



The social dimension of agritourism

Eline De Smet
Management advisor
eline.de.smet@erov.be

10 September 2024

Framework

→ Interreg Europe ~ priority 'SME competitiveness'

→ 6 partners

- Region of Tuscany (lead partner) & Tourism of Tuscany (IT)
- Ministry of Economics Latvia (LV)
- Ministry of Environment, Urban Planning and European Cooperation - Region of Crete (GR)
- Ministry of Innovation, Research and Tourism - Balearic Islands (SP)
- Tourism South Limburg (NL)
- Economic Council of East Flanders (B) in cooperation of Tourism of East Flanders

→ ECEF

Policy programs - keys

- Strategic Policy Plan for Tourism in East-Flanders 2014-2019
- East-Flemish regional strategy on economic development and stimulating entrepreneurship 2014-2019
- Keys:
 - To develop sustainable, qualitative and innovative tourism products
 - To advise and stimulate tourism SME's on creating new tourism products
 - To coordinate different local tourism initiatives on a regional level, cooperation and exchange of experiences

Goals

1. Increasing the competitiveness of SMEs
1. Fully exploiting the economic potential of the tourism sector
1. Better policy instruments to develop new, tailor-made tourism products

Action plan

1. Phase 1: 2017 – 2019
→ developing and proposing the action plan
1. Phase 2: follow-up 2020-2021
→ implementation of the action plan

Three main actions:

- gastronomy as an asset
- showcase craftsmanship
- local days at local producers sites

Good practice 1

Tasteful East Flanders ambassadors

- a. several new ambassadors every year
- b. in different sectors (B&B's, restaurants, local shops and caterers)

- ↗ number of tourists
- ↗ entrepreneurs in the spotlights
- ↗ tourists <-> local food producers



Do (something) local!

Good practice 2

East Flemish wine tour

- a. 25th of August: 3th time
- b. first edition in 2018

- ↗ tourism SMEs <-> other sectors
- ↗ own strengths

Come and taste East Flanders!



Lessons learned

- take your time
- spit out, look further, find alternatives
- pay attention to your stakeholders
- do's and dont's
- diversity of, network!

