

## **WHAT IS MICROTURISM?**

Micro-tourism is supported by smaller tourism companies in smaller destinations outside the major cities. In the project Benefit4Regions, there is a focus on microtourism outside the major cities based on experiences and services from networks of small, local companies and / or associations.

*In short: Micro-tourism is borne by micro-businesses at micro-rural destinations.*

## **10 STEPS IN DEVELOPING OF MICROTURISM**

Tourism is a vital growth industry for rural areas. There is a large untapped growth potential in the smaller destinations outside the major cities and here the microtourism companies are crucial. The micro-tourism can help boost tourism outside the major destinations and make the area more attractive to tourists for longer or recurring stays.

Experience from the project shows that microtourism lacks an overall framework for development. The following 10 recommendations are therefore an attempt to simplify a great deal of microtourism to some concrete frameworks and steps for the development of microtourism. In practice, the work must be organized to suit the individual micro-destination. The 10 steps must therefore be read as a checklist that can be used to plan future initiatives.

### **1. START-UP**

The process must be based on an idea, a challenge or another reason for initiating development. The set-up can be deliberate and clarified, as a concrete action that supports a defined strategy, but it can also be a coincidence or outside influence that creates interest and the basis for collaboration on microtourism. You can be lucky or skilled at catching the things that spark the co-operation, or you may find it difficult to find exactly what can bring together interest and commitment. Therefore, ask yourself where do you want the idea and what is needed to get there? Who does what, why, how and when?

### **2. GROWTH POTENTIAL**

Common interest and will is important, but it cannot stand alone. There must be clear business potentials and opportunities in the companies that work with microtourism. It is therefore important to uncover and analyze the growth potential, and here there may be a need to involve professional experts with knowledge in the field.

### **3. THE LOCAL SUPPORT**

Small businesses often also need local support from residents, associations, local authorities, companies in other industries, politicians, etc., if it is to succeed in creating positive development and spill-over growth to the area. Support for micro-tourism companies must be mobilized through local and municipal networks, as well as visibility and knowledge of microtourism. Micro-tourism is also about a broader local collaboration, where companies work together with local enthusiasts and associations, etc. The broader collaboration

can, among other things, contribute with visibility, local pride, content, fundraising, education and infrastructure - local frameworks that companies can rarely realize on their own.

#### **4. RELATIONSHIPS AND COHERENCE**

It is a good idea to make connections and connections to other areas of microtourism. These can be geographical connections or thematic contexts that link tourism areas together. But it can also be strong networks and good practices that unite the areas. Knowledge sharing in networks is a good starting point for developing relationships and creating connections.

#### **5. INDIVIDUAL DEVELOPMENT**

In many cases, the companies have very different wishes and potentials. Some prioritize business development or additional sales, while others are concerned with stable operations, staff or management. Here, there may be a need for sparring and guidance of external tourism consultants, so that weaknesses and potentials in the individual tourism business are identified, tackled and exploited.

#### **6. BUSINESS NETWORK DEVELOPMENT**

In other cases, there are clear common interests and potentials. For example, in relation to creating development in a particular season, certain types of experiences in a local area, or a particular segment. It can also be creating new combinations of experiences and services that can add value to the overall vacation experience and be profitable for the tourism companies. Here, there may be grounds for joining together in professional and professional development networks of several companies and / or associations.

#### **7. COLLABORATION OF NEW PRODUCTS**

Once new business ventures have been established, the next step is to develop new tourism products and services based on co-creation. The initiative must be implemented by the partners themselves by involving as many people as possible, as the product development process can only contribute to the existing portfolio solely through participation. In addition, it is strongly recommended to build the new products on the region's strengths and unique properties that are in line with the region's identity.

#### **8. DISTRIBUTION AND VISIBILITY**

Marketing is important when bringing new products and new content to the market. It requires care and skill, choosing the right distribution and media for the segment, and it can therefore be beneficial to use and engage channels, media and operators from outside.

## **9. RESPONSE FROM GUESTS AND MARKET**

The development of microtourism must be a test for the guests and the market. The interaction with guests is a critical part of the development chain. This applies early in the process, where guests and market players often see other opportunities and potentials than the locals. But also later in the process when guests buy - or leave. Early in the process, the experience or service in relation to the segment and the message must be clarified.

## **10. MEASUREMENT OF PERFORMANCE AND EVALUATION**

The best micro destinations for microtourism succeed in making development an ongoing process where improvements and new initiatives are tested and put into action. It requires data, follow-up, lifelong learning and adjustment of development work.

Finally, micro-tourism is a cross-sectoral industry with a number of stakeholders with different needs and expectations. In order to find a common way to interact and develop rural areas, the exchange of opinions and knowledge is of great importance.