



# Advisor Resources Package

competence area 2

**ethics & social  
responsibility in tourism**

developed by **SPEKTRUM**



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# Advisor Resource Package: **introduction**

Addressed to:

- Sustainable tourism advisors
- VET providers
- Small tourism providers

offers a set of eight blended learning resources to support tourism and local development through the promotion of sustainable and efficient use of natural, cultural and economic resources in watercourse regions.



# Ethics & Social Responsibility in Tourism: **about competence area 2**

Ethical and socially responsible tourism is the junction where tourist expectations and destination needs meet at environmental, social and economic level. This competence area describes the knowledge, skills, and attitudes the sustainable tourism advisor must acquire and develop to guide small tourism providers in watercourse regions to initiate and run more ethical and socially responsible practices in their businesses.



# Ethics & Social Responsibility in Tourism: in this competence area you will learn how to

- define ethics and socially responsible tourism highlighting its impact on small tourism businesses, local communities and economy
- provide examples of ethical and socially responsible tourism businesses and practices
- support small tourism providers assessing the social and environmental impact of their business
- explain the importance of adopting and integrating the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (UNTWO)
- guide small tourism providers on how to manage the ethical operation of their business: 1. supply chain; 2. the local community (in the tourism destination); 3. workplace; 4. customers
- advise small tourism providers to include accessibility into their policies and businesses strategies

# Competence area 2: **guidance**



In this section you can find knowledge-based contents presenting key factual and conceptual information about the topics covered by the **ethics & social responsibility in tourism** competence area

Social and cultural impacts of tourism are the ways in which tourism is influencing value systems, individual behaviour, family relationships, collective life styles, moral conduct, creative expressions, traditional ceremonies and community organisation. In fact, they are the effects on the people of host communities of their direct and indirect interactions with tourists.

## Social impact of tourism



The impact of tourism on the environment is complex. It involves many activities that can have adverse environmental effects. Many of these are linked to construction of general infrastructure and tourism facilities. The negative impacts of tourism development can slowly destroy environmental resources on which it depends. On the other hand, tourism can have positive effects on the environment by contributing to environmental protection and conservation. It is a way to raise awareness of environmental values and it can serve as a tool to support protection of natural areas while increasing their economic importance.

## Environmental impact of tourism



Ethical tourism is based on a set of standards for tourism businesses, stakeholders and tourists, aimed to prevent the negative impact of their actions on the environment, culture and the local community in host destinations. Ethical tourism adds value to tourism products, provides opportunities to disadvantaged groups, increases authentic experience while avoiding any activity that negatively impacts the environment and the local community at the host destination.

## Ethical and socially responsible tourism





## Ethical Tourism

- Includes elements of social enterprise,
- meets the needs of vulnerable groups,
- provides opportunities for disadvantaged groups
- is environmentally friendly,
- offers excellent local services and products,
- increases authentic experiences,
- involves the local population.

## Characteristics of ethical tourism



As a key frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism is a complete set of principles designed to guide the main actors in tourism development. Addressed to governments, the travel industry, communities but also tourists, it aims to help maximise the sector's benefits while minimising its potentially negative impact on the environment and societies, while respecting human rights and encouraging international understanding.

## Global Code of Ethics for Tourism



Supporting an ethical supply chain means that small tourism companies incorporate social and human rights and environmental considerations into how they do business.

An ethical supply chain focuses on the need for social responsibility, aiming to produce products and services in a way that treats workers (e.g. fair pay, sustainable work loads, ethical work conduct) and the environment (e.g. materials from sources with renewable or low impact extraction methods) ethically.

## Ethical supply chain

Ethics in the workplace is defined as the moral code that guides the behaviour of employees with respect to what is right and wrong in regard to conduct and decision making.

## Ethical workplace

Ethical customer service is concerned with truth and justice and has a variety of aspects, such as meeting and exceeding customer expectations with fairness, courtesy, respect, honesty and transparency.

## Ethical customer service

An ethical tourism business not only contributes to social, ecological and economic development but also gains recognition at the national and international levels. An ethical tourism business promotes social awareness and builds trust among their customers and the large community, which eventually results in high productivity and sales. Therefore, ethics in tourism is essential for the sustainable development of businesses.

## Ethical tourism business



An inclusive tourism business or destination works to offer positive travel experiences to people with different needs (disabled people, seniors, families, people with allergies, etc) by addressing them from various perspectives, and by providing design and service solutions that aim to cover as many different groups as possible. Accessible tourism means an “inclusive” environment where people of all abilities are made to feel welcome and wanted as customers and guests.

## Accessible or Inclusive Tourism Business



## Competence area 2: **tutorials**



In this section you can find a set of self-explanatory task-cards, specifically designed to provide real-world challenge and supply the practical information to develop your competences on **ethics & social responsibility in tourism**



# Task card 1: assessing the social and environmental impact of your business



# outline

This action card aims to support the sustainable tourism advisor in guiding the small tourism providers in assessing the social and environmental impact of their business. To achieve that, the sustainable tourism advisor will present a set of strategies and tools so that small tourism providers be able to identify a set of indicators in order to assess the social and environmental impact of their tourism products and services.

# Action 1: **Gather information**

**Step1:** Consult the Manila declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism (1997)

**Step2:** Access and watch YouTube videos about Social and Environmental Impact of Tourism

**Step3:** Consult Green Globe International Standards for Sustainable Tourism at [www.greenglobe.com/criteria-indicators](http://www.greenglobe.com/criteria-indicators)



*source: freepik.com*

## Action 2: **research and reflect**

**Step1:** Brainstorm on the social and environmental impact your own tourism products and services may have on your local community

**Step2:** Research, read about and reflect on SIA (Social Impact Assessment) of Tourism

**Step3:** Read about and reflect on LCA (Life Cycle Assessment) in Tourism



source: : [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

# Action 3: **define and assess**

**Step1:** Define the set of social and environmental impact indicators related to your own business based on your research

**Step2:** Define the scale for the assessment of the various indicators

**Step3:** Carry out the impact assessment following your set of indicators



source: : [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

By using this Action Card, you have learned about the various impacts (social and environmental) that tourism in general and tourism businesses in particular have on regions and local communities, as well as ways of measuring these. Feel free to use other tools and assessment methods more fitting to your business context and competences.

To ensure and improve sustainability of your tourism business on the long term, regular impact assessment of your tourism activities is recommended.

## summary



# Task card 2: adopting and integrating the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union

# outline

The Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET) is a comprehensive set of sustainable tourism principles, addressed to governments, the travel industry, communities and tourists. It aims to help maximise the sector's benefits while minimising its potentially negative impact on the environment, societies and cultural heritage worldwide.

This action card aims to support the sustainable tourism advisor in guiding the small tourism providers in understanding the importance of adopting and integrating GCET in their tourism business operations.





# Action 1: research

**Step1:** Access the UNWTO portal at [www.unwto.org/global-code-of-ethics-for-tourism](http://www.unwto.org/global-code-of-ethics-for-tourism)

**Step2:** Read about the 10 principles of GCET

**Step3:** Reflect on the importance of and ethical values conveyed by each principle



source: freepik.com

## Action 2: map

**Step1:** Find (via desk research or within your business network) real world (good) tourism practices/initiatives relevant for each principle

**Step2:** Analyse elements that clearly refer to GCET these tourism initiatives use in their communication

**Step3:** Think of why these cases sound attractive



source: : freepik.com

# Action 3: **understand**

**Step1:** Identify GCET principles relevant to your own tourism business

**Step2:** List the opportunities and benefits resulting from adopting these by your tourism business

**Step3:** Brainstorm on ways of implementing them in your tourism operations, and how these influence your business strategic goals



source: : [freepik.com](https://www.freepik.com)

By using this Action Card, you have learned about the importance of adopting and integrating the principles of Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, as well as the opportunities and benefits of implementing those that are most relevant to your own tourism business.

Ethics is a crucial element in guiding your strategic goals, short term as well as long term goals and objectives for your company's sustainability. Therefore its continuous integration in your tourism operations is key for your business success.

## summary

# Competence area 2: **hands-on resources**



In this section you can find scenario-based situations designed specifically to illustrate how **ethics & social responsibility in tourism** competence area can be put in practice by small tourism providers



*source: freepik.com*

# Scenario 1: ethical tourism operations

The owner of a small lakeside hotel wants to integrate ethical standards in her business as she is aware that this may significantly enhance the hotel's image, competitiveness and attract more tourists.

Following some research she decides to set a series of ethical rules and actions related to the following areas of operations of the hotel: supply chain, local community, workplace, customers.

## Scenario 1

The owner of a small lakeside hotel plans to integrate ethical standards in her business as she is aware that this may significantly boost the hotel's competitiveness and attract more tourists or increase their loyalty, but she needs to understand the why's and how's related to this change.

After leading focus group discussions with the company's staff about the hotel's activities where the main issues of ethics arise, as well as with local actors and experts of ethical and socially responsible tourism certification standards and actors of the local community, but also consulting the Global Codes of Ethics for Tourism and tourist' feedback, she manages to define a set of standards and rules that concern the ethical operation of the hotel in the following areas: 1) supply chain, 2) local community, 3) workplace and 4) customers.

## Scenario 1 – Supply chain

Her first research results show that an increasing number of tourists are demanding ethical supply chains from hotels in exchange for loyalty. So, specific actions need to be taken towards an ethical supply chain by considering the following most important actions:

- partnering with local and/or ethical supplier brands, whose core values align with the ones of the hotel
- using locally sourced food and services
- sourcing materials provided from sources with renewable or low impact extraction methods
- choosing greener transportation
- reducing and eliminating waste and packaging
- use of recycled materials
- using resources in a sustainable way (water, gas, electricity)



## Scenario 1

Based on interviews with locals (local authorities and actors of local economy, other businesses and citizens from the region where the hotel operates) the owner also concludes that the following standards must be followed/ by the hotel management:

- hire local staff
- source products and services locally
- pay relevant business taxes
- cooperate in being the ambassador of the local destination
- show appreciation for how locals collectively make the destination great by donating to non-profit organisations, supporting local entrepreneurs, joining volunteer projects, and being involved on various levels
- protect local natural resources and avoid waste production

## Scenario 1

The in-depth interviews led with staff members of the hotel team strongly confirmed her belief that the next standards are key in an ethical workplace:

- implement fair employment practices, be equitable in hiring women, youth and people from local minority groups, while restraining child labour.
- assure fair salaries and provide social protection
- provide the company's staff the tools, education, and training (including in ethics) to grow
- invest in the team and provide a positive work environment – “a happy team leads to happy guests”
- respect the 3 Principles on Forced Labour
- encourage all employees to be demanding as far as ethics are concerned

## Scenario 1

The reviews provided by the hotel's guests over the recent period served as a good basis for defining most of the key rules that must be followed by the hotel staff in terms of ethical customer care:

- treat all tourists with honesty, dignity and equality, safeguard their wellbeing
- assure security, health and safety of tourists
- value and respect customers' feedback
- be open to and know about different lifestyles, cultural values and expectations of tourists
- provide tourists with objectives and honest information on their place of destination and on the conditions of hospitality, stays, as well as contractual clauses proposed

# Scenario 1: ethical tourism operations

- What other rules related to ethical operations in the areas of supply chain, local community, workplace and customers could the hotel owner adopt?
- To what extent would promoting the hotel's ethical attitude influence tourists' choice?
- Will the rules/actions taken by the hotel increase tourists' awareness of the importance to become ethical tourists?

# Scenario 1: ethical tourism operations

## TRY to

- Lead a comprehensive research on the different aspects relevant to your business profile before developing the set of actions for implementing ethics
- Involve your staff members, local economy actors to know about various perspectives
- Communicate your business's ethics to boost its public image

## AVOID to

- Integrate ethics into your main areas of operations without any cost-benefit analysis of the consequences carried out
- Leave ethics out from your mission and vision statements. Your staff needs to understand that values and ethical standards are integral to your business
- Being too ambitious in building ethics into your operations, without having the capacities for implementing it.



*source: unsplash.com*

## Scenario 2: Accessible tourism

A medium sized lakeside mobile homes camp situated in a very famous holiday site faces a noticeable decrease in number of tourists accessing the holiday site.

After a thorough investigation of the possible reasons for this current situation, the owner of the campsite recognises that the tourism business needs to find sustainable ways to boost its image and attract new visitors.

## Scenario 2

A medium sized lakeside mobile homes camp located in a popular holiday site of a given region faces a noticeable drop in the number of tourists accessing the holiday site.

The owner along with his team carries out some research in the region where similar accommodation businesses operate but located in less attractive locations. The results are shocking: despite the mobile homes campsite is located in the most beautiful and popular natural site, it is welcoming the least number of tourists in the area. The owner recognises that his business must urgently find ways to boost its image and attract new visitors, most probably **improvements are necessary** as far as **accessibility** is concerned. The question is if this is really needed and how these changes should be planned and implemented?

## Scenario 2

The first step in the process of designing and implementing this change was gathering information on the implications of integrating accessibility into the company's strategy.

Following consultation interviews with experts with experts in accessibility, the owner finds out about the following:

- People with disabilities represent 15% of the world population
- Improving access to a tourism business will enable tapping into a large and growing market
- Investing in accessibility enhances competitiveness and strengthens customer loyalty as it generates customer satisfaction. Tourism destinations that fail to meet accessibility conditions face the risk of finding themselves out of today's market.

A decision is taken by the owner, accessibility must be integrated in the business strategy!



## Scenario 2

Expert interviews similarly led to the next logical steps to be taken by focusing on the **key questions**:

- What is the persona of people with a disability?
- Which are the common barriers preventing people from accessing your tourism business? Who benefits from improved access?
- What is happening in the local area where the business operates? Which are the low cost ways to improve the quality of the services, facilities and information?
- What to consider when assessing the company's buildings and facilities? How to provide reliable, useful and detailed information on the accessibility of the business? How to best communicate the tourism business accessibility?

## Scenario 2

In the next phase the owner researches ways to find answers to the above questions, they make contact with various **local actors in order to explore their local area, and seek collaboration**, such as:

- Local council dealing with accessibility issues (wheelchairs, hoists and electronic equipment for hire)
- Local authorities in charge of funding opportunities for developing the business infrastructure
- Other hospitality businesses, attractions, national parks (with experience in accessibility and recognising the benefits of increasing access for visitors)- in order to share information, pool resources and identify opportunities for cross promotion and cooperation
- Networks dealing with accessibility

## Scenario 2

Then the team focuses on finding **low cost ways to improve the quality of their service, facilities and information, leading to increased accessibility** and identifying the below:

- Including accessibility information in the brochures and website and keep various Visitor Information Centres up to date about the tourism business
- Providing information in different ways including print and online
- Increasing access to information about the tourism business (consider fonts, colours, size, language style, pictures, digital format used)

## Scenario 2

- Diversifying the booking methods (online via various platform, campsite website, email, phone)
- Organising staff training (visits to accessible restaurants, attractions; basic information about common barriers to access and strategies to address these)
- Equipping and decorating your facilities (entrance, halls, rooms, bathrooms, restaurant) in ways that best support and help all guests with various disabilities
- Offering flexible arrangements for checkout

In relation to **assessing the tourism business buildings and facilities** some further questions emerged that similarly need to be addressed:

- How to ensure access improvements benefit all visitors? (principles of Center for Universal Design to be followed)
- How to find out how accessible a tourism business is? (car parking, getting to your front door, reception, rooms, paths around the building, doorways, lifts, bathrooms)
- How to make sure that buildings and facilities meet legal requirements?
- What does good access look like?

## Scenario 2

When getting to the question of how to **provide reliable, useful and detailed information on the accessibility of the tourism business**, the owner and his team agreed that an 'Access Statement' describing the accessibility of different parts of the tourism business is crucial (use of photos, maps of the location, mobility maps, location of business facilities, accessibility information about the local area, is key) as it will assist tourists to make an informed decision about where to visit.

Finally, related to **promoting the accessible business, essential things to consider are:**

- Targeting the business's marketing
- Including people with a disability in advertising
- Promoting the business's accreditation
- Incorporate accessibility information into both digital and printed promotional materials

# Scenario 2: Accessible tourism

- Is integrating digital, social and sustainable skills of staff members in a tourism accessibility strategy a priority for the management, why?
- What ways of promoting accessible tourism business would lead to an increase in visitors with a disability ?
- Why a regular update of the business plan including accessibility is needed to be done by the management of the tourism business?



# Scenario 2: Accessible tourism

## TRY to

- Develop a business/action plan to integrate accessibility into the company's strategy.
- Involve staff members, people with various disabilities, families, seniors, carers, experienced travellers in the planning who can provide most practical and innovative solutions to improve accessibility of the business.
- Make sure your business accessibility is advertised clearly.



## AVOID to

- Claim your business is accessible if it is not.
- Leave out accessibility from the usual promotional channels, these should be part of the implementation of marketing strategies.
- Use jargon, long sentences and unfamiliar acronyms in your communication and promotion actions. You need to address ALL tourists.

# Competence area 2: **practical tips**



In this section you can find a checklist of points to adopt **ethics & social responsibility in tourism** practices in local turismo businesses

Make employee development part of your business strategy and make ethics training part of employee development.

## Practical tip 1

Have a framework and process for the resolution of ethical issues.

## Practical tip 2

Having a disability action plan turns problems into opportunities by building staff confidence and organisational focus to achieve an inclusive visitor experience.

## Practical tip 3

# Competence area 2: **useful reading**



In this section you can find a list of relevant online resources to help you go further on **ethics & social responsibility in tourism**

## **Accessible tourism**

[www.unwto.org/accessibility](http://www.unwto.org/accessibility)

## **Assess the social impact of tourism within communities**

<https://vuir.vu.edu.au/id/eprint/2171>

## **Environmental impacts of tourism**

[www.researchgate.net/publication/275349611](http://www.researchgate.net/publication/275349611) Environmental impacts of tourism

## **Ethical and social responsible tourism**

[www.unwto.org/ethics-culture-and-social-responsibility](http://www.unwto.org/ethics-culture-and-social-responsibility)

## **Global Code of Ethics for Tourism**

[www.unwto.org/global-code-of-ethics-for-tourism](http://www.unwto.org/global-code-of-ethics-for-tourism)



## **Manila Declaration on the Social Impact of Tourism**

[www.univeur.org/cuebc/downloads/PDF%20carte/70%20Manila.PDF](http://www.univeur.org/cuebc/downloads/PDF%20carte/70%20Manila.PDF)

## **Promoting accessible tourism**

[www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/promoting-accessible-tourism-for-all.html](http://www.un.org/development/desa/disabilities/issues/promoting-accessible-tourism-for-all.html)

## **Social impacts of tourism**

[www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02508281.1986.11014414](http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/02508281.1986.11014414)





# You have completed competence area 2, well done!



## PARTNERSHIP



**MINDSHIFT**  
Talent Advisory



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 NUMBER 2021-1-PT01-KA220-VET-000032948



Co-funded by the  
Erasmus+ Programme  
of the European Union