



Program for the Subsidisation of Social and Solidarity Economy Entities



Zagori, Greece



Mountain area; Predominantly rural, remote regions



Led by: Ecomuseum Zagori

Dynamo partner: D6 - Zagori



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Nature-based and cultural tourism

Destination development

Aim

The aim of the solution is to contribute to the formation of Zagori's tourism identity through interpretive processes that highlight the traditions of the region and allow visitors to grasp the factors and values that have shaped its uniqueness. Educational programs, including an interactive narrative of the timeless relationship between people and their natural environment, showcase the cultural and natural heritage of the broader area while also emphasising the protection and sustainable development of the region.

More specifically, the solution aims to diversify and broaden the tourism sectors appeal by attracting tourists through alternative forms of tourism. By targeting selective tourism of special interests, such as conference tourism and research tourism, the solution enhances the destination's appeal and fosters knowledge exchange and collaboration. Further, focusing on attracting special tourism groups, including people with disabilities and the elderly, promotes social equity and diversity within the tourism industry. By providing tailored services and facilities to accommodate the needs of these groups destinations ensure accessibility for everyone to enjoy their travel experiences.

Educational programs and initiatives are also aimed at increasing school tourism to cultivate a new generation of travelers who value experiential learning and cultural immersion. By offering engaging and informative activities tailored to school curricula, destinations can attract student groups and instill a lifelong appreciation for travel and exploration.

By fostering inclusivity, and promoting lifelong learning and cultural exchange, the solution contributes to sustainable economic development and societal well-being within the region and for those visiting.

CROSS-CUTTING PRIORITIES

Biodiversity



Social justice and inclusion



Climate change mitigation and adaptation



INNOVATION

Social, organizational and governance



Financial and business models innovation



Story

The solution began by recognising the need to promote and preserve Zagori's unique identity through tourism. Community stakeholders and local authorities collaborated to showcase the region's traditions and natural beauty while ensuring sustainable development. Driven by a shared passion for conservation, Ecomuseum Zagori engaged the local community, fostering ownership and pride in Zagori's heritage, and building a loyal base of advocates who champion its mission and contribute to its ongoing success.

Ecomuseum Zagori is an open-type museum and serves as an interpretive center for the environment and cultural landscape of the area, serving both visitors and the local community. The museum's aims were strengthened through the help of the program of the Region of Epirus for the Subsidization of Social and Solidarity Economy Entities, and its development was further supported by community engagement, government backing, and expertise in inclusive tourism and education.

Since its inception, Ecomuseum Zagori has evolved to promote accessible tourism, implement educational programs, and host conferences and research expeditions, highlighting Zagori's unique offerings. It has diversified the tourism sector, attracted diverse visitors, and fostered appreciation for the region's heritage while contributing to sustainable development through economic growth, social cohesion, and environmental stewardship. Its success showcases the impact of community-driven initiatives in cultural preservation and sustainable tourism.

Impact

- Three new job positions have been established in tourism management, educational program coordination, and inclusive service provision, directly contributing to reducing unemployment and providing economic stability for local residents.


- Educational programs have had a significant impact on school tourism, providing students with valuable learning experiences that emphasise the importance of cultural and environmental stewardship.
- By engaging the local community in its activities, the museum has strengthened social cohesion and fostered a sense of pride and ownership among residents.
- By attracting tourists with special interests, such as conference attendees, researchers, and people with disabilities, Ecomuseum Zagori has diversified the tourism base of the region. This diversification reduces the dependence on traditional forms of tourism and promotes a more sustainable tourism model. These have also led to knowledge exchange and innovation, contributing to the sustainable development of the area.

Ecomuseum Zagori demonstrated a high level of adaptability, continuously refining its programs to meet changing conditions and emerging trends. It developed new educational programs, interactive exhibits, and specialized tours to cater to the diverse interests of its visitors. The creation of job positions and promotion of cultural and environmental tourism had a lasting positive impact on local residents. Educational outreach was a key focus, attracting school groups and specialised interest groups, which increased visitor numbers and fostered appreciation for the region's heritage among younger generations. Commitment to innovation, such as using technology for immersive storytelling, further ensured the visitor experience was fresh and engaging.



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