

Turisme de Barcelona creates a protocol to gauge levels of sustainability among businesses in the sector

- The aim is to foster good practices and sustainable behaviours among businesses in the sector
- The Barcelona Sustainable programme will launch a prize for the best businesses in sustainability issues

Barcelona, 29th May 2017.- Turisme de Barcelona has developed a system of indicators to gauge the levels of sustainability attained by all the businesses in the tourism sector with the aim of promoting and providing guidance about good tourism practices. This measure will have an impact on management and calls for social responsibility among businesses.

These indicators focus on **five core areas**: social sustainability, environmental sustainability, cultural and traditional heritage, accessibility and sustainability. Targets are set and practices assessed within these areas.

For instance, in the area of **social sustainability** the indicator measures the contribution the business or body makes to “eradicating poverty” or “guaranteeing a healthy life”, together with an evaluation to develop an inclusive economy by “employing people with disability or gender-equality issues”. The area of **environmental sustainability** focuses on preserving the environment and saving natural resources as well as fostering and implementing policies that will help achieve a more habitable city.

One of the most important guiding principles is the analysis of businesses in terms of water consumption, energy consumption and the implementation of renewables, waste recycling and the use of environmentally friendly products. The sustainability of the **cultural, natural and traditional heritage** is determined by a commitment to bringing the diversity and wealth of Catalonia's cultural and traditional heritage to a wider audience. The aim is to preserve the tangible and intangible cultural heritage, including traditions, practices in the natural environment and traditional crafts.

As far as **accessibility** is concerned, the aim is to avoid discrimination according to temporary or permanent disability – to avoid confusing the promotion of accessible tourism with the implementation of measures to remove architectural barriers – by including awareness-raising measures and training travel-trade members. We also consider whether accessibility has been taken into account beyond legal regulations or if the businesses have trained staff in awareness-raising. **Economic sustainability** is a cross-cutting theme, and its indicator is obtained when viewed from a perspective of social sustainability, environmental sustainability, accessibility and the defence of the tangible and intangible assets of its regional heritage, in addition to their financial viability.

Useful ideas

This indicator protocol includes a compendium of best practices with some useful ideas, including encouraging the reuse of things people throw away by using specific logistic or management tools, guaranteeing a healthy life, developing a mutually supportive and inclusive economy by increasing the length of stays through visits to other regions in Catalonia, etc.

Indeed, **the Work Plan of the Barcelona Sostenible Programme Committee (BST)** for 2016-2017 – having defined what sustainable tourism is and compiled a series of good practices – embarked on specific actions based on the first compendium of indicators. It came up with the idea of holding a call for entries whereby an external panel of judges would award a prize to the best practices in the five sustainable tourism core areas.

Strategic Plan

The initiative is part of the commitment to sustainable tourism gathered in the 2020 Tourism Strategic Plan approved by Barcelona City Council that makes provision for drawing up sustainability criteria, which the highest number of businesses, products and services in the field of tourism can adhere to, including aspects that go beyond environmental sustainability, such as, for instance, quality of employment.

The programme seeks to contribute to raising awareness among the tourism sector in sustainability issues, while giving greater visibility to the businesses, products and services working in these fields in order to spread this awareness to the community as a whole.

For further information:

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