



# Tourism in actions

20 examples of social policies & programmes around the world







## Preface

ISTO brings together many public and private organisations who are at the origin of many programmes or schemes enabling a greater number of people to go on holiday or, more generally, to gain access to tourism.

While we can classify this as part of what we call “social tourism policies”, it is also clear that these mechanisms are very important drivers for the development of domestic tourism in many countries.

This report, published on the occasion of the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development (IY 2017), aims to present 20 examples of these programmes or schemes, which have proven their worth in 17 countries around the world, benefiting large numbers of people as well as the local economy, contributing to the training of stakeholders and increasing the quality of supply.

While this list is of course not comprehensive, it nonetheless paints an eloquent picture of how, today, in 2017, the political will of certain governments or local authorities, as well as the dynamism of civil society, through social stakeholders or associations, can be used to widen access to tourism.

Have a nice trip!  
Jean Marc Mignon, President of ISTO



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# Tourism in actions

## 20 Examples of Social Policies and Programmes around the World

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# Subsidies to Social Tourism Associations



Belgium / Wallonia

**Year of foundation**

The first law relating to this action was enacted in 1951



## Organisation responsible

The General Tourism Commission (CGT in French, for Commissariat général au Tourisme) is the Walloon tourism agency. This public agency is responsible for implementing the government of Wallonia's overall tourism policy.

## Description

In Wallonia, social tourism is regulated by the Walloon Tourism Code. It is administered by the General Tourism Commission (CGT), and more specifically by the Directorate-General for tourism attractions and infrastructures. The Walloon Tourism Code defines social tourism as: leisure and travel activities organised by an association in such a way as to offer all persons, and in particular economically and culturally disadvantaged people, the best practical conditions for effective access to these activities.

## Objectives

In order to promote and develop social tourism, the CGT gives recognition to social tourism associations and provides them with financial assistance.

Subsidies may be granted to social tourism associations, or through them to affiliated non-profit organisations, if they meet the following criteria:

- have as their main objective the promotion of social tourism;
- have been in existence for at least three years;
- have a minimum of three social tourism centres in Wallonia, or have 1000 members per province in at least three Walloon provinces;
- develop a social tourism policy in their tourist accommodation facilities; and
- entrust their day-to-day management to a personnel of impeccable character.

## Target groups

**Recipients of subsidies** – The Government agency may grant subsidies to social tourism associations which meet the following conditions:

- their tourist accommodation facilities meet Government sanitary standards, general standards and specific safety standards;
- the social tourism association relies on sufficient equipment and operations to enable rational and efficient management;
- their projects are set within the Walloon general tourism policy;
- allocate, per calendar year, at least 51% of the actual occupancy of each tourist accommodation centre to their members, by reference to the number of overnight stays. the rates of the services provided to their members do not exceed, on the one hand,
- three quarters of the average price charged for a similar service in a comparable hotel establishment and, on the other hand, three quarters of the price charged to non-affiliates in their tourist accommodation facilities.

### Target groups

The main targets are underprivileged groups, young people, large families, people with disabilities, senior citizens.

Over the years, new population groups affected by the economic situation were added: the unemployed, single-parent families, long-term patients and seniors with low pensions.



## Operation

The Walloon aid scheme for social tourism is known as "building subsidy".

Subsidies may be awarded to social tourism associations for expenses relating to the following:

1. acquisitions or reassignments of land or facilities and buildings intended and allocated for the development of tourist accommodation establishments relating to social tourism; and
2. interior fitting-out, furnishings and major maintenance of the grounds, installations and buildings referred to in point (1).

The fees for the works referred to in paragraph (2) may be subsidised.

Value added tax (VAT) may be subsidised in so far as it cannot be recovered by the beneficiary association.

The subsidy rate is 60% when no beds are created and 75% when beds are created with a maximum of €12,500 per bed created. VAT, costs related to the acquisition of buildings and expenses related to accommodation specific to the reception of people with disabilities are not included in the calculation.

## Achievements

Various accommodations have been built, renovated or extended with the support of the General Tourism Commission over the years. Some of the major realisations still under way today include:

- Expansion and renovation of the Liège Youth Hostel;
- Creation of a guest house in the centre of Louvain-la-Neuve;
- Renovation of the "Vayamundo" holiday centre in Houffalize;

## Success factors

- A great and diverse accommodation offer throughout Wallonia: in town or in the countryside; for young people, families, seniors; an offer ranging from school tourism to high-level tourism, etc.
- The efforts made by social tourism associations to upgrade the standard of their accommodation.
- The participation of the various accommodation facilities in the tourism promotion of their area.

## Problems encountered

- Subsidy applications exceed available budgets;
- Lack of overall view of the sector. A new Technical Committee on Social Tourism will be set up in the coming months to revitalize the sector and its relationship with the CGT;
- Difficulties in controlling that accommodation establishments comply with social standards;
- The standard prices applied by social tourism infrastructures are often similar to those in hotels.
- A fuzzy image of social tourism circulates in public opinion, probably linked to a lack of communication. Target groups lack knowledge of the existing offer and the price solidarity mechanism.

## Impacts

Social tourism significantly contributes to the Walloon tourism economy.

This building subsidy mechanism allows to maintain a quality and resolutely modern social accommodation offer that meets fire safety standards. It also allows the development of new infrastructures.

This constant renewal offers everyone, and in particular economically and culturally disadvantaged people, the best practical conditions for effective access to leisure and travel activities organised by a social tourism association.

## Statistics

Each year, a specific budget is allocated to investment aid for social tourism operators.

**2015**

a total of  
**2,608,000 €**  
was spent  
on social tourism

**2017**

**2,562,000 €**  
it is planned to devote

## Website

<http://wallex.wallonie.be> (Law in Wallonia) – Walloon Tourism Code

<http://cgt.tourismewallonie.be> – Official website of the General Tourism Commission



# The Holiday Participation Centre



Belgium / Flanders

Year of foundation 2001



## Organisation responsible

VISITFLANDERS - Flemish government

## Description

The Holiday Participation Centre makes holidays accessible for all, they support people who are not able to go on a day trip or holiday because of financial or other problems. They believe everyone is entitled to a break and experiences that can give energy. Different problems, tailor-made solutions.

## Objectives

- Holidays for all, because everyone deserves a break;
- Offering holidays to people on a low income at a social rate, by lowering the financial barriers.
- Offering an online web platform for questions and answers to solve all kinds of participation barriers [www.vakantieschakel.be](http://www.vakantieschakel.be)

## Target groups

People and families who are unable to take a break and enjoy the beauty of Flanders.  
Everyone who wants to solve participation barriers in tourism is welcome in the network of more than 2200 partners.

## Operation

All kinds of questions will be connected to answers in the partnership network. A dedicated team is available everyday by email, phone, fax, all kinds of communication.

The financial barrier is often very high, that's why tourism partners offer a social rate to people who live below the minimum income.

For people who live in poverty, there are two ways of benefiting from the social rates:

- First, organisations that are a member of the Holiday Participation Centre can sign in on the website. They receive a username and password. Once they are signed in, they have access to the complete offer. This means they have access to the social rates. When not signed in, only the offer without the rates is visible. People who are supported by a member organisation, can apply for a holiday via this organisation.
- Second, people can also register for the offers directly with the Holiday Participation Centre. For this, they have to provide proof of income. The European 'poverty level' is used as the standard. In the case of direct requests, no consideration is taken of the multi-complexity of poverty as a whole. A copy of a tax return or an OMNIO-status can account for income proof. In addition to income proof, the Centre also needs a family record book.
- Who are the social member organizations? 1500 very diverse member organisations, all focused on an underprivileged target group: welfare centres, Welzijnsschakels (volunteer groups working to combat poverty and social exclusion), OCMWs (social services), family guidance services, neighbourhoodcentres...



## Achievements

- A partnership network engaging more than 2200 partners
- Vacation guides (annually renewed with an overview of day trips, group stays, organised group holidays and individual holidays) where tourism partners (attractions, events, hotels, chalets, youth accommodation, etc.) give discount on their rates (up to 50%, even 75%);
- More than 1500 social organisations are (free) members of the Centre. It's a unique concept;
- Received a Silver Award from the World Tourism Organisation - UNWTO;
- Received an award for social innovation of the World Leisure Organization;
- Received 'best practice status' of Eurohealthnet.eu



## Success factors

- Many social member organisations are involved which results in a wide range of choices in the offer.
- The online booking process is very much appreciated.
- In order to prevent the abuse of social rates, the centre decided to work with membership for social organisations. This way they protect the suppliers and make sure the rates end up with the people they are intended for.
- Each year, VisitFlanders brings all partners together at the Holiday Participation Forum. Tourism providers, social organisations and holidaymakers exchange thoughts and get to know each other's world.
- The Holiday Participation Centre established a news network: turning holiday stories into news so they can be an inspiration to other people. More than 350 stories are on [www.iedereenverdientvakantie.beto](http://www.iedereenverdientvakantie.beto) inspire, to connect ideas

## Problems encountered

- The discount must reach the intended target group;
- Make the offer known to a wide audience;
- Convince every tourist organisation to put their (discounted) offer in the brochure.
- Some holidaymakers have little experience with going on holiday and do not know what to expect, while others prefer not to leave the family environment for a night. Some also find planning very difficult (how to get to the destination, what to do once they are there, how to save money, what to pack?).

## Impacts

- The number of participants increase each year;
- Holidays have positive effects, also after the holiday experience itself
- Going on holiday can be a "stepping stone" to positive changes. This stepping stone effect can bring about, for example, improved family relationships, an expanded social network or increased self-confidence.
- The Holiday participation centre contributes to social tourism policy and organises training for partners

## Statistics

**14.5%**

of Flemish people live in a family that cannot afford a week's holiday away from home.

This concerns over  
**880,000**  
people.

**21%**

of the children in Flanders lives in a family which cannot afford one week of holiday

**130,000**

people living in poverty enjoy a holiday or daytrip via the holiday participation Centre

**2200**

partners want to include everyone in tourism and are engaged in the holiday participation network.

## Website

<http://www.vakantieparticipatie.be>  
<http://www.vakantieschakel.be>  
<http://www.iedereenverdientvakantie.be>



## Social Tourism Programme



Brazil

Year of foundation 1946



### Organisation responsible

SESC (Serviço Social do Comércio – Social Service of Commerce) São Paulo  
SESC SP is a Brazilian private, nonprofit entity of public interest, founded in 1946 by commerce, services and tourism industry stakeholders.

### Description

- In the State of São Paulo, SESC has a network of 40 leisure centres which combine its activity areas, realised through cultural, educational, sports, leisure and health programmes. Over the years, SESC has received over 20 million visitors and 2 million members.
- In the field of tourism, SESC is developing a Social Tourism Programme which aims to the democratisation of access to tourism through excursions, overnight trips, lectures, conferences and accommodation facilities located on the São Paulo coastline, always focusing on educational actions in order to promote ethical and responsible travel.

### Objectives

- Democratising access to travel;
- Boosting the active participation of travellers;
- Supporting and promoting ethical and sustainable tourism development;
- Raising awareness among travellers on the need to respect the environment, host communities and the quality of tourism services;
- Fostering reflection on tourism activities and social tourism.

### Target groups

Commerce, services and tourism industry workers from the State of São Paulo.





SESC sees social tourism as an inclusive, pluralistic, democratic and transforming activity.

SESC São Paulo develops social tourism through two focus areas:

- Outbound social tourism (including excursions, overnight trips, lectures, conferences and discussions on tourism), and
- Inbound social tourism (including accommodation facilities located in Bertioiga, São Paulo coastline, and local excursions).

SESC Bertioiga has the capacity to host 1,022 people simultaneously, with an average occupancy rate of 92%.

- SESC São Paulo is currently the primary social tourism institution in Brazil. The programme, which serves around 143,000 people annually, is successfully promoting a wider access to tourism, primarily among commerce, services and tourism industry workers, but also for disadvantaged people.
- Today, 29 entities offer excursions and other social tourism activities in the State of São Paulo. In addition, another entity focusing on social accommodation is located on the São Paulo coastline (SESC Bertioiga). Inaugurated in 1948, it has set a benchmark for other holiday centres aimed at workers across the country.
- SESC's Social Tourism Programme does not only contribute to the democratisation of access to tourism, it also successfully drives tourism stakeholders to embrace more ethical and sustainable practices.

The key success factors of the Social Tourism Programme include:

- The cultural and educational profile of the institution, along with its cross-functional workforce which enable the development of tourism as a valuable cultural activity;
- The credibility gained by the institution through 70 years of hard work. One of the main reasons behind participants choosing SESC in order to travel or stay overnight is their trust in quality;
- The affordable prices of activities offered by SESC, enabling the participation of many people who would otherwise be excluded;
- The extensive network of entities participating in the Social Tourism Programme, reaching people in most parts of the State of São Paulo.



## Problems encountered

- Social tourism operates through agreements with tourism industry providers, generally used to conventional tourism practices. It requires constant efforts from the institution in order to educate providers about the values that guide the development of social tourism. The same applies to participants who, when used to travelling through conventional tourism, demand services that are not always aligned with the purpose of the Programme.
- Another major challenge is the promotion of social tourism, which is often associated with senior tourism. Developing strategies in order to reach other groups such as children, families and youths has been one of the key focuses of the Programme over the past few years.
- Still with regard to target groups, SESC has improved its structure in order to attend to people with disabilities. However, these efforts are misaligned with the conditions of the visited sites, which are often inadequate and make it difficult for this group to participate.

## Impacts

- The democratisation of access to tourism can be verified both in the outbound areas (excursions, overnight trips, lectures and conferences), and in the social accommodation facilities.
- An average of 27,000 people participate annually in travels through SESC, 80% of which with salary levels between 0 and 5 minimum wages.
- In the social accommodation centre of SESC Bertioga, which hosts an average of 45,000 people annually, 80% of visitors have a salary level between 0 and 5 minimum wages.

## Statistics

**149,124**

Number of people who participated in SESC Social Tourism actions in 2016:

**Inbound social tourism (SESC Bertioga accommodation facilities):**

**1,022** beds

Day use capacity:

**300** people per day

Average occupancy rate: **92%**

In

**2016**

**70,000** people enjoyed the facilities of SESC Bertioga for a day or took part in local excursions around the centre

about **45,000** people stayed in SESC Bertioga, 80% of them with salary levels between 0 and 5 minimum wages

**Outbound social tourism (excursions, overnight stays and other activities) in 2016:**

**399** overnight trips and

**470** day excursions were realised

**27,000**

people participated in trips or excursions, 80% of them with salary levels between 0 and 5 minimum wages.

**5,400**

people attended social tourism educational activities

Website

<http://www.sescsp.org.br/turismo>



## DAFA Programme : Camp Counsellor Training Programme



Canada / Quebec

Year of foundation 2009



### Organisation responsible

#### **Camp Counsellor Training Programme (DAFA in French: Diplôme d'aptitude aux fonctions d'animateur)**

An initiative of the Conseil québécois du loisir (CQL) in partnership with the following organisations: Association des camps du Québec (ACQ), Association québécoise du loisir municipal (AQLM), Fédération québécoise des centres communautaires de loisir (FQCCL), Fédération québécoise du scoutisme, Quebec 4-H Clubs, Mouvement québécois des vacances familiales (MQVF), Unités Régionales de Loisirs et de Sport du Québec. With the active support of the Quebec Ministry of Education, Recreation and Sports, and Québec en Forme.

### Description

The DAFA programme provides training courses, tools and support to camp counsellors, instructors and managers. The purpose is to ensure the quality and safety of the leisure experience through training specifically tailored to the needs of each type of leisure and sport camps. The DAFA Programme:

- meets expected standards for quality and safety in the facilitation of group recreation;
- validates the work of the camp counsellors;
- promotes recruitment and retention; and encourages discussion between networks through recognition of the Programme across Quebec and beyond.

The basic camp counsellor training programme (DAFA camp counsellor) is intended to any person who wants to lead a group of young people aged 5-17 in a leisure context. The DAFA training programme consists of: a 33-hour theoretical part including lectures and workshops and a 35-hour camp counselling internship with a group of children. In order to complete the two parts, the 68-hour training programme is subject to an evaluation. Successful trainees get the DAFA certification. Through this programme, trainers can get the "Master Instructor" and "Training Manager" certifications, and team managers can get the "DAFA counselling team coordinator" certification. Additional training courses include "physical activities", "outdoor activities", "civic participation", etc. In addition to these training courses and certifications, camp counsellors, instructors and managers can access their secure personal workspace on the website of DAFA programme, tool kits and support to deliver the programme.

### Objectives

Seven Canadian leisure organisations share similar challenges in terms of training and management. Supported by CQL to develop a suitable solution, these organisations decided to willingly share their knowledge, expertise and training in order to create a single training programme recognised by all stakeholders. The DAFA programme better equips these organisations, and gives them access to quality training content and practical tools to train and manage camp counsellors.

## Target groups

- Any individual aged 16 and over who wants to become camp counsellor and work with young people aged 5-17 in a leisure environment (DAFA training programme).
- Any leisure organisation interested in training their camp counsellors and instructors.

## Operation

CQL is the managing organisation of DAFA programme. The organisational framework of DAFA is based on concerted action and collaboration between Canadian partner leisure organisations and their members. Its decentralised structure allows training courses to be provided all over Quebec, both in rural and urban areas, and it provides local leisure organisations the flexibility to adapt training to their needs and the specificities of their communities.

## Achievements

- Development of training: camp counselling, DAFA instructor, additional training
- Development of camp counselling, training and management tools
- Coordination of a field community
- Website with a secure transactional portal for camp counsellors, instructors and managers.
- Promotional campaign and management of social media pages
- Winner of the World Leisure International Innovation Prize 2016 (worldleisure.org). The prize recognises the best practices in training young talents who will offer a great variety of quality and safe leisure activities.
- The DAFA programme was selected among twelve innovative and inspiring initiatives by TIESS (Innovative territories in the social and solidarity economy) for their partnership experience between the social economy and municipalities. (tliess.ca)

## Success factors

- Solidarity, commitment and long-term engagement of partners.
- The financial participation of donors that recognise the autonomy of the leisure organisations.
- Financial support to the national coordination
- Creation of a transactional website
- Permanent communication with local organisations.





## Problems encountered

- Development of membership, on a voluntary basis, of local organisations with different sizes, histories, and visions of a national programme.
- Website. CQL has provided training and support for the use of the website through a web platform, operating procedures, and tutorial videos.
- Communication. Due to the high level of staff turnover, particularly in a seasonal framework, communication on the operation of the programme is challenging.
- Durability. Challenges include ensuring the continued commitment and active participation of operational and financial partners, and promoting accessibility.



## Impacts

### On children

- Providing them with quality and safe camp experiences, with qualified staff, ensuring their overall development.
- Offering a varied programme centred on entertainment, promoting initiative, independence, discovery and leisure education.
- Promoting healthy lifestyle habits.

### On camp counsellors

- Building transferable and widely recognised knowledge, soft skills and hard skills.
- Wide recognition by leisure communities all over Quebec.
- Promoting young people's civic participation in the framework of the training course.

### On parents

- The programme ensures quality and trust, and fosters family-work-safe leisure balance (especially during school holidays).

### On organisations and communities

- Ensuring the availability of quality training.
- Improving the skills and quality of camp counselling and management.
- Building multiple local and regional partnership ecosystems.
- Contributing to the dialogue between stakeholders (communities, municipalities, health and school organisations, etc.)

## Statistics

The programme is available throughout Quebec since 2009; it has reached

**30,000**  
camp counsellors

**300**  
counselling team  
coordinators

**400**  
organisations and  
municipalities

**1000**  
instructors.

Each year, the DAFA programme offers **300** training sessions.

# Senior Citizens Holiday Programme

**SERNATUR**  
Servicio Nacional de Turismo

Chile

Year of foundation 2001



## Organisation responsible

Servicio Nacional de Turismo (National Tourism Service, Sernatur)  
Public organisation

## Description

It consists of subsidizing the value of tourism packages for Chilean senior citizens in order to use tourism services in destinations prioritized by Sernatur during the low season. Strengthening the local economies of the destinations, contributing to reduce the seasonal nature of employment, developing and promoting tourism products and destinations, encouraging the development of the supply chain and allowing seniors to enjoy the psychological and physical benefits of tourism.

## Objectives

### Direct beneficiaries:

- The aim of the programme is to fight against the seasonal nature of tourism in Chile.

### Indirect beneficiaries:

- Provide seniors with easier access to the physical and psychological benefits of tourism.

## Target groups

**Direct beneficiaries:** The target groups are all companies in the national tourism sector that are affected by seasonality problems in the tourist destinations identified by the programme for each season. Target groups include tourist accommodation establishments, tourism operators, travel agencies, transport and tourist guides.

**Indirect beneficiaries:** The indirect beneficiaries of the Programme are part of the solution, rather than affected by the problem, which is the case with direct beneficiaries. They include all those who qualify according to the conditions established in the bidding bases, namely senior citizens (over 60 years old) and disabled people over 18 years old.

To be an indirect beneficiary of the Senior citizens holiday programme (VTE), one of the following requirements must be met:

- 1) Being a Chilean citizen over 60 years of age or a Chilean resident abroad, over 60 years of age.
- 2) Being a foreigner with permanent residence in Chile, aged 60 or over.
- 3) Being retired, pensioned or benefiting from a widow's pension of any provisional system, even if they are under 60 years old.
- 4) People with disabilities over 18 years of age who may travel alone or accompanied by a person who facilitates access to all activities.



The programme provides for two modalities of implementation: The National and Intraregional Programmes.

The operation of the programme is entrusted to specialised tourism operators through a public bidding process. The bidding for the national programme covers all regions, from Arica and Parinacota to Magallanes. And 15 bids are held, one for each region, for the implementation of the Intraregional modality.

The winning companies subcontract tourism companies in the municipalities prioritised by Sernatur according to their seasonality index. These companies offer products and services included in the tourism packages defined by Sernatur in the technical terms of reference of the bidding process – accommodation, transport, travel agencies, local tour operators, travel assistance insurance, tourist guides, among others – and Sernatur is responsible for supervising the correct performance of the services as established in the contracts signed by Sernatur and the awarded companies.

There are two types of packages:

**Regular packages:** They are marketed through travel agencies authorised by Sernatur to any interested party that fulfils one of the above-mentioned conditions (target groups). They are subsidised up to 78% of the total value of the tourism package, depending on the terms and season. This type of packages can give access to destinations throughout the country, considering air and land transportation.

**Social packages:** They receive a subsidy of up to 89% of the total value of the tourism package and are intended for the 80% most vulnerable seniors. These packages are distributed through the municipalities, which apply annually to participate and select the organisations or senior citizens that qualify to travel. Travel destinations are within a maximum radius of 500km from the starting point and use only land transport.

- The programme began in 2001 with 3 destinations, and currently has more than 50 destinations throughout the country. Creation of a virtuous circle to develop them, from emerging destinations to consolidated destinations.
- In order to achieve this, the programme has mobilised more than half a million seniors in the low season, going from 10,000 passengers in its first season to more than 58,000 in its seventeenth year.

- Funding
- Political support
- Citizen support
- Support of the tourism industry
- Having a comprehensive control and performance evaluation with respect to its purpose.
- Resource efficiency in addressing an economic problem (tourism seasonality) and social problems at the same time (access of priority sectors to tourism activity).

One of the main challenges is to stimulate demand in periods when variables such as school holidays and climate strongly affect the marketing of tourism packages.

Through the development of domestic tourism, it has managed to strengthen the local economies of participating destinations, boosting them in times of low demand or when it is affected by exogenous factors that affect the demand for tourism services (natural disasters).

Over the course of its implementation, the programme has used more than

**3.5 million** night beds in the different destinations

During the 16 seasons already completed, more than **550,000** seniors have travelled, with an investment of more than 75 million dollars and a return on investment of 2.19, that is,

for every **\$1.00** dollar invested by the government

the industry receives approximately **\$2.19** dollars from participants

# Social Tourism Programme for Workers and their Families



Colombia / Antioquia

Year of foundation 1957



## Organisation responsible

Caja de Compensación Familiar Comfenalco Antioquia. Non-profit entity in charge of the family welfare fund.

## Description

The Cajas de Compensación Familiar (Family Compensation Funds) distribute the payroll contributions paid by employers in the form of family subsidies. They provide subsidised services to workers and their families, and special groups including senior citizens and school-age children. The social tourism services offered by Comfenalco Antioquia include recreation parks, ecological parks, accommodation, camping services and recreational programmes throughout Antioquia department.

## Objectives

- Providing tourism services for people who, without differentiated and preferential offers, would not be able to participate in an inclusive and sustainable way.
- Redistributing payroll contributions paid by employers through services that improve the quality of life of workers, their families and special groups.

## Target groups

Comfenalco Antioquia offers social tourism services to low-income workers and their families (earning less than four times the minimum legal monthly salary in force in Colombia), senior citizens and school-age children, living in Antioquia department. In 2016, Comfenalco Antioquia recorded 797,548 members, 91% of whom are low-income people, potentially eligible to the social tourism programmes offered by the family compensation fund.

## Operation

Over its 60 years of existence, Comfenalco Antioquia has made great efforts in order to reach the remotest areas of the department and offer recreation and social tourism programmes. Its infrastructure of parks and hotels is distributed all over the department. It includes a great water park with a capacity of 5,000 users, a recreational park in the Urabá area, which had been affected by years of law and order issues. Comfenalco is present in the northern part of the department, one of the greatest mining areas in Colombia, with a recreational centre where miners and their families can enjoy a nice day outside. In Southwestern Antioquia, a rural area traditionally part of the coffee region, Comfenalco manages an ecopark and a social campsite. In Arví forest reserve, on the outskirts of Medellín, capital city of the department, Comfenalco has an ecological park and a hotel. Comfenalco Antioquia covers all the areas of the department, enabling 800,000 households to participate in leisure and social tourism activities.





## Achievements

The purpose of the Caja de compensación familiar Comfenalco Antioquia is to be recognised as the reference family compensation fund across all areas of Antioquia in today's post-conflict process. Recognised for its experience, competitiveness and commitment, Comfenalco Antioquia jointly manages the social programmes of Antioquia department through agreements with public and private institutions. It has a strong presence in 85 of the 125 municipalities of the department, with comprehensive service centres, 3 hotels, 6 recreational parks, and 2 sports and recreation clubs. Comfenalco serves 3 million users among its members and the general public, through its social tourism and leisure services.

## Success factors

Throughout its 60 years of existence, the Caja de compensación familiar Comfenalco Antioquia has strongly contributed to improve the quality of life of affiliated workers, their families, and the community at large. From a compensation fund aiming at easing the burden on households, it has become a provider of social services, including recreation and social tourism, and a partner of the local government in the provision of social services to vulnerable population groups.

## Problems encountered

- The use of social tourism services provided by Comfenalco Antioquia is hampered by target groups facing difficulties in reaching our facilities or points of service due to mobility problems or lack of appropriate access ways.
- With some of the people eligible to the social tourism programmes being located in the remotest areas of the department, which cannot be reached by the media, the dissemination and use of social tourism services is particularly difficult.

## Impacts

The social tourism services offered by Comfenalco Antioquia have had a positive impact on vulnerable groups. For instance, children from areas where they do not have an easy access to leisure activities, have benefited from the presence of Comfenalco Antioquia in 85 municipalities across the department. Activities have been developed over the past 3 years, and 35,557 children have benefited from them.

Over the past 8 years, the Caja de Compensación Comfenalco Antioquia has allowed 22 million people to gain access to social tourism programmes offered by the family compensation fund. In Antioquia, Social Tourism truly means Tourism for All.

In **2016** the number of members of the Caja de Compensación Familiar Comfenalco reached **797,548** people, of which being people earning less than four times the minimum legal salary. **726,755**

## Statistics

During that year, the recreational centres served **613,395** people, **187,890** of whom benefited from social tourism programmes at preferential rates, allowing them to participate.

Among all users served in 2016, **31%** benefited from social tourism packages at a **70%** discount compared with market value.

Last but not least, in 2016, the Jornada Escolar Complementaria (Complementary school day) reached **10,957** children through different forms across the Antioquia department, and gave **475** children from **48** municipalities the opportunity to participate in an annual camp with recreational activities, board and lodging, and visits to tourist sites in the city of Medellín.

# The Holiday Voucher



France

Year of foundation 1982



## Organisation responsible

The Agence Nationale pour les Chèques-Vacances (ANCV, the French national agency for holiday vouchers). A public institution of an industrial and commercial nature placed under the supervision of the Ministry of Economy and Finance and the Secretary of State for Tourism.

## Description

The holiday voucher is one of the main holiday support mechanisms established by the French Government. It is a nominative payment document that allows its beneficiaries to build up a budget dedicated to holidays thanks to a financial contribution from the organisation that allocates them. This contribution is subject to partial tax exemption. Holiday vouchers are awarded on the basis of social criteria by private employers, works councils and social bodies to their beneficiaries: employees, civil servants, beneficiaries of social bodies...

To do so, organisations must first conclude an agreement with the national agency for Chèques-vacances holiday vouchers (ANCV), which is the only agency authorised to issue and redeem these payment vouchers.

## Objectives

The primary objective of the holiday voucher is to make holidays accessible to as many people as possible. It is aimed in particular at people with modest incomes so that each of them can set up a budget at their own pace to finance their holidays. It is also seen as a tool for motivation and retention by the employer.

## Target groups

The potential beneficiaries of holiday vouchers are employees of any companies, selected according to social criteria:

- All employees of the private sector, provided that their employer has an agreement with ANCV, according to the social criteria defined by their employer or works council.
  - Self-employed workers.
  - Civil servants from the three public-service levels (national, local government, hospitals).
  - Retired persons whose mutual or social organisation to which they are affiliated offers holiday vouchers.
  - Parents or dependent children of the holder of the holiday voucher can also use it.
- Beneficiaries can come from all age groups, all income groups and family situations (in couples, singles, with children, etc.).

## Operation

The allocation of the holiday voucher as part of a monthly savings account is preferred. In this context, anyone wishing to benefit from the holiday voucher pays part of their salary into a monthly savings account, which is supplemented on the basis of social criteria. At the end of an agreed savings period, the employee recovers the money accumulated in the form of holiday vouchers. In most cases, savings are released in June, before the summer season.

Holiday vouchers can also be awarded in participation – payment by the beneficiary of his or her savings in one time – or as a donation.

The holiday vouchers are accepted by 190,000 tourism professionals to pay for accommodation, catering, transport or leisure activities; they are valid for two years.

The Agency's management fees are covered by a 2% commission, 1% payable by the organisations allocating them (commission on order) and 1% by the professionals accepting them (commission on redemption).

The management surpluses generated by the issue and redemption of holiday vouchers are reinvested in social action programmes supporting the departure of holidaymakers.





- 36,700 organisations allocate holiday vouchers to 4.28 million beneficiaries. With their families, 10 million people, or 1 out of every 6 French people, benefit from this scheme.
- A wide and dense network of acceptance of holiday vouchers. It is accepted by more than 190,000 tourism and leisure professionals, representing 208,000 touch points throughout France.
- The creation in 2015 of an e-holiday-voucher. This new and easy to use instrument allows payment on the internet without any manual processing. It is already accepted by many online professionals, such as travel agency networks.
- The "Coupon Sport", on the model of the holiday voucher, promotes greater access to sports activities.
- Through the surplus earnings generated by the management of the holiday voucher, various personal assistance programmes have been set up such as Seniors en vacances (seniors on holidays), Départ 18:25 (holidays 18:25), holiday project assistance and the holiday solidarity grant. Aid is also granted to tourism facilities engaged in providing access to holidays for all (social tourism), to support their engineering needs or to finance their renovation works.
- Personal assistance programmes also support population groups targeted by national social policies. These programmes contribute in particular to the inclusion of people with disabilities, the prevention of loss of autonomy and the maintenance of social relationships of seniors, the integration of vulnerable groups from less-favoured areas, and the socio-professional integration of people experiencing exclusion.

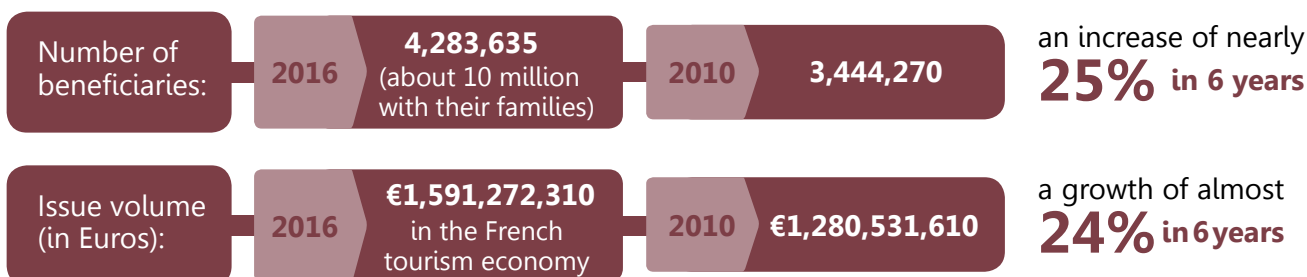
- A scheme supported by the French Government, which contributes to its attractiveness through the exemptions granted to organisations during its implementation.
- Wide coverage. Since 2009, access to holiday vouchers for employees of small businesses has been simplified and encouraged to help reduce inequalities between large and small businesses. Since 2015, self-employed workers and employees of private individual employers can also benefit from it.
- The implementation of a business strategy tailored to each type of customer.
- Since 2009, the promotion of holiday vouchers has also relied on a network of business providers and purchasing advisors who promote them to their customers. The Agency collaborates with some 15 national and regional partners.
- The holiday voucher, which is highly consensual, contributes to fostering social dialogue within the company, facilitating relations and social ties. It plays an important role for both employees and employers.
- The continuous improvement of this process and the modernisation of its instruments, with the e-holiday-vouchers and sport coupons.
- The network of professionals is growing with expectations and tourist uses with more than 208,000 points of acceptance. The Agency takes into account the preferences of users to develop its network.
- A very diversified network: players in the accommodation, catering, travel, transportation, leisure, arts and culture industries.
- The Agency's solidarity-based circular economy model, which generates a strong commitment from its environment to the scheme.



- The evolution of tourism practices, particularly the role played by internet, is leading to a change in the use of "paper" holiday vouchers and requires the development of an offer adapted to new uses.
- The reorganisation of the labour market, companies and the new role of the government, lead to new prospecting and retention methods.

- The holiday voucher contributes to economic development, through its impact on the tourism economy and land use planning.
- The holiday voucher is a factor of integration and social cohesion, through its contribution to travel and by helping to maintain seasonal employment.
- Its economic benefits are significant: increase in purchasing power dedicated to the beneficiaries' holidays, mainly for the benefit of the national tourism economy.
- In recent years, the number of beneficiaries and issue volume have been steadily increasing, especially among employees of small businesses.
- Its surpluses allow the development of significant social action programmes.

#### Figures of the holiday vouchers in 2016:



**190,000** service providers and tourism and leisure professionals accept holiday vouchers at 208,000 touch points.

**251,200** people went on holidays in 2016 thanks to the holiday voucher as part of social assistance programmes for the most vulnerable groups (seniors, young people, people with disabilities, etc.).

While the value of the issue volume of holiday vouchers represents only about 1% of domestic tourism consumption, a recent survey showed that for every Euro spent via a holiday voucher, another two to three Euros would also be spent. The holiday voucher can therefore be considered to have a leverage effect on nearly 4% of the domestic tourism consumption of French visitors, estimated for 2015 at €106.8 billion.



# Corporate Social Responsibility Approach



France

Year of foundation 2014



## Organisation responsible

VVF Villages Non-profit association governed by the Act of 1901

## Description

**In 2014, as part of the organisation's strategy, the governing bodies decided to create a voluntary CSR approach at VVF Villages**, based on the international standard ISO 26000. Since its inception, VVF Villages has belonged to the Social and Solidarity Economy and, at the societal level, already fulfils collective missions of general interest.

Its first mission is to **make holidays accessible to as many people as possible**. VVF Villages is committed to the right to holidays in accordance with article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): "Everyone has the right to rest and leisure...", in line with the fundamental right to paid leave earned in France in 1936. This mission is directly aligned with the "Human Rights" issues set out in ISO 26000.

### How does this translate at VVF Villages?

VVF Villages has implemented a pricing policy based on the French "family quotient" tax-splitting system with 5 to 20% discounts during school holidays: every year 1 million Euro of turnover is spent on holiday departure assistance. On average, 50% of VVF Villages guests receive an annual departure assistance (Family Allowance Funds – CAF, national agency for holiday vouchers – ANCV, works councils) every year.

Its second mission is to **contribute to the planning and economic development of local areas**, in direct connection with the "Community involvement and development" issues set out in ISO 26000. The economic model of VVF Villages is based on the solidarity of the territories: villages located in popular tourist areas enable villages in rural and medium mountain areas to benefit from economic spinoffs on their territory.

### How does this translate at VVF Villages?

VVF Villages calls on more than 220 local suppliers for its food purchases. VVF Villages also helps create and maintain local jobs.

**Based on a sound background, the company initiated in 2014 a voluntary CSR approach, following a rigorous methodology, in line with ISO 26000.**

### How?

- **By raising awareness of CSR**, with the help of a consulting firm, among board members and a panel of employees representing the various functions.
- By carrying out an **audit** with interviews at headquarters (including the President), review of questionnaires completed by 69.5% of the villages, 230 customers and 70 employees (societal report).
- By creating a **priority matrix** based on ISO 26000 subjects, in relation to VVF Villages activities. This matrix highlights 18 issues that should be taken into account in the future approach.
- By assessing the **level of dialogue with the various stakeholders** through mapping.
- Finally, by **benchmarking the CSR** of other (social or commercial) tourism organisations.

Combining all the data from these different steps reveals a CSR strategy specific to the VVF Villages association. This strategy has been approved by governance (President and Executive Board) because it is critical to stress the engagement of these stakeholders to achieve the desired objectives.

This CSR strategy has four main objectives:

**1. Strengthening our social and solidarity missions:**

- Holiday accessibility – facilitating access to holidaymakers in a vulnerable economic situation and people with disabilities.
- Economic development of local areas: pooling human and material resources between VVF Villages and local authorities, often owners of holiday villages.

**2. Making the employees more involved in the association:**

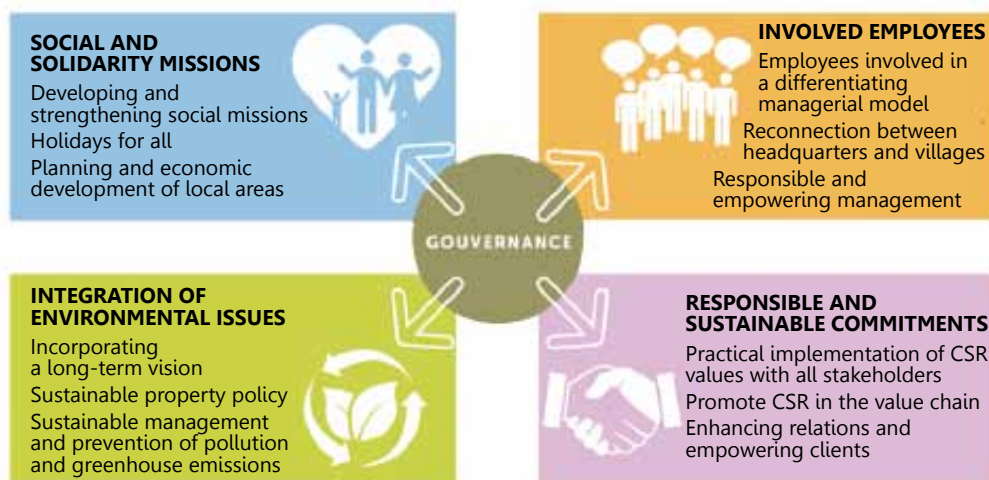
- Moving management towards more participative, collaborative practices by developing responsibility and autonomy.
- Drawing the headquarters closer to the villages, making the head office “a village like any other” through activities.

**3. Reinforcing responsible and sustainable commitments to all stakeholders:**

- Promote CSR in the association's value chain through concrete actions.
- Strengthen customer relations through the creation of a customer journey and the in-house development of a CNIL (French data protection authority) correspondent.

**4. Integrating long-term environmental issues into projects:**

- Incorporating a long-term vision into property renovations.
- Evolving towards sustainable resource management and fight against greenhouse emissions through the operation of sites and procurement.



The aim of this strategy is to involve VVF Villages in a continuous improvement approach (exceeding legal obligations) but also to differentiate as a responsible company in a highly competitive environment.

VVF Villages' main stakeholders: employees, owners, holidaymakers, suppliers, partners, investors, etc.

This CSR approach operates as follows:

- A CSR manager reporting directly to senior management
- Implementation carried out by project groups (consisting of volunteer employees) and functions (working groups combining village and headquarters employees)
- Development through a training plan to create a CSR mindset among employees, according to their field of activity
- Reporting on the progress of subjects to the Management Committee, Executive Committee and Board of Directors (especially in the context of a commission)





## Achievements

Since the end of 2015:

- Toolkit to help villages host people in a vulnerable economic situation
- Creation of "eco-citizen" activity booklets given to children in villages to learn green practices and promote good community life.
- Activities at headquarters based on the employees' hidden talents, in conjunction with local stakeholders and leisure facilities, also shared with the 55,000 holidaymakers and people following VVF Villages on social media.
- Training courses: responsible sourcing (procurement), pesticide-free greenspace maintenance (maintenance workers), catering with waste prevention and recycling of leftovers (chef cooks), responsible buildings (building team)
- Creation of an internal support unit for voluntary employees in difficulty at work (agreement signed with the French Health and Safety Committee – CHSCT)
- By 1 January 2018: 100% of villages powered by 100% green energy
- Incentive to hire hybrid cars for personal use by employees, with highly attractive access conditions, similar to VVF Villages' fleet of corporate vehicles.
- Reception of 100 migrants (from the Calais Jungle) in 3 holiday villages during winter 2015/2016
- Integration of VVF Villages into the Boards of Directors of the French sustainable development committee – Comité 21 – and of the network of sustainable tourism players – Acteurs du tourisme durable (ATD).
- Organisation of the SSE week for employees: exhibition and interventions on the local currency "bank", workers' production cooperative bookshop, etc.
- Removal of all picnic packaging for groups of hiking and cycling clients
- And many other ongoing projects (eg. in 2018, the first comprehensive CSR report will be published)

## Success factors

- Support from senior management
- Function-specific training
- Bringing meaning to actions
- Joining inspiring networks with shared practices
- Proving to decision-makers, including internally, that CSR is a financial opportunity, a differentiating brand awareness lever
- Annual validation of the CSR approach by an external social affairs auditor (just like a financial auditor)

## Problems encountered

- There can be discrepancies between will and action.
- Difficulty to mobilise in a cross-functional manner
- It is sometimes difficult to guide internal behaviour towards changes that will have an impact in the long term and not in the short term, such as budgetary and economic objectives may require.
- Lack of visibility of the CSR approach on communication media

## Impacts

Positive reputation: 3 CSR awards won in one year.  
Obligation to make internal progress whenever a public process is initiated.  
Positive relationships with social organisations/partners: works councils, etc.  
Promoting the organisation's differentiating identity (societal diversity, civic education, etc.) with holidaymakers in search of meaning and values.

## Statistics

For each action, the budget ranges **from €0 (headquarters)**  
**to €10,000**  
(staff training or creation  
of children's activity booklets).

# Operation Teenage Backpack



France

Year of foundation 2002



## Organisation responsible

Vacances Ouvertes. Registered association.

## Description

Sac Ados (literally meaning teenage backpack) is a mechanism that targets local authorities, communities, family allowance funds, associations, social organisations and all youth organisations that wish to launch and develop a local self-supporting holiday departure aid scheme for young people. This system is tailored to the variety of local contexts and needs. In short, it is a way of helping young people to go on holiday.

## Objectives

- Sac Ados encourages young people between 16 and 25 years of age to live a first experience of autonomous holidays, in France or in Europe, through methodological and financial support.
- Promote autonomy during holidays and leisure time.
- Strengthen and engage a network of qualified partners on the right to holidays.

## Target groups

The Sac Ados programme is aimed at enabling young people –aged 16-25– to travel, while they are generally excluded from holidays.

## Operation

The organisation that uses this mechanism will finance the holiday project and define the operating rules (specifications, training, provision of grants, etc.). Then, the field organisations (youth service, youth information centres – BIJ, youth cultural centres – MJC, youth information network – RIJ...) inform and support young people in their projects, whether through methodological assistance or grants. These young people then develop a project that they will present to the organisation, and will eventually experience their first holidays independently.





## Achievements

- Calls for projects for holiday support mechanisms for adults, families and young people, for methodological and financial support, through the partnership with ANCV.

Partners who use this mechanism benefit from:

- Advice and assistance in adapting the mechanism to field realities
- Methodological tools to help design and set up projects for professionals.
- Communication media for promoting the mechanism.
- Training on holiday project methodology
- Quantitative and qualitative assessments of the campaign

For young people:

- Holiday grants worth approximately €130.
- A guide for project preparation.
- A mobile site accessible by QR code.
- A project description file.
- A modular pack that can contain: A travel bag, €130 in holiday/service vouchers or credit card, a health kit: first aid kit, road safety, condom...
- A prepaid credit card. It allows young people to pay for their purchases on-line, by phone or at the shop. This card is accepted everywhere and makes it easier for young people to travel abroad, where they were unable to use holiday vouchers or other services.

## Success factors

- Creation of a partner ecosystem with local players in order to ensure, for example, the implementation of a youth policy, a joint effort in the support of young people, etc.
- There are multiple types of partners: regions (Aquitaine, PACA, etc.), departments (Pas-de-Calais, Seine-et-Marne,...), Family Allowance Funds (Alpes-Maritimes, Ariège, Haute-Garonne, Gers, Lot, Garonne,...), communities of municipalities (Andelle, Perche,...) and municipalities (Angers, Epernay, Mérignac, Nantes, Noisy-le-Grand, Rouen, etc.).
- Financial support from VACAF to the Caisses d'Allocations Familiales (Family Allowance Funds) members of this scheme. Referring members of the Sac Ados initiative benefited from several training sessions and qualifications.

## Problems encountered

- Challenging social and economic situation.
- Decrease in allocations to local authorities.

## Impacts

- Allowing young people to travel and discover mobility;
- Cultural gains for these young people;
- Development of self-esteem and social skills;
- Recognition by local institutions for the implementation of the mechanism;
- Sense of belonging to a European community
- In 2017, increasing demand for Europe packs (+ 600).

## Statistics

**450**

organisations in 33 departments implement the Sac Ados programme and thus support nearly 3,000 young people in developing their holiday projects.

Since this mechanism was created in 2002,

**nearly 25,000**

young people have already been able to experience autonomy by going on holidays by themselves and organising their own stays step by step.

**3,182**

packs sold to

**32**

sponsors.

Website

<http://www.vacances-ouvertes.asso.fr/jeunes/sad>

# QMJ : Quality System for Youth Accommodation



Germany

Year of foundation 2004



## Organisation responsible

BundesForum Kinder – und Jugendreisen e.V.  
(Federal Forum for Child and Youth Travel)

## Description

Since January 2007 there exist common quality criteria for youth accommodation in Germany. The QMJ classification system is a trusted registered trademark. In 2004, QMJ was developed by the Federal state of Mecklenburg Western-Pomerania in cooperation with youth organisations, the Mecklenburg Western-Pomeranian Youth Hostel Association and other NGOs.

That was the first time that quality standards in the sector of youth accommodation had been introduced. One aim was to give the guests (mainly people under 26) guidance in choosing their accommodation.

The participation in the certification process is voluntary.  
Certified establishments are identifiable by a QMJ pictogram.

The BundesForum Kinder- und Jugendreisen e.V. (The German Forum for Child and Youth Travel) expands the quality management system for all of Germany.  
This unique system makes it possible to fill in the gaps in the certification that exists for different kinds of accommodations at national level.

## Objectives

Strengthen the quality and security in youth travel and accommodation.

## Target groups

All accommodation and operator types (hotels, apartments, farms, camps, ...) for children and young people.





## Operation

To participate and obtain the quality label, accommodation establishments need to register on the website and fill in a form where they indicate their interest in the QMJ. Once a cooperation agreement has been signed with the organisation, they will be added to the system. In addition, the accommodation establishments and their staff need to attend practical training courses on the quality label. At the end of these courses, participants receive a certificate. After a thorough preparation, ideally twelve weeks after the training, an auditor visits the accommodation establishment and performs an inspection. BundesForum will then receive a recommendation of the accommodation, based on the results of the auditor. From that moment, the accommodation is listed in the database.

## Achievements

- Training opportunities for accommodation staff: the BundesForum regularly organises training sessions with partners in accommodation establishments that received the certificate. They also offer individual training.
- QMJ consists of two successive stages, the certification can be followed by the star classification. This ensures that comfort (classification) also means safety (certification). The next higher level can only be reached if all conditions of the previous level are fulfilled. The certification conditions must always be fulfilled in full. The certificate and stars classification are valid for 3 years, after which a new audit is required.
- To include the ever-changing experiences and needs of young people, a project committee meets at least once a year. The task of this committee is to review and adapt the criteria when needed.
- Diversification of the types of accommodations for young people.
- All certified accommodations have a QMJ logo at the entrance of their establishment.
- Quality control is a competitive edge over the competition.

## Success factors

- It is the only independent accommodation qualification system for youth accommodations.
- The certification and classification are seen as a brand image, a quality label.
- The BundesForum has trained and authorized auditors throughout Germany to advise and visit the youth accommodations. They meet regularly and make recommendations to the Board.
- Recognition of quality control.
- Joint marketing resulting in better public perception.

## Problems encountered

The challenge is to make the customer aware of the special and unique features of a child and youth accommodation. The basis of the QMJ system is the special quality guaranteed by safety, child protection, educational features and programmes.

## Impacts

- Customer safety
- Advertising, promotion through press releases, trade fairs, ...
- Assistance provided by the federal office
- Clients are increasingly satisfied
- Registration in the QMJ directory
- Website for certified accommodations: [www.gruppenhausfinder.de](http://www.gruppenhausfinder.de)

## Statistics

More than **600** employees have already participated in the training sessions

There are more than **4000** housing units for youth between the Baltic Sea and the Alps

Website

<http://www.bundesforum.de/qualitaet/qmj-unterkunft>

## Programme Erzsébet



**ERZSÉBET**  
PROGRAM

Hungary

Year of foundation 2012



### Organisation responsible

The Hungarian National Foundation for Recreation (HNFR).  
Non-profit organisation

### Description

The Erzsébet Program is the largest national social tourism programme, involving each year over 1% of the country's population in domestic tourism through social tourism grants. It provides recreational options for seniors, large families, disabled people and children.

### Objectives

Main objectives:

- To place social policy on new footings, with stronger focus on people in need
- To provide non-state-sponsored social services to alleviate the government budget
- To create a more effective, direct and monitorable social recreational system

The Erzsébet Program allows children, disabled people, seniors and large families from all regions of the country and also across the borders, to spend active leisure-time together. The Erzsébet Program provides opportunities for recreational holidays during the whole year.

The programme also has a social investment dimension:

- Contributing to the well-being of the society, helping individuals in need of special care
- Improving the skills of children, the human resources of the future.

### Target groups

The programme, in the spirit of supporting social cohesion and anti-discrimination, and promoting personal and social rights (right to have a break, equal opportunities, etc.), provides the possibility of recreation to such groups of society:

- who could otherwise not afford to go on holiday due to financial reasons,
- who face other difficulties and need special attention, as disabled people,
- who deserve particular attention, as children and large families.

### Operation

Since 2012, when the Erzsébet Program was launched, the system was mostly financed by the issuance and distribution of the Erzsébet Voucher, which was a part of the fringe benefit system.

It is important to emphasize that initially the Erzsébet Program operated under an alternative funding model, mostly without the involvement of the government budget. From 2016 the Hungarian State Government has also supported the social tourism, with special respect to the children's Erzsébet Camps organised by the Erzsébet Foundation for the Children of the Carpathian Basin.

Erzsébet Camp is a unique initiative in Europe that brings the summer holiday fun to thousands of children and young people in Hungary. Within the framework of Erzsébet Camp, the beneficiaries – aged between 8 and 18 – have the opportunity to spend a whole week of the summer at Lake Balaton or other popular camp sites in Hungary, at extremely low prices depending on the type of the camp programme and the income of the family.



- Erzsébet Program is in line with the objectives of the new European strategy, Europe 2020, especially with its flagship initiative, the European platform against poverty and social exclusion.
- Since the launch of the Erzsébet Program in 2012 more than 1 million people have been supported through recreational grants.

## Success factors

- The Erzsébet Program has become the largest social tourism system of the last two decades in Hungary.
- In the course of the implementation of the Erzsébet Program, HNFR works in close cooperation with civil society organisations representing the supported target groups, such as National Association of Large Families, National Federation of Mobility Impaired Persons Associations, Hungarian Federation of the Blind and Partially Sighted, Hungarian Association of the Deaf and Hearing Impaired.
- It is "normative" in the sense that all who apply and fulfil the eligibility criteria, receive support, until the allocated funds are exhausted.
- It is "direct" for the support directly goes to the individual and can be used only for going on a holiday.
- It is "monitorable" for it is available only in certain accommodation establishments that are connected to a closed IT system with an overall process follow-up.
- The amount paid by the beneficiaries for the recreational holiday is one of the lowest in Europe: it is between 10% and 25% of the market price.
- The Hungarian National Foundation for Recreation (HNFR), as an Affiliate Member of UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has signed up to follow the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism.
- The number of Erzsébet Program participants rises from year to year.
- The Hungarian Government was honoured by receiving the annual award of the European Large Families Confederation (ELFAC) for creating and implementing the Erzsébet Program (2015).

## Problems encountered

There are more people in need of social recreational opportunity than the capacity of the programme.

## Impacts

- The Erzsébet Program, focusing on the principles of social protection and social inclusion, has been contributing to the improvement of the quality of life of those who are in need, suffering from poverty and/or social exclusion.
- Improved moral and physical health.
- It provides a great opportunity for parents to ensure that their children are a part of an excellent programme at a very low price; and last but not least, that they find joy and new experiences together.

## Statistics

Since the launch of the Erzsébet Program in 2012 **more than 1 million people** have been supported through recreation grants and camping opportunities

Each year, the programme reaches more than **1% of the Hungarian** population through social tourism subsidies

In 2017 around **250,000** people received holiday support by Erzsébet Program

# Quality Brand for Hospitality for All



Village for all 2017

Italy

Year of foundation 2001



## Organisation responsible

Village for All

## Description

- Village for all –V4A® offers more than 20 years of experience in Accessible Hospitality and it guarantees the V4A® International Quality Brand Hospitality for All. With its trademark, it certifies tourism facilities offering accessible hospitality to everyone. It guarantees reliable information, by personally checking each accommodation before membership.
- It ensures customized information, dimensions and spaces, without delivering "accessibility licenses", but giving people the opportunity to choose the best solution for meeting every specific need.
- The company and the certified tourism facilities operate in full accordance with the "UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities", specially referred to the Art. 30, which recognize the right of every person to a cultural life and to enjoy the access to places for cultural performances or services.
- The V4A® Brand is currently present in Italy and Croatia.

## Objectives

Its mission: to guarantee a holiday for everyone!

## Target groups

All people and especially people with permanent or temporary motor disabilities, sensorial limitations (blind and/or deaf), food allergies and intolerances, as well as elderly people, diabetics, people on dialysis, obese people and families with young children.





- V4A® creates partnerships with tourism facilities and businesses, and helps them to acquire skills to be able to offer an accessible hospitality to all in a process of continuous improvement.  
The "Improvementplan" is the instrument on which they focus, together with the tourism companies, on the most significant interventions that may be conducted to provide innovative services and enhance the quality of tourism.
  - Training courses: one of the main goals of V4A®'s work is planning an accessible hospitality to make every tourist a key player of its own holiday. Due to this, V4A® considers training as the most important tool to hand over its philosophy and know-how to those who take care of the well-being and satisfaction of all the guests.
  - V4A® worked for hotels, resorts and camps, hospitality and training institutions, industry magazines, associations, private beaches, airports, universities.
  - 80 tourism facilities in Italy and Croatia have obtained the V4A® Brand
  - Data was collected through 'V4AInside' on the accessibility of tourism facilities, within different projects such as:
- **City of Agrigento - "Integrated Accessibility" for all of the Tourist District "Valley of the Temples"**
  - **Puglia promozione - Puglia for all** is a project that aims to obtain the tourist and cultural accessibility qualification in Puglia.
  - **Veneto Region, Tourism Excellence Project** - social and accessible tourism development, for the construction of a regional tourism system able to meet every need thanks to the data collection of tourism facilities through V4AInside.
  - **Republic of San Marino and San Marino Consortium 2000 - 'San Marino For All' Project:**  
Goal: to open the San Marino Republic to the Accessible Tourism Market. For this specific reason, San Marino was chosen as the destination for the 1st UNWTO European Conference on Accessible Tourism held on 19 November 2014. V4A® provided the project consulting and V4AInside software for monitoring the tourism facilities and attractions.
  - **ExpoFacile**
  - **APT Services srl Emilia Romagna Region, "Emilia Romagna for all" project ASCOM of Padova and Ferrara**
  - **Cesare Serono Foundation- "A ruota libera"** (freewheel) project for the publication of tourist guides dedicated to people with physical disabilities of the most beautiful Italian cities of art
  - **ISNART (National Institute Tourist Research)** - for the project Hospitality Brand Accessible Marche Region, for the accessibility evaluation of tourist facilities and attractions of the Marche Region.  
Furthermore, since 2009, V4A® organizes with Fieradi Vicenza (Vicenza exhibition centre) and Veneto Region the event "Gitando", the first International Exhibition dedicated to accessible tourism, which in 2015 was transformed into the new concept "MOVE!".

- **European Award of Excellence for Accessible Tourism 2013- MiBAC (Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities and Tourism).**
- **UNWTO Ulysses Awards 2013 (World Tourism Organization of the United Nations).**
- **UNWTO Ulysses Awards 2013 UNWTO (World Tourism Organization of the United Nations). Madrid, January 2014**
- **Project Zero Essl Foundation with the World Future Council partnership. Vienna, December 2013**
- **"Eco and the City Giovanni Spadolini" Award, of Spadolini Foundation**
- **SMAUMob App Awards 2013 Milan**
- **Recognition by Attiva Mente**

## Success factors

- High knowledge in the field of tourism and in accessible tourism;
- Roberto Vitali and Silvia Bonoli created the **V4AInside application**, a technological and organisational innovation in the process of data collecting and processing related to accessibility. Through the use of advanced technology, the device creates the appropriate tabs for the collection of multimedia data (photos, movies, vector drawings) and physical characteristics (slope, size, obstacles, etc.), depending on the type of structure to be verified. The system directly monitors the procedure (from the audit opening until the end when data is sent to the "Cloud") and it performs a consistency check on the data entered.

Every data is counterchecked by the device which prevents tampering and maintains a high level of control on the specialized personnel. At the end of the data collection, they are instantly processed and sent to the central system to be stored and evaluated by specialists. Thanks to a specially developed algorithm, a plan of improvements is elaborated to increase the accessibility of facilities (structural improvement such as the demolition of architectural barriers, organisational improvement such as a celiac menu, or communication systems for deaf and / or blind, etc.).

In October 2014, Village for all - V4A® was granted the industrial invention patent for the V4AInside - V4A® system by the Ministry of Economic Development, Directorate General for Combating Counterfeiting, Italian Patent and Trademark Office.



## Problems encountered

The main problem is not technical but cultural: entrepreneurs do often not understand the importance of accessible tourism. This concept should be specifically taught in vocational schools.

## Impacts

An increase in projects from public administrations. For example: training courses on the theme of 'removal of architectural barriers'.

## Statistics

**80**

tourism facilities have the V4A brand.

There exist **3 guides:** in the **North of Italy**, **Centre** and **South of Italy** and a **special one** for **Croatia**.





#### Organisation responsible

TravelersMAP Inc.  
Travel agency registered by the government  
Social Enterprise authorized by the government

#### Description

TravelersMAP is a sustainable travel company in South Korea. As the first social enterprise in the travel sector in South Korea, TravelersMAP aims to offer greater benefits for locals, travellers and the environment.

#### Objectives

- For travellers: Deliver memorable interpretative experiences to travellers that help raise sensitivity to host countries' political, environmental, and social climates. Provide experiences from the local culture such as home stays and cultural programmes.
- For locals: Generate financial benefits for both local people and the private industry. Develop communities and markets where fair trade products are made available to travellers.
- For the environment: Limit the size of groups to a maximum 15-16 travellers to minimize the impact on the environment.  
Use of public transportation and promotion of local principles to preserve the environment.

#### Target groups

- Target customer group: people between 30-50 years of age, mostly women who prefer environment-friendly or fair trade products.
- Beneficiaries: citizens in developing countries.

#### Operation

- Travel consultancy and booking;
  - Urban regeneration in Small-and-Medium Local Cities;
  - Searches for tourism partners with a social vision;
- The tourism industry in Korea relies on mass tourism. There are only a few huge leading travel companies in Korea. While travelling, travellers are accompanied by a Korean guide with a private vehicle. Travellers are offered meals in large Korean/Chinese restaurants and are forced to go to the shopping mall related to the travel agency. This way, the travel agency gets a commission. However, this way, the travellers do not get the opportunity to understand the local area and the local population.

Against this distorted structure of Korean tourism industry, TravelersMAP tries to set up a sound structure of tourism and recover the relationship between traveller and local. Therefore, the organisation has adopted several principles to plan the travel: working with local guides and accommodations, restaurants, using public transportation, offering cultural, historical, social and economic background to travellers.



## Achievements

- Foundation of the alternative school "Roadschola" giving young people the opportunity to learn through travel
- Established branch offices: MAP Cambodia, MAP Nepal
- Awarded for the "Innovative social enterprise" by Seoul Government
- Established SEA Center; Social Enterprise Activation Centre in Nepal
- Investment from Mirae Asset Daewoo Co., Ltd., and THE HAPPINESS FOUNDATION by SK group

## Success factors

- The first factor for success is that TravelersMAP is the first travel agency that introduced responsible tourism in Korea. Unlike mass tourism popular in Korea, TravelersMAP has offered small groups of travellers acultural and environmental experience and volunteer activities in local areas. This made them aware of the concept of responsible tourism turning themselves into loyal customer. Also, as TravelersMAP is a pioneer in the field of responsible tourism in Korea, people who are interested in sustainable tourism and fair trade have been attracted.
- The second factor for success is the cooperation with local partners. TravelersMAP supported local people in Nepal and Cambodia to get trained and establish their own travel agency. As a result, even small groups of travellers can be directed to reliable partners. Moreover, travellers indicated to be satisfied with the quality of the travel.
- The third factor is the introduction of CBT; Community Based Tourism in Korea, as TravelersMAP works with the local community in Cambodia and Nepal. The company helped to improve infrastructure in local villages, including toilet facilities, and building a community library together with travellers. As they promote tour programmes in local communities, this becomes a source of profit for them.
- The fourth factor is that TravelersMap's responsible travel programme has been accepted as a unique travelling style in the market. TravelersMAP has met the travellers' new needs to have free time, use public transportation, and visit local restaurants.
- The fifth and last factor has been the active investment and support from the government and the positive impactson investors.

## Problems encountered

- Lack of awareness in responsible tourism
- Weak price competitiveness compared to Korean-style mass tourism companies.

## Impacts

- Spread of awareness of sustainable tourism in Korea.
- Contribute to local revitalisation by developing tourism potential.
- Creation of income for local players and communities in developing areas (rural area in Korea, Cambodia, Nepal, Vietnam, Thailand, China, Indonesia, Morocco etc.)
- Reduction of environmental pollution by tourism

## Statistics

**3,288**  
travellers in  
2016

**\$ 3,023,844**  
of total sales in 2016

**\$ 2,218,171**  
of total expense  
spent with locals

**\$ 160,657**  
of total  
expenses spent  
in local in low  
GNI countries

**41**  
destination  
countries

Website

<http://www.travelersmap.co.kr>



# Programme « Let's all travel around Mexico »



Mexico

Year of foundation 2001



## Organisation responsible

Ministry of tourism of Mexico (SECTUR)  
Public organisation

## Description

This national movement aims to make Mexicans travel more in their country and thus generate a greater economic income through :

- A value chain that strengthens the local economy;
- The generation of new and attractive offers that represent opportunities both for the largest tourism companies in the country and for local businesses, so that they can join the virtuous circle of tourism;
- A more efficient use of the significant existing tourism capacity in Mexico, which becomes underutilized in the low season.

## Objectives

Launched in April 2016 by President Enrique Peña Nieto, this is the strategy of the Ministry of Tourism to strengthen national tourism.

It aims to encourage a **greater number** of Mexicans to discover and enjoy the great tourist riches that Mexico has, by making it easier for them to travel.

It also aims to generate more local revenues, jobs and business opportunities.

## Target groups

Young people, Children, Senior citizens, People with disabilities, Active workers  
Low-income families, Sports Tourism

## Operation

Tourism has become one of the main drivers of the national economy. This is largely due to the fact that 85% of the country's tourism consumption is made by Mexicans.

The implementation of this initiative consists in encouraging all stakeholders, organisations and institutions that operate tourism in Mexico to enter into agreements that allow potential or existing tourists to benefit from competitive prices.

## Achievements

One year after the launch of this movement, achievements include:

- 30 nationwide launches;
- 18,430 business appointments; and 2,150 local tourism companies and stakeholders have joined the movement, generating more than 2,842 tourism offerings in a number of destinations, routes and tours across the country, with savings of up to 65% off.

In addition, 2,000 micro and small tourism service providers have received specific training in 82 Pueblos Mágicos (Magical Towns) and 102 municipalities, allowing them to enhance their tourism offerings and enter the virtuous circle of tourism.

Let's all travel around Mexico has proven to be a key factor in improving hotel occupancy rates : 8.4% annual growth in the number of domestic tourists staying in hotels during the low season, compared to the previous year.

It has also boosted the capacity building of thousands of small and medium-sized tourism companies, who had not been able to integrate into the value chain of the sector.



## Success factors

### 1. Underutilised capacity

### 2. Diversification of the offer

- Generation of differentiated tourism packages at affordable prices.
- Reversing the concentration of the tourism market: Mexico is a country with **more than 200 tourist destinations** and **65% of the tourist flow** is concentrated in only 10 of them.
- Promotional events for the development of Let's all travel around Mexico (VTxM), with special emphasis on the integration of specific tourism products.
  - 22 Workshops covering 82 Pueblos Mágicos (Magic Villages)
  - 2,000 participants
  - 102 Additional Municipalities
  - 800 New tourism products
- Tourist Guides "**Las Rutas de México**" (The Routes of Mexico)

### 3. Advertising Campaign

The campaign, which focused on underutilised capacity in low season, became the national promotional strategy; through the CPTM, the promotional campaign "**Viajemos Todos por México**" (Let's all travel around Mexico), with an impact worth 300 million Mexican pesos and 245 million pesos of investment.

Social media strategy, generation of digital content put in value through specialised portals.

## Problems encountered

Reports have shown that due to the marked seasonality and adverse effects, there is a considerable amount of **underutilised capacity** :

- 89 million hotel rooms/night not occupied per year (2015).
- 8.9 million empty seats on domestic flights in 2016.
- 200 million bus seats are not occupied annually.

## Impacts

### National Tourism Activity Record

Total arrival of national tourists to Mexico hotels (millions)

- 226 Million national tourists
- 89 million national tourists stayed in hotels in 2016.
- 137 million national tourists stayed in non-hotel establishments in 2016.

## Statistics

The occupancy rate in the January-April 2017 period increased by 4.4% with respect to the previous year, from **61,4%** to **65,8%**

The total number of national tourists in January-April 2017 increased by **4,7%** with respect to the previous year

Reduction of **11%** in outbound tourism to the USA

Major Plan Aeroméxico

**51,8%** increase in bookings  
**47,8%** increase in domestic tourism  
**63,9%** increase in January and February 2017

Website

<http://www.viajemostodospormexico.com>



# Senior Health and Thermal Wellness Programme



MINISTÉRIO DO TRABALHO,  
SOLIDARIEDADE E SEGURANÇA  
SOCIAL

## Portugal

Year of foundation 1997



### Organisation responsible

Fundação INATEL (Instituto Nacional para Aproveitamento dos Tempos Livres dos Trabalhadores – National institution for the development of leisure activities for workers). Public foundation

### Description

- The Senior Health and Thermal Wellness Programme is an initiative of the Portuguese government managed by INATEL, with the support of its network of 22 offices. It is designed to give the best experience to the free time and leisure of senior citizens who are still active. The programme is aimed at seniors (60+) in order to encourage them to travel.
- Travel payment is made taking into account positive differentiation methods, in order to stimulate the participation of low-income citizens who are potentially more exposed to isolation, loneliness and social exclusion.
- Originally, the programme had a duration of 15 days/14 nights but, after 2012, this period was changed to 13 days/12 nights.

### Objectives

- To improve the quality of life and well-being of seniors, in particular through the implementation of thermal treatments;
- To encourage participation of low-income seniors;
- To increase the use of thermal establishments;
- To increase the use of hotel capacity in thermal areas;
- To stimulate the economic activity of the regions, maintaining and creating jobs in the tourism sector;
- To promote the economic development of the thermal resorts in particular and of the Thermal Wellness in general;
- To increase hotel activity in low and medium seasons, in numerous spas;
- To stimulate the cultural activities of the involved regions.

### Target groups

Anyone, with a preferred age of 55 years or more, who is required to perform thermal treatments due to health problems. Participants need to submit a medical certificate when registering. Participants can be accompanied by anyone from the age of 18, who may or may not perform thermal treatments. Regarding the evaluation reports completed by seniors during their stay in the programme, the typical participant is a woman (63,3%), married (66,3%) and aged between 71 and 80 years-old.

### Operation

- The programme had a duration of 15 days/14 nights until 2012 and, from then on, it changed to 13 days/12 nights.
- In order to participate in the programme, interested persons may call upon the Local Operational Units of Fundação INATEL or through the travel agencies that have joined the marketing of the Programme.
- Registrations are made by direct booking, taking into account the first letter of each participant's last name.
- The registration days were arranged in alphabetical order to avoid queues and to allow a much more comfortable booking experience for seniors interested in this programme.



## Achievements

- Partnership agreements with municipalities, including special rates in local museums and craft workshops.
- Since 1999, there has been a collaboration between INATEL and IMSERSO (Spain) so both countries can benefit of the senior programmes. INATEL hopes to extend senior tourism to health and spa programmes throughout the Iberian Peninsula.
- Through the programme, seniors can enjoy around 40 spas in Portugal.
- The programme offers packages of a duration of 15 days (14 nights). In order to meet the social objectives of the programme, package tours must include as many activities as possible and not incur additional costs for participants.

## Success factors

- The first tourism programme in Portugal to combine treatments with a cultural and tourist entertainment programme, supporting the regions where it takes place and fighting against seasonality in tourism destinations.
- Being a programme with reduced prices, it is more accessible to participants, (reimbursement of about 50% by the Portuguese government).
- One of the few opportunities (if not the only one) for many seniors to attend thermal spas.
- Contribution to improving the health and quality of life of senior citizens.
- High contribution to the tourism and economic dynamism of the destinations.

## Problems encountered

- The strong geographic concentration of the programme, since most of the participating thermal spas are located in the north and centre of the country;
- The dissatisfaction of some seniors with the prices of thermal treatments, which are not included in the tourism package purchased;
- The programme is no longer state-funded, which has led to a substantial increase in prices.

## Impacts

- The programme includes active recreation education, combining tourism development, environmental protection and respect for the cultural identity of local communities.
- Creation and maintenance of tourism infrastructures that would not exist without the flow of visitors that this programme generates.
- Customer retention because of satisfaction with the programme. According to the Portuguese Ministry of Health, statistically the seniors who participate in the programme, spend less time in medical consultations.

## Statistics

To date, the programme has provided access to thermal treatment to approximately  
**46,000**  
 seniors during its ten years of operation.

Financial support of  
**12.2**  
 million euros over 11 years.



## Holidays and Leisure Activities for Children



Moscow / Russia

Year of foundation 2011



### Organisation responsible

MOSGORTOUR  
Moscow City Culture Department  
Public cultural institution

### Description

MOSGORTOUR organises holidays and leisure activities for children. The company is the country's largest organiser of children's holidays, focusing on children with disabilities, orphans and low income families.

MOSGORTOUR is the Russian leader in children's leisure activities and the main source of innovation in the tourism industry. Every year the company organises holidays for more than 60,000 people.

### Objectives

The main mission is to enable Moscow children to gain access to quality leisure services and reform the entire holiday industry in Russia.

### Target groups

Parents and children from disadvantaged groups  
Commercial tourists

### Operation

MOSGORTOUR:

- processes applications for holiday grants offered by local or federal authorities;
- selects holiday camps and recreation centres for children;
- trains more than 4,000 camp counsellors every year to work in holiday camps;
- develops educational holiday programmes, with an emphasis on children's intellectual and personal development;
- organises events and activities in the city for children, with conferences, creative activities, guided tours, outdoor games, etc.; and
- supports disabled children in the framework of inclusive stays.

### Achievements

- MOSGORTOUR has enabled more than 46,000 children and their parents to go on holiday at preferential conditions.
- The organisation has set up a three-step control procedure for the operation of holiday camps: after the call for tenders, before the summer holidays and during the children's stay.
- MOSGORTOUR is the founder of the Moscow central school of camp counsellors, where students are trained to supervise children and teenagers in leisure centres.
- The partners of the educational holiday programmes include the city of Moscow, the Russian Chess Federation, National Geographic, the Moskino Cinema Network, the Children's Theatre, and many more.
- Over the past three years, MOSGORTOUR has organised 20 inclusive stays for children with hearing impairment and children with Down syndrome.
- To ensure children's safety, MOSGORTOUR chooses the safest means of transport, for example by using trains rather than buses when travelling to the airport.
- MOSGORTOUR has negotiated comprehensive insurance coverage for children going to holiday camps.





## Success factors

- Transparency in the procedures for selecting holiday camps and awarding leisure grants
- Effective cooperation with government institutions at both local and federal levels
- Careful selection of providers
- Strict safety requirements
- The prompt response to parents' requests
- The high level of training of camp counsellors

## Problems encountered

The demand for grants for children in the target categories exceeds supply.

## Impacts

- MOSGORTOUR has established high quality standards for all Russian holiday organisers.
- Together with partners, the company has created a classification of Russian holiday camps.
- MOSGORTOUR coordinates the annual international conference of the children's educational leisure and holiday industry (KIDPRO). The conference welcomes Russian and foreign experts to discuss industry challenges and perspectives.
- The company has revived the interest in the profession of camp counsellor.
- MOSGORTOUR has considerably reduced the number of accidents in holiday camps.
- MOSGORTOUR has raised public awareness of tuberculosis prevention.

## Statistics

**60,000**

children go on holiday every year with the help of MOSGORTOUR

**4,000**

camp counsellors are trained and employed every year by MOSGORTOUR

**7**

educational holiday programmes, developed by MOSGORTOUR, were introduced in Russian holiday camps and leisure centres during the summer of 2017

**34**

holiday camps and leisure centres are available for children and their parents.

**7,009**

disabled children were able to go on holiday thanks to MOSGORTOUR during the summer of 2017

## Senior Tourism Program



Spain

Year of foundation 1985



### Organisation responsible

The Spanish Institute of Senior Citizens and Social Services (Instituto de Mayores y Servicios Sociales - IMERSO) is the social security management body attached to the Ministry of Health, Social Services and Equality, through the State Secretariat for Social Services and Equality.

### Description

The IMERSO is developing the tourism programme to complement the social security system during the low tourism season. This programme offers senior citizens the opportunity to go on holidays from October to June and spend their free time travelling to various destinations in Spain on favourable economic terms. The programme also contributes to maintaining employment and economic activity.

### Objectives

Their actions have several objectives:

- Ensure and facilitate greater social participation of seniors.
- Promote a healthier, more active lifestyle and promote well-being.
- Encourage and support the creation and preservation of employment and economic activity in the tourism industry by focusing on the hotel sector during the off-season, thereby helping to mitigate seasonality.

### Target groups

Seniors are at the heart of IMERSO's concerns. This programme is therefore intended for people aged 65 and over who are either beneficiaries of the Spanish social security system, pensioners of the Spanish public pension scheme, widowed pensioners over 55 years of age, pensioners of other schemes and beneficiaries of unemployment benefits or allowances who are at least 60 years of age. They may be accompanied by their partner even if they do not meet the age criteria. Participants may also be accompanied by their children with a level of disability higher than 45%. They must occupy the same room as the recipient of the programme.

### Operation

Anyone wishing to participate in the IMERSO programme is required to complete and submit an application. This can be done online via IMERSO's electronic portal, through its central office or in writing. But it is recommended to do this online because the process is much faster and does not require any additional processing.

IMERSO processes applications received in a timely manner and validates those that meet the various criteria, including age and income, taking into account participation in previous trips.

Applications are assessed on the basis of a points scale corresponding to the various criteria. All applicants will be notified whether or not their applications are accepted. In the event of a positive answer, people will be informed of the date on which they can obtain tickets and choose their trip from among the available choices. Individuals whose number of points is not sufficient to be directly selected may be placed on the waiting list.







## Achievements

- Participants are offered different types of packages, ranging from trips to coastal areas of the Iberian Peninsula or islands, to inland destinations: cultural tours, nature tourism, trips to the various provincial capitals and to autonomous cities (Melilla, Ceuta).
- Large choice of destinations in Spain
- Services included in the programme: return trip, accommodation, insurance policy, medical services and entertainment programme. However, there may be some exceptions depending on the situation, location and mode of tourism.
- Each year, a brochure is published listing all IMSERSO destinations.
- Variety of destinations and available dates.

## Success factors

- Economies of scale.
- Good value for money with a large number of services provided.
- Programme highly appreciated, valued and satisfying at all levels.
- The programme is offered by more than 8500 travel agencies.
- The organisation follows up to ensure that service delivery is consistent with expectations.

## Problems encountered

Over the past few years, the program has been affected by the economic crisis, but the Government has maintained its support for its positive impact on the active aging of older people and the creation and maintenance of employment.

At present, the hotel offer may be reduced by the greater demand for places by foreign tour operators that have modified their demand for holiday places by choosing Spain instead of other North African countries.

## Impacts

- Job creation: approximately 13,000 direct jobs in hotels and 80,000 indirect jobs in low season are created or maintained each year in the regions that suffer most from seasonality.
- Social and welfare impact on beneficiaries: the activities developed under this programme improve the quality of life and health of older people. Decrease in the number of visits to medical centres and in the use of medication.
- There is a high level of satisfaction with the programme. 96% of participants intend to travel again with IMSERSO.

## Statistics

Since its inception, more than **12 million people** have participated in the programme.

Job creation: the programme created **88,800** jobs during the 2013/2014 season.

Number of participants for the 2015/2016 season: **1,135,587**

Number of participants for the 2016/2017 season: **1,135,715**

**67.5%** of users are in the **65-79** age group.

Evolution between the annual report of 2016 and 2017:

The number of applications received in 2017 increased by **6.5%** compared to 2016

For the 2016/2017 season, IMSERSO accepted applications from **3,596,659** people





Switzerland

Year of foundation 1939



## Organisation responsible

Swiss Travel Fund (Reka) Cooperative.  
Non-profit organisation.  
Money institute and holiday provider.

## Description

In Switzerland, Reka money is a reduced-price means of payment for tourism services (accommodation, catering, sports, wellness, travel, holidays, culture and leisure). Issued by the Swiss Travel Fund (Reka), Reka Money is available in the form of Reka-Checks, Reka-Card, Reka Rail and Reka-Lunch. This payment method is available at more than 9,000 acceptance points and offers a wide range of possible uses, including hotels, restaurants, travel agents, Reka Holidays, public transport, entertainment, museums, ski lifts and cable cars, leisure parks, fitness centres, circuses, zoos, and much more. Reka-Checks and Reka-Cards can be obtained at a reduced price from numerous employers, employees' organisations and Coop branches namely Manor and Jumbo (Reka Rail).

## Objectives

The Swiss Travel Fund Reka (founded in 1939) is a cooperative organisation whose aim is to enable as many families in Switzerland as possible to enjoy holidays and leisure. Reka Money and the wide choice of holiday homes from Reka Holidays are the key components of this non-profit organisation.

## Target groups

- Companies, which offer Reka money as a wage benefit to their employees;
- Employees, who can buy Reka Money at a reduced price through their employer;
- Members of employee associations;
- Supercard holders can obtain Reka-Checks at a 3% discount from customer service desks at the larger Coop branches;

## Operation

The operation of the Reka Money mechanism differs according to the type of payment used.

- First of all, there is the Reka-Check, which is one of the most popular leisure payment methods in Switzerland. These checks are issued by the Swiss Travel Fund Reka and offered to employees at a 3 to 20% discount through employers, employee associations and Coop. The CHF 100 check is available at a price ranging between CHF 80 and CHF 97. When employees use their cheques at acceptance points, they are redeemed at their face value. They save between 3% and 20% on purchased services. Once the Reka Money has been collected, 3% commission returns to the Reka company.
- Another method of payment is widely used: the Reka-Card (the electronic Reka-Check). The Reka-Card is easy to use, it can be ordered via employers or directly through Reka and can be topped up in various ways: with Reka-Cheques, payment slips, via an e-banking account, SMS, credit card or Post Finance card. Once topped up, the prepaid card can be used at all Reka-Card acceptance points.



- Reka-Card, resulting from the innovative development of the Reka-Check, is a cashless means of payment. Its attractiveness continues to grow as it is used in more than 90% of acceptance points, and it also offers other advantages such as health insurance along with preferential conditions.
- Reka Rail is another product of Reka Money, more focused on low-cost public transport services.
- Reka-Lunch is a new electronic means of payment allowing affordable meals for corporate staff.
- Reka Money 3.0 is a major project that aims to combine Reka Money solutions, cashless payments and paper money into an integrated system. This will make it easy to use new payment methods and launch new products that are not compatible with cash solutions.

- There are more than 9000 acceptance points throughout Switzerland, which makes this payment method more attractive.
- Large choice of service providers (hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, public transport companies, leisure parks, museums, circuses, zoos, etc.) who accept Reka Money.
- It is more cost-effective than cash because it is exempt from taxes and social security contributions for both the employer and the employee. Up to CHF 600.00 per annum, reductions in Reka-Checks do not need to be declared on the new salary certificate, see section III of the Guide to drawing up the salary certificate: undeclared benefits - reductions in Reka-Checks up to CHF 600.00 per annum (only declare the reductions when they exceed CHF 600.00 per annum).
- Economic promotion of the leisure and tourism sector in rural Switzerland.
- Possibility of a wide range of services (from simple to high-end).
- Users save an average of 17% on their purchases with Reka Money.
- According to a study carried out in 2015, Reka ranked 8<sup>th</sup> in a survey on the contribution to the common good of organisations in Switzerland. This ranking is based on 4 criteria of well-being: morality, quality of life, cohesion and task performance. The final results range from 1 (low social assistance contribution) to 6 (strong social contribution). The Reka organisation reaches an average of 5.02.

## Problems encountered

- Some companies have limited the possibilities of obtaining Reka money.
- Following the abandonment of the Euro floor rate, this will significantly affect the demand for holidays in Switzerland, including the sale of Reka Money, which is decreasing as a result.
- Increased costs of the organisation's projects.
- Reka has lost one of its most important customers, the city of Zurich, which has given up offering Reka Money to its 20,000 employees, resulting in a drop in turnover.
- In addition, following the fall of the Swiss franc, many companies decided not to offer Reka Money to their employees.
- Low fuel prices have had a negative impact on demand and more particularly on its use in service stations.

## Impacts

- More money for leisure and holidays.
- Employee motivation and performance.
- Eight out of ten people in Switzerland know Reka Money and five out of ten have already used it to make a payment.
- Enthusiasm for this means of payment with one million people in Switzerland who regularly pay in Reka cash.
- The "Reka-Check" system of low-cost leisure money generates an additional consumption of more than CHF 100 million per annum.

Revenue (in CHF millions): In 2016, turnover (or total Reka Money sales) reached **629.7** a decrease of about 4% compared to the previous year.

Redemption of Reka Money in 2016:	<b>63.7%</b> public transport	<b>20%</b> holiday/leisure	<b>16.3%</b> in petrol stations.
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Sales 2016:	<b>60%</b> employers	<b>34.4%</b> COOP	<b>4.4%</b> employee organisations	<b>1.2%</b> miscellaneous.
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In 2014, record sales were surpassed in terms of Reka Money.

**Overnight stays 2016:** The number of overnight stays in Switzerland and abroad totalled **925,973** overnight stays, a decrease of about 1%.

**1 million people** pay regularly with this means of payment.

In 2016, **1227** families benefited from free holidays.



## The Charity that gives Families a break



UK

Year of foundation 1975



### Organisation responsible

Family Holiday Association  
A national charity organisation

### Description

For over 40 years, the Family Holiday Association has provided breaks for UK families struggling with issues such as severe and sudden illness, bereavement, mental health issues, disability and domestic violence. The charity was founded on the belief that holidays are a lifeline, not a luxury, and this is a key principle that survives to this day. The majority of families we help have never before been on a family holiday. The evidence shows that spending time together away from their daily struggles can be life-changing for the families we work with.

Each family helped is referred by someone already working with them in a supporting role. This referral network includes teachers, health visitors, social workers and other charities such as Barnado's and Shelter. By working with referrers, the Family Holiday Association can be sure that they are helping families who will benefit the most.

### Objectives

Provide British seaside breaks and day trips for families struggling with some of the toughest challenges life can bring. A simple break from a stressful situation can create precious memories, strengthen bonds and develop a new sense of optimism. Moreover:

- Increase the number of families that gain access to short breaks and day trips
- Research and promote the value of breaks for families experiencing disadvantage and wider society
- Increase awareness of the scale and scope of the problem of lack of access to breaks

### Target groups

- The people they most want to help are families who would otherwise not have the opportunity to go away, and for whom a short break or day trip would make a significant difference to their current and future lives.
- The Family Holiday Association helps families with one or more children under the age of 18 and its caregivers (parents, grandparents, older sisters and brothers etc.).

### Operation

- Families cannot apply directly to the charity. It is an external person working with the family such as a teacher or support worker who can apply. They act as the point of contact throughout the process. In other words, in addition to applying, it also helps families prepare their break, in order to ensure the smooth progress because many families have never had a break away from home and may not know what it is to travel, what to pack etc. It is also a way to ensure that the charity helps the right people in need. The application process normally opens in November and continues until funds / breaks are exhausted.
- The Family Holiday Association receives no government funding, so they are wholly reliant on the generosity of its donors, fundraisers and other supporters. There are several ways to make a donation: making a one-time or regular donation, participating in a sponsored event, fundraising during celebrations such as weddings or anniversaries, or through different applications or websites it is now possible to donate through online booking (eBay) or when booking online a restaurant (Charitable booking), ...





## Achievements

- The Family Holiday Association offers different types of breaks: short breaks, group trips or days out.
- In 2016, they helped a record 5,184 families with a short break or day trip and engaged with even more holiday partners and have made significant strides in increasing people's understanding of the importance of helping struggling families access the benefits of a break.
- Travel industry campaign - 500 for 500. On the occasion of its 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary year (2015-16), the Family Holiday Association asked 500 of their friends for £500 each.
- To help those who wish to organise a fundraiser, the Family Holiday Association offers supporting fundraising materials for any type of engagement. This pack gives access to useful elements such as poster templates and sponsorship forms.
- The Family Holiday Association owns 16 caravans, each located at a holiday park by the British coast.

## Success factors

- The charity asks the participants in its programs to leave a feedback so that they can make necessary adjustments and constantly improve their work.
- Partnership with large and small companies in different fields (TUI, Barrhead Travel, Higgidy, Hildon, Haven, ...).
- The Family Holiday Association has local support groups and partner charities who each raise money to fund breaks for families in their area.
- The Family Holiday Association works with more than 1000 referrers at national level from 188 local authority areas

## Problems encountered

- Families are encouraged, via their referrer, to do as much of the booking and planning for their break as possible, help to break down barriers to future participation.
- When staying on a holiday park, entertainment passes are provided. A small contribution to expenses is also usually gifted by the charity. However, the on-site costs at a holiday park can still be high. Support and advice on how to budget and minimise expense is provided by the charity.

## Impacts

How families benefit:

- They have fun and create happy memories (99% - feedback survey 2016)
- Children have new experiences (98% - feedback survey 2016)
- Families have the chance to spend more time together and are more optimistic (96% - feedback survey 2016)
- A break reduces stress and worries and increases confidence (92% - feedback survey 2016)
- A growing body of academic research clearly demonstrates a link between short breaks and a number of positive outcomes. These include improved mental health; improved attendance, behaviour and attainment by children at school; adults are more likely to engage with further education.

## Statistics

In 2016,  
**5,184**  
families were  
helped to access a  
break, comprising

**11,222** children

**7,767** adults

**a record year  
for the charity**

**Half the  
families**  
they helped had never  
been on holiday before

**Over a third**  
of children visited the beach  
**for the first time**

Website

<http://www.familyholidayassociation.org.uk>





## Uruguay / South America

Year of foundation 2006



### Organisation responsible

Ministry of Tourism – Secretary of State of the Executive Power

### Description

The Ministry of Tourism leads a cross-sectoral system composed of multiple government organisations and the private sector. Its aim is to ensure that all Uruguayans gain access to tourism through different types of programmes with various levels of subsidies. The Government negotiates with private operators to offer packages and itineraries ranging from one-day excursions to five-day all-inclusive packages. The Ministry organises all the programmes and directly operates the most complex ones, with overnight stays, gastronomy, tours and multiple activities.

### Objectives

- The aim of the System is to help the entire population gain access to tourism and enjoy their fundamental right to travel and leisure, as established by the United Nations. Several subsidy mechanisms have been introduced in order to help the most vulnerable groups.
- In turn, it boosts the entire value chain of the tourism industry, creating new sources of income and reducing the seasonal nature of tourism in Uruguay.

### Target groups

- The entire population of Uruguay is entitled to benefit from this System.
- The Government's largest contribution goes to the most economically, socially or geographically vulnerable groups.
- There are programmes for youths, students, workers, teenagers and seniors, thereby covering the entire population.

### Operation

The Ministry of Tourism designs itineraries covering the whole country. It signs agreements with all private operators that are interested in joining the System and collaborates with multiple Government agencies.

Once the itinerary is agreed upon, at a much lower price than market value, the Ministry coordinates with local Government agencies in order to add content to the tours and activities of all packages. The contribution of local Government agencies allows the creation of comprehensive packages for about half the market value. It will be offered by travel agencies affiliated to the System throughout the country.

If users have incomes below a certain amount (about US\$600), they can apply for an additional support. In that case, the Ministry will cover the costs of transportation in the package, lowering its price to about 30% of the market value.

The Central Bank of Uruguay funds the packages in 6 instalments through a social credit system.

This mechanism applies to complex tours, with accommodation, excursions, and half board. In addition, there are several types of one-day excursions and activities and others that include accommodation in public or semi-public holiday camps.





The main achievement is to eventually provide access to tourism to the entire population. Employees living on low income and low unionisation levels, rural workers or domestic employees have been able to exercise their right to travel and leisure through these programmes. The same applies to youths and senior citizens living on low income, and to all inhabitants of rural communities living far away from populated areas. The National Social Tourism System offers starting points in over 180 localities all over the country (many of them with less than 500 inhabitants), and itineraries in 74 tourist spots across the country.

Domestic tourism was not developed to the extent of its capacity in Uruguay. Due to the lack of interest shown by the private sector, largely focusing on inbound tourism, this segment was mostly disregarded. The Government took up the responsibility of developing domestic tourism products and proved private operators that it was possible to meet the challenge of seasonality by offering fair prices to the Uruguayan tourist outside of the high season. As the supply adjusted, the demand for domestic tourism grew exponentially, providing an easier access of the entire population to tourist sites. Therefore, the interests of all users met those of the operators, turning the programmes into a win-win economic situation.

Through this long-term initiative, many tourist sites gained visibility and are now increasingly popular among the general population.

The main challenge was the lack of interest of private operators in domestic tourism. It led the Government to design a number of products and itineraries untapped by the private sectors. Once this constraint was overcome, after 3 or 4 years of operations, the major issue was the lack of coordination between the multiple Government agencies, which conducted social tourism activities on their own. The level of coordination has gradually improved, and the System is expected to be consolidated and the initiative fully centralised in the Ministry of Tourism.

After 10 years of development, the main impact of this public policy is much more qualitative than quantitative. Reaching localities where no one had ever heard of tourism and transporting passengers who had never left their villages created collective awareness on the benefits of travel in every aspect.

In a social tourism trip, while some passengers may get to see the ocean for the first time, local artisans may gain the opportunity of selling their crafts. The aim is now to keep this tourism flow steady, in order to give sustainability and consolidate the achievements of this mechanism. The new priority is to increase the number of visitors in all destinations.

Each year, more than  
**90,000**  
passengers travel through the social tourism programmes

**80%**  
go on day tours or use Government managed services

**20%**  
choose overnight stays and use the infrastructure of the private sector

The Ministry of Tourism directly manages the transportation, accommodation and activities of approximately  
**5,000**  
passengers annually, with half or full board service

There are more than  
**200**  
entities affiliated to the System (hotels, restaurants, shops and businesses at large), which represent over  
**3,000**  
direct jobs and about the same amount of indirect jobs

**For each peso invested in the programme, the double is generated on the market**

The extent of the programme is nationwide, with starting points from over **180** localities and an offer of **74** destinations across the **19** departments of Uruguay.



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