

Working Group Action plan

(Revised methodology after Plymouth – June 2009 – according to the objectives of the WG)

QUALITY OF LIFE OF RESIDENTS

Coordinator: *Francesc IGLESIES* – Catalunya – figlesies@gencat.cat

Context

Tourism activity in destinations presents important impacts on the Quality of Life of Residents, both positive but also negative ones, that provides opportunities and challenges. Developing a strategy of a sustainable tourism model should imply, unavoidably, including the improvement and promotion of the positive and minimizing the negative effects. Moreover, the construction of competitive and sustainable destinations means to set up what opportunities and challenges become real and how can be measured.

At the same time, it's necessary to involve more and more destination residents in the tourism model, as a transversal activity; to achieve this goal, obviously, the residents should perceive tourism as a benefit, not as a disturbing activity, as seen in some mature and crowded destinations.

Therefore the management of the Quality of Life of Residents in tourism destinations emerges as a key issue for they to become sustainable plus competitive.

Diagnostic:

- Tourism implies the coexistence in space and time of different groups of people, with different interests, such as tourists and residents.
- There are many types of impacts of tourism activity directly related with the quality of life of residents: economic, employment, social and environmental.
- Tourism implies benefits but costs as well; however, costs are more easily perceived than benefits, even more when we talk about indirect benefits through multiplier effects.
- Residents in most mature and/or crowded destinations or areas who are not directly involved in tourism activity tend every day more to reject tourism, since it is perceived to be a disturbing activity, which is destroying heritage and landscape, implies a loose of identity, among others
- There are few analysis in depth on the impacts of Tourism upon Quality of Life of Residents; but there are some good practices emerging from several destinations.

- The lack of knowledge on this area is reinforcing the feeling of Residents regarding tourism, since it becomes difficult to launch campaigns of sensitivity on real tourism effects; therefore, the gap between this feeling and the real situation of costs and benefits gets larger.

Objectives

- 1) Analyzing opportunities and challenges of tourist activity from the residents quality of life point of view. Identification and measurement of the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism on the Quality of Life of Residents.
- 2) Promoting the inclusion of Quality of Life of Residents as an objective itself in all decision making processes regarding tourism planning and development.
- 3) Developing strategies for a better comprehension and awareness of tourism activity from the Residents point of view.

Actions and timetable

□ **SHORT AND MEDIUM TERM ACTIONS ON A VOLUNTARY BASIS:**

OBJECTIVE 1: Analyzing opportunities and challenges of tourist activity from the residents' quality of life point of view: Identification and measurement of the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism:

ACTIONS:

- i. To built the State of art on knowledge base on quality of life of the residents, in a regional cooperation basis.
- ii. Development the criteria to define a survey of local population satisfaction in tourist destinations (quantitative and qualitative analysis).
- iii. Exploring European programs and funds to implement projects and initiatives in this area.

Methodology:

- *Identifying and compilation of previous approaches and practices about Tourism and Quality of Life.*
- *Identifying and compilation of existing information, indicators and surveys.*
- *Identifying of funding options to cooperate among regions in the applied research of the challenges and opportunities of residents quality of life.*

□ **MEDIUM AND LONG TERM ACTIONS :**

OBJECTIVE 1: Analyzing opportunities and challenges of tourist activity from the residents quality of life point of view: Identification and measurement of the economic, social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism:

ACTIONS:

- i. Establishing a harmonized and comparable monitoring system, based on detected effects and mostly based on carrying capacities and the impacts on local population satisfaction.

Methodology:

- *Contracting a European Survey*
- *Implement Interregional projects in this area.*
- *Analyzing Residents' perceptions on Tourism.*
- *Analyzing the eventual gap between perceptions and real effects. Methodology:*
- *Call for specific meetings addressed to decision makers (regions and partners) in order to include tourism in their agendas.*
- *Detection and use of available dissemination channels (academic meetings, conferences, local associations, etc.) to involve different stakeholders in the discussion and dissemination of results.*

OBJECTIVE 2: Promoting the inclusion of Quality of Life of Residents as an objective itself in all tourism decision making processes

ACTIONS:

- i. Disseminating results on previous analysis among decision and policy makers
- ii. Promoting dialogue between stakeholders, involving private sector and representatives of civil society.
- iii. Coordinating policies on different levels and areas concerning tourism and quality of life, specially those regarding spatial planning, heritage and use of resources

Methodology:

- Organization of Workshops and Focus Groups to share and disseminate results among more specific groups as well as promoting Social Dialogue.
- Compilation of best practices and elaboration of a Guide for public administrations

OBJECTIVE 3: Developing strategies for a better comprehension and awareness of tourism activity addressed to Residents

ACTIONS:

- i. Launching Awareness Campaigns based on tested results.
- ii. Elaborating a Conduct Code.
- iii. Developing a bidirectional information system which permits interaction and feedback between residents and decision makers.

Methodology:

- *Detection and use of all available dissemination channels to demonstrate the added value of tourism for the Quality of Life of Residents.*
- *Elaboration and dissemination of a Conduct Code for the Residents to learn more from tourism benefits and how they can become more involved in improving competitiveness and sustainability of their destination, at the same time that their quality of life arises.*
- *Compilation of best practices and elaboration of a Guide for public administrations in order to implement training programs, such as the one based on Destination Ambassadors.*
- *Developing a platform for interaction between residents and public sector, in order they can make contributions and express their feelings.*

Responsible people for the actions

Name	Organisation
Francesc Iglésies	Generalitat de Catalunya
Tomas Olsson	Region Västra Götaland