainable construction practices, reforestation programs and the promotion of sustainable transport; community Involvement supporting social and economic development initiatives; biodiversity conservation by planting native trees and creating habitats for local fauna; reduce greenhouse gas emissions, using electric vehicles and promotion of sustainable transportation for guests and employees; and local economy impact by creating jobs and supporting small businesses and regional suppliers.

5. Ibersol Group

    The Ibersol Group is a multi-brand organization operating in the catering business across several countries. Committed to quality, safety, and environmental values, it prioritizes customer satisfaction and has adopted the principles of the 2030 Agenda focusing on the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The group actively promotes sustainability in its operations by enhancing food safety management systems, reducing ecological footprints through local sourcing, and engaging in community support initiatives. It emphasizes employee development through training programs while continuously monitoring and adapting to consumer preferences, all within a framework of social responsibility and community engagement to foster a positive impact in the societies it serves.

1. Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages

Identification

Name	**Guia de Regras e de boas práticas na Restauração e bebidas (Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages)** **AHRESP e Direção Geral do Consumidor -** Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC) e a Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP)
Subsector	Tourism, Hotels, Restaurants and Similar Services
Website	**Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC)** XXIII Governo - República Portuguesa **Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP)** **https://ahresp.com/**
Country	Portugal

1.1. Background

This Guide (Figure 2 - Cover of the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages (Direção-Geral do Consumidor, & AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal, 2023)) is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages.

Figure 53 - Cover of the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages (Direção-Geral do Consumidor, & AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal, 2023)

1.2.   Key Principles

This Guide is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages.

1.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Please describe the main barriers and challenges faced, as well as the lessons learned from it.

This guide is available online, the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Restaurants and Beverages, the result of joint work between the Direção-Geral do Consumidor (DGC) and the Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (AHRESP), the Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages. It is aimed at consumers and economic agents in the restaurant and beverage sector and seeks to answer and clarify recurring doubts such as, for example, gratuity, payment methods, capacity of spaces, minimum consumption in restaurant and beverage establishments, among others.

This Guide is available on the DGC and AHRESP websites[52].

1.4.   Benefits and Outcomes

The main benefits of this guide are that it will train consumers to adopt better practices, clarify all their doubts, as well as raise awareness among economic agents and respond to professionals in the restaurant and beverage sector, on a wide range of topics such as tips, sharing of meals, space capacity, among others.

1.5.   Performance Indicators

This Guide is a joint project between AHRESP and DGC which aims to inform and clarify, companies and consumers, about various practices and situations that occur in Restaurants and Beverages, some of them controversial, such as the provision of glasses of water by the establishment, the entry of animals or the practice of tipping.

This document, which is based on the legislation that governs different situations, also includes understandings and good practices that must be carried out by establishments and their customers.

---

[52] https://magazineahresp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Guia-Regras-e-boas-praticas-na-restauracao_2023.pdf

2. Companies Tourism 360º Program

Identification

Name	Companies Tourism 360º Program Programa Empresas Turismo 360º - TURISMO DE PORTUGAL
Subsector	Tourism, Hospitality and Restaurant
Website	https://empresasturismo360.turismodeportugal.pt/EmpTur360/
Country and date	Portugal, 2021

2.1. Background

Inserted in Pillar 4 - P4.4 Sustainability in Companies and Destinations - of the Tourism Recovery Plan, the Companies Tourism 360º Program (Figure 54) is a measure that aims to place companies at the center of the sector's sustainable transformation process.

Alongside the sector's transformation process, it is important to evolve the vision regarding the responsibility of companies in the sector as an agent of value creation, not only for their shareholders, but also for workers, their suppliers, the community, the territory and the environment. The aim is to create a smarter sector that creates more value, is more sustainable and more responsible, and naturally depends on companies more focused on intelligent growth, based on innovation and qualification, more responsible to society and more sustainable.

The tourism company at the centre of the sector's transformation process, an actor that must be seen as a member of the community, from a 360º perspective. This involves cultural transformation work, in a close public-private partnership, curation, training, and, finally, the consecration of a form of public recognition for companies, based on economic, social and environmental dimensions.

Figure 54 - Companies Tourism 360º Program (Turismo de Portugal, 2021)

2.2. Key Principles

The Tourism 360º Companies Program is an initiative by Turismo de Portugal that aims to place companies at the centre of the sector's sustainable transformation process. Adhesion to the project was formalized by 19 partners, including the Portuguese Tourism Confederation, the Portuguese Association of Business Ethics, the Bank and the Order of Certified Accountants.

This program focuses on developing actions that include training tourism companies to incorporate ESG (Environmental, Social and Corporate Governance) indicators into their respective management processes, as well as accelerating the process of incorporating ESG indicators in companies, challenging them to actively rethink their environmental, social and governance practices. The program focuses on the development of actions that include training tourism companies to incorporate ESG indicators into their respective management processes, the provision of monitoring instruments, sustainability reporting models and includes the promotion of public recognition of organizations.

This initiative falls within the scope of international trends that embody challenges on a global scale related to the sustainability and social responsibility of tourism, for which it is important to leverage initiatives and dynamics that can ensure the dissemination of good practices, the responsible recovery of sector and strengthening its resilience and competitive capacity. As a national tourism authority.

In the case of Turismo 360º, it is also important to note that this good practice is also included in the access criteria to the Offer Qualification Support Line (tourism financing protocol between Turismo de Portugal and Banks).

2.3. Barriers and Challenges

Turismo de Portugal developed training actions aimed at managers and technicians in the areas of strategy, innovation or sustainability of micro and small tourism companies and medium and large companies, based on the following objectives and contents:

Objectives

- Acquire knowledge on emerging themes of sustainability and ESG management;
- Understand the vision and requirements of the financial sector for access to financing;
- Master the requirements underlying the legislation that is being defined in Europe and Portugal regarding the reporting of non-financial information;
- Understand the market challenges arising from Portugal's and Europe's commitments to climate change and emerging social issues;
- Know cost reduction strategies by reducing environmental impact and reinforcing social impact;
- Access sectoral ESG indicators;
- Understand techniques for collecting, managing and reporting ESG information.

Main contents

- The challenges and opportunities of sustainability;
- Start a sustainability journey;
- The importance of non-financial reporting;
- Structure and content of a sustainability report;
- Materiality and sectoral ESG – Environmental, Social & Governance indicators;
- Techniques and procedures for collecting, managing and reporting ESG information.

The 360º Tourism Companies Program aims to promote responsible practices in the environmental, social and governance pillars, ensuring companies have better conditions for access to financing, optimization of efficiency, and more sustainable financial performance. This Program fits into the pillars of Tourism in Portugal and aims to position the country as one of the most competitive and sustainable tourist destinations in the world.

On September 24, this program was distinguished by the European Commission with an honorable mention, within the scope of the European Enterprise Promotion Awards (EEPA), an initiative that distinguishes good business promotion practices based on their contribution to the economic development and employment of regions.

2.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Turismo de Portugal recognized the record number of 486 tourism companies highlighted for their commitment to sustainability practices. 100 companies received the "ESG Engaged" seal, the maximum number of companies to achieve this level of distinction in the Companies Tourism 360o Program, as well as the 386 companies recognized with the "ESG Committed" seal that joined the sustainability journey through this Program.

The event took place at the Montebelo Mosteiro de Alcobaça Historic Hotel and was attended by the Secretary of State for Tourism, Pedro Machado, and the President of Turismo de Portugal, Carlos Abade.

The distinction of the 100 companies with the "ESG Engaged" seal reflects their commitment to environmentally responsible practices, through the implementation of concrete and measurable measures, which were reported through the Organizational Sustainability in Tourism Reporting Tool (FOREST). The 386 companies recognized with the "ESG Committed" seal demonstrate their aspiration to be at the forefront of the transformation of Portuguese tourism, proving that a sustainable and regenerative future is not only possible, but also economically viable.

2.5. Performance Indicators

From January 2022, and once these indicators have been defined, Turismo de Portugal is committed to training the sector in terms of sustainability, through periodic training actions that will continue throughout the entire Program. It is expected that, over the next year, around 2,000 companies will attend these training actions.

The launch of a Companies Tourism 360 platform is also planned for 2022, to allow companies to directly monitor their commitment to the defined ESG indicators and, thus, obtain their Sustainability Report.

It is also planned to create the Empresa Turismo 360 distinction, a seal awarded by Turismo de Portugal to companies that demonstrate their commitment to sustainability, in all its aspects, verified by a Sustainability Report.

3. Gil Eannes Hospital Ship

Identification

Name	Gil Eannes Hospital Ship – Fundação Gil Eannes (Gil Eannes Foundation)
Subsector	Tourism
Website	www.fundacaogileannes.pt
Country	Portugal

3.1. Background

The purpose of the Gil Eannes Foundation, which owns the ship, is to transform it into a pole of attraction in the city of Viana do Castelo, and to develop initiatives for a wide range of publics and entities, based on the transmission of values and knowledge of maritime arts, of the important assistance it provided to the cod fleet in the seas of Newfoundland and Greenland, from 1995 to 1973.

Thus, over these twenty-six years as a Museum, several rehabilitation and restoration works have been done, providing visitors with the contact with the various spaces and acquiring a little of the history they have to tell.

3.2. Key Principles

The ship and museum Gil Eannes is a symbol of the fishing culture and shipbuilding of the city, contributes to the preservation of the collective memory of a people, especially of the cod fishermen of the traditional fishing.

In 1998, it was redeemed for 250 thousand euros. It received deep works, with funds raised from institutions, companies and citizens. In the same year it was open to the public as a Museum Ship.
In 2014, "Centro de Mar" opened its doors on board the ship, representing an investment of 550 thousand euros financed by the Regional Operational Program of the North (ON2) 2007-2013. The Centro de Mar is a space installed on the stern of the Ship, and it includes a museum and interpretative space of the maritime culture of Viana do Castelo, and the Sea Documentation Center.
Visual completely different of the Gil Eannes Museum Ship spaces (Figure 34), the Centro de Mar develop exhibitions and activities related with the sea thematic, and the issues of the sea and the community maritime culture.
With 7 employees, the Gil Eannes Foundation has been to restructure its services, whether in the organic, whether in the needs map definition, being in the process of moving forward with procedures for contracting human resources needs.

Figure 55 - Gil Eannes Ship for Tourism and Culture[53]

3.3. Barriers and Challenges

Total rehabilitation of the Ship areas (already in a final stage, but with the necessity of recovering.). Foundation's finance sustainability, financing the expenditures with the earned income in the ticket office and in the merchandise product.

Not having access for all. Unfortunately, the original structure of the Ship, dating from 1995, makes it impossible for the handicapped people to visit.

All the barriers and challenges faced make the Gil Eannes Foundation want to improve the quality of the services provide to visitors, to overcome these constraints

3.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The population of Viana do Castelo has a great affective connection to the Gil Eannes Ship. On the one hand, it was built on the city's shipyards, where many generations of people from Viana worked, and on the other hand because it supported many fishermen who were from

With the creation of the Ship as a Museum the main purpose of the Foundation is to preserve the Ship. Besides being a museum space, it integrates meeting room and exhibition hall. In addition, the Gil Eannes Foundation has integrated some projects that count on community support. These are many filming and events on the Ship.

Over the years the Gil Eannes Ship was stage of national and international movies and soap-operas. In the last five years the Ship received at least five filming events between soap-operas and movies.

As already written above, the Gil Eannes Foundation has a calendar event filled with different activities as books presentation, anniversary, World Tourism Day celebration, Sea National Day celebration, participation with the City Hall in Tourism Fairs, Book Fair in the city, Europe Heritage Journeys, and external events.

---

[53] https://www.fundacaogileannes.pt/

In 2023, also it became part of an Industrial Tourism Network, in industrial heritage typology, with the purpose to meeting the expectation of tourists who seek authentic and original experiences in this segment.

3.5. Performance Indicators

According to the latest activity report, 2018 was a year of growth in the number of visitors, reaching a record number of 90 835 thousand visitors, as showed in Figure 35. In addition, it was rated by TripAdvisor as the 7th best Portuguese museum a national level and unique in the north in the top 10 nationals.
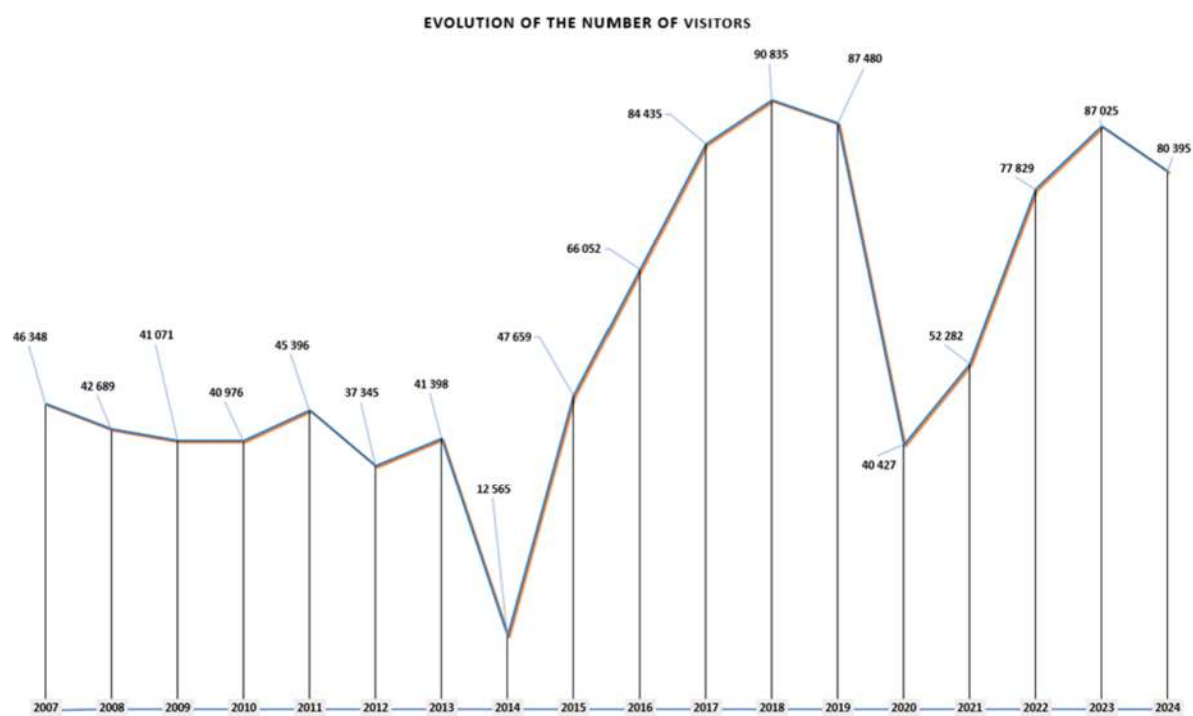
Figure 56 - Evolution of number of visitors on Gil Eannes Ship[54]

Since 1998, it has received more than 1 million visitors. However, in 2014 the number of visitors does not reveal the average of forty thousand visitors due to the time it was closed for visits, and also 2020 and 2021, due to pandemic situation.

---

[54] https://www.fundacaogileannes.pt/engine.php?id=1161

4. Neya Hotels

Identification

Name	Neya Hotels
Subsector	hospitality
Website	https://neyahotels.com/
Country	Portugal

4.1. Background

NEYA Hotels was born from the vision of providing a sustainable tourism experience. The Group's hotels have been thought out and designed to be a benchmark in sustainability, from construction to day-to-day operations.

As a sustainable hotel group, it is committed to quality and service excellence daily through a tripartite sustainability concept - environmental, economic and social.

A hotel cannot be seen as a body alien to the surrounding society and only accessible to customers: it must be a showcase of values and principles that it shares with the community, with this recognition being given to sustainable offers that minimize their environmental footprint, bringing added value to destinations.

In this way, the Group contributes to reducing the ecological footprint in the tourism sector and believes that everyone's contribution can make tourism more sustainable.

NEYA Porto was born from the restoration of part of the ruins of one of the few buildings of Manueline architecture in the city of Porto, the Madre Deus de Monchique Convent. The construction maintained the original layout of the convent and the garden cloister, preserving the history of the building. From the symbiosis between the historical heritage and the contemporaneity of the project comes a hotel that blends into a setting in perfect harmony between past and present, with a philosophy based on sustainability and thinking about the future.

4.2. Key Principles

The Group includes two hotels, the NEYA Lisboa Hotel and the NEYA Porto Hotel, and implements Quality, Environment and Safety Management Systems in the units, which allow for an effective minimization of the environmental impact of the activity in all descriptors, such as waste management, energy and water consumption, carbon emissions, mobility and the use of chemical products.

The NEYA group implements efficient practices daily to reduce its ecological footprint, committed to the quality and excellence of its services through a threefold concept of sustainability: environmental, economic and social.

Therefore, they implement the following policies to accomplish these principles: environmental policy, emissions reduction policy, biodiversity protection policy and waste treatment and/or reduction strategy.

In the field of social responsibility, the NEYA group consistently works to develop partnerships with charities, as is it example presented in Figure 57. This support is not limited to donations or contributions in kind, but to a commitment of time, work and dedication, channelling the resources available within its business structure to help. Partnerships were signed with institutions related with supporting children, such as the Ronald McDonald Children's Foundation, the Acreditar Association and the Ajudaris Association. Besides that, they developed the *Solidary Room* project, with the aim of providing free bed and breakfast to families of needy children who travel from their area of residence for medical appointments, hospital treatment or hospital stays. Moreover, they are involved in actions to donate goods to charities under the HOSPES Program of the Hotel Association of Portugal. It also collaborates with the Local Authorities to provide meals for families in need.

Figure 57 - Solidarity dinner at the NEYA Hotel[55]

About social politics, they implement human rights politics and local suppliers' politics.

The hotel has implemented a supplier selection procedure that includes requirements related to environmental, legal and certification issues.

---

[55] https://porto.neyahotels.com/responsabilidade-social/

The NEYA Porto Hotel implements the following Governance politics: anti-corruption and fraud policy; policy for the prevention and management of conflicts of interest; data privacy policy; and a whistleblowing channel for employees.

4.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main challenges that NEYA Porto Hotel is facing in implementing their environmental, social and governance (ESG) politics and initiatives is the resistance of employees and customers. Regarding the employees, the resistance to daily, and in every task, apply the ESG politics and initiatives of the hotel. Mainly this resistance is related with bad habits and routines that need time to change and interiorize. Regarding the customers, when we talk about a four stars hotel, usually customers have some resistance to accept some change, for instance, take less time in the shower to reduce water consumption or not having some goods in the meals because they are not in the season, or they are not from local. These issues need time, awareness, and change of habits, from employees and customers, to contribute to better results in applying ESG politics and initiatives.

4.4. Benefits and Outcomes

As a result of the measures implemented, the Neya Porto hotel has received the following certifications:

- LEED (Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design) Gold: the first hotel in Portugal to receive this certification for the excellence of its construction, designed from the ground up to create an efficient building with reduced consumption of resources. This is a globally recognized symbol of green construction, ensuring savings in electricity costs, reduced carbon emissions and healthier environments.
- Green Key: the hotel received this award in 2021. This is an international distinction that promotes Sustainable Tourism in Portugal by recognizing tourist establishments, local accommodation, campsites and restaurants that implement good environmental and social practices, that value environmental management in their establishments and that promote Environmental Education for Sustainability. The requirements of this certificate are to have an environmental management system aimed at reducing energy and water consumption, to separate waste, to use environmentally friendly cleaning products and to choose mostly organic and locally produced products. The Green Key is a seal of confidence that tells consumers that by choosing one of these establishments they are helping the planet.
- Zero Carbon: the certification was awarded to the hotel by Sociedade Ponto Verde in 2021. This certification was awarded because the hotel is carbon neutral, contributing to the mitigation of global warming and climate change on the planet.
- We Care Environmental Sustainability Seal: seal awarded by the Hotel Association of Portugal for compliance with environmental commitments through participation in the Association's HOSPES program. This seal aims to promote the circular economy, distinguishing hotel units committed to good environmental practices that promote sustainable and responsible growth.
- Safe Travels Seal: awarded by the World Travel & Tourism Council and certifies destinations and spaces that comply with hygiene rules so that all guests feel confident and safe traveling.

4.5. Performance Indicators

NEYA Hotel defines performance indicators three main intervention areas:

Environment: water consumption; energy management; greenhouse gas emissions; waste management; and circular economy.

- **Water consumption**

  Measures to promote the water efficiency:
  - ✓ Timers
  - ✓ Flow reducers
  - ✓ Gray waters
  - ✓ Monitoring by sector
  - ✓ Efficient equipment
  - ✓ Employee training
  - ✓ Guest awareness

- **Energy management and greenhouse gas emissions**

  Measures to promote the water efficiency:
  - ✓ Thermal insulation
  - ✓ Photovoltaic solar panels
  - ✓ Solar water heating panels
  - ✓ Centralized technical management
  - ✓ Energy-saving air conditioning
  - ✓ LED lighting
  - ✓ Switch that turns off lighting and electrical equipment in the bedrooms
  - ✓ Presence sensors
  - ✓ Use of water for heating and cooling
  - ✓ Sectoral monitoring of energy consumption
  - ✓ Limiting temperature regulation in guest rooms
  - ✓ Cutting off the air conditioning in the rooms when the windows are opened
  - ✓ Purchasing energy-efficient equipment
  - ✓ 100% green energy consumption

- **Waste management and circular economy**

  Circular economy and waste reduction measures:
  - ✓ Refillable amenities dispensers
  - ✓ Total waste separation, including the provision of waste separation buckets in the rooms
  - ✓ Reduced use of paper
  - ✓ Use of FSC-certified recycled paper
  - ✓ Plastic Free Policy: use of biodegradable straws; water in Tetrapak; wooden room opening card; paper laundry bag
  - ✓ No linen change option for bathroom and bedroom
  - ✓ Consumption of mains water in glass bottles
  - ✓ Employee awareness and training
  - ✓ Guest awareness

- ✓ Selection of suppliers and goods with sustainability criteria
- ✓ Raising awareness of food waste among guests in the breakfast area
- ✓ Valid food leftovers from the kitchen and restaurant are transferred to the staff canteen
- ✓ Valid food that is not expected to be consumed in the cafeteria is donated to social non-governmental associations
- ✓ When the Non-Governmental Associations are not available to collect the food, it is made available on the "To Good to Go" platform

Social: hiring model; salary equity; employee qualifications; health and safety in the workplace; reconciling work, personal and family life; local partnerships; and local products.

- **Employees Indicators**

  Hotel NEYA Porto has 33 employees, all full-time, 32 permanent and 1 fixed term. All 33 employees are local, with an average absenteeism rate of 1%.

  The distribution of employees by function and gender is: in the administration are all women, in management 33% are male and 67% are female; technician are 67% male and 33% female and in operations are 31% male and 69% female. About age, 12% are more than 50 years old, 58% are between 30 and 50 years and 30% are less than 30 years. 6% of the employees have international nationality.

  The proportion of employees earning more than the national minimum wage is 73% for men and 50% for women.

  The hotel arrange training for the employees by they own and in partnership with universities, professional schools, study centers or other, in the following thematic:
  - ✓ Food hygiene and safety
  - ✓ Bookings and sales
  - ✓ Firefighting
  - ✓ First aid
  - ✓ Concept and Management System for Quality, Environment and Safety
  - ✓ LEED system
  - ✓ Front House
  - ✓ Review of Booking and Sales/Contracting Procedures
  - ✓ Fire Safety

  In addition, the hotel regularly receives visits from schools and universities to publicize the hotel's sustainability concept and contribute to a more sustainable tourism sector. The hotel also hosts training or curricular internships and provides support for academic work requested by students.

  The hotel offers the following employee benefits:
  - ✓ Health insurance
  - ✓ Social transportation pass
  - ✓ Anniversary day
  - ✓ Parking
  - ✓ Partnerships with various companies for various services

  Measures to reconcile professional, personal and family life:

  Working time arrangements: overtime; bank hours; split hours; rotating shifts.

Measures to promote work-life balance: bank hours; flexible working hours; working from home/mobile office; teleworking.

- **Local Community Indicators**

  NEYA Porto Hotel is involved in actions to donate goods to charities under the HOSPES Program of the Hotel Association of Portugal. It also collaborates with the Local Authorities to provide meals for families in need.

  About the proportion of purchases from local suppliers, 34% of the total purchases are made to local suppliers.

Governance: legal compliance; ethics; transparency; due diligence in the supply chain; risk management.

- **Legal compliance and ethics Indicators**

  The hotel has a legal department and has implemented a Quality, Environment and Safety Management System, certified to ISO standards, guaranteeing legal compliance with all legislation applicable to the hotel industry. It also has a Legislation Management procedure, which guarantees the internal routine of identifying applicable legal requirements through systematic consultation of Portuguese legislation, legal advice and regular assessment of legal compliance, among other things.

  The hotel has a Code of Ethics, but no ethics training has been carried out.

- **Transparency**

  The hotel communicates its sustainability performance on its website, on social media, in the group newsletter, in the newsletter sent to clients, in the accounts report, in the hotel's quarterly sustainability report, in press releases, in sustainability brochures, in the hotel's physical channels and media, fairs and congresses, working groups and visits to the hotel, among others.

- **Due diligence in the supply chain and risk management**

  NEYA Porto Hotel has implemented a procedure for assessing environmental aspects and risks to identify the environmental aspects of NEYA Hotels' activities, products and services, assessing, whenever possible, the real and potential impacts on the environment, considering a life cycle perspective and establishing the borderline level of significance of environmental aspects. It also defines the process for identifying and assessing the risks and dangers of the activity, as well as OSH (Occupational Safety and Health) opportunities.

  Risks arising from the supply chain:

  - ✓ Unsafe working conditions
  - ✓ Non-compliance with labour legislation
  - ✓ Non-compliance with environmental legislation
  - ✓ Use of hazardous substances

Conclusion

Short and medium-term sustainability commitments and targets for NEYA Hotel Porto over the next 2 years:

- 10% reduction in waste production and 65% of MSW separated for recycling
- 5% reduction in the hotel's energy consumption per occupied room
- 5% reduction in the hotel's water consumption per occupied room
- Installation of two more electric vehicle charging points
- Reduction of 5% in the Hotel's CO2 emissions and their compensation
- Reduction in the hotel's accident rate
- Increased employee satisfaction
- Biosphere certification
- Bikotel certification

5. FeelViana

Identification

Name	FeelViana Sport Hotel
Subsector	hospitality
Website	https://feelviana.com/
Country	Portugal

5.1. Background

FeelViana Sport Hotel is a four-star superior hotel, all dressed in wood and perfectly set in the extensive pine forest of Praia do Cabedelo, in Viana do Castelo, where sport and well-being are in complete harmony.

This hotel defends the concept of sustainability by integrating the three factors known as the "Triple Bottom Line": economic, social and environmental.

Aware of the impact that tourism has, they think of their activity as promoting a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. They endeavor to integrate themselves into the community, nature and environment, from the architecture of their structures to the choice of materials and the care taken in their relationship with their surroundings.

FeelViana is an established brand that intends to continue growing and developing new projects that bring dynamism, reverence and innovation to the city of Viana do Castelo and the northern region of Portugal.

5.2. Key Principles

FeelViana is strongly committed to environmentally sustainable practices and the preservation of the environment, which reinforces its socio-economic dimension and the need to assert itself as a socially responsible organization, linked to the general interest and principles of sustainable growth.

The management is committed to adopting a socially responsible and ethical management model, constantly considering economic, social and environmental aspects.

Keeping to the goal set from the outset, FeelViana maintains a path that leads every day to:

- Providing quality services to customers, transforming them into differentiating and innovative experiences, provided by attentive and passionate teams, creating economic and social value.

- FeelViana has a strong commitment to improvement, aimed at customer satisfaction and respect for the environment.
- Ensuring the quality and excellence of the services provided, through constant innovation, training, motivation and professional development of employees and initiatives to inform them about ethics and social responsibility, safety and health at work.
- To add value to the company, guaranteeing that the partners will appreciate the value of their actions in a sustained and continuous manner.
- To study, control and, whenever possible, minimize occupational risks, promoting safety and preventing injuries and damage to health.
- To favor job creation in the region by promoting skills development.

FeelViana is committed to complying with all legal and other requirements applicable to its activity and to continually improving the quality of the services provided and occupational health and safety, involving all stakeholders and respecting the principles of social responsibility, by defining, approving, implementing and periodically reviewing quality objectives and targets.

FeelViana's commitment to the landscape starts right from the choice of design and architecture of the development, thought out in such a way as to blend in naturally, a choice that is reflected in the materials, the design elements chosen to integrate our project.

FeelViana's value the north, the sea, the mountains, the river and the region.

5.3. Barriers and Challenges

FeelViana Sport Hotel defined the next challenges they are willing to develop through the following action plan for next year:

✓ Organization of environmental awareness actions: cleaning up the beach, river and others
✓ Rehabilitation of the wakepark area, raising awareness among the population and working with local authorities to correct illegal discharges into natural water resources
✓ Working with the ICNF and the municipality to remove dead and/or diseased pine trees within the FeelViana space, and at the same time, plan their reforestation with autochthonous species advised by the organizations in question
✓ Social solidarity actions with agents in the region
✓ Digitalization and innovation to enable more efficient and sustainable processes

5.4. Benefits and Outcomes

- **Waste Management:**
  ✓ Separation, collection and recycling of cooking oil
  ✓ Usage of containers for the selective separation of waste produced
  ✓ Sorting of rubbish, including organic waste
  ✓ Returning packaging to suppliers
  ✓ Reduction of single-use plastics
  ✓ Containers for the selective separation of all waste produced
- **Restaurant:**
  ✓ Menus are designed with seasonal produce
  ✓ Respect for sustainable fishing: we don't list fish that are on the "red list".
  ✓ Benefit from electronic invoices and receipts

- ✓ Replace plastic straws with biodegradable pasta straws
- ✓ Replaced bottled water with a zero-carbon filtered water system, served in reusable glass bottles
- ✓ Reusable glass bottles
- **Suppliers:**
  - ✓ Choosing local suppliers, regional and seasonal products
  - ✓ Preference is given to suppliers and products with ecological certification
  - ✓ Avoid buying individually packaged products
  - ✓ Purchases and use of disposable consumables are controlled
- **Housekeeping:**
  - ✓ Use of dispensers in our amenities
  - ✓ All cleaning products are certified and accompanied by a technical data sheet
- **Energy:**
  - ✓ Usage of solar energy to power the hotel's operations
  - ✓ Implementation of strategies to reduce our energy consumption
  - ✓ Lights with proximity sensors
  - ✓ Automatic switch-off of all lights and HVAC system when guests leave the room
- **Sports activities:**
  - ✓ Re-use of packaging for online sales shipments
  - ✓ Value sustainable products for sale, such as sun creams, recycled neoprene, own merchandising line
  - ✓ Donation of used neoprene suits to local social organizations
  - ✓ Sanitize of wetsuits with specified amounts of water and always use biodegradable cleaning products
  - ✓ Biodegradable cleaning products
  - ✓ Reuse of bicycle tires
- **Social and Economic Performance:**
  - ✓ Promoting closer ties with the academic community, hosting study visits and motivating innovation through the challenges launched
  - ✓ Focus on sustainability and digitalization, which is why we are constantly looking for new partnerships, initiatives and/or projects

Ecolable Certification: the European Union's ECO-LABEL scheme is a voluntary instrument that aims to reduce the negative impact of production and consumption on environment, health, climate and natural resources by promoting products with a high level of environmental performance.

Some examples of projects and actions that directly benefit the hotel from adopting sustainable practices:

- ✓ Recycled furniture: with the use of torn/unused kite sails, included in the decoration of common areas of the hotel, or staff service areas.

✓ Decorative Design Elements: the outdoor hammock on the hotel's terrace (Figure 24) was built with waste textile material collected from European industries. This hammock is made from non-woven fabric that combines polyester with viscose and/or cotton and/or other fibers. In the production of these fabrics, companies trim the ends of the rolls so that they can fit into the machines for further processing, and therefore these ends are considered waste. This local company, 10 km from the hotel, collects these materials and transforms them into yarn. The material is dyed by partners with energy efficiency and water saving certificates. The dyes are also eco-tex certified. Once dyed, it is plaited, and the hammock is produced using a completely manual knotting technique. The piece was produced by a 100 per cent Portuguese brand, inspired by the city of Viana do Castelo.

Figure 58 - Hotel terrace with handmade hammock (FeelViana Sport Hotel, 2024)

✓ Hotel clothing line: FeelViana's capsule collection was developed on the basis of sustainability, ensuring a balance between economic growth, social well-being and environmental preservation. To this end, partnerships were made with national producers and fashion houses that share the same values, encouraging the economy and national textile production.
  o Textile certifications for the pieces in the collection:
    ▪ GOTS: the Global Organic Textile Standard (GOTS): internationally recognized standard for fabrics.
    ▪ OEKO-TEX 100 Standard: textile products tested and approved for harmful substances
    ▪ OEKO-TEX 100 Standard GMO: Genetically Modified Organism (GMO) check for cotton and cotton products
    ▪ SA8000: international certification standard that encourages organizations to develop, maintain and apply socially acceptable practices in the workplace
    ▪ Organic Content Standard (OCS): Non-food product containing between 95% and 100% organic material. It verifies the presence and quantity of organic material in a final product and traces the flow of the raw material from its origin to the end product

- Clear To Wear (CTW): each item must comply to be with strict health and safety standards
✓ Sponsorship of the natural monument "Ribeira de Anha": coordination and internal planning of ecological recovery activities in conjunction with the local authorities of Viana do Castelo. Actions to be carried out under the rehabilitation program:
    o Eradication of invasive species
    o Planting autochthonous species
    o Clearing vegetation
    o Waste clearance
    o Monitoring the area adopted
    o Regarding vegetative growth

5.5. Performance Indicators

FeelViana Sport Hotel defined some main performance indicators to be and maintain their sustainability focus.

Economic

Reduction in costs and consumption in the design and construction of the project (location that respected the natural characteristics of the land, construction company, local materials and labor (zero kilometres))

Environmental

Energy management (renewable energies, lighting, ventilation and natural heating) and the life cycle management of materials (zero waste)

Reduction in water consumption (human consumption and irrigation), etc.

Commitment to "Hybrid" efficiency, with water-saving timer taps

Investing in solar energy by installing solar panels throughout the building (self-sufficiency)

Reducing plastics as much as possible and asking suppliers to replace everything possible (eliminating single-use plastics, replacing drinking straws with pasta straws and plates with bamboo plates).

Waste collection with separation for recycling and reuse

Use of electric cars and electric chargers in the hotel

Social

Employee training every year (ethical and sustainable practices, equal opportunities, gender equality, non-discrimination, active participation and commitment/contribution to our social and environmental commitment)

Support for social and environmental projects. Environmental certification with the European Union Ecolabel (5 hotels in Portugal with this distinction). This label reflects our active policy for sustainability: using renewable energy sources, saving energy and water, reducing waste, contributing to the environment/local community (local suppliers and products), etc.

Activities in nature (promoting active and healthy lifestyles, also for employees), code of good practice, decoration with reused materials, non-polluting board wax, etc.

Specific measures:

- ✓ Daily reduction in energy consumption by 15 per cent, with the aim of continuing the commitment to active sustainability
- ✓ Daily reduction in water consumption by 100 per cent, with timed taps in all locations and their continued maintenance
- ✓ Increase the number of reusable materials by 5% per year, with the aim of reducing waste and reusing materials for decoration and other purposes.
- ✓ Number of social activities supported: 3 per year, with the aim of continuing the program
- ✓ Number of environmental associations supported: 1 per year. Sponsorship of the Ribeira de Anha local monument
- ✓ Number of single-life plastics disposed of reduced by 60 per cent on a daily basis, making it necessary to find alternatives to plastic packaging
- ✓ Number of actions to fulfil social commitment: 2 per year, with a commitment to maintain and create new actions
- ✓ Number of actions to fulfil the environmental commitment: 3 per year, with a commitment to maintain and create new actions

Other measures:

- ✓ Control and monitor resource consumption (water, electricity and gas)
- ✓ Promoting healthy lifestyles in harmony with nature.
- ✓ Re-using materials at the end of their life cycle with us to produce decoration/furniture items (upcycling).
- ✓ Favor the purchase of decorative elements using upcycled materials, natural, reusable materials
- ✓ Respect for native species
- ✓ No use of pesticides and chemicals in our garden
- ✓ Natural monument sponsorship programs in partnership with local authorities

6. Six Senses Douro Valley

Identification

Name	Six Senses Douro Valley
Subsector	hospitality
Website	https://www.sixsenses.com/en/hotels-resorts/europe/portugal/douro-valley/
Country	Portugal

6.1. Background

Six Senses Douro Valley (Figure 25), located in the heart of the Douro Valley, is a luxury resort that combines high-quality hospitality with a solid commitment to sustainability. This resort is known for its ecological practices and active involvement with the local community.

Figure 59 - Six Senses Douro Valley[56]

---

[56] https://expresso.pt/boa-cama-boa-mesa/2023-04-22-Hotel-de-luxo-no-Douro-e-o-mais-sustentavel-da-Peninsula-Iberica-5915ba27

Six Senses Douro Valley believes that tourism can and should be a force for good. Its vision includes preserving the environment, supporting the local economy and offering guests authentic and meaningful experiences. These values are central to all its operations.

It was created in 1995, maintaining the same ambition from the beginning: to journey beyond destinations into new experiences and cultures making feel the purpose behind travels. They work to be seen as being environmentally friendly and socially responsible, promoting personal well-being and the health of our planet.

Six Senses values

- Local sensitivity, global sensibility: Part of the local fabric and culture, yet in tune with the wider world
- Responsible and caring: Caring for hosts and local communities. Committed to preserving the environment and sustainable operations
- Crafted experiences: An all-encompassing and unique range of experiences to stimulate, energize and restore
- Pioneering wellness: Delivering the latest and most effective wellness programs and experiences in partnership with leading experts
- Emotional hospitality: An emotionally intelligent approach to service that begins with empathy
- Fun & quirky: Aesthetics and experiences which are always unique, often unexpected and sometimes unusual. Delivered out of our constant curiosity and willingness to experiment

6.2. Key Principles

At Six Senses, sustainability is more than just a buzzword.

From using local and sustainable building materials to implementing efficient waste management practices, the resort is at the forefront of sustainable tourism.

The Six Senses philosophy is based on sustainability and well-being. The resort is committed to minimizing its environmental impact and improving the quality of life of local communities through responsible and innovative practices.

For Sis Senses, sustainability is a defining characteristic of what luxury means. It's also an area where they want to be a story-doer rather than a storyteller.

Their commitment is to be considerate custodians of the places where they reside was a founding principle when they became a sustainable hospitality brand in 1995, and why they continue their focus on making a net positive impact on local wildlife, ecosystems, culture, and communities.

Therefore, their strategy is built on the following premises:

Experiences with Purpose

Tourism with purpose is an approach to tourism that goes beyond simply travelling. It involves creating meaningful experiences for visitors, while benefiting the local community and protecting the environment.

Guests at Six Senses Douro Valley are invited to take part in activities that promote well-being and sustainability, such as sustainability workshops, visits to organic wineries and holistic wellness programs. These experiences aim to provide an enriching and conscious stay.

Positive Environmental Impact

Six Senses is committed to minimizing its environmental impact through sustainable construction practices, reforestation programs and the promotion of sustainable transport. The use of recycled materials and the reduction of single-use plastics are some of the initiatives implemented to achieve this goal.

Six Senses supports local organic farming, ensuring that much of the food served is fresh and regionally sourced. This not only reduces the carbon footprint but also supports local farmers and promotes healthy eating.

Community Involvement

Six Senses works closely with the local community, supporting social and economic development initiatives.

Training and employment programs for local residents are examples of how Six Senses contributes to the sustainable development of the region.

Biodiversity Conservation

Six Senses Douro Valley develops projects to protect and restore local biodiversity. Initiatives such as planting native trees and creating habitats for local fauna are fundamental to preserving the Douro Valley ecosystem.

Reducing Emissions

Six Senses implement strategies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, such as the use of electric vehicles and the promotion of sustainable transportation for guests and employees. These actions help mitigate the impact of climate change.

Local Economic Impact

Six Senses contributes significantly to the local economy by creating jobs and supporting small businesses and regional suppliers. This approach strengthens the community's economy and promotes sustainable and inclusive development.

6.3.   Barriers and Challenges

Six senses established national and international commitments to fulfil their sustainability goals and challenges:

United Nations Global Agreement: supports the universal principles of human rights, labor, the environment and the fight against corruption.

Science-Based Targets Initiative (SBTi): committed to the SBTi initiative, establishing science-based greenhouse gas emission reduction targets.

Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP): participation in the CDP, a non-profit organization that supports companies and cities in disclosing the environmental impact of their activities.

Partnership with the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC): collaborates on sustainability initiatives in the travel and tourism sector.

UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs): alignment of business practices with the SDGs, especially the goals related to climate action, terrestrial life and responsible consumption and production.

Commitment to Plastic Reduction: elimination of single-use plastics from its hotels, including the replacement of miniature hygiene products with larger dispensers.

Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC): Six Senses and the GSTC have a significant commitment to sustainability:

- Six Senses' Sustainable Operations Guidelines have earned GSTC Recognized Standard status. This means that the guidelines document has been fully recognized as equivalent to the GSTC Industry Criteria.
- The Six Senses Sustainable Operations Guidelines have been developed to ensure that all Six Senses properties share the same commitment to balancing economic, environmental and social profitability, while remaining in harmony with local communities and ecosystems.
- This helps Six Senses actively monitor the environmental footprint of each property to assist in the conservation of cultural and natural heritage and strives to contribute positively to the socio-economic development of neighboring communities through its 'sustainability funds', which are managed at each property, among other things.

6.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Six Senses have several projects and initiatives that bring benefits and outcomes, mainly to the environment (carbon emission reduction, energy savings, waste production reduction, recycling, water consume reduction and water recycling) and related with their social commitment (funding local associations and project related with natural conservation and recovering, local suppliers, education and supporting public infrastructures).

Environment

Every Six Senses property hosts an organic garden to give back to the earth through composting and building healthy soil. Our landscapes are made up of local and non-invasive plant varieties, many of which are fundamental ingredients for our restaurants and spa treatments, as well as in natural cleaning products that we create ourselves in our Earth Labs. We continue to explore how we can keep our habitats healthy and their inhabitants (whether human, hornbill or hammerhead) feeling well.

LEED Silver certification: through localized application of our brand standards and aiming for LEED Silver certification for all new hotels, we drive sophisticated design without being formulaic. By blending new ideas with traditional or locally inspired architecture, each property can take on a life and personality of its own and infuse its own touch.

Construction: The Standards for Design and Construction guide our responsible approach and bring economic value to owners through healthy rooms and ventilation, energy efficiency in lighting and equipment, renewable energy production, water efficiency and recycling, passive architecture, building management systems, ozone protection and efficient glazing and building envelopes. Building materials are local and sustainable, and may include certified wood, recycled and rapidly renewable materials as well as natural fibers, fabrics and flooring. In newer properties air conditioning is programmed to automatically turn off when doors are opened, instantly lowering energy consumption.

Plastic free outcomes:

- ✓ 2023: All single-use plastic egg packaging eliminated. To date, 94% of the resorts now receive eggs in plastic-free packaging
- ✓ 2022: All plastic coffee sachets removed, saving around 33,215 pieces of plastic from landfill.
- ✓ 2021: Plastic stickers eliminated, removing around 234,428 items from annual circulation.
- ✓ 2020: All bathroom amenities switched to plastic-free packaging, including toothpaste kits, hair essentials, and more.

- ✓ 2019: Suppliers take back and return program launched, introducing a circular delivery model, which eliminated 29,497 unnecessary plastic packaging items.
- ✓ 2017: Earth Lab launched; a dedicated place where guests and hosts can learn handy life hacks, such as making do-it-yourself compost, chemical free detergent, or lip balm using homegrown and organic herbs. All in plastic free packaging, of course!
- ✓ 2016: Plastic straws eliminated and replaced with paper, bamboo, or lemongrass - or no straw at all!
- ✓ 2003: Drinking water production and reusable glass bottling facilities introduced at every resort. The result: around 1.8 million fewer plastic bottles are in circulation every year.
- ✓ 1995: Refillable ceramic dispensers for shampoo, conditioner, and shower gel introduced from day one as standard in guest rooms.

Social

Local fabric: We don't build castles on hills. Our architecture and building practices follow indigenous designs from local architects and artisans. Our food comes from local farmers and fishermen. Our knowledge of the best fishing holes, diving spots, underground and pop-up events is founded on our local relationships. After all, we could not hope to care for you if we did not first care for our people, families and communities we are part of.

Education: Six Senses operates in many remote areas, where access to education can often be a challenge for women, children and young adults. Our learning and education projects support community development and help to shape a brighter future for local communities.

Public infrastructure:

- - All of us - from our top management to our sustainability managers who drive initiatives, to our hosts at each property, through to our guests - understand that sustainability is about making the most of our natural resources and celebrating what's good in all the locations where we operate. But we're also there when things aren't going well, providing valuable funds and resources for disaster relief or badly needed renovations to public institutions.
- - Healthcare: A specific example of public infrastructure spending is in the case of hospitals. In some destinations, health provision is poor, which is why healthcare in communities is one of our top categories for our Sustainability Fund. This enables us to provide vital medical equipment to local hospitals such as incubators for premature babies.

Clean water and sanitation: Clean water access is another challenge for many of our local communities. We provide clean water and sanitation by leveraging our expertise in filtering and bottling our own high-quality drinking water, combined with educational programming. Water access is a cross-cutting issue and increased access also results in reduced single-use plastic for our communities.

Sustainability Funds: are managed at each Six Senses property comprising 0.5 percent of total hotel revenue, in addition to sales from house-bottled water and popular soft toy mascots that represent a project at each location.

Examples of application of sustainability funds:

- ✓ Support of various projects targeting the **restoration and conservation of natural habitats** such as forests and beaches and work with local farmers, governments and NGOs. Within the resorts chemical use is limited and compost organic matter to regenerate soil and give back to the land.

- ✓ **Restoring marine habitats** through projects such as growing and replanting coral reefs, controlling overfishing through our purchasing policies, funding conservation research, planting seagrass, and protecting nesting turtles on our beaches. All water leaving the properties is treated to a safe standard and water is recycled to irrigate plants, ensuring aquatic ecosystems benefit from operations.
- ✓ **Wildlife projects**: projects to leave natural habitats alone and only intervene if we are convinced, we're helping and on the advice of experts. We have been able to improve the prospects for some critically endangered species.
- ✓ **Corporate value of 'Global Sensitivity, Local Sensibility'** means addressing worldwide problems at a local level. We cannot achieve success without the collaborative efforts of our partners including the Manta Trust, Blue Marine Foundation, International Union for the Conservation of Nature, Olive Ridley Project (and so many more we are just sorry we can't list them all). We take our hats off to their support and dedication in providing knowledge, expertise and the highest level of commitment to our mutual goals.

The project and initiatives presented result in several impacts. Here are some impacts reported for 2023:

- 28,960 people gained access to clean drinking water and sanitation

- 16,645,347 square meters of protected or restored habitat

- 14,663 kilograms of trash were collected voluntarily by our hosts, community members, and guests

- 31,220 people joined awareness raising events to help the environment and support communities

- 4,336 hours of teaching or hosting was provided surrounding our Sustainability Fund project topics

- 15,002 individual animals were researched, protected, or monitored within our wildlife projects, including Endangered and Critically endangered species

- 12,259 endangered sea turtles hatched on our beaches, including 4,364 hawksbill and 8,165 green turtles

- We provided improved access to education and skill training to 3,989 students and 778 hours of teaching

- 10,967 stray and livestock animals gained improved standard of living

- 25,412 people gained improved access to healthcare

- 9,254 people gained improved public waste management in their community

- 730 people have improved livelihood as a result of our Sustainability Fund projects

6.5.   Performance Indicators

The Vice President of Sustainability Jeff Smith, initiated in 2012, individual properties monitor and measure their environmental efforts. All of the group's hotels and resorts contribute to Cornell University's Hotel Sustainability Benchmarking program[57], which compares their performance against a global dataset of their peers in carbon, energy, water and waste.

Therefore, Six Senses track everything from the things reduced (energy, water, plastic) to the things regenerate (habitats, endangered and critically endangered species, local economies and prosperity).

In 2023, Six Senses sustainability data reveals that as a group:

- ✓ 69,698 kilograms of vegetables were produced and served in restaurants
- ✓ 120,154 organic eggs contributed from happy Six Senses hens
- ✓ 133,873 kilograms of compost was produced to enrich the soil
- ✓ 47,937 kilograms of upcycled timber products created
- ✓ 1,920,659 plastic bottles avoided by refilling own drinking water
- ✓ 16.40 liters of essential oils produced
- ✓ 5,081 liters of EM cleaning solution produced
- ✓ 47.87 liters of honey produced
- ✓ 1,711,531.89 kwh of renewable energy generated

---

[57] https://greenview.sg/services/chsb-index/

7. Ibersol Group

Identification

Name	Ibersol Group
Subsector	Restaurant and Catering
Website	https://www.ibersol.pt/
Country	Portugal

7.1. Background

The Ibersol Group is a multi-brand group with a presence in Iberia and in Portuguese-speaking countries. It is in the organized catering business and respects the values of Quality, Safety and the Environment, relying on qualified and motivated Human Resources who are committed to fully satisfying the needs of the Consumer. Considering its international presence, the Ibersol group has started to identify, from a corporate sustainability perspective, the themes of the 2030 Agenda, namely the 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Ibersol began its activity in the catering sector in 1989 with the aim of developing the Pizza Hut business. In 1990 it opened Ibersol's first Pizza Hut in Albufeira and in subsequent years, as part of the Sonae Group's Tourism area, it went on to develop other catering sectors and operate hotels. At the end of 1994, Pargeste decided to acquire Ibersol with the aim of developing it as part of a more comprehensive project in the Restaurant and Leisure area. In 1995, Ibersol signed a franchising contract with PEPSICO for the establishment of KFC in Portugal. From that moment on, the group grew and in 2020 the sector was marked by the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak that spread worldwide, putting a brake on global economic activity, with profound impacts on consumer behavior and habits. Some restaurants closed, leaving only those that could continue to operate through take-away, drive-thru and delivery, at a much lower level than their normal potential. Throughout this process, Ibersol, following the instructions of the World Health Organization, activated contingency plans aimed primarily at guaranteeing the safety of all customers and employees and ensuring the protection of the entire supply chain, in particular seeking to combine the abrupt reduction in activity with the protection of jobs. The year 2021 was marked by the word resilience, associated with the ability to overcome and recover, and since then it has been in this environment of slow but sustained recovery that Ibersol has built a path of resilience and dynamism, first recovering the restaurant business located in the street and shopping centers, and then in the Travel segment, given the constraints on mobility resulting from the pandemic. During the recovery process it increased its social sustainability profile as a major Group that creates jobs and social cohesion. In this sense, it has managed to protect employment in Portugal and Spain, following a combined strategy of utilizing the state support available and a consistent policy of new restaurant openings for the Group's different brands, reflected in the strong growth in the number of Burger King, Taco Bell, KFC and Pizza Hut units. The Ibersol Group has created thousands and thousands of jobs, is respected by all the international partner brands and has a fantastic team for its dedication and high performance. The Ibersol Group

aims to protect the future by promoting environmental, social/economic and governance responsibility, positively influencing the organization's long-term value. At the Ibersol Group, corporate sustainability is a goal that, year after year, has been deepening in the good practices, because always doing better and being enterprising are maxims that also lead the Group to realize an ambitious agenda for sustainability in its ethical, social and environmental aspects. The Ibersol group has been continuously working on environmental, social and economic sustainability in the markets in which they operate, Portugal, Spain and Angola, always endeavouring to do more and better.

7.2. Key Principles

Ibersol is a multi-brand Group with a presence in Iberia and in Portuguese-speaking countries, that aims to maintain its focus on customer satisfaction in all markets, knowing that what matters to customers is 'good value for money' and the positive experiences they have on each visit to one of their restaurants. To ensure continuous improvement, the Ibersol Group promotes excellence and endeavours to always do better, using measurements, monitoring and evaluation systems to continually improve the performance of its management systems. Their values are:

- They believe in and value their people
- They exist for the Customer
- They are happy to share
- They are sustainable and inclusive
- They like to undertake and innovate
- They are creative
- They promote excellence
- They always do better.

Ibersol is pleased with the effective commitment of everyone at different levels of the organization, which reflects the solidity of the values and the shared commitment that is full, dynamic and transversal Sustainability in society.

7.3. Barriers and Challenges

All businesses in the restaurant industry come with new challenges, changes, restrictions, and innovations, which have been intensified by the pandemic. It is a highly competitive market that presents unique characteristics that impact the business. For Ibersol, the main challenges in the activity include:

Food Safety

The group is committed to serving safe, quality products. Food safety is a basic principle of the Group's sustainability, and they have implemented a demanding Food Safety Management System, certified by the international standard ISO22000: Food Safety Management Systems. This system involves controlling the entire food chain from the producer to the customer's table. In addition to safe, quality products, the Ibersol Group wants to go further by providing variety, clear and precise information on products and ingredients and advice on healthy lifestyles through the Viva Bem programme.

Sustainability

Sustainability involves ensuring customer satisfaction, guaranteeing the safety of customers, people and products, actively promoting health and safety conditions at work, reducing the environmental impact of our activities, taking action to combat food waste and strictly complying with all legal,

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

33

regulatory and statutory requirements. Regarding people, it is essential to invest in skills, valorisation and inclusion, promoting communication between all stakeholders. For the Ibersol Group it is crucial to inform and train all employees, reinforcing skills in the areas of quality, food safety, the environment and occupational health and safety to standardise individual and collective practices and communicate and promote the participation of employees and other stakeholders so that they can contribute to better efficiency in management systems. Protecting everyone involves maintaining a traceability system, from source to end consumer, with strict control of the supply chain; ensuring control of critical points in the production process; acting diligently, in accordance with the precautionary principle, in the event of emergencies or accidents that could cause harm to people, products or the environment; adopting pollution prevention and reduction practices with specific measures in the areas of climate, energy and preservation of natural capital; and identifying, assessing and controlling the risks faced by employees in order to prevent accidents and near misses at work.

Health and Nutrition

Promoting the health of its employees and customers is the group's biggest concern and challenge. To strengthen the well-being and the sense of belonging of employees, the Ibersol group continued the "Ibersol in Motion" program, under which it develops various initiatives and challenges that promote the interaction between colleagues outside the work context. From a consumer perspective, in 2019 the My HACCP project was launched in the various brands of the Group. Developed to improve the existing food safety management tools in the operation, it is an application that works in an intuitive and interactive way and allows teams to have a view of what is happening, in real time, allowing them to focus on solving critical/urgent issues of action. This project reinforces the investment in the continuous improvement of the culture and the food safety management system implemented in all Ibersol group stores.

Consumer Preferences

This group has the ambition of providing unique dining experiences to all its customers. Positive experiences foster trust-based relationships, which are essential assets that impact the entire organization. The group has clear strategic objectives related to the "Customer" asset, including their level of satisfaction, the responses they expect to receive, and the evolution of their consumption behaviour, desires, and expectations regarding the products and services available to them. This focus allows for clearer and faster identification of trends to follow, anticipation of concepts, innovation in offerings, enhancing customer complementarity, and strengthening the company's competitive position.

Human Resources

The need to recruit staff to work in the restaurant industry depends directly on the turnover rate, that is, the number of employees who leave the company's staff, which needs to be replaced. In the Ibersol group there is a concern to put the right person in the right place. It is essential for the group to find qualified and motivated human resources, who are committed to the full satisfaction of the consumer's needs.

Reduction of the Ecological Footprint

The group prioritize the procurement of local products to help reduce the ecological footprint. The proximity of the suppliers allows the group not only to provide the client with the freshest and nutritionally richest ingredients, but also to ensure that the entire transportation phase is minimized. By reducing transportation time, they lessen CO_2 emissions into the atmosphere, which translates into a very significant reduction in the supply chain over the course of a year.

Sectorial

Operating in the food sector, any food crises or distortions in the raw materials markets, as well as any changes in consumption patterns, can have a significant impact on the financial statements, which requires an equally attentive and preventive approach.

Packaging

In recent years, and particularly in 2019, we have seen pressure to reduce consumption of single-use plastic, raising important challenges in the search for alternative solutions with less environmental impact. To this end, a working group was set up with the aim of identifying and reducing the amount of existing plastic packaging and reinforcing the principles of circularity in the way that Ibersol operates. The production of packaging waste - service packaging delivered to customers and packaging for raw materials and products - is inevitable in an activity sector such as the Ibersol group. To ensure that this waste is correctly channelled and treated, and as in previous periods, the contract to join the Integrated Packaging Waste Management System, coordinated by Sociedade Ponto Verde, was renewed once again.

7.4. Benefits and Outcomes

At the Ibersol Group they recognise the importance of protecting the environment and ensuring the sustainable development of the Group's businesses. The Ibersol Group has developed a working model of continuous improvement in management processes that catalyse active sustainability policies, internalising the dynamics of sustainability at an environmental level and seeking to reduce environmental impacts and operational rationality in its management. It has always been our concern to promote environmental management practices, sensitising all those who work with us, as well as our clients. In this way they have been reducing our ecological footprint and helping to preserve the planet, which is our home. The Ibersol group is becoming more aware all the time, supporting, protecting, undertaking and connecting with the community in favour of a better world. To give back to the world what it gives us every day, the Group participates and contributes to the community and the environment developing positively and keeping the wealth of its resources available for this and future generations. Risk management in the environmental area falls within the remit of the Quality Department, which is responsible for implementing and reinforcing sustainability concepts with a view to adopting more sustainable and efficient practices in all aspects of the Ibersol group's activity. In this context, several measures have been implemented to promote responsible and proactive behaviour and procedures that distribute shared value for the business, environment and society, in areas considered to be a priority, namely the Circular Economy and waste management, the preservation of resources and the reduction of the ecological footprint. Also noteworthy is the re-certification in Standard NP EN ISO 14001:2015 - Environmental Management Systems, a certification that attests to the commitment of the entire structure to strengthening its environmental performance in managing the impact of its activities, namely by optimising the use of natural resources, protecting the environment and reducing the ecological footprint. For the Ibersol group, environmental sustainability is more than a goal, it's a practice in constant development. This is why Ibersol systematically seek environmentally responsible solutions throughout the organisation's value chain. The group is increasingly committed to a vision of a circular economy, which promotes the decoupling of economic growth from increased resource consumption.

This vision has led to the pursuit of rigorous environmental management practices in its different areas. To this end, the Ibersol group invests daily in reducing the environmental impacts of its activities, particularly in terms of:

- Waste production: organic, packaging and used cooking oil;
- Contributions to the Circular Economy: by reducing disposable plastic-based products;

- Consumption of resources: energy and water;
- CO_2 emissions;

... and the involvement of all stakeholders in respecting environmental sustainability and the Circular Economy.

Reflecting these concerns, in 2019 the Group renewed its certification in the NP EN ISO 14001:2015 Standard - Environmental Management Systems, a certification that attests to the commitment of the entire structure to strengthening its environmental performance in managing the impact of its activities, by optimising the use of natural resources, protecting the environment and reducing the ecological footprint. Guaranteeing the principles of efficiency and circularity are elements that Ibersol maintains in their relationship with suppliers and in the development of the processes and products and it was based on these principles that, in 2019, they promoted a Circular Economy session, in a joint action with the Ministry of the Environment and Energy Transition.

Customers

Customers are an asset of the utmost importance in modern catering and the Ibersol Group takes this premise very seriously. The trust and preference that characterise the Group are the result of continuous work on customer satisfaction throughout the relationship with the Group's brands. In this context, the Ibersol group dedicates itself daily to in-depth study of each customer profile, endeavouring to identify the best practices for monitoring consumer trends, adapting and changing the different units, both in terms of space, products and services, as well as internal procedures, information systems and new concepts. They also implement campaigns for promoting costumers' environmental behaviour (Figure 42)

Figure 60 - Example of a campaign for promoting costumers environmental behavior[58]

To closely monitor customer experiences, the Group constantly measures and monitors the quality of service in its restaurants and services. Tools capable of providing important indicators of customer

---

[58] https://vivabemoblog.wordpress.com/2019/12/23/dia-verde-ibersol-recicle-sempre/

satisfaction are regularly applied, namely quality audits, customer satisfaction surveys and the management of complaints received.

Community

Pursuing its own values and principles of sustainability, the Ibersol group maintains an active role in promoting initiatives involving the community in which it operates. Initiatives include:

8. Porto of the Future

Launched by Porto City Council with the aim of promoting links between civil society and the school community, the Porto de Futuro programme has had the Ibersol group as a partner from the outset.

9. Junior Achievement

As part of the 'Porto de Futuro' project, the Junior Achievement Portugal Association challenges the region's schools with training programmes focused on entrepreneurship, with the support of partner companies responsible for providing this training for students from primary to secondary school.

10. Innovation Challenge

The Innovation Challenge challenges students to solve real problems that companies usually face.

11. Open Kitchen

The kitchens of the Ibersol group's brands continue to receive regular visits from groups of children and young people who can get to know the dynamics of the teams and the rigour of the procedures involved in food preparation.

12. Donation of food and other gifts

Several of the Ibersol group's brands are associated with multiple initiatives of a social nature, specifically by donating food and equipment to various organisations.

13. Support for sport and other local initiatives

The brand supports sports initiatives by donating meals, for example.

14. Raising awareness of the integration of people with disabilities

Within the scope of integrating people with disabilities, Ibersol has formed several partnerships with different associations, namely the Salvador Association, the Porto Cerebral Palsy Association, the Portuguese Association of the Disabled and the Gaia Professional Rehabilitation Centre.

Food quality and safety

Food quality and safety are essential values in modern catering. Their full and exhaustive application makes a strong contribution to sustainability. To this end, the group monitors consumer trends and customer expectations so that means and tools are reinforced and perfected every year, thus guaranteeing a consolidated environment of trust for those who visit its restaurants. It is the Ibersol Group's sustainability policy to guarantee its stakeholders the utmost promptness and satisfaction in terms of quality and food safety in all markets, a premise to which the Group responds in an integrated manner with the quality and food safety management systems applied throughout the value chain.

Employees

People Development at the Ibersol Group has made significant qualitative leaps, gaining increasing prominence in the labour market. Its presence at employability events has been strengthened, with a renewed, bolder image in line with the Ibersol Culture and Values.

4. Training

The company has created the Ibersol Academy, a global, inclusive and modern academy capable of equipping employees in various countries with the skills currently most valued in the market. It has a

partnership with Porto Business School. A training plan is adapted to each employee so that they can progress in their career.

5. Satisfaction questionnaire

To understand employees' needs and perceptions of the organisation, the Ibersol group applies a satisfaction questionnaire every year - Tenha a Palavra (Please speak)- which measures the motivation and satisfaction of the professionals at Ibersol's operations in Portugal.

6. Cohesion and employee motivation

To maintain group cohesion and employee motivation, ibersol organises numerous activities such as

- i-Office Break - a lunch or snack organized by the different businesses, aimed at familiarizing employees with the product range of the Group's various brands and providing a monthly moment for socializing and sharing;
- different Events - for example the Ibersol Group Christmas Dinner, where 25 awards were given to outstanding employees in the most varied areas of intervention.

7.5. Performance Indicators

The 2019 brought the Ibersol group new indicators that continuous improvement focused on the customer is the right strategy. Evidence of this is the various certifications in the areas of Food Safety, Quality, Environment, and Occupational Health and Safety Management Systems, which is a rewarding achievement.

Environmental performance

As far as the environment is concerned, there are countless positive indicators of the activity:

6. Packaging Waste

The mission of this system is to guarantee the take-back, recovery and recycling circuit, as well as reducing the volume of waste deposited in landfill. Equally important is the fact that all the Group's units play an active role in the selective separation of waste (paper/cardboard, plastic/metal and glass), a task carried out on a daily basis in all the restaurants and also in the offices. It was in this context that in 2019, in partnership with Sociedade Ponto Verde, Ibersol organised several awareness-raising actions with the 'Ibersol Green Day'. 'Always recycle' was the motto of these actions, which involved more than 200 people from the offices in Porto and Lisbon. It has always been their concern to promote environmental management practices, sensitising all those who work with us, because in small gestures, all of us together can make a difference and contribute to preserving the planet, which is our home.

7. Food Oil

Likewise, the production of waste cooking oil continued to be managed and monitored, ensuring that 100 per cent of the waste produced was sent, recycled and recovered. For example, in 2019, approximately 600 tonnes of used cooking oil were sent for biodiesel production.

8. Resource consumption

The Ibersol Group has implemented measures to reduce electricity, gas, and water consumption by modernizing technical systems and enhancing energy efficiency. Key initiatives include: adoption of LED technology in new and existing shops to ensure energy efficiency and longer lifespan while minimizing heating contributions; Light-coloured walls and ceilings enhance the use of natural light, reducing the reliance on artificial lighting, Automated Lighting Control, reactive Energy Management, On/Off Control Measures Plan, Energy-efficient refrigeration practices, including using eCubes to stabilize temperatures, resulted in substantial reductions in compressor operation and energy

consumption (10-30%), HVAC Adjustments that optimize temperature settings (18ºC in winter and 25ºC in summer) has led to 7% savings in energy consumption for air conditioning. Variable speed drives in exhaust fans reduced energy consumption by 20-25% and extended equipment life, fixed-price energy purchasing from futures markets for optimal pricing resulted in a 1.81% reduction in electricity consumption in 2019 compared to 2018, natural Gas Efficiency: Installation of more efficient equipment contributed to a 0.21% decrease in gas consumption relative to 2018 levels. Overall, these initiatives reflect Ibersol Group's commitment to energy efficiency and sustainability.

9. CO2 emissions

The Ibersol group remains committed to reducing CO_2 emissions, insisting on finding solutions to minimise the impact of this gas on the atmosphere. Compared to the year of 2018, in 2019 emissions of more than 9,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide were avoided, in total and indirectly.

10. Water

To water consumption and address the economic impacts of rising water prices, several measures have been implemented to reduce the flow, such as install flow reducers in taps and showers, these devices can reduce water flow by over 50%. They work by introducing air into the water, creating micro-bubbles that maintain the sensation of normal water flow while conserving usage. This approach minimizes water consumption without compromising pressure or user experience.

Product performance

Relating to Product Responsibility (Portugal), 100% of concepts represented in the NP EN certification ISO 22000: 2005 CERTIFICATION, 31 units certified by ISO 22000: 2005, more than + 1,200 external audits safety, more than 2,000 laboratory, 3.51 customer complaints per 100,000 transactions and 178 mystery audits.

Social performance

3. Employees

Regarding training, around 456,206 hours of training were carried out in 2019 for 7307 employees. Based on the results of the 'Have your say' questionnaires, each unit, through its Management and Coordination Teams and respective HR Business Partners, draws up specific action plans to improve its indicators. Also in 2019, Ibersol obtained a 'frankly positive' appraisal from its employees in all the areas analysed. 'Training' and "Relationship with Management" are the areas that best meet the expectations of the internal public in the same period. In parallel, and to complement the information obtained, "Have Your Say" also provides a space for sharing, aimed at suggestions for improvement and employee concerns. In 2019, 1,092 free comments were registered.

With regard to employee safety, in 2019 more than 900 audits were carried out to control principles and practices, drills, consultations with employees on Occupational Health and Safety, the revision and updating of the Occupational Health and Safety brochure, training sessions on Occupational Health and Safety.

4. Community

With every moment, the Ibersol Group is more aware, supports, protects, and connects with the community in favour of a better world. To give back to the world what it gives us every day, the Group participates vand contributes so that the community and the environment develop positively and develop positively and keep available, in this and future generations, the wealth of its generations and the wealth of its resources. Pursuing its own values and principles of sustainability, the principles, the

Ibersol group maintains an active role in promoting initiatives that the community in which it operates. As pioneer of a modern catering concept, characterised by its dedication to excellent customer service and a concern for the permanent its employees, the Ibersol group does not neglect its responsibility its responsibility as a participative agent in the society in which it operates.in the society in which it operates. It is therefore its policy to be society through solidarity actions, donations, training support and other types of initiatives.

8. Conclusions

Sustainability is crucial for all sectors, especially for hospitality and tourism in Portugal. This document highlights significant advancements in sustainable practices across various sectors in Portugal's hospitality and tourism industry. The commitment to responsible tourism reflects growing awareness and proactive steps towards minimizing environmental, economic and social impacts.

This research identifies best practices encompassing digitalization and sustainable transitions in the hospitality sector, leading to training material development and learning exchanges.

Considering **Gil Eannes Ship**, this represents the Portugal fishing culture, transformed into an attraction in Viana do Castelo with restoration efforts, symbolizing local maritime culture. It promotes community engagement through various events, despite suffering some setbacks as financial sustainability, accessibility for disabled individuals, and a need for service quality improvement. The benefits are the number of the visitors, the community connection, and for example film productions.

The **Guide to Rules and Good Practices in Catering and Beverages**, that is a collaborative work between AHRESP and DGC was made to clarify restaurant practices, providing clarity on common dining practices to both consumers and businesses. It educates consumers for better practices and addresses frequent concerns in the sector.

The **Tourism 360º Program** aims to lead the sector's sustainable transformation, focusing on innovation and responsible growth, by integrating Environmental, Social, and Governance indicators in business practices, fostering community and environmental responsibility. This program received the recognition of companies committed to sustainability, involving over than 486 companies.

To effectively minimize the environmental impact of the activity in all descriptors, including waste management, energy and water consumption, carbon emissions, mobility, and the use of chemical products, **Neya Hotels**, which consists of two hotels—the NEYA Lisboa Hotel and the NEYA Porto Hotel—implement Quality, Environment, and Safety Management Systems in the units. Through the three concepts of sustainability—environmental, economic, and social—the NEYA group provides high-quality services while reducing its ecological footprint daily. It is focused on sustainable tourism, blending eco-friendly practices into daily operations across the two hotels. They implement sustainability policies, support for local charities, and effective resource management. Some resistance from staff and customers can be felt but these good practices provide them several certifications for environmental impact and a strong community involvement strategy.

Sport and well-being are completely attuned at the four-star **FeelViana Sport Hotel**, that integrates the three "Triple Bottom Line" factors—economic, social, and environmental—to support the idea of sustainability. Recognizing the influence of tourism, they view their work as fostering a balance between social progress, economic expansion, and environmental conservation. From the design of their buildings to the selection of materials and the consideration given to their relationship with the environment, they try to blend in with the community, the environment, and nature. They have a commitment to environmental and community well-being with innovative practices, like waste and water management systems, local supplier engagement, and eco-friendly resources.

The **Six Senses** has continually pursued the goal of creating meaningful travel experiences that connect guests to new cultures and environments. They have a genuine commitment to environmental sustainability and social responsibility, which is essential to enriching the guest journey. They integrate local cultures while remaining aware of global perspectives, prioritizing the well-being of the hosts and communities, focusing on environmental preservation and sustainable practices.

The **Ibersol Group** is a multi-brand organization operating in Iberia and Portuguese-speaking countries, specializing in organized catering. The group aligns its practices with the 2030 Agenda and Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), focusing on corporate sustainability and social responsibility across its operations in Portugal, Spain, and Angola. The group promotes excellence through continuous improvement, effective monitoring, and measurement evaluation systems. Core values include valuing human resources, customer-centeredness, sustainability, creativity, innovation, and striving for excellence. They actively pursue environmental and social sustainability goals, implementing continuous improvement strategies in management and operational practices. Initiatives include waste reduction, responsible resource management, and active community engagement. Ibersol has a commitment to food safety, employee development, and community engagement.

Portugal has a long way to go even though it is currently making progress toward sustainability. With an effect on governance, management commitments, and goods, whose processes have evolved, sustainability has become more important in business plans.

9. References

Direção-Geral do Consumidor, & AHRESP – Associação da Hotelaria, Restauração e Similares de Portugal (2023). Guia – Regras e Boas Práticas na Restauração. https://magazineahresp.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/Guia-Regras-e-boas-praticas-na-restauracao_2023.pdf.

FeelViana Sport Hotel (2024). Sustentabilidade 2024: Boas práticas e Plano de Ação. https://feelviana.com/site/public/paginas/sustainability-en_1722435606.pdf.

FeelViana Sport Hotel | Sustainability. https://feelviana.com/en/sustainability.

FeelViana Sport Hotel. https://feelviana.com/.

Fundação Gil Eannes (1998). https://www.fundacaogileannes.pt.

Grupo Ibersol. GRUPO IBERSOL. https://www.ibersol.pt

Grupo Ibersol (2019). GRUPO IBERSOL. https://www.ibersol.pt/investidores/relatorio-sustentabilidade/2019/Ibersol_RS_2019_pt/

Hammer, J., & Pivo, G. (2017). The Triple Bottom Line and Sustainable Economic Development Theory and Practice. *Economic Development Quarterly*, *31*(1), 25–36. https://doi.org/10.1177/0891242416674808

NEYA Porto Hotel (2022). Relatório de Sustentabilidade | ESG – Environmental, Social and Governance. https://porto.neyahotels.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/relatorio-esg-neya-porto-2022-final_low-300x169.pdf.

NEYA Porto Hotel (2023). Quarto Solidário. https://porto.neyahotels.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/neya-hotels-quarto-solidario.pdf.

NEYA Porto Hotel. https://porto.neyahotels.com/

Six Senses Douro Valley. Six Senses History. https://www.sixsenses.com/en/about-us/history/.

Six Senses Douro Valley. Six Senses Sustainability. https://www.sixsenses.com/en/sustainability/.

Sustentabilidade Social, Económica e Ambiental do Hotel FeelViana: https://odslocal.pt/projetos/sustentabilidade-social-economica-e-ambiental-do-hotel-feelviana-1544?lang=EN.

Turismo de Portugal (2021). Empresas Turismo 360. https://empresasturismo360.turismodeportugal.pt/EmpTur360/.

Unites Nations. (2015). *Transforming our world: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*. UN Sustainable Development Group.

Annex F - Country Report of Slovenia

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: Srednja šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor
Country: Slovenia
Date: November, 2024

Contents

10.   Introduction

In the context of sustainable development, we will present examples of good practices aimed at reducing the impact on the environment. Examples represent advocacy for the responsible use of natural resources and socially responsible businesses, which include several measures to reduce the impact on the environment and care for employees and the community. The goal is to present how we can have a positive impact on the environment and society by integrating sustainable practices into our operations. Such an example of good practice not only raises awareness of environmental issues, but also proves that sustainable initiatives are feasible and can contribute to a more balanced development in the long term. With this example, we can also inspire other organizations and consumers to join efforts to reduce environmental impact and promote sustainable changes in society.

When preparing a report related to obtaining answers to examples of good practices, we focused on the quantitative research method. We used the structured interview method, which is considered one of the most common and effective data collection methods, especially in qualitative research. The interview method is a method of data collection where the researcher obtains information from the interviewee through direct conversation. The interview is particularly useful in obtaining in-depth, qualitative data, as it allows the researcher to gain insight into the respondent's personal experiences, opinions, beliefs and feelings.

There are three main types of interviews.
a) **Structured interviews**: In this type of interview, the researcher uses a pre-prepared questionnaire with well-defined questions that are the same for all respondents. This approach allows easier comparison of answers and statistical analysis, since all interviews are uniformly structured.
b) **Semi-structured interviews**: This type of interview combines pre-prepared questions and flexibility. The researcher has a basic list of questions, but can adjust and ask additional questions based on the answers of the interviewee. This method allows greater flexibility and a deeper understanding and adaptation according to the individual.
c) **Unstructured interviews**: Unstructured interviews are the least formalized and allow maximum freedom. The researcher usually only has a basic theme or idea, while the questions are formed on the fly based on the answers of the interviewee. Such an approach enables deep insight and the discovery of unexpected aspects of the subject (Banjac, 2020, p. 74-79).

Interviews are suitable for research where it is important to gain a deeper understanding of personal experiences, attitudes or understandings of a particular topic, and are useful in various fields such as sociology, psychology, anthropology and user research.

11.   EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE 1 – Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection

Identification

Name	Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection, prof. ddr. Ana Vovk
Subsector	tourism, education
Website	www.ipvo.si Facebook Ana Vovk

SUMMARY - GOOD PRACTICE 1

This text exemplifies good practice by clearly addressing a pressing global challenge—environmental degradation—and providing a practical, innovative solution through education and self-sufficiency. It demonstrates a strong connection between theoretical academic knowledge and its practical application in real-world situations, making the information highly accessible and actionable. The program promotes sustainability through interdisciplinary learning, focusing on crucial areas such as circular economy, biodiversity, and water conservation, which are vital for both individual and collective well-being. Additionally, the Academy emphasizes personal and environmental health, combining physical, spiritual, and ethical aspects to create holistic well-being for individuals and society. Finally, the innovation is forward-thinking, preparing individuals to thrive in future, unpredictable conditions, while simultaneously fostering a deep respect for nature and the planet.

Plan of the training ground for visiting tourists
http://ipvo.si/slo/mednarodni-center-za-samooskrbo

The training ground for visiting tourists
http://ipvo.si/slo/ucni-poligon-za-samooskrbo-dole

11.1. Background

The Institute for the Promotion of Environmental Protection operates as a non-profit organization for connecting the coexistence of man and nature. Ever since a human developed his/her activities in nature, he/she changed it into an environment that needs more and more help to restore the ecosystem services that enable human life. That's why we develop innovations based on academic knowledge and transfer them into practice to help people live a safe, healthy, self-sufficient life, both for the physical and the spiritual body. Our mission is to connect mankind with nature in the care of the planet Earth, which we, as a human species, want to preserve. That's why we developed the Academy of Integrated Self-Care learning program. It is an alternative school for living and gaining practical experience about life today and in the future with all the challenges that surround us. It is a social innovation and responds to the low levels of self-sufficiency in Slovenia, deterioration of the quality of soil, water and biodiversity, dependence on digitization, consumerism and motivation in life. At the Academy, we educate different generations, from school-aged, students and the working and retired generation on how to connect with nature, where we live and how to be self-sufficient in this connection. Only this is an important pillar of life safety. The Academy is an independent school of life based on academic science, which includes lectures and practical work, as well as consulting for users.

Short description: The Academy of Integrated Self-Care is an alternative school for life for the quick and useful acquisition of professional knowledge and their application in everyday life. We found that people have different educational levels, but most of them lack new scientific knowledge about self-care, water, soil, plants and animals, as well as about radiation, the risk of floods, landslides, droughts and diseases. Also, people need knowledge for their own vital life and care for their physical and spiritual bodies, and we offer this at the Academy of Holistic Self-Care. A challenge that innovation solves: The Academy of Holistic Self-Care is a private school for a vital life. It is an alternative way of

education for a safe life from the point of view of settlement, food production and processing, one's own health and care for oneself and the planet Earth. Current education systems do not yet offer top academic skills adapted to users both in theoretical form and through practical experiences. In innovation, we combine both, follow and supplement new scientific knowledge and transform it into direct use based on 10 years of experience. More and more people have problems with anthropogenic disasters such as floods, droughts, winds, landslides, various diseases and also with themselves. Through innovation, we teach them to coexist with nature and develop their potential for self-realization. Innovation is international. The innovation is designed to raise the consciousness of people to be more self-sufficient and to develop their potential, their mission and be trained to care for planet Earth. The Academy enables individuals to develop their personal skills, upgrade their skills, interdisciplinary knowledge, opens up new marketing avenues and is therefore a help in creating their business paths. The content of the innovation is completely sustainable. Such contents, which are horizontal, are circular economy, efficient use of materials, energy, waste management, care for water, land, biodiversity. A sustainably designed learning program is based on the promotion of savings both for oneself and for imparting these values to others. It also incorporates an ethical aspect, care for oneself, for others and for the planet Earth, because through the use of dowsing it opens up communication with the beyond, which gives a person inner insight, activates intuition and, through the transition to the 5th dimension, makes him responsible and righteous, which is what today's world urgently needs.

11.2. Key Principles

The academy was chosen as an innovation, and innovation comes from the activation of the higher consciousness of a man, so that people can reconnect with the rhythms of nature, with its limitations, with its gifts, regardless of whether we live in cities or in the countryside. This connection creates a sense of completeness in a person and he experiences vitality in himself, he again feels the motivation for the goals he wants to achieve as his mission, and when he is satisfied with himself, he has fewer physical problems, less need for medical care, more contribution to his own supplies, connects with others, so the last part of the innovation is dedicated to living in bioregions, which are zones of comfortable life when man is part of nature. The idea comes from the trust we have as a human species to take care of our planet Earth and that is the originality of this innovation.

In order to implement the Academy, it was first necessary to establish the Dola self-sufficiency training ground, which is an activator of self-sufficiency processes in Slovenia and abroad. With ecosystem approaches to food production, care for biodiversity, reuse, circular economy, development of new skills and transfer of academic knowledge into direct practice, and by advocating food security based on a sustainable way of life with nomadic jobs. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground was established as response to the decline of self-sufficiency in Slovenia and the lack of experiential knowledge, as many practices have died out over generations, new real conditions such as long droughts, rains, diseases and the dying of biodiversity and fertile land require different approaches to food production and also different methods of passing on knowledge and experience to different generations with the goal of creating a free, independent and nutritionally secure country. Activating self-sufficiency through ecosystem approaches, which is the basis of the Dole Learning Site, operates

on a global level, as many scientific, professional and popular articles, books and films have been written in a foreign language, as well as project and connecting partnerships have been established to share experiences of a sustainable way of life all over the world.

For the development of the Academy, it was necessary to establish an innovative learning environment. It manifests itself in transcending the material, digital, social component, because it is a way of life. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground shows that we can live in sustainable facilities (yurt, dugout, wooden houses) that have a zero CO_2 footprint, that we can grow food in a completely natural way without pesticides and poisons, which is essential for water conservation and life on earth, that by reusing water we can satisfy all the needs of plants and life and that there is no need for additional burden on water ecosystems, that with the permaculture way of life we can restore life to the soil, which is dying extremely quickly precisely because of conventional methods of cultivation, and that with plant-based oriented nutrition significantly reduces the pressure on our planet Earth and we can also live in less favorable areas, which unfortunately are increasing. So, it answers the challenge of how we will live in the next decades, because the conditions will be different from today, so it contains a look ahead, so it prepares the way for a vital life in advance.

11.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main obstacle was obtaining financial resources for the development of the idea, i.e. for the establishment of an open learning environment, the Dola self-care training ground, and the associated equipment for the implementation of the Academy for integral self-care.
The challenge is definitely low awareness and people's awareness of the need for self-care, but in this area things have changed considerably in recent years, not only in Slovenia but also throughout Europe and the world.

11.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Teaching within the Academy is based on the development of new nomadic green workplaces, and with a practical example at the Dola self-care training ground, the entire cycle, including the theoretical basis, is given (the interviewee runs the Academy of integral self-care, where participants get both theoretical and practical advice). The result of this alone is the creation of many new jobs in the countryside. The Academy is designed to raise the consciousness of people to be more self-sufficient and to develop their potential, their mission and be trained to care for planet Earth. Innovation enables individuals to develop their personal skills, upgrade their skills, interdisciplinary knowledge, opens up new ways of marketing and is therefore a help in creating their business paths. The content of the innovation is completely sustainable. Such contents, which are horizontal, are circular economy, efficient use of materials, energy, waste management, care for water, land, biodiversity. A sustainably designed learning program is based on the promotion of savings both for oneself and for imparting these values to others. It also incorporates an ethical aspect, care for oneself, for others and for the planet Earth, because through the use of dowsing it opens communication with the beyond, which gives a person inner insight, activates intuition and makes him responsible and righteous, which is what today's world urgently needs.

11.5. Performance Indicators

The main indicators are visible in the changes in people's way of life and the need to connect with nature. The uniqueness of the project is manifested in going beyond the material, digital, social component, because it is a way of life. The Dole self-sufficiency training ground shows that we can live in sustainable facilities (yurt, dugout, wooden houses) that have a zero C02 footprint, that we can grow food in a completely natural way without pesticides and poisons, which is essential for water conservation and life on earth, that by reusing water we can satisfy all the needs of plants and life and that there is no need for an additional burden on water ecosystems, that with the permaculture way of life we can restore life to the soil, which is dying extremely quickly precisely because of conventional methods of cultivation, and that with plant-based oriented nutrition significantly reduces the pressure on our planet Earth and we can also live in less favorable areas, which unfortunately are increasing. So, it answers the challenge of how we will live in the next decades, because the conditions will be different from today, so it contains a look ahead, so it prepares the way for a vital life in advance. Independent science, practical work, the latest findings, the principle of ecoremediation, NBS, comprehensive, physical and spiritual, motivates, includes visualization, brings a vital independent life, is the answer to excessive globalization, is the way to a safe and independent life, upgrades professional skills, is sustainably designed.

12. EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE 2: Farm tourism Kovačnik, Barbara Štern – the holder of complementary activities at the farm

Identification

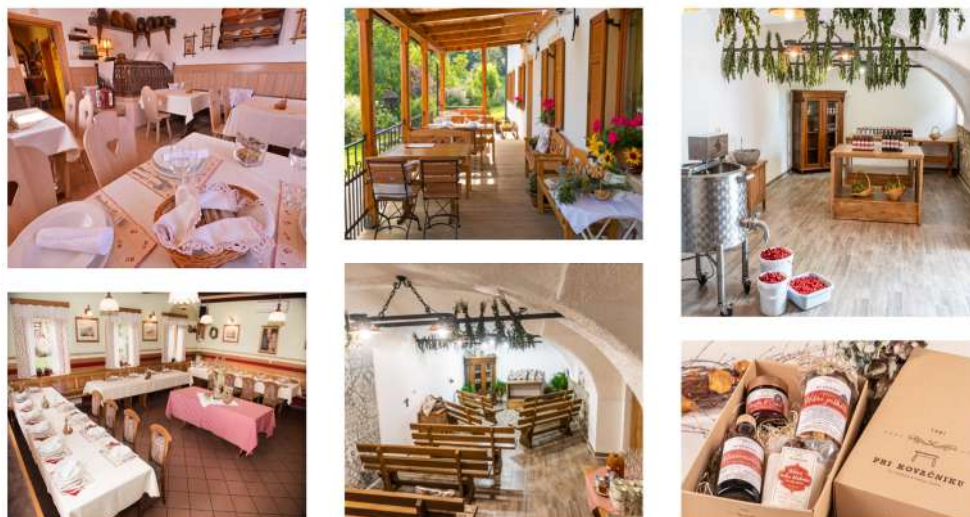| Name	**Farm tourism Kovačnik**, Barbara Štern - the holder of complementary activities at the farm
Subsector	tourism, hospitality, restaurant, agriculture
Website	ww.kovacnik.com Facebook: Pri Kovačniku Farm Stay Instagram: kovacnik_farmstay YouTube: Teta Barbka

SUMMARY - GOOD PRACTICE 2

This text is an example of good practice because it effectively highlights the family's deep connection to their land, traditions, and guests, creating a strong sense of authenticity and care. The integration of three generations within the farm's operations ensures diverse perspectives and fosters intergenerational understanding, which enriches the business. The text also emphasizes the family's commitment to sustainability, with local ingredients, eco-friendly practices, and the Slovenia Green label reflecting their dedication to environmental responsibility. Additionally, the family's proactive approach to learning, attending workshops, and staying engaged in local trends demonstrates their commitment to continuous improvement. Finally, the focus on personal relationships, both within the family and with guests, creates a welcoming and supportive atmosphere that contributes to the farm's success and longevity.

Local cuisine

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

8

https://kovacnik.com/nasa-zgodba/

Homestead Kovačnik
https://kovacnik.com/nasa-zgodba/

12.1. Background

Farm tourism Kovačnik is located in the heart of green Pohorje, where nature awakens all senses with its heavenly touch. Three generations of the Štern family, known as Kovačniks, take care of the guests: grandmother Angelca, owner Danilo and his wife Barbara, son Aljaž and Kaja, and daughters Julija and Ana. Kovačnik's farm is located at 680 meters above the sea level, in the Pohora village of Planica above Fram. The basic activity on the 36-hectare estate is a livestock farming. They own 12 hectares of arable land, most of which are meadows and pastures. In harmony with nature, they breed 40 cattle in a modern free-range barn. Pigs and laying hens are also reared on the farm, and small animals also roam the property, adding to the variety of events on the farm. Daughter Julija is a big fan of horses. They have been spoiling their guests with traditional cuisine. Last year, they completely renovated the overall graphic image. Their jams, cookies, poticas, syrups, juices, teas are equipped with new labels.

The Štern family has been pampering guests with traditional cuisine. They are best known for their weekend family lunches. With them, you can experience a real vacation on a farm in comfortable family rooms with a luxurious country breakfast and an excellent dinner. Animal lovers will be impressed by the colorful company of animals, while children will be delighted by the large playground and play area. They did not use European funds during the renewal and expansion of activities.

Their story is successful because of their genuine and personal contact. They find inspiration for creating new stories and projects in their love for their way of life. The main processes or the steps for the success of their story are created and implemented on the fly. They divide them into short-term and long-term goals, and they only want to achieve them. Much depends, of course, on the state of the family, both financial and psycho-physical, as a family of seven lives off the activity. They try to satisfy the needs and wishes of the guests and at the same time take care of mutual relations in the

family. These are the first steps to a successful story, and they build on them day by day, month by month. The story is already being built on well-laid foundations, which were written down in the history of the homestead by grandmother Angelca and grandfather Ivan, on which they can currently create and grow organically.

12.2. Key Principles

Since it is a family activity and such an exposed example of good practice, the family builds on interpersonal relationships and intergenerational understanding, as their team consists of three generations. They are aware of the different perspectives of family members, which often lead to disagreements. They point out that it is important to adapt, understand and accept, while at the same time they are united by the love of work and always welcome help from a neighbor.

The main source is certainly the experience of the older members of the family and at the same time the new wind and youthful energy of the younger generations, who contribute with new knowledge to the expansion and improvement of their services. They enrich their experience by participating in additional thematic workshops, participating in fairs and various seminars, thus upgrading their knowledge and broadening the horizons of the tourism and hospitality profession.

12.3. Barriers and Challenges

The main shortcoming that has been highlighted is their high aspirations and goals, which are difficult to realize due to insufficient grants for micro-providers.

12.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The main challenges are to have control over trends, competition, demand and supply in the service market and, consequently, to keep up with the times. They try to be active on social networks and as much as possible present at events in the local environment, where they observe and witness various trends, which they later follow in their work. Their biggest advantage is that they manage their own time. At the same time, the employees are also members of the family, which makes it easier for them to do business and organize their working hours.

12.5. Performance Indicators

The family engaged in complementary activities on the farm are proud recipients of the Slovenia Green label, with which they undertake to respect the principles of the latter label. Therefore, the transport routes are short, as all the ingredients come from their fields or the nearby lush environment. By raising awareness of sustainable development and the production of local and domestic ingredients, the guest, supplier and neighbor are thus satisfied. In this way, they contribute to the sustainable development of the local and wider environment. They pointed out that performance indicators are measured by the visits of regular guests who like to return to them onto the green Pohorje.

13. EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE 3: Pohorje Village Resort - 5 Start

Identification

Name	Pohorje Village Resort - 5 Start d.o.o. - Aneseja Šenveter
Subsector	tourism, hospitality, restaurant
Website	www.pohorjevillageresort.si Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/pohorjevillageresort/timeline/ Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/pohorjevillageresort/

SUMMARY - GOOD PRACTICE 3

This text is an example of good practice because it clearly outlines the company's commitment to sustainability and responsible tourism, emphasizing their strong environmental ethos. It effectively highlights the company's dedication to harmony with nature, not just in their operations but also in the attitudes and actions of their employees and guests. The integration of sustainable practices, such as using local products and minimizing environmental impact, is communicated in a way that showcases both social and environmental responsibility. Additionally, the company's emphasis on innovation, such as implementing digital tools to reduce bureaucracy and enhance the guest experience, shows their adaptability and forward-thinking approach. Finally, the focus on teamwork, positive energy, and a shared vision among employees fosters a supportive work environment that contributes to long-term success.

Pohorje Village

https://www.pohorje-slovenija.si/img/b8e7202b-4d5a-4ccf-9c8c-9f7fc6095d7b/329611642.jpg?fm=jpg&q=80&fit=max&crop=1024%2C538%2C0%2C82&w=1200

13.1. Background

The mission of the company 5 Start is to write successful stories in the field of tourism. Only people who live with tourism can work successfully in tourism, who feel tourism as a playground where they can play various games and enjoy it immensely. They point out that it is necessary to be prudent and resourceful at every step (multitasking is nowadays an obligation and, in their opinion, the only possible way of working in tourism, so they welcome like-minded people into their ranks who share their passion for creating stories) and in step with times. They are aware that they must be in harmony with nature at every step, not only in their private lives but also (and above all) in the workplace. All of this is crucial. Having environmental certificates and acting in accordance with them is their privilege and not an obligation. They are oriented in such a way that they work in the midst of unspoilt nature with as little impact on nature as possible, they believe that nature also gives us back everything good. It is important that every individual employed by the company acts in accordance with nature. In the company, they place great emphasis on transferring this belief to their guests through actions and quality services. Their great satisfaction is shown in the fact that guests accept their mission - to be in harmony with nature and preserve it - with open arms and great respect.

13.2. Key Principles

Pohorje Village Resort boasts the most recognized certificates for responsible, safe and sustainable behavior in tourism, with the Green&Safe sign and the Green Key. The latter assures all guests that by choosing a certified tourist establishment, they directly contribute to the protection of the environment. With the obtained certificate, they pledged to increase the use of environmentally friendly and sustainable business methods and consequently reduce the sharing of resources, raise awareness and change the behavior patterns of all stakeholders in individual tourist establishments and in the tourism industry in general. With the help of strict documentation and frequent inspections, they maintain high environmental standards and ensure the sustainable development and preservation of the green planet for all future generations.

They attach great importance to human resources in their business. By working in a narrow or wider team, with set common goals, with similar values, they work and create for the common good. At work, they need a lot of ideas, good will, critical thinking, studying the competition and "keeping up with the times" - as an example, the time of the Corona Virus epidemic greatly disrupted tourist flows and made working in tourism impossible in short term, but at the same time it opened the door to new ways of work, thinking and acting. There is an even greater emphasis on returning to nature. Realizing that it would be necessary to do something in terms of operations, the company introduced the digitization of some departments and only introduced this into the operations of the resort itself. They point out that, in the long run, this enables them to operate more easily (especially with a lack of staff) and have a lower impact on the environment. For example, they became agents for an application that enables contactless check-in to a hotel room, ordering items and services and paying for the reservation without waiting in long lines at the reception desk, less impact on the environment, as

reservations are made electronically, and at the same time, the receptionist is spared a lot of monotonous bureaucratic work, which allows him to devote more time to guests, to communicate with them more about more pleasant topics, such as how to spend time at them, what to see, visit and taste.

13.3. Barriers and Challenges

Business and a friendly working climate are important to the company. At work, they emphasize that work must be done with a lot of positive energy and a positive attitude towards work. That's why they never focus on problems (they define them only as obstacles, which they overcome without problems and with joint efforts).

Challenges arise in tourism on a daily basis, as their operation is largely independent of them - it depends on the environment in which they operate and the people who visit them. In Slovenia, legislation is often an obstacle when you want to create something in tourism. They point out that the legislation imposes on them additional (in their opinion unnecessary) bureaucratic work, to which they have to devote a lot of time. This may be something that tourism workers have been pointing out for a long time. A well-known challenge recently (when working in tourism) is the lack of good and trained staff to work in tourism. They are trying to partially solve the problem by introducing digitization, and at the same time they are trying to adapt to it with various changes (searching for people who are capable of multitasking). They connect with various companies (also from abroad) with which they take care of the exchange of personnel, constantly changing the work flow process, connecting with the local environment, etc.

13.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Connecting - only this enables more of everything for all involved stakeholders. Connecting with the surroundings means that the guest gets a wonderful experience. The guest benefits from accommodation, eats an excellent Styrian breakfast or dinner made from local ingredients, can ride around on a bicycle (with which he protects the environment), and at the same time they direct him to use public transportation with a gondola to the city, where he experiences a panoramic trip that will remain with him for a long time. A pleasant memory, in the evening a guest sits by the fireplace with a glass of good wine in the lobby bar (they only offer local wines, which raise the profile of Styrian winemakers, and at the same time, in their Local shop, you can buy this wine and take it home). They are also sustainable in terms of promoting and selling local products (local honey and other local products, which enable better functioning and visibility for many surrounding farmers and artisans). The awareness that they are not each other's competition from which they have to hide their products and services, but active stakeholders who can achieve more together, by connecting (both for their own good and for the good of every guest), is crucial when working in tourism and after in their opinion, the only way to success.

13.5. Performance Indicators

Above all, reducing the impact on the surroundings, as they operate in the heart of the Pohorje forests, is very important. In their work, they use local products, suppliers, and raw materials, which while reducing the impact on the environment (fewer transport routes, healthier diet) also enable the promotion of individual products/raw materials of local lecturers. So, this way they also ensure that their products/raw materials get higher value, as a result they enable their survival. Last, but not least, they also mention that their services, which they offer to their guests, are of higher quality and authentic, thanks to their effort and work.

Indicators of good practices in sustainable development are tools that enable monitoring, measuring and evaluating the effects of sustainable measures in the social, economic and environmental fields. The indicators are useful for companies, governments and organizations that want to improve their sustainability practices, as they allow quantitative and qualitative assessment of progress.

In the company, the satisfaction of the guests is very important to them. The connection between guest satisfaction and the sustainability aspect is becoming increasingly important, especially in hospitality and tourism, where guests are increasingly aware of the environmental and social impacts of their travels. By implementing sustainable practices, tourism businesses such as hotels, restaurants and resorts can have a positive impact on the environment, local communities and contribute to a higher level of satisfaction and loyalty of their guests.

14. EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE 4: College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor (Višja strokovna šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor)

Identification

Name	College of Hospitality and Tourism Maribor (Višja strokovna šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor - contact person Tadej Ljubec)
Subsector	tourism, hospitality, restaurant, education
Website	www.sedem.si www.vsgt.si

SUMMARY - GOOD PRACTICE 4

This written text exemplifies good practice in several key areas. It effectively outlines a clear and comprehensive mission to train future professionals in catering, tourism, and wellness, while emphasizing sustainability and responsible tourism. By highlighting real-world examples such as the educational restaurant and collaboration with local suppliers, it shows how hands-on learning and community involvement strengthen both the local economy and educational outcomes. Furthermore, the emphasis on ethical, cultural, and environmental awareness through education illustrates a deep commitment to developing responsible professionals. Finally, the recognition of challenges like staff shortages, along with a focus on flexibility, persistence, and sustainable solutions, show a pragmatic and forward-thinking approach to overcoming obstacles.

Educational restaurant

https://educational-training.si/visja-strokovna-sola-za-gostinstvo-in-turizem-maribor/

14.1. Background

The mission of their institution is certainly to train the best possible future professionals in catering, tourism and wellness. Future staff who understands and knows trends, and also dictates them. They place great emphasis on a green future, sustainable human resource management and sustainable development. As part of the school, they opened an educational restaurant called Restaurant Sedem. Over the course of nine years, as many as 840 students did internships at the restaurant, gaining first-hand knowledge and thus strengthening the local economy with new energy, views and thinking. As a result, they meet their graduates in almost all catering establishments in the area.

They also point out sustainable tourism as a key direction and effort. Sustainable tourism and education represent a combination of tourism with sustainable values and approaches that educate visitors about the importance of nature conservation, respect for local culture and responsible travel. Sustainable tourism tries to reduce the negative impacts of tourism on the environment and local communities, while at the same time promoting sustainable management of resources and the involvement of the local population.

They highlight the key elements of sustainable tourism, such as the protection of natural and cultural heritage, which means that sustainable tourism strives to protect natural resources and cultural heritage. This reduces the negative impact on nature and preserves the cultural identity of the destination, which makes it possible to preserve the beauty and uniqueness for future generations. It is very important to support the local economy so that sustainable tourism includes local communities, businesses and products. Instead of large hotel chains, it encourages accommodation with local providers, buying local products and working with local guides, which strengthens the local economy. They also highlight the reduction of the ecological footprint, which means that sustainable tourism encourages practices such as the use of public transport, waste reduction, energy and water conservation and the use of renewable energy sources. It thereby contributes to reducing the environmental impact of tourists.

In any case, ethical and cultural sensitivity is also important, encouraging visitors to respect local cultures, customs and values and emphasizing the importance of responsible behavior that does not harm the local population or nature.

The role of education in sustainable tourism is essential for the success of sustainable tourism, as it makes tourists, local residents and tourism workers aware of the importance of responsible and sustainable behavior.

Sustainable education in tourism includes the education of tourists. Through educational programs, tourists can learn about the impact of tourism on the environment, responsible behavior in nature parks, respect for local customs and responsible waste management. For example, guides can share knowledge about the importance of nature conservation and highlight how tourists can reduce their impact.

Programs for local communities focus on the local population, who can be trained to sustainably manage tourism activities, manage natural resources and promote their cultural heritage. This makes them active partners in tourism, which strengthens their economic independence and preserves local resources.

Sustainable training of tourism workers is a key. Tourism workers such as guides, hoteliers and catering workers can engage in sustainability education that teaches them how to reduce the environmental impact of their services, creates a positive experience for tourists and promotes sustainable values. When raising children and young people, it is necessary to include this topic in educational programs. Schools and universities in tourist regions can include topics related to sustainable tourism and environmental protection in their curricula. Children and young people are the key, as they will become responsible tourists and guardians of nature in the future.

Sustainable tourism through education not only reduces the negative impacts of tourism, but also plays a key role in raising awareness and promoting a sustainable lifestyle. Educational programs ensure that tourists understand their responsibility towards nature and the local community, thus contributing to sustainable development, conservation of natural resources and a better quality of life in the destinations they visit.

14.2. Key Principles

There are certainly several key principles, the most important areas that we need to understand in the educational sphere when working with young people - communication with them is important, as well as their values and habits. It is necessary to stay in trend and in touch with new things; we can partly dictate them ourselves. At the same time, this is a very big challenge, since they are "entry" students, at an increasingly lower level of knowledge. This fact represents a great challenge, so it is necessary to awaken their will, desire and meaning for all these things that we do at the institution. We present their example of good knowledge transfer practice - the latter takes place as part of several projects, such as table etiquette, when second-year students independently cook for first-year students, and the latter, in addition to a meal, also learn how to dine, according to all the rules. Although this seems like a small, insignificant project, it turned out to be the key to understanding our work and a key foundation in their professional growth. Of course, this is enhanced by a system of exercises that all students complete before entering the restaurant. In this way, they can more easily provide the expected level of service in the restaurant. The restaurant staff is also a very important aspect. They put a lot of emphasis on "home grown staff", which in practice means that all employees in the professional field were once students of the school. Thus, they know the work structure, values and expectations. At the same time, they successfully involve young colleagues in this process. The average age of employees at Restaurant Sedem is 24 or 25 years. They are very proud that for the fifth year in a row they are the recipients of the Michelin recommendation for Restaurant Sedem, especially considering that there is a different shift of students in the restaurant every day, and that there are almost 100 of them during the year.

For sustainable cooperation and development, cooperation with local suppliers and winemakers is necessary, and this aspect is also part of the learning process, where everyone listed is also involved. They enable students to get to know local suppliers, and suppliers to gain access to future customers.

14.3. Barriers and Challenges

For the past three years, we have been facing the biggest problem so far, which is a steady decline in interest in the profession. This is reflected in high school enrollment, which is steadily falling. As a result, we also have problems in higher education.

The problem of staff shortages in hospitality and tourism is an increasingly pressing challenge in many countries, as the industry faces difficulties in attracting and retaining employees. This issue has become even more pronounced following the COVID-19 pandemic, which has affected tourism destinations and the hospitality industry, prompting many workers to seek more stable employment outside the industry.

The reasons for the lack of staff in hospitality and tourism are manifested in low wages and unattractive working conditions. Hospitality and tourism often offer relatively low wages compared to other sectors, and also involve a lot of physical work, long working hours and unstable schedules. These conditions make jobs less attractive to job seekers. Tourism and hospitality are often seasonal, which means that many workers do not have the possibility of long-term employment and a stable income. During periods of the low tourist season, they often encounter work interruptions, which makes it difficult to plan and ensure a regular income. Workers in catering and tourism often change jobs or leave the industry due to demanding work and unattractive conditions. This means that it is more difficult to retain experienced personnel, which directly affects the quality of services. Hospitality and tourism require certain knowledge and skills such as communication, language skills, cultural understanding and quality service. Trained personnel are scarce and training programs often fail to fill gaps in the labor market. Uncertainty, due to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, has drastically affected the tourism sector, as many establishments have closed or restricted operations. This has led to mass redundancies and uncertainty in the industry, which has deterred many from returning to hospitality and tourism. The lack of personnel in hospitality and tourism is a complex problem that requires multifaceted solutions. By investing in better working conditions, education and digitization, it is possible to create a more stable, more attractive and sustainable working environment that will help improve the industry in the long term.

14.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Persistence, persistence and more persistence, along with flexibility. It is important to understand that every day brings new challenges, and that our "fellow students" are often more sensitive to personal problems than we are. Therefore, they need more support and guidance, included at a wider level. The key is to set clear goals and values that guide them. It is also important to identify key individuals-enthusiasts who will be willing to invest more than just their time in this project. Adequate financial resources were and are absolutely necessary for the successful establishment of the system and bridging critical periods in which we may not have been financially stable enough.

14.5. Performance Indicators

One of the key strengths of our mission is working with a large number of students, which enables the spread of influence and the transfer of knowledge between different groups. Students from different backgrounds bring different perspectives, which enriches the experience and increases opportunities for innovation. Also, exchanges with other students from different countries and cultures are an extremely valuable opportunity to develop global competences, expand horizons and strengthen intercultural skills. Connecting with different institutions and cultures around the world allows them to share best practices and expand their influence internationally, enabling sustainable development through different approaches and solutions.

Our education contributes significantly to sustainable development by enabling students to understand the importance of sustainability and its impact in various fields. By focusing on training young people for sustainable practices, education helps to create personnel who will be able to develop and implement sustainable models in various sectors. By incorporating sustainable principles into the educational process, they create a multiplier effect, as their students transfer the acquired knowledge and values to their communities, companies and future generations. Thus, they enable a long-term impact on the sustainable development of the local and wider environment.

15.   EXAMPLE OF GOOD PRACTICE 5: Maribor tourist board (Zavod za turizem Maribor)

Identification

Name	Zavod za turizem Maribor (**Maribor tourist board**) Tkalski prehod 4 2000 Maribor PE Najstarejša trta na svetu (**The oldest vine in the world**)
Subsector	tourism
Website	Website: www.visitmaribor.si; www.najstarejsatrta.si E-mail: stara-trta@maribor.si Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/WorldsOldestVine/?locale=sl_SI Instagram: https://www.instagram.com/oldest_vine_museum/

SUMMARY - GOOD PRACTICE 5

This written text exemplifies good practice by effectively combining sustainable operations with community engagement. The organization integrates sustainable solutions into every aspect of its business, including energy management, waste reduction, and cooperation with local suppliers, which reflects a holistic commitment to sustainability. By obtaining Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, they demonstrate leadership in responsible tourism, ensuring they meet international sustainability standards. The proactive approach to innovation, collaboration, and ethics showcases their determination to continuously improve and inspire others. Additionally, the clear performance indicators and strategic focus on reducing environmental footprints highlight the organization's long-term vision for both environmental and social sustainability.

The house of old vine

15.1. Background

Their mission is to have and to leave as little carbon footprint as possible. They strive to operate as sustainably as possible, responsibly managing waste, energy and water. In their business they cooperate with local suppliers to the greatest extent possible.

Their mission is also to create sustainable solutions that improve the quality of life, encourage cooperation and support innovation in the community. They are committed to inclusion of equal opportunities and development that takes into account the needs of current and future generations.

Their vision is to become a leading example of excellence in sustainable tourism, combining people, technologies and knowledge to shape a better future. They want to be a reliable partner in changes that bring long-term benefits to the environment and society, which is why they are also pioneers in calculating the carbon footprint of a tourist facility and are also the first to receive the Slovenia Green Attraction certificate.

Values followed by the institute:
• sustainability: they are committed to solutions that are responsible for the environment and the community,
• innovation: they constantly strive for new ideas and creative approaches to solving challenges,
• collaboration and networking: they believe in the power of teamwork and building partnerships,
• ethics: they operate honestly, responsibly and with integrity,
• excellence: they strive for high quality in everything they do.

Their good practice example is based on a project that combines the local community and advanced technology for better energy efficiency. The initiative was created in response to rising emissions and the need to save energy.

15.2. Key Principles

The aforementioned organization operates in accordance with international standards of sustainable development, as confirmed by the Green Key certificate. They adhere to the principles of environmental responsibility, energy efficiency and waste reduction. Organizational, financial, technical, time, information and social resources are key to developing good practices and obtaining the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates. Management support, trained staff and funding for certification and sustainable improvements are required. Technical tools, such as carbon footprint calculators and energy-efficient technologies, enable emission reduction. Time for planning, adjustments and compliance with requirements are important, as well as access to guidelines, consultants and data. Cooperation with the local community, partners and visitors is the key to spreading sustainable practices.

The Slovenia Green Attraction certificate highlights their commitment to providing sustainable experiences for visitors, respecting natural and cultural heritage and supporting local communities. They actively involve the local community and visitors in raising awareness about the importance of sustainable tourism.

The main characteristics that define them are:
• Green Key that confirms their sustainable practices in the field of resource management (water, energy), reducing their environmental footprint,
• Slovenia Green Attraction that confirms their contribution to the vision of a green, boutique and sustainable Slovenia,
• they introduce innovative solutions for energy efficiency and the use of renewable energy sources,
• they actively strive to protect natural and cultural attractions that are part of our tourist offer,
• they offer visitors unique, environmentally friendly experiences that include local products and respect sustainable values.

The organization conducted an analysis of existing practices and prepared a plan to improve environmental and social standards. They optimized energy and water consumption, reduced waste and improved resource management. They implemented activities to increase local community involvement, such as cooperation with local providers and the organization of workshops. They participated in the verification process for the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, which included the preparation of documentation, staff training and independent inspections. They have taken care to educate staff and visitors about sustainable practices. Green certificates have become part of their marketing strategy to appeal to eco-conscious guests. They monitor their sustainability indicators and adapt to new challenges and opportunities.

15.3. Barriers and Challenges

They did not face any major obstacles in obtaining the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, but the challenge is maintaining and extending the certificates, which requires constant monitoring of standards and adjustments. These obstacles were overcome by regularly recording indicators, internal evaluations and cooperation with experts. When calculating the carbon footprint, the main problem was obtaining data, which was solved by establishing a system for regular information collection and using standardized methods, such as the GHG Protocol. The main challenges were maintaining and extending the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, which require constant monitoring of standards and adjustments, and difficulties in obtaining data for calculating the carbon footprint.

15.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The organization emphasizes that strategic planning and organization, communication skills, leadership and teamwork, analytical and problem-solving skills, adaptability and flexibility, sustainable and systemic thinking, stakeholder engagement skills, digital and technical skills, measurement and evaluation of results, and ethics and integrity are being of key importance.

Their story is successful because:

- The Green Key Certificate ranks them among the leading sustainable providers on a global level;
- The Slovenia Green Attraction certificate confirms their key role in the development of a green destination in Slovenia;
- their practices serve as an example for other organizations that want to follow sustainable principles;
- with sustainable measures, they reduce costs, improve the visitor experience, and contribute to protecting the environment for future generations.

Obtaining certificates increases competitiveness and paints a positive image of the company. They also reduced costs by adopting sustainable measures. By incorporating sustainable principles into a company's daily operations, this contributes to long-term success, as sustainable and environmentally friendly business practices are increasingly recognized as the key factor in long-term growth and success.

15.5. Performance Indicators

The project contributes to sustainable development by reducing its environmental footprint by implementing energy-efficient solutions, optimizing resource use and promoting recycling. The Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates confirm their commitment to sustainable tourism, while the calculation of the carbon footprint allows for accurate monitoring of emissions and the design of effective measures to reduce them. In addition, the project involves the local community and raises awareness among visitors about the importance of sustainable practices, creating long-term benefits for the environment and society.

Key performance indicators include: reduction of energy and water consumption, amount of recycled waste, accuracy of the calculated carbon footprint, successful maintenance of the Green Key and Slovenia Green Attraction certificates, and the level of visitor awareness and local community involvement in sustainable activities.

16.   Conclusion

As part of the research carried out in the local environment, we conducted interviews with providers who are recognized as examples of good practices in the field of sustainability. With the help of these interviews, we gained insight into the specific measures they implement and their impact on guest satisfaction. The words and opinions of those who stood out with their sustainable approach and offered practical solutions are summarized.

One of the key points that appeared in many responses was the importance of environmental protection measures, such as the use of energy-efficient appliances, recycling, carbon footprint and reducing water consumption.

In the context of sustainable development, examples of good practices are presented, the aim of which is to reduce the impact on the environment, responsible use of natural resources and socially responsible business. This emphasizes the importance of measures that include reducing the environmental impact, caring for employees and supporting local communities. Examples of good practices can encourage other organizations and individuals to make sustainable changes, leading to balanced development. Innovative approaches, such as the Dole self-sufficiency training ground (Poljčane municipality, Slovenia), show how sustainable buildings (yurts, dugouts, wooden houses) with a zero CO2 footprint enable the production of food without pesticides, the use of permaculture practices and the reduction of environmental impact.

An important part of the research involves the use of structured interviews to collect data, which enable the analysis of changes in people's living habits and their connection with nature. The project includes sustainable principles such as ecoremediation and a holistic approach to health and vital life, which is a response to globalization and preparation for a future in which conditions will be different. One of the examples of sustainable business is a family that carries out sustainable complementary activities on a farm in the heart of the Pohorje forests, a proud recipient of the Slovenia Green label. In this way, they contribute to sustainable development of the local environment, as they support local suppliers and farmers by reducing their impact on the environment. In tourism, the sustainability aspect is becoming more and more important, as guests are looking for environmentally friendly and responsible offers, which affect greater satisfaction and loyalty.

An important part of the educational process is aimed at sustainable tourism, which educates visitors about nature conservation, respect for local culture and responsible travel. Training students in hospitality and tourism contribute to sustainable development, as young people acquire knowledge that they can transfer to their future work environments, thereby enabling a long-term impact on sustainable behavior in various sectors.

Environmental measures such as energy-efficient appliances, recycling, reducing water consumption and using organic products contribute significantly to guest satisfaction. Guests appreciate seeing companies implement sustainable practices because it makes them feel connected to improving the

world. Supporting local communities by incorporating local resources, such as locally-grown food and cultural elements, increases the authenticity of the experience and allows guests to connect more with the local culture, which also affects their satisfaction. Transparent communication about sustainability efforts builds trust and enables guests to actively participate in sustainable practices.

Innovations, such as smart rooms, natural materials and ecological services contribute to greater guest comfort, which enhances their experience. Adapting sustainable practices to the specific needs of guests, such as organic workshops or nature tours, fosters a sense of responsibility and connection. Good sustainability practices contribute to greater guest loyalty, as they are willing to support businesses that share their values, leading to long-term benefits for the hospitality industry. In this way, companies improve their reputation, attract environmentally conscious guests and increase their competitiveness.

17.   References

Banjac, Marinko. 2020. Uvod v kvalitativne metode zbiranja podatkov. *Opazovanje, intervju in fokusna skupina*. Ljubljana: Fakulteta za družbene vede, Založba FDV.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Inštitut za promocijo varstva okolja

GreenHost – poklicna odličnost, politika in podjetja združena za veščine vodenja gostinstva, prilagojene metodam okoljskega odtisa

Soglasje

Ta intervju je razvil projekt GreenHost, raziskovalni konzorcij Evropske unije iz 7 držav in 19 partnerjev, z referenco projekta 101144003 – GreenHost – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE, katerega namen je opisati primere dobre prakse, ki se izvajajo v zelenem in digitalnem okolju, spretnosti. Namen tega intervjuja je narediti začetno zbiranje primerov dobrih praks, ki bo privedlo do zbirke dobrih praks. Intervju poteka v skladu s protokoli raziskovalne etike in predpisi GDPR. Intervju bo posnet z zvočnim posnetkom, vaše ime ali kateri koli drugi identifikacijski podatek bo povezan z zvočnim posnetkom ali prepisom. Kasete bo lahko poslušala samo projektna ekipa. Trakove bo prepisal raziskovalec in jih izbrisal, ko bodo prepisani točni zapisi.

S podpisom tega informiranega soglasja izjavljate, da sprejemate sodelovanje v tej študiji pod zgoraj opisanimi pogoji.

Datum:__6___/___7__/___2024__

Podpis:__ *[signature]*
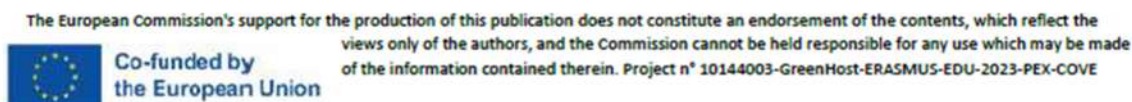
Attachment 2: Domačija Kovačnik, Barbara Štern, nosilka dopolnilne dejavnosti na kmetiji

GreenHost CoVE Project

GreenHost – poklicna odličnost, politika in podjetja združena za veščine vodenja gostinstva, prilagojene metodam okoljskega odtisa

Soglasje

Ta intervju je razvil projekt GreenHost, raziskovalni konzorcij Evropske unije iz 7 držav in 19 partnerjev, z referenco projekta 101144003 – GreenHost – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE, katerega namen je opisati primere dobre prakse, ki se izvajajo v zelenem in digitalnem okolju, spretnosti. Namen tega intervjuja je narediti začetno zbiranje primerov dobrih praks, ki bo privedlo do zbirke dobrih praks. Intervju poteka v skladu s protokoli raziskovalne etike in predpisi GDPR. Intervju bo posnet z zvočnim posnetkom, vaše ime ali kateri koli drugi identifikacijski podatek bo povezan z zvočnim posnetkom ali prepisom. Kasete bo lahko poslušala samo projektna ekipa. Trakove bo prepisal raziskovalec in jih izbrisal, ko bodo prepisani točni zapisi.

S podpisom tega informiranega soglasja izjavljate, da sprejemate sodelovanje v tej študiji pod zgoraj opisanimi pogoji.

Datum: 25 / 11 / 2024

Podpis: B. Štern

Attachment 3: Pohorje Village Resort - 5 Start

GreenHost – poklicna odličnost, politika in podjetja združena za veščine vodenja gostinstva, prilagojene metodam okoljskega odtisa

Soglasje

Ta intervju je razvil projekt GreenHost, raziskovalni konzorcij Evropske unije iz 7 držav in 19 partnerjev, z referenco projekta 101144003 – GreenHost – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE, katerega namen je opisati primere dobre prakse, ki se izvajajo v zelenem in digitalnem okolju, spretnosti. Namen tega intervjuja je narediti začetno zbiranje primerov dobrih praks, ki bo privedlo do zbirke dobrih praks. Intervju poteka v skladu s protokoli raziskovalne etike in predpisi GDPR. Intervju bo posnet z zvočnim posnetkom, vaše ime ali kateri koli drugi identifikacijski podatek bo povezan z zvočnim posnetkom ali prepisom. Kasete bo lahko poslušala samo projektna ekipa. Trakove bo prepisal raziskovalec in jih izbrisal, ko bodo prepisani točni zapisi.

S podpisom tega informiranega soglasja izjavljate, da sprejemate sodelovanje v tej študiji pod zgoraj opisanimi pogoji.

Datum: 19 / 11 / 2024

Podpis: **5 STAR d.o.o.**
Slovenska ulica 10, 2000 Maribor
ID za DDV: SI31767885
E: high@fivestar.si www.fivestar.si
BE SMART

Attachment 4: Višja strokovna šola za gostinstvo in turizem Maribor

Green Host
CoVE Project

GreenHost – poklicna odličnost, politika in podjetja združena za veščine vodenja gostinstva, prilagojene metodam okoljskega odtisa

Soglasje

Ta intervju je razvil projekt GreenHost, raziskovalni konzorcij Evropske unije iz 7 držav in 19 partnerjev, z referenco projekta 101144003 – GreenHost – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE, katerega namen je opisati primere dobre prakse, ki se izvajajo v zelenem in digitalnem okolju, spretnosti. Namen tega intervjuja je narediti začetno zbiranje primerov dobrih praks, ki bo privedlo do zbirke dobrih praks. Intervju poteka v skladu s protokoli raziskovalne etike in predpisi GDPR. Intervju bo posnet z zvočnim posnetkom, vaše ime ali kateri koli drugi identifikacijski podatek bo povezan z zvočnim posnetkom ali prepisom. Kasete bo lahko poslušala samo projektna ekipa. Trakove bo prepisal raziskovalec in jih izbrisal, ko bodo prepisani točni zapisi.

S podpisom tega informiranega soglasja izjavljate, da sprejemate sodelovanje v tej študiji pod zgoraj opisanimi pogoji.

Datum:_18__/__11__/_2024____

Podpis:_____Tadej Ljubec_____

Green Host
CoVE Project
Co-funded by the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

31

Attachment 5: Zavod za turizem Maribor

Green Host
CoVE Project

GreenHost – poklicna odličnost, politika in podjetja združena za veščine vodenja gostinstva, prilagojene metodam okoljskega odtisa

Soglasje

Ta intervju je razvil projekt GreenHost, raziskovalni konzorcij Evropske unije iz 7 držav in 19 partnerjev, z referenco projekta 101144003 – GreenHost – ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE, katerega namen je opisati primere dobre prakse, ki se izvajajo v zelenem in digitalnem okolju, spretnosti. Namen tega intervjuja je narediti začetno zbiranje primerov dobrih praks, ki bo privedlo do zbirke dobrih praks. Intervju poteka v skladu s protokoli raziskovalne etike in predpisi GDPR. Intervju bo posnet z zvočnim posnetkom, vaše ime ali kateri koli drugi identifikacijski podatek bo povezan z zvočnim posnetkom ali prepisom. Kasete bo lahko poslušala samo projektna ekipa. Trakove bo prepisal raziskovalec in jih izbrisal, ko bodo prepisani točni zapisi.

S podpisom tega informiranega soglasja izjavljate, da sprejemate sodelovanje v tej študiji pod zgoraj opisanimi pogoji.

Datum: 27 / 11 / 2024

Podpis: _____

Green Host
CoVE Project
Co-funded by
the European Union

Funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

32

Annex G - Country Report of Spain

GreenHost – Vocational Excellence, Police and Enterprise United for Hospitality Management Skills adapted on Environmental Footprint Methods

WP2/A2: Pool of Good Practices

Report by: Aethnic, Cambra de Comerç de Girona and CETT

Country: Spain

Date: November 2024

Contents

18.   Introduction

Within the framework of the **Greenhost Project,** the current report aims to identify good practices at Spanish level regarding green transition, digitalization and social needs in the tourism, hospitality and restauration industry, and completes the first phase of the Project. Gathering these needs will give support to the implementation of the next phases on developing material for training and organizing study visits to offer practical and exchange experiences.

A structured methodology was followed to inquire on the 5 good practices developed within the report. A literature review was conducted to identify them based on the provided digitalization, sustainability and social criteria. This was followed by targeted interviews with key stakeholders and responsible individuals, providing practical insights and expertise on each of the practices analyzed. The findings obtained were included following the structure provided in the template: background, key principles, barriers and challenges, benefits and outcomes, and performance indicators.

When selecting the good practices, different areas were sought to be represented. For example, from the tourism side, the good practice done by **Identify Travel** has been included, as they propose digitalization cultural heritage routes and try to contribute to managing sustainable tourism in cities. Regarding accommodation industry, some good practices have been selected. One of them is **La Ballena Alegre**, a campsite that has undertaken diverse environmental sustainability actions. **Inout Hostel** is another accommodation that is also implementing actions in green and social sustainability. The company **HotelVerse** has also been analysed, as it is offering personalized digital services. Finally, regarding gastronomy, **La Fageda** has been reviewed due to their commitment with social inclusion.

These are only five examples in the Spanish tourism industry. However, their experience can show a commitment to green and social sustainability, as well as digitalization, and can inspire other businesses in the tourism sector.

19. La Ballena Alegre

SUMMARY:

La Ballena Alegre Campsite, located in Sant Pere Pescador, Costa Brava, focuses on offering a luxurious camping experience while prioritizing sustainability. It uses renewable energy, collaborates with local suppliers, and educates visitors on environmental importance. Despite challenges like high costs and regulatory adaptation, it works to reduce its carbon footprint. The "Responsible Holidays" project promotes sustainable holidays. It has won awards for its innovative practices.

Identification

Name	La Ballena Alegre C.B
Subsector	Hospitality / Environmental sustainability
Website	https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/

19.1. Background

The La Ballena Alegre Campsite is located in Sant Pere Pescador, in the heart of the Costa Brava, Catalonia, and is internationally recognized for its commitment to sustainability and respect for the environment. The campsite has 324 buildings, most of which are bungalows and mobile homes, along with 809 pitches covering an area of 24 hectares.

The mission of the campsite is to offer a unique camping experience, combining luxury and modern amenities with a strong commitment to environmental protection.

The vision of La Ballena Alegre is to become a leading reference in the camping sector and a model of internationally recognized sustainable tourism.

Among the campsite's values are a commitment to serving guests, fostering a welcoming and inclusive environment where everyone is accepted, and maintaining high standards of quality and excellence in

all its services. All of this is achieved by promoting sustainable tourism and reducing environmental impact through continuous improvements driven by innovation and technology.

Image: La Ballena Alegre campsite. La Ballena Alegre website

19.2. Key Principles

La Ballena Alegre Costa Brava has specialized in Eco-Wellness tourism (Nature & Well-being), which is defined as:

- A set of tourist activities where sustainability and appreciation for the natural and cultural environment, as well as the well-being of tourists, are prioritized.
- Responsible tourism that commits to minimizing its environmental impact, sponsoring and promoting environmental projects, and protecting and conserving the environment.
- Offering activities to enjoy local traditions, gastronomy, and culture, promoting and enhancing the social and economic development of the local community by working with local producers and merchants.
- In the Eco-wellness concept of La Ballena Alegre, nature is seen as a constructive and positive commitment, both direct and indirect, preserving it for future generations.

The various initiatives of La Ballena Alegre reflect its commitment to sustainability:

- Sustainable facilities: La Ballena Alegre uses renewable energy such as geothermal energy to heat or cool water, photovoltaic panels to generate electricity, and fast-charging points for electric vehicles. The bungalows are designed to be 85% energy self-sufficient.
- Responsible suppliers: Collaboration with suppliers who practice organic farming and livestock rearing and work to eliminate plastic.

- Engaged staff: Training and raising awareness among staff to encourage sustainable practices within the campsite.
- Education and activities: Activity programs for guests, especially children, to educate them on the importance of sustainability.

19.3. Barriers and Challenges

La Ballena Alegre has encountered a series of barriers and challenges in continuing its commitment to this type of tourism model. Among the different elements, the following stand out:

- Implementation costs: The investments in sustainable technologies and facilities are high.
- Acceptance and awareness: Raising awareness and commitment to sustainability among all participants (customers, suppliers, staff) requires time and ongoing efforts.
- Regulations and norms: Adapting to European and local regulations can be complicated and costly.

However, it is important to note that the main challenge La Ballena Alegre is currently working on is auditing the campsite's carbon footprint with the goal of reducing or offsetting it as much as possible and becoming energy self-sufficient. This is achieved not only through investments but, more importantly, by generating awareness among everyone who is part of the La Ballena Alegre family. This includes proposing children's and family activities with this goal in mind, ensuring that suppliers and campsite events align with these values, and creating an experience for customers that they wish to incorporate into their daily lives.

19.4. Benefits and Outcomes

In 2020, La Ballena Alegre launched a sustainable initiative called Responsible Holidays to promote environmental awareness among customers, suppliers, and campsite staff. The goal was to demonstrate that it is possible to contribute to the preservation of the planet during holidays, and this campaign is part of a four-year project aligned with the company's sustainability values.

The campsite reinforces its commitment to the sustainability model by promoting the energy, environmental, economic, and social benefits of local engagement. The specific actions being implemented at the campsite are:

1. Product actions:

- Eco-design in the construction of bungalows and facilities.

- Use of eco-friendly materials.

2. Service actions:

- Sale and use of local and seasonal products.
- Circular economy workshops as part of children's activities.

3. Environmental actions:

- Reducing water and energy consumption.
- Promoting the minimization and valorization of generated waste.
- Wastewater management.
- Landscape integration.
- Avoiding the introduction of non-native species.
- Planting halophytic species.
- Providing information and raising awareness of good environmental practices among employees and guests.
- Informing suppliers about the environmental commitment and the requirements that this entails for them.

19.5.   Performance Indicators

As a result of the actions undertaken, La Ballena Alegre has achieved a set of indicators to minimize pollution. The indicators shown below are linked to the area of action, the real consumption and the improvement actions taken to reduce the previous consumption:

6. Energy management:
   1.6. Electricity:
   – Electricity consumption during 2020 stood at 1,282.258 MWh + 204.396 MWh solar power (solar power = 14% of total electricity consumption), giving a consumption ratio per person and day of 0.013* MWh/person/day. The consumption ratio in 2020 has increased compared with 2019 (0.010) because occupancy in 2019 was higher. However, solar power consumption has increased considerably, from 73.449 MWh (2019) to 204.396 MWh (2020).
   – Improvement actions:
      e. Energy efficiency in new equipment and LED lighting.
      f. Certified 100% renewable from Foener (since 2019)
      g. Photovoltaic solar power 39 eDevesa bungalows (188.855 MWh), 79% energy self-sufficient (54% in 2019) (Increased by 12 solar panels in 2020, total 22 panels). 22 solar panels, storage battery (enables power to be shared between all bungalows) and EV charger at every eDevesa bungalow. Customers can view energy use obtained by

managing self-consumption in their bungalow. Each year, a prize is given to the bungalow with the lowest consumption, consisting of a free stay the following year.

    h. Photovoltaic solar power 10 Tamariu bungalows (15.541 MWh) (Installed in 2020 with 10 panels on each bungalow)

1.7. Natural gas:

- Natural gas consumption during 2020 stood at 1,177.633 MWh + 356.792 MWh renewable (renewable = 23.25% of total thermal power consumption), giving a consumption ratio per person and day of 0.014* MWh/person/day. The consumption ratio in 2020 has increased compared with 2019 (0.011) because occupancy in 2019 was higher. Use of renewable energy has increased from 10.206 MWh in 2018 to 356.792 MWh in 2020.
- Improvement actions:
  - f. Use of thermal solar power.
  - g. Washing facilities: 290.705 MWh (2019 data; the real 2020 reading is not available due to meter failure)
  - h. New 2020 GEOTHERMAL POWER: 61.659 MWh (supermarket climate control) + 4.428 MWh (Hot water for staff rooms and kitchen).
  - i. In 2019, aerothermal and geothermal power was tested in one eDevesa bungalow in order to determine performance.
  - j. Replacement of LPG by Natural Gas (2014)

1.8. Diesel:

- Annual consumption during 2020 stood at 10,775 L (109.04 MWh) (1 L/10.12 KWh) Consumption ratio: 0.095 MWh/person/day. Progressive decrease since 2013 by 5,000 litres/year. However, in 2020, the decrease was 1,640 litres due to increased building work to repair damage caused by Storm Gloria.
- Improvement actions:
  - c. Decrease since 2013 due to the purchase of electric vehicles (purchase in 2018 for organic waste collection).
  - d. Consumption in 2013: Consumption of Diesel A: 9,852.35 L

1.9. Petrol:

- Consumption during 2020 stood at 1,082 L (10.95 MWh) (1 L/10.12 KWh) Consumption ratio: 0.00009 MWh/person/day
- Improvement actions:
  - c. Decrease since 2013 due to the purchase of electric vehicles (purchase in 2018 for organic waste collection).
  - d. Consumption in 2013: Consumption of Petrol: 3,645.06 L

1.10. Renewable energies:

- Total energy consumption during 2020 was 3,141 MWh (electricity + natural gas + fuels + renewable energies): 0.028 MWh/person/day. Thus, the % of renewable energy was 58.7% (561 MWh): Mains electricity from renewable sources (1,282.258 MWh) Thermal solar power for washing facilities (290.705 MWh) Photovoltaic solar power Bungalows (204.396 MWh) Geothermal power: Climate control (61.659 MWh) and ACS (4.428 MWh).

7. Water management:

- The annual consumption in 2020 was 39,528 m3. The consumption ratio per person and day was 0.349 m3. Consumption in swimming pools out of total annual consumption was 5,683 m3, corresponding to 14 swimming pools + 2 SPA Oxygen pools (calculated using 2019 meter readings). In 2019, there were 2 new swimming pools with 40 m3 each. Consumption is greater than in previous years due to increased cleaning rendered necessary by Storm Gloria and Covid-19, and the reduced occupancy in 2020.

- Improvement actions:
  - f. Low-consumption plant species
  - g. Watering scheduling
  - h. Low-consumption taps and showers
  - i. Washing facility 2 was automated in 2018, washing facility 3 was automated in 2019 and washing facility 1 was automated in 2020.
  - j. General awareness-raising among the public

8. Waste management:
   - In 2020, the % of selective refuse collection was 16% (5% glass, 3% plastic, 4% paper and cardboard, and 5% organic). Total special waste in 2020 amounted to 0.00001% (0.003% in 2018 and 0.04% in 2019), which includes waste products such as building rubble, batteries, light bulbs, pruning waste, fluorescent lamps, oil, and bulky objects.

9. Product management:
   - In 2020, the number of suppliers with ISO 14001, ISO 9001, and sanitary certificate increased. Purchases of organic products amounted to 5.95% of the total (increase of 13.3% over 2019). Locally-sourced products accounted for 22.85% (increase of 3% over 2019). Sales of organic products accounted for 2.20% (increase of 6% over 2019) and locally-sourced products accounted for 20.10% (increase of 1.3% over 2019).

10. Material management:
    - Material consumption in 2020, assuming the same number of days open as in previous years, would be 4.64 Tn (less than previous years).
    - Improvement actions:
      - b. Cleaning product and sodium hypochlorite (for disinfecting water) containers returned to the supplier

These indicators translate into pollutant emissions into the atmosphere. The carbon footprint of the La Ballena Alegre, in 2020, was the emission of 309.80 Tn of CO_2. However, the campsite's vegetation enables 50% of the emissions caused by energy and coolant gas consumption to be offset. That is, 153.30 Tn of CO_2 are trapped in the campsite's vegetation.

This sustainable management model implemented by the La Ballena Alegre campsite has received several awards:

- 2020 European Solar Prize in the industrial category for the eco-friendly, solar-powered eDevesa bungalows. This prize is the "Champions League of renewable energies".
- EMAS Catalonia 2021 award in the category of Best environmental implementation with the Implementation of different renewable energies in the eDevesa bungalows.
- Best sustainable, environment-friendly campsite in Europe in 2022, in the category of Sustainability and Environmental Awareness, awarded by the German association ADAC. The prize has been awarded for the campsite's holistic approach: a successful combination of luxury and modern camping with sustainable environmental protection. With its broad range of services, this 5-star campsite's managers strive to achieve the noble goal of reducing their

CO2 footprint. And they are doing it very well: every year, they save more than 100 tons of CO2. The ADAC Camping Awards are Europe's top campsite awards.

References

ACN (2024). *Territori ordena retirar 89 'bungalows' y derribar cuatro piscinas del cámping Ballena Alegre de Sant Pere Pescador*. https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20240509/territori-retirar-bungalows-derribar-cuatro-piscinas-camping-ballena-alegre-sant-pere-pescador-102150482

Càmping La Ballena Alegre (2022). *Declaració medioambiental*. https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/wp-content/uploads/Declaracio%CC%81-medi-ambiental-2020web.pdf

Càmping La Ballena Alegre Costa Brava (2021). *Responsible holidays at La Ballena Alegre Campiste*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBlzZW-Qvek

CETT (2022). *Toni Castellar (Ballena Alegre): "Estando de vacaciones también se puede contribuir a la preservación del planeta"*. https://www.cett.es/es/camping-sostenibilidad-ballena-alegre-alimara

20. La Fageda

SUMMARY:

La Fageda is a cooperative that integrates people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues into the workforce. With over 640 employees, it operates in dairy production, gardening, and tourism. The company has a strong social and environmental focus, reducing water and energy consumption. Its mission aligns with the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), promoting sustainability, inclusive education, and social integration through meaningful employment.

Identification

Name	Cooperativa La Fageda
Subsector	Gastronomy and others / Social and environmental sustainability
Website	https://www.fageda.com/en/

20.1. Background

La Fageda is a Catalan cooperative recognized for its unique business model, which combines the business sector with a social focus on the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues into the workforce.

In the business sector, the project includes a gardening division, a livestock farm, a yogurt and dairy dessert production plant, a jam workshop, and finally, a tourism branch through its Visitor Service.

La Fageda's mission is to improve the quality of life and promote the social integration of people with intellectual disabilities, severe mental disorders, and other groups at risk of social exclusion in the Garrotxa region, by generating meaningful employment, training opportunities, and a wide range of care services through its business activities.

Its vision is to be a solid social and business project that serves as a model of inspiration for creating value in society.

La Fageda's core values include trust, integrity, responsibility, enthusiasm, effort, and quality.

Image: La Fageda headquarters. La Fageda website

20.2. Key Principles

Currently, La Fageda consists of a team of over 640 people. Of these, more than 330 are salaried employees, and half of them (164 people) are in vulnerable situations. The La Fageda team works in the production branch of dairy products, ice creams, and jams, the gardening and livestock branch, and the visitor service. Over 90 people are not salaried employees but are users of various occupational or pre-employment services, classified into four areas: socio-labour, employment insertion services, personal services, specialized care, and training. Additionally, there are 180 students.

The results of La Fageda's business activities for the past year, 2023, are as follows:

-   The gardening division has a workforce of over 30 people.

-   The farm has 251 cows.

-   Dairy production exceeded 86 million units.

-   The production of several types of jams reached over 138,000 kg.

-   Ice cream production was over 68,000 kg.

-   The Visitor Service welcomed more than 45,000 visitors.

Additionally, it is important to note that La Fageda has chosen not to use social integration as a marketing tool, to avoid conflicting with the company's core philosophy.

20.3. Barriers and Challenges

La Fageda has faced various barriers and challenges on its path toward sustainability and social inclusion:

- Economic challenges: Ensuring economic viability while maintaining social and environmental commitments.
- Social acceptance: Overcoming prejudices and stigmas associated with intellectual disabilities and mental health issues.
- Technology and infrastructure: Significant investments required to implement renewable energy technologies.

20.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The benefits and results achieved by La Fageda are numerous and significant:

- Social impact: Improvement in the quality of life for people with disabilities by providing them with work and social integration.
- Environmental sustainability: Reduction of environmental impact through organic farming practices and renewable energy.
- Recognition and reputation: International prestige for its social mission and sustainable practices.

20.5. Performance Indicators

La Fageda makes a profound contribution to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) defined by the United Nations for 2030. Below is an outline of La Fageda's alignment with the SDGs, showing first the SDG and then, La Fageda's contribution to it:

18) No poverty: Eradicate poverty in all its forms, everywhere.
   a) The project includes people who are on the poverty line.

b) The people with intellectual disability or mental illness who work at La Fageda earn 4 times the non-contributory allowance they would receive from the State if they were not working.

c) They provide access to housing and other basic services, which lifts a considerable load on the families who look after disabled or mentally ill people.

d) They have opened a company shop, El Rebost, managed through the La Fageda Cooperative, which sells food at affordable prices.

19) Zero hunger: Stop hunger and famine, achieve food security, improve nutrition, and foster sustainable agriculture.

a) They give products to third-sector organisations. In 2020, they donated 600,000 yoghurts.

20) Good health: Guarantee healthy lives and foster wellbeing at all ages.

a) They work with people suffering from mental illnesses, intellectual disabilities, or drug addictions.

b) They foster physical activity directly among their employees, with weekly healthy walks.

c) They have a vegetable garden with 1,600 m2 and they sell the produce at their cooperative's shop. By this means, they contribute to improving their employees' diet, and through the Canteen Service.

d) They work for their employees' safety and wellbeing.

21) Quality education: Guarantee inclusive education for everyone and foster equal access to quality, lasting learning opportunities.

a) They are in the process of becoming authorised as a Training Centre and they will be able to issue Professionalism Certificates.

b) They are involved in the New Opportunities School project in Olot.

22) Gender equality: Achieve gender equality by empowering adult and young women.

a) The criteria used in selecting people to work at La Fageda do not discriminate on the grounds of sex or gender identity.

b) They have an Equality Plan registered with the Catalan Government that includes actions and challenges such as: creation of the equality committee, training courses for employees, parity within the different areas, use of non-discriminating language, etc.

c) Their services, particularly Housing, provide relief for families in the daily care of vulnerable people. This care, and the domestic work this would entail, is normally provided by women. Consequently, their services release them from having to devote time to costly, time-consuming tasks.

d) 37% of management positions (Board of Trustees and Executive Committee) are held by women.

23) Clean water and sanitation: Guarantee the availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation.

a) They have a physical-chemical and biological water treatment plant that processes La Fageda's wastewater. The quality levels of the water they discharge into the river are very high.

b) They foster water saving in the treatment plant's internal functioning (from 1.5 m3 in 2019 to 1.4 m3 in 2020).

c) The robotised milking parlour has reduced water consumption in this activity by 40%.

d) They mix the sludge from food manufacture with the cows' manure, separating out the liquid fraction. The result is used to fertilise the fields that provide forage for the cows.

e) In recent years, they have made significant effort to reduce water consumption for cleaning and cooling. In 2018, they reduced it by 20%, and by 40% in 2019.

24) Affordable and clean energy: Guarantee access for everyone to affordable, reliable, sustainable, renewable energy sources.

a) 99% of the electricity they consume is supplied from renewable energy sources.

b) 80% of their thermal energy is produced in their biomass boiler, which burns wood chips. As a result, their propane consumption has reduced considerably.

c) Overall, 86% of the energy they consume comes from renewable sources.

d) They have also reduced electricity consumption by installing more efficient insulation and LED lights, both indoors and outdoors.

e) Energy efficiency is a priority issue when choosing industrial machinery.

f) When choosing vehicles for their fleet, they give priority to low mileage used hybrid vehicles.

25) Decent work and economic growth: Foster sustained, inclusive and sustainable growth, full productive employment, and a decent job for everyone.

a) They offer work to people at risk of social exclusion in La Garrotxa.

b) Specifically, at their Special Work Centre, they hire people who have a mental illness or intellectual disability. Unemployment of this population group in the region has fallen drastically, as they give work to 25% of those who are of working age (138 people in 2020).

c) They also have a work integration company, El Faig, for people in the region who are in a situation of vulnerability for other reasons (33 jobs in 2020).

d) They have a Pre-Occupational Service for about 15 mentally ill people who need to complete a pre-employment process.

e) 80% of the employment contracts signed at La Fageda, regardless of their vulnerability status, are long-term.

f) They are starting a training project to improve the employability of young people in the region who have not found their place in the education system.

g) They are a member of the Pact for Vocational Training and Employment in La Garrotxa.

h) They use teleworking whenever possible.

i) They facilitate work-family balance by organising play activities on the premises for employees' children during school holidays.

j) During the last decade, they have modernised infrastructures and technologies to be more competitive, create new jobs, provide machines to help people and not to replace them, support ergonomics and energy efficiency, and improve their cows' wellbeing. They have also started a pilot plant.

26) Innovation and infrastructure: Build resilient infrastructures, support inclusive, sustainable industrialisation, and foster innovation.

a) La Fageda project is a story about business innovation.

b) They support inclusive industrialisation, adapting the production lines to their workforce so that machines help people in their work, without replacing them.

c) They contribute to improving the region's economic development.

d) They have implemented logistic's model that reduces heavy goods vehicle traffic inside the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve and makes stock management more sustainable.

e) Using a high-performance film, in recent years they have reduced annual plastic consumption for shrink-wrapping pallets by 31% (1,331 kg).

f) A pilot plant has been operating within the Innovation Department since 2020.

27) Reduced inequalities: Reduce inequality between and within countries.

a) More than half of the people who work at La Fageda are in a situation of vulnerability.

b) The inequality experienced by these people is reduced thanks to having a useful, fairly paid job, working in an atmosphere that facilitates genuine human relations and supported by psychologists and social workers.

c) They foster stable employment contracts: 80% of the contracts are permanent.

d) The salaries earned by the people with intellectual disability or mental illness who work at La Fageda are 4 times higher than the non-contributory allowance they would receive from the State if they were not working.

e) They foster inclusive work, irrespective of abilities, gender, provenance, religion, or race.

f) Their Workplace Integration Service supports people in situations of vulnerability to help them find work in local institutions or businesses.

g) The Housing services are an opportunity to reduce the inequality experienced by people with intellectual disabilities or mental illnesses and their families.

28) Sustainable cities and communities: Create sustainable cities and human communities that are inclusive, safe, and resilient.

a) They cooperate in reducing negative environmental impacts within the La Garrotxa Volcanic Zone Natural Park by means of a mobility plan and proposals to disperse tourism from overcrowded areas and deseasonalise tourism.

b) They provide a transport service by bus from Olot for part of the workforce and they encourage the remainder to share vehicles.

c) They give priority to efficient waste management.

29) Responsible consumption: Guarantee sustainable consumption and production systems.

a) They combat food wastage with a line of bulk yoghurts and recalling sufficiently beforehand those products set to expire or reach their best before date soon. These products can be bought by the organisation's employees at discounted prices.

b) Their new creamy yoghurts are packaged in paperboard containers with a thin plastic film. These containers can be disposed of in the paper recycling bin; they have enabled us to reduce the quantity of plastic in each container from 80 to 2 grammes.

c) All the paperboard and cardboard used for packaging their products is sourced from sustainably managed forests.

d) They manage the by-products from their processes so that they can be used for animal nutrition.

e) They have a composting plant for processing the slurry produced by their dairy farm.

f) They support the circular economy: they use their cows' manure to fertilise the fields on which they plant a large part of the cereals which, in turn, are used to feed the cows.

g) They separate all the several types of waste.

h) They publish their Sustainability Report every year.

i) They foster sustainable tourism through the Visitors Service Office, which manages bookings for visits to their facilities with an access code to the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve.

30) Climate action: Urgently combat climate change and its effects.

a) They are accredited by the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST) and they publicise all the measures they are taking to improve sustainability.

b) They have implemented selective waste collection.

c) They encourage application of the 3 Rs (reduce, recycle and reuse) in their project.

d) They support quality tourism.

e) They support awareness-raising and training new recruits in good environmental practices that are specific for the job.

f) They publish news about environmental actions.

g) They engage in sustainable production.

31) Life below water: Preserve and make sustainable use of the oceans, seas, and marine resources for sustainable development.

a) In 2021, they held an awareness-raising workshop on the problem of microplastics in the sea, organised by the NGO Ocean Cats and attended by 50 La Fageda employees.

32) Life on land: Protect, restore, and foster sustainable use of land ecosystems, manage forests sustainably, combat desertification, stop and reverse soil degradation, and halt the loss of biodiversity.

a) They organise guided tours that include a stroll through the Fageda d'en Jordà Natural Reserve. Their Visitors Service Office provides information about the Park's flora and fauna.

33) Peace and justice: Promote peaceful, inclusive societies to enable sustainable development, provide access to justice for everyone, and develop effective, responsible, inclusive institutions at all levels.

a) They define themselves as a transparent company; every year, they publish a Sustainability Report in which they give account of their actions.

b) They have a code of ethics for all employees, governed by the principles of peace and justice.

34) Partnerships for the goals: Increase the resources for implementing and revitalising global partnerships for sustainable development.

a) Since the company was formed, they have understood that a social enterprise cannot grow without networking and partnerships with public administrations and entities. Accordingly, they have formed strategic partnerships with multiple players.

b) They transfer their expertise in social entrepreneurship through training seminars.

c) They are a member of the Pact for Vocational Training and Employment in La Garrotxa.

La Fageda is a well-recognized social project, as demonstrated by the many awards and distinctions it has received since 1997. The full list of the awards and recognitions are available in the following URL:

https://www.fageda.com/es/premios-y-reconocimientos/, some of which have been awarded directly to its founder, Cristóbal Colón.

References

La Fageda Fundació (2022). *La Fageda, compromesa amb la sostenibilitat Resum d'accions 2022*. https://www.fageda.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ODS_la_fageda_2022.pdf

The Arbinger Institute (2019). *La Fageda | Turn the World Outward*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoI052QdkM8

21. INOUT hostel

SUMMARY:

INOUT, a non-profit hotel employing 90% staff with disabilities, prioritizes environmental sustainability. Located in a natural park in Barcelona, they focus on water conservation (wastewater treatment), renewable energy (solar, biomass), and responsible consumption (local products, waste reduction). They actively address climate change (CO_2 reduction, electric vehicle charging) and protect ecosystems. Their efforts have resulted in significant CO_2 reduction and numerous awards (e.g., Biosphere certification).

Identification

Name	"INOUT hostel"
Subsector	Hospitality and Restaurant / Environmental sustainability and social
Website	https://www.inouthostel.com/en

21.1. Background

INOUT was opened in 2004 by the non-profit organisation Icara Social Initiatives. This special employment centre for the hotel and catering industry was the first hotel service in Europe to have 90% of its staff with disabilities. Icaria Social Initiatives defines itself as a "non-profit entity whose objective is to provide support and opportunities for the personal, social and labour progress of children and adults with intellectual disabilities". This NGO therefore has strong social commitments and a desire to make tourism services inclusive and accessible to as many people as possible.

In its growth, INOUT has also developed several good environmental practices and made ecological sustainability central to its project. This commitment to protecting the environment stems from its location, in one of Barcelona's major natural parks, Collserola. The hostel's website explains that INOUT is located in a natural park and that the entire team is committed to protecting the environment and minimising its impact on the immediate surroundings.

The company's determination to make environmental protection a key part of its vision is reflected in its engagement to the "Barcelona plastic zero" commitment. This commitment aims at efficiently reducing the amount of single-use plastic in the city. The importance of environmental protection in its values can also be seen in its determination to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. As its website explains, INOUT has joined forces with organisations, businesses and professionals from the tourism sector to declare a climate emergency and act to drastically reduce carbon emissions.

Image: Hostel Inout Barcelona. Hostel Inout Barcelona Facebook

21.2. Key Principles

INOUT HOSTEL has demonstrated its commitment to sustainable development in several ways, from collaborating on social programmes and projects to implementing innovative methods for exploiting renewable energy sources.

According to "Biosphere sustainable", there are 6 main areas in which INOUT implements good environmental practices:

1. Clean water and sanitation

Being in Catalonia, a region that is experiencing severe droughts and a growing shortage of water, water is a key issue for the establishment. Good environmental practices focus mainly on the water collection, supply, purification and treatment stages. To this end, the hostel has set up facilities that encourage reduced water consumption. It is also concerned about the quality and cleanliness of its water systems, implementing measures to avoid contaminating the water with its activity. Finally, it runs information and awareness campaigns on cleanliness and the responsible use of water.

INOUT HOSTEL strives to ensure that water is used responsibly and that every effort is made to encourage its reuse. For example, the entity has installed equipment that collects its wastewater and then treats and purifies it. This advanced wastewater treatment system purifies the water, removing contaminants and waste. Once the water has been purified, INOUT reuses it to water its vegetable patch and gardens.

2. Affordable and Clean Energy

Access to clean, smart and modern energy services is another of INOUT's priorities. To achieve this, the hotel prioritises the use of green and renewable energy sources. For example, INOUT installed nearly 200 solar panels.

The entity has also installed motion detectors in the lighting to optimise the switching on and off lights. These motion detectors can be found in the hostel's corridors, ensuring that no energy is wasted and that lights are never left on by mistake.

To reduce energy consumption and use cleaner energy, the entity also has a biomass boiler installed for hot water consumption and local wood pellet heating. Sectorial thermostats are also installed to control the temperature, and all the lights are LED. INOUT also runs awareness campaigns on energy use.

3. Responsible Consumption and Production

INOUT's good environmental practices also focus on sustainable consumption patterns. For example, it favours the purchase and consumption of local and sustainable products and services. The hotel tries as much as possible to favour short circuits and to offer local and seasonal food.

It also adopts measures to minimise the waste it generates during its business. To this end, INOUT promotes the 3Rs in its production models: reduce, recycle and reuse. For example, to reduce water consumption to a minimum, INOUT has installed push buttons in the showers to ensure that no water is wasted. INOUT Hostel also shows its commitment to responsible consumption by trying to only get second-hand furniture and objects instead of buying new ones.

4. Climate Action

One of INOUT's priorities is also to tackle climate change. To this end, the company monitors and compensates for the carbon footprint of its activities. INOUT also encourages sustainable mobility and the use of transport methods that use less CO2. To this end, it has installed a charging point for electric

vehicles. This initiative encourages green modes of transport and is essential for an establishment located outside the city centre, in a natural park. These measures enable INOUT to offer transport alternatives that will considerably reduce CO2 emissions.

5. Life Below Water

INOUT HOSTEL is committed to protecting the oceans with the aim of achieving sustainable underwater life. The entity carries out actions to raise awareness and protect marine ecosystems. It also supports measures for more sustainable use of marine resources and contributes actively to the prevention of pollution of the seas, lakes and rivers.

6. Life on Land

INOUT is developing good practices aimed at protecting the area in which it is located. To do so, the hotel provides data on the area's natural resources. It also adopts actions to reduce the impact of its activities on biodiversity. Finally, it undertakes a range of activities to respect the natural landscape and local wildlife.

Located in a nature park, this is a necessity for INOUT, as it aims to live in harmony with its ecosystem and limit its impact as much as possible. As the director explained to me in an interview, the information gathered is invaluable for understanding current realities such as climate change, as well as the needs of the site. With more data, it's possible to adapt and adopt precise and effective measures.

21.3. Barriers and Challenges

In the interview conducted with the INOUT's Technical Director, it was explained that most of the challenges were economic, as all innovative installations are very expensive. INOUT must make high-cost investments, as it was the case with the water purification equipment, the solar panels or the biomass boiler. To overcome these obstacles, INOUT must constantly respond to calls for proposals and apply for grants. However, the director pointed out that it was sometimes impossible to wait for the results and that the establishment had to invest in good environmental practices in the hope that they would get the subventions to be reimbursed.

INOUT's director went on to explain that the lack of information was also a frequent problem. For example, on the question of wastewater treatment systems, it was difficult for them to know which systems were available and which one were the best. There were not many people specialised in this field, and they did not know if it would work. They were concerned because it was a major investment.

They also sometimes have doubts about laws and regulations. For example, the INOUT team is now worried about the swimming pool, because this year, due to the drought in Catalunya, it looked like the municipality was hardly going to let them open it. Therefore, they thought about installing a water reuse system for the pools, but they were not sure how effective the system would be, as it is not installed in many places, and it is very expensive. Without this information, it is very difficult for them to know where to start and it causes them a lot of uncertainty.

What has helped them a lot to overcome this lack of information is to apply for different European and Chamber of Commerce projects, both to meet suppliers and to find out what options are available to them. These projects help them to find the time to focus on the subject but also to benefit from an audit or consultancy on a certain topic.

21.4. Benefits and Outcomes

In the interview conducted, the director of INOUT explained that the biggest advantage of developing good environmental practices is being able to adapt to their ecosystem, the Collserola Natural Park. For example, the hostel is in an area where the risk of fire is high, and the soil is very dry. Therefore, they decided to invest in a water treatment plant that collects grey water from the buildings, treats it and then uses it for irrigation. This practice not only solves the problem of water shortage but also reduces the risk of fire. Indeed, the entity has more water to irrigate the soil, which becomes less dry and therefore less prone to catching fire. In the event of a fire, INOUT can also use the waste it collects to act effectively without using up drinking water. Thanks to these good practices, INOUT adapts to its environment and reduces risks. These good practices also serve to be in line with the values and missions of the project and to help build a more sustainable world, which is in itself a great source of satisfaction for the organisation.

21.5. Performance Indicators

By 2024, September 10, INOUT had reduced its CO_2 emissions by 1,272 tonnes thanks to the implementation of its good environmental practices. As calculated by the company, this is equivalent to an annual saving of 5,301 trees, or the daily carbon footprint of 16,1013 people.

These good practices have also brought the company numerous national and international awards, including the "Responsible Tourism Awards for Catalonia" or the "Biosphere Certified label". This label, which is the fruit of certification under the United Nations 2030 Agenda, is awarded by Biosphere Sustainable after "verifying that sustainable practices are correctly implemented. It is a guarantee that the entity respects its commitments".

In 2019, The INOUT Hostel received the "Honourable Mention for Corporate Social Responsibility", awarded by Grupo Habitat Futura and its official partner the Institute for Responsible Tourism. In particular, this distinction rewards establishments that demonstrate 'Global Sustainability': understood as the selective management of waste and recycling, the preservation of the environment or the use of ecological suppliers. It also acknowledges companies that demonstrate 'building sustainability', focusing on the integration of renewable energy systems or even the efficiency of installations.

In 2023, INOUT won a prize awarded by Hostelworld and Red Española de Albergues Juveniles - REAJ, with the project "Helping to reduce CO2 by growing apple trees". "REAJ is a not-for-profit organisation whose main objectives are to promote youth mobility, environmental protection, equal opportunities, intercultural understanding and peace." These awards show that the good environmental practices put in place by INOUT have been recognised and praised by various organisations, and it encourages the establishment to continue in this direction.

As the director explained, the whole INOUT team is incredibly grateful with everything they have managed to achieve in recent years, both in terms of accessibility and environmental sustainability. These good practices have been recognised not only by the awards they have won, but also by the comments and opinions of customers, who are often inspired by the efforts made here to protect the environment. INOUT are aware that there is still a long way to go, and many good environmental practices still need to be implemented, which is why they are ready and motivated to achieve the highest level of green sustainability.

References

Catalunya (2015). *Catalonia, a responsible tourism destination*. https://act.gencat.cat/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Turisme_responsable_ENG.pdf

Icària iniciatives socials (2024). *INOUT Hostel Centro Especial de Trabajo.* https://www.icaria.biz/

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). *Ambiental Sustainability.* https://www.inouthostel.com/en/sostenibilitat-ambiental

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). *Biosphere Sustainable.* https://www.biospheresustainable.com/es/comunidad/inout-hostel/518

INOUT Hostel (2020). *Mención honorifica.* https://www.inouthostel.com/es/menci%C3%B3-honorifica

INOUT Hostel (2024). *INOUT Hostel Barcelona*. https://www.inouthostel.com/en

Red Española de Albergues Juveniles (2023). *Albergues REAJ ganadores de 16.000€ en ayudas para proyectos de sostenibilidad y accesibilidad*. https://noticias.reaj.com/albergues-reaj-ganadores-de-16-000e-en-ayudas-para-proyectos-de-sostenibilidad-y-accesibilidad/

The information was complemented with an interview with Izaskun Quilez Arsuaga, technical director of the INOUT.

22.   HotelVerse

SUMMARY:

HotelVerse is an innovative digital project that increases customer satisfaction and engagement by offering a digital twin immerse experience. The platform supports sustainable tourism by optimizing hotel occupancy and reducing overbooking. It boosts direct bookings, reducing the use of third-party platforms and offers new features to improve the booking experience.

Identification

Name	Hotelverse
Subsector	Hospitality / Digitalization
Website	https://hotelverse.tech/solutions/

22.1.   Background

Hotelverse is an innovative project in the hotel industry that enhances the digital touring experience for users visiting a hotel's website. It offers an immersive 360° virtual tour, allowing users to explore different room types and even reserve the exact room they wish to stay in. This personalized experience meets the growing demand from users seeking unique and customized options when booking hotels or trips. Hotelverse is committed to continuously improving the customer experience through direct channels, focusing on innovation and analyzing tools that help optimize the booking process and enhance overall sales performance. The idea came from entrepreneurs in the hotel industry to solve and improve the booking experience for hotels. Hotelverse decided to launch an innovative spin-off project, which was established as its own company.

22.2.   Key Principles

Hotelverse offers solutions characterized by cutting-edge digital innovations aimed at enhancing guest experiences and hotel operations. The key features include **digital twins'** technology, which provides

The European Commission's support for the production of this publication does not constitute an endorsement of the contents, which reflect the views only of the authors, and the Commission cannot be held responsible for any use which may be made of the information contained therein. Project n° 10144003-GreenHost-ERASMUS-EDU-2023-PEX-COVE

26

immersive room previews, a direct booking, and personalized booking options for the customers. It offers a specific website with the solutions listed below:

- **Destination Overview**: this feature helps users locate hotels more effectively, improving their understanding of the surrounding area. For **urban hotels**, it highlights the hotel's position within the city and nearby points of interest, such as shopping areas, museums, and restaurants. For **resorts**, it provides a detailed view of the entire complex, including all its outlets. This feature enhances guests' familiarity with the destination and encourages exploration of the local area or resort facilities.

- **Content hub:** it offers a solution designed to turn website visits into more profitable bookings by utilizing advanced digital tools like direct booking engines, personalized room selection, and immersive digital experiences. These features help hotels reduce dependency on third-party platforms (OTAs), and increase direct engagement with guests, leading to higher revenue. The platform's customization options, and real-time data improve guest satisfaction and booking efficiency. There is also an option for businesses to request a demo to see how the platform can enhance their operations.

- **Customer insights**: this feature transforms how hotels understand guest behavior by providing valuable data through tools like navigation heat maps that show which areas are most engaged on the website. Additionally, interaction KPIs (Key Performance Indicators) help track user interactions, and data on the most visited items (such as floors, room locations, and bed types) offer insights into guest preferences.

- **Choose your room**: this option allows guests to select their preferred room directly through the hotel's website. Guests can preview room views and select based on specific attributes such as floor, location, or bed type.

- **Claim your sunbed**: this option allows hotel guests to reserve their sunbeds in advance through the hotel's website, eliminating the need to rush. This convenience enhances the guest experience by providing a more relaxed and stress-free option, while also creating an additional revenue opportunity for the hotel by charging for sunbed reservations.

- **Grab your table**: it allows guests to reserve prime seating at hotel restaurants or bars in advance.

- **Book your experience**: this option allows guests to reserve pre-arrival experiences and services through the hotel's website. This could include activities, spa treatments, dining experiences, or others, providing a smooth way for guests to enhance their stay before they arrive.

- **Disintermediation**: this option allows guests to book directly with the hotel, avoiding online travel agencies or OTAs. It offers real-time room availability, the option to select specific rooms with interior and exterior views to drive more direct bookings.

A deeper description of the project can be watched [here](#).

Image: Example of digital room booking. Hotel Verse webiste

For example, Hotelverse explains a **case study** summarized below of the Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspalomas where the technology **Digital Twins** is implemented:

The Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspalomas is the first hotel in the Canary Islands to use Hotelverse's Digital Twin technology, offering guests a highly personalized booking experience. This 5-star hotel allows users to explore its facilities virtually before arrival, enhancing guest engagement and boosting brand reputation. The **Digital Twin** enables features like room selection, which has increased interest in superior rooms, with a 42% conversion rate at the "Choose Your Room" step. Technology has doubled website visit time and improved direct bookings. The overall effect is a more personalized and **immersive experience**, leading to higher customer satisfaction and booking rates. The hotel's focus on visibility and user interaction with the Digital Twin further strengthens its position in hospitality.

This is an innovative new booking model that offers a new standard in direct sales, which makes customers interact deeply through the platform, and spend more time on the hotel website to explore the different options. It also offers more revenue for the hotel, as customers can identify all the features of the hotel room they are interested in, and highly satisfied guests, as their expectations fit with the reality of their stay.

Image: Example of Salobre Hotel Resort & Serenity in Maspaloma booking process. HotelVerse webiste

22.3. Barriers and Challenges

One of the key challenges Hotelverse faces is the ongoing evolution of customer expectations and the increasing demand for seamless, personalized experiences. As technology rapidly advances, staying at the forefront of emerging trends is essential for Hotelverse to meet these expectations and maintain a competitive edge. This requires continuous innovation and refinement of their solutions to offer more tailored and convenient services. For instance, Hotelverse is currently developing new features that will enhance the guest experience by enabling customers to reserve amenities such as tables at the hotel restaurant or sunbeds in the solarium. These enhancements reflect Hotelverse's commitment to providing a fully integrated digital experience that serves to the changing needs of modern travellers, ensuring convenience and satisfaction at every touchpoint.

22.4. Benefits and Outcomes

Hotelverse's technology has garnered multiple awards, including being recognized as the most innovative start-up in Spain at the EmprendeXXI Awards (CaixaBank), winning the Best Customer Experience Award at the 2020 Tourism Innovation Summit, and being featured in the 100 Best Ideas of the Year 2022 by *Actualidad Económica* (El Mundo). They also received the Best Hospitality Digital Solution award from *La Razón* and won the Customer Experience category at the Travolution Awards 2022. Moreover, their founders were recognized in *Forbes*' list of the 100 most creative business

leaders. Hotelverse benefits from the backing of ENISA (Ministry of Industry, Trade, and Tourism), a public entity that finances viable and innovative business projects.

Looking ahead, the next steps include scaling the sales force for international expansion, evolving the product to increase market size by offering various levels of service to different types of hotel establishments, and consolidating the brand as the leader in its category worldwide. As part of this strategy, they aim to offer an attractive value proposition where customers can digitally immerse themselves in the hotel and explore the surroundings and everything the area has to offer. This approach focuses on driving direct sales by maximizing conversion, while enhancing the overall digital experience for our customers.

22.5. Performance Indicators

- Engagement: your customers can fly over the hotel and explore your facilities taking advantage of all your multimedia content. Display web prices on the buildings and for each room, and redirect customers directly to your booking process enhancing the experience
- Disintermediation: differentiate yourself from OTAs with a unique value proposition, let your customers walk into each room and check out its exterior views. Give them the power to choose their exact room and request it after booking.
- Generate revenue for the hotel: charge for room selection to guests coming through other channels, increase your ADR with attribute-based selling functionality (bed type, noise level, size, etc.) and even allow them to book a higher category room by understanding the unique value proposition of each room.
- Plug & play activation: the Roiback-Hotelverse partnership, allows you full integration into the engine taking advantage of all its benefits.

For example, the KPIs of the Roiback-Hotelverse partnership are the following:
- On website:
  - +30% superior rooms.
  - Users seeing the difference in rates, views or different features end up choosing a superior room.
  - +€ or $ per room selection.
  - An average of two rooms per day.
- In reception:
  - +25% Increase the sale of superior rooms.

- o Improve your sales with a better upselling experience.
- o +70% Superior rooms.
- o Visualizing to the customer the Digital Twin and the views offered by the suggested rooms.

- In contact Center:
  - o +10% Contact Center upsell.
  - o Improve your sales with a better upselling experience.
  - o +30% of superior rooms. For offering exclusive rooms in Digital Twin.

References

CETT (2023). *I CETT Smart Tourism Summit Barcelona - Cinta Massó (Hotel Verse)*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wRUOrRf1PM

CETT (n.d.). *"La tecnología y la innovación están en el ADN de Hotelverse"* https://www.cett.es/es/noticia-entrevista-hotelverse

DayOne Premios Emprende (2023). Entrevista Hotelverse. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdO-y_cPOgY

HotelVerse (2022). HotelVerse. https://hotelverse.tech/

HotelVerse (2023). The reinvention of hotel bookings: Digital Twins for a luxury experience. https://hotelversewebcomm.azurewebsites.net/wp-content/uploads/2024/02/EN-Salobre-Case-Study.pdf

Roiback (n.d.). *Hotelverse – Partners*. Roiback. https://en.roiback.com/partners/hotelverse

23.   Identify Travel

SUMMARY: Identify is a digital guide platform that offers personalized suggestions about cultural heritage. It can be an App for tourists but can also be embedded in hotel websites. This service aims to democratize cultural spots, de-massify the most well-known cultural sites, reduce the use of paper guides, offer updated information, and provide routes based on gamification.

Identification

Name	Identify Travel
Subsector	Tourism / Digitalization and Environmental sustainability
Website	https://www.identifytravel.app/

23.1. Background

Identify Enjoy Culture is a travel tech startup that offers a tailor-made digital guide platform to let tourists know about the cultural spots in destinations: activities and excursions, cultural routes, and local and quality dining restaurants... It offers a 21st-century alternative to tourist brochures and maps with personalized suggestions about cultural information where the client is the main focus. These guides can be used directly by tourists, or they can be embedded in accommodation or destination websites to offer clients unique and high-quality recommendations about the destination. Specifically, Identify is focused in:

- Trusted recommendations: Recommendations to tourists of sites that a local would suggest, improving their travel experience.
- Curated activities and routes: Selection of the routes according to your target (families, friends, couples,…).
- Increase in customer satisfaction: Improve customer satisfaction by providing them with a unique and quality experience in the destination.
- Destination information at your fingertips: reduce the use of paper maps and switch to innovation with the trusted web app to enjoy the destination.

The **mission** of this company is the following:

- To democratize access to information on the cultural heritage of the whole world through mobile technology, increasing the offer of cultural information to contribute to the de-massification of tourism.
- To disseminate unknown heritage sites and to put them in value.
- To distribute the flow in the overcrowded tourist areas and encourage people to move towards less crowded places.
- To be committed to a model of sustainable tourism in which the masses do not degrade or harm the environment of those who live there all year.

The **vision** of this company is to become the go-to app for cultural tourism, where the community generates trust among travelers by recommending the most relevant points and the most notable routes in each destination. Identify believes that a tourism and cultural model away from overcrowding is possible, but it requires the effort, will, and participation of everyone. They think that society only succeeds in preserving the cultural heritage of each place if both locals and visitors take care of it and do not exploit it irresponsibly. Through promoting culture, Identify Enjoy Culture drives tourism's de-seasonalization, wealth distribution, and the de-standardization of conventional routes to decentralize tourism and achieve a better and more sustainable experience for all.

The **company's values** are innovation and digitalization, sustainability, and product personalization. Their objective is to enhance the products they offer in the market. They aim to support the transition to digital versions. Innovation for them means that all technology is developed in-house, with their team and technology ecosystem. This allows them to keep our solutions updated. Personalization means that while products start from a general idea, customization is crucial to ensure each one feels unique to the user. Digitalization, sustainability, and personalization are at the core of their approach. Referring to artificial intelligence, now, they are using AI to optimize their internal processes, not the final products. However, they have enhanced they processes to achieve better outcomes.

Identify's target market consists of people between 25 and 40 years old, primarily women, who live in urban areas, like travelling and exploring the cultures of new places, and like to plan their travel activities.

23.2. Key Principles

The company's idea arises from the competitiveness in the sector and the need for companies to stand out not just by offering good service, but by providing a pleasant experience for the client, and that

experience is tied to the destination. In this sense, Identify offers different services with particular **characteristics and resources**:

- **Gamified Routes "CultureQuiz"**: CultureQuiz is an innovative and exciting way to explore every corner of your municipality through routes that can be accessed via mobile. They create challenges and games for all audiences, showcasing each city's true charm and promoting each municipality's heritage and traditions. It also helps to discover local and traditional fairs and festivals while overcoming challenges and earning rewards. CultureQuiz is a key tool to boost citizen participation in the territory and create unique experiences in the community. It does not require either apps or downloads.

Image: Example of Gamified Routes CultureQuiz. Identify webiste

- **Digital Guide for Travelers**: "Identify Trips and Routes" is a travel app that lets tourists know what to see, what to do, and where to eat. It allows them to identify all the cultural points around them through gamification. It is possible to use it to play sites to see before a trip and discover new places and cultures. The app contains a repository of worldwide information and updated activities. Users can create their routes by selecting the cultural spots they want to visit. Moreover, they can also share these routes with other platform users. The app is geolocalized so users can learn about cultural spots closer to them. The app is available for Android and iPhone.

Image: Example of the Digital Guide for travellers. Identify website

- **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation**: The digital guide allows to offer the best cultural routes and all the leisure options in the city through your web app without downloads. These digital guides are purchased by accommodation with the purpose of a can create their own digital guide adapted to their clients' needs and preferences to ensure they enjoy their trip. In this case, it is used the digital platform Identify DTX (Destination Traveller Experience), where personalized information about cultural spots, cultural activities, restaurants, transport,… surrounding the hotel can be recommended. Clients can check this digital guide through the hotel website and through emails they receive after the booking. It is remarkable that the digital guide is a web app, not an app. Identify updates the information of each digital guide, although the hotels have access to an intranet where they can add some spots if they like. Hotels periodically receive a report with KPI from Identify.
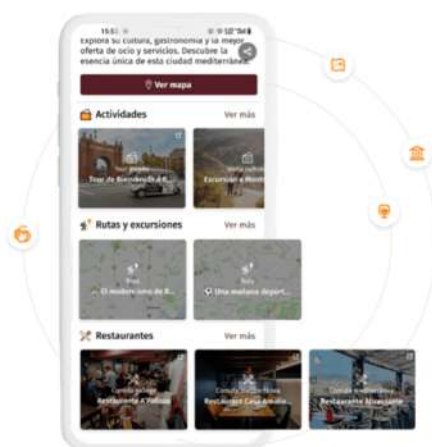

Image: Example of Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation. Identify webiste

- **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination**: The digital guide for a destination aims to ensure that every visitor enjoys the city like a local, authentically exploring the culture, gastronomy,

and history of the destination. The guide is always updated and conveys the value of every corner. This digital guide is purchased by a destination that aims to promote their culture and gastronomic heritage. This is the latest product, launched in early 2024. Thye have implemented it at the Port of Barcelona, including on the Nautic Bus. Additionally, they are collaborating with Amics de la Rambla de Barcelona association.
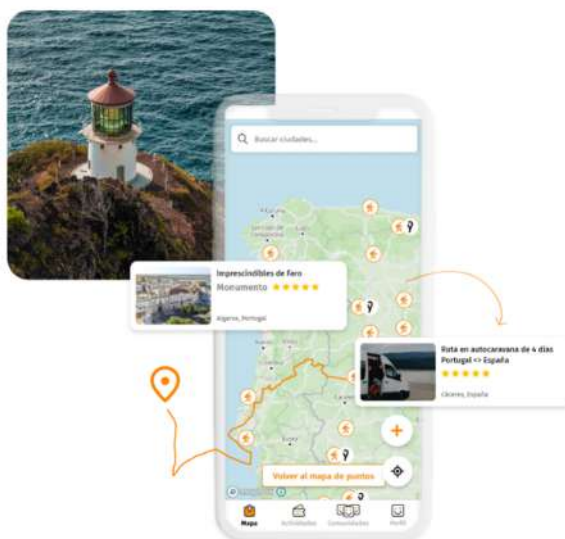

Image: Example of Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination. Identify website

The platform is available in Spanish, Catalan, and English, and for hotels, five additional languages are included: French, German, Portuguese, Russian, and Arabic, with the possibility of adding more.

To create the database of cultural spots, Identify automatically collected information (audio, text, and images) from multilingual open data sources. The Identify team then filtered and organized this information to be used in a user-friendly manner. They have a large database that is updated and expanded periodically.

Regarding **resources**, their foundation is built on technology, but human expertise is essential. They are a team of four, with two focused on the technical side. The key resources are skilled professionals who conduct studies and reviews of their technology and recommend tools for continuous improvement.

Regarding the **skills**, on the one hand, soft ones are crucial. The most important include a strong desire for continuous learning and to stay connected to industry, as the world of technology changes rapidly,

though not everything is applicable to the sector. Workers need to be proactive, open-minded, and genuinely interested in their work. On the other hand, technical skills are also important, such as technology, programming, language skills (especially English), and agility with AI tools to optimize the time spent on programming and research. On the marketing and sales side, in addition to curiosity and dynamism, understanding the hotel sector and its unique characteristics is vital. This includes the ability to dive into the specific features of urban hotels, identifying their differentiating points. This knowledge provides them with resources to craft better areas for clients.

23.3. Barriers and Challenges

Identify experienced **barriers and challenges** they needed to face while developing their different services.

Regarding the **Digital Guide for Travelers:**

- The digital guide app for travelers is free for users. Consequently, it was difficult to monetize at the beginning. The strategy of Identify was to contact organizations and companies (museums, theatres, hotels,…) that would like to offer the customers a differential value and include them as a spot in the app. The agreement was that these institutions would offer some discounts for users who came in their place through Identify. In contrast, Identify would receive a commission for the number of people that visit a spot through the app. As it is possible to geolocalize the users, it is possible to calculate the corresponding commission.
- Finding new users can be challenging but Identify is trying to disseminate the app through its website, travel blogs, and advertising.

Regarding the **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Accommodation:**

- Firstly, the beta version of the digital guide was an app, but after the validation by some hotels, it was decided to create a web app. The web app allows embedding of the digital guide in the hotel's website, whereas, with an app, it was not possible.
- Adapting each digital tourism guide to each hotel is challenging, as it is extremely important to know the client profile in detail (e.g. if they are families, pet-friendly, LGTBI community,…). It is important to work together with the hotel to define this profile and consequently adapt the digital guide to their preferences.
- In recent years, the hotel's and clients' interaction has become online during the booking process. Nevertheless, the interaction between the hotel and clients during customers' stay in the hotel tends to still be face-to-face. Identify aims to incorporate digitalization into this

communication to be able to personalize the offer of cultural routes. Some hotels have been reluctant to add this digitalization, as they prefer being focused on hotel occupancy rather than quality. However, there are some hotels that try to prioritize the quality of the service to foster loyalty, so Identify tries to sell their product to this kind of hotel.

- Nowadays, hotels can not check their KPI information in real-time, so they have to wait until Identify sends them a report. Identify is working to add this functionality in the future.

- The cultural activities and the gastronomic proposals promoted are created through the suppliers and contacts that match the criteria of Identify. Nevertheless, some cultural activities organizers or restaurant owners have contacted Identify to be included in the digital guide. In this case, Identify is trying to avoid being paid for including any kind of proposal but is trying to be selective with them to ensure the quality of the proposals.

Regarding the **Digital Tourism Guide for Your Destination:**

- Although Identify would like to work with public administration, bureaucratic procedures make it challenging. In this sense, Identify has decided to start working with the private sector to gain clients and experience, and they will try to work with the public sector in the future.

Overall, the main challenge was validation being aware of whether the product is useful. That is why they pivoted from having an end-user product to a private product, as private clients have higher economic capacity than with an end-user. It is important to not become attached to a single product.

Another challenge is to educate the sector, using a language and techniques they are familiar with. Approach them with very innovative terms and ideas, can be a challenge. Establishing minimum standards, KPIs, and specific indicators is essential to assess your progress.

Finally, financing is necessary to be aware of funding opportunities to expand the resources. It is also challenging to attract talent that shares the same passion for working in a startup at our current level.

23.4. Benefits and Outcomes

The digital routes of CultureQuiz offer numerous **advantages** as they contribute to discovering your municipality's local culture and heritage. Some of the benefits are:

- Energizing local commerce by disseminating cultural spots, historical sites, monuments, restaurants,… of different places around the world.

- Building community, as the digital guides include ratings and reviews from other users. Moreover, users can create their own routes with the spots they are interested in and share them with other users.

- Reviving traditions by disseminating local activities in a city or a village.

- Adding value to the territory through gamification. The gamified routes help the audience know cultural points in a recreational way; at the same time, they promote the beaten track place.

- Democratize cultural spots, even the lesser-known ones, which can help to redistribute the flow of tourists in overcrowded areas.

- Geolicalize the user, helping to let them know information about the cultural spots closed to them and discovering off the beaten track places.

- De-massification and de-seasonalization of tourism, as the spots are not only of tourist cities. There are spots in urban and rural areas. It is also possible to find spots next to the user's place, which also allow local people to discover their own territory.

- Digital maps without downloads for digital guides for accommodations or destinations. The digital guides can be embedded in the accommodation or destination's official website.

- The Digital Guide for Travelers requires users to download an app, but it is valid worldwide, so users do not have to download an app for each destination visited. Spots can be found around the world, in urban and rural areas, although most of the points are in Europe.

- For the accommodation guides, the main benefit is the reduction and optimization of the time that reception staff spend attending to guests. Moreover, the information is always updated.

- For destinations, gamification allows guests to interact with what they see and hear, which is not possible with paper base, and they receive more feedback on how people are enjoying it. In addition to improving engagement and customer loyalty, the information is always updated dynamically and keep information more current. If some information is not correct on paper, you must discard the brochures, but now with this digital tool changes can be applied more easily.

23.5. Performance Indicators

Some **performance indicators** of Identify are the following:

- Regarding the information included in the digital guides:
  - ο 331.745 curated cultural spots
  - ο 317.126 leisure and culture activities

- o 8.5819 routes

- o 782.393 images

- o 5.000 audioguide hours

- o Rating system assessing user's interest

- Regarding the benefits for the hotels that have included Identify in their website:

  - o Reduction of the time that reception staff spends recommending activities by up to 70%

  - o Reduction of 87.99% of paper in tourist guides in accommodation

  - o Foster guest loyalty through the personalized experience offered

  - o Increase of the hotel revenue through the sale of activities offered within the platform

  - o Increase of NPS (Net Promoter Score), related with costumer experience.

  - o Positive feedback from the receptionists

References

CETT (2024). *Oferim una manera diferent de fidelitzar als hostes i visitants, mitjançant activitats i rutes culturals creades a mida dels seus interessos.* https://www.cett.es/ca/noticia-premis-emprenedors-identify

Identify APP (2023). *Identify Travel - Pitch BTM Lloret de Mar 2023.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2DSZTece7U

Identify Travel (2024). *Tecnología para el turismo de hoy.* https://www.identifytravel.app/

Nación Innovación (2023). *Cultura e innovación #NaciónInnovación391.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inWOp4Stb60

Smart Travel News (2024). *Identify Travel: innovación digital al servicio del turismo cultural.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nk-vX5au9F4

The information was complemented with an interview with Elena Losantos, CEO of Identify Travel

24.   Conclusions

The good practices analysed in this report are examples on how companies in Spain are tackling green, digital and social needs of tourism and hospitality industry. The summary of each good practice is listed below:

- La Ballena Alegre is an outstanding example of how a campsite can **integrate sustainability** into all its operations. With a firm commitment to environmental protection, this initiative has proven to be beneficial for both the campsite and the community, offering a model that can be replicated by other companies in the sector.

- La Fageda is a non-profit cooperative whose commitment to sustainability goes back to its very origin. The project was born with the clear aim of contributing to a more **sustainable society**. They have developed this commitment over the years, both in the social area and in the economic and environmental areas. Nowadays, is a world example for its contribution to sustainability because **it complies with 88% of the SDGs** set by the UN.

- INOUT's environmental good practices have been illustrated in numerous ways, ranging from **water collection and management to renewable energy** or changing consumption patterns. With innovative technologies such as wastewater treatment systems or solar panels, INOUT has been rewarded for its efforts, both in terms of **reducing its damaging impact** on the environment and in terms of the numerous awards it has won.

- Hotelverse exemplifies how the hospitality industry can **leverage advanced technologies to enhance user engagement and improve operational outcomes**. The use of a Digital Twin in Hotelverse is an example of how hotels can offer personalized, immersive experiences with the 360º views that resonate with customers who increasingly look for convenience and tailored-made services and improves the booking process.

- Identify Travel is a company that offers a **tailor-made digital guide platform**, which can be used directly by tourists or embedded in accommodation or destination websites. It is a good example of digitalization, as it allows democratize cultural spots, redistribute the flow of tourists in overcrowded areas, offer updated and personalized information of activities in real time; decrease the paper waste and increase tourist satisfaction.

We can conclude that nowadays companies are aware of the importance of implementing good practices in different areas in response to the current needs of sustainability, customer satisfaction and digitalization. These initiatives are just a small sample of what it is currently developing in the tourism and hospitality sector in Spain.

25. References

ACN (2024). *Territori ordena retirar 89 'bungalows' y derribar cuatro piscinas del cámping Ballena Alegre de Sant Pere Pescador*. https://www.elperiodico.com/es/sociedad/20240509/territori-retirar-bungalows-derribar-cuatro-piscinas-camping-ballena-alegre-sant-pere-pescador-102150482

Càmping La Ballena Alegre (2022). *Declaració medioambiental*. https://www.ballena-alegre.com/costabrava/wp-content/uploads/Declaracio%CC%81-medi-ambiental-2020web.pdf

Càmping La Ballena Alegre Costa Brava (2021). *Responsible holidays at La Ballena Alegre Campiste*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pBlzZW-Qvek

Catalunya (2015). *Catalonia, a responsible tourism destination*. https://act.gencat.cat/wp-content/uploads/2015/02/Turisme_responsable_ENG.pdf

CETT (2022). *Toni Castellar (Ballena Alegre): "Estando de vacaciones también se puede contribuir a la preservación del planeta"*. https://www.cett.es/es/camping-sostenibilidad-ballena-alegre-alimara

CETT (2023). *I CETT Smart Tourism Summit Barcelona - Cinta Massó (Hotel Verse)*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2wRUOrRf1PM

CETT (2024). *Oferim una manera diferent de fidelitzar als hostes i visitants, mitjançant activitats i rutes culturals creades a mida dels seus interessos.* https://www.cett.es/ca/noticia-premis-emprenedors-identify

CETT (n.d.). *"La tecnología y la innovación están en el ADN de Hotelverse"* https://www.cett.es/es/noticia-entrevista-hotelverse

DayOne Premios Emprende (2023). Entrevista Hotelverse. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zdO-y_cPOgY

HotelVerse (2022). HotelVerse. https://hotelverse.tech/

Icària iniciatives socials (2024). *INOUT Hostel Centro Especial de Trabajo.* https://www.icaria.biz/

Identify APP (2023). *Identify Travel - Pitch BTM Lloret de Mar 2023.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_2DSZTece7U

Identify Travel (2024). *Tecnología para el turismo de hoy.* https://www.identifytravel.app/

INOUT Hostel (2020). *Mención honorifica.* https://www.inouthostel.com/es/menci%C3%B3-honorifica

INOUT Hostel (2024). *INOUT Hostel Barcelona*. https://www.inouthostel.com/en

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). *Ambiental Sustainability.* https://www.inouthostel.com/en/sostenibilitat-ambiental

INOUT Hostel (n.d.). *Biosphere Sustainable.* https://www.biospheresustainable.com/es/comunidad/inout-hostel/518

La Fageda Fundació (2022). *La Fageda, compromesa amb la sostenibilitat Resum d'accions 2022.* https://www.fageda.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/10/ODS_la_fageda_2022.pdf

Nación Innovación (2023). *Cultura e innovación #NaciónInnovación391.* https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=inWOp4Stb60

Red Española de Albergues Juveniles (2023). *Albergues REAJ ganadores de 16.000€ en ayudas para proyectos de sostenibilidad y accesibilidad*. https://noticias.reaj.com/albergues-reaj-ganadores-de-16-000e-en-ayudas-para-proyectos-de-sostenibilidad-y-accesibilidad/

Roiback (n.d.). *Hotelverse – Partners*. Roiback. https://en.roiback.com/partners/hotelverse

Smart Travel News (2024). *Identify Travel: innovación digital al servicio del turismo cultural*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nk-vX5au9F4

The Arbinger Institute (2019). *La Fageda | Turn the World Outward*. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CoI052QdkM8