



**Srijem i  
Slavonija**  
*Protkani zlatom*  
TURISTIČKA ZAJEDNICA  
VUKOVARSKO-SRIJEMSKJE ŽUPANIJE

## Code of Ethics for the Tourist Board of Vukovar-Srijem County

Vinkovci, September 2023.

## **PREAMBLE**

This Code of Ethics aims to establish the foundation for sustainable and responsible tourism development in Vukovar- Srijem County. It has been drafted in compliance with the Global Code of Ethics for Responsible Tourism of the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), adopted by resolution A/RES/406(XIII) at the XIII General Assembly of the World Tourism Organization (Santiago, Chile, September 27-October 1, 1999).

All providers of tourist services in Vukovar-Srijem County are invited to adhere to this Code of Ethics and regularly review it. The Tourist Bord of Vukovar-Srijem County is responsible for monitoring this Code's implementation and reporting on its effectiveness. This Code seeks to create a sustainable environment that will enable growth and prosperity for all destination stakeholders while respecting sustainability values.

## **OPERATING PRINCIPLES**

### **Article 1.**

#### **Tourism's Contribution to Mutual Understanding and Respect among People and Societies**

1. Tolerance and respect for religious, philosophical, and moral diversities are the foundation of responsible tourism; tourism development stakeholders and tourists must respect the cultural and social customs of all peoples, including minorities and the local community.
2. Touristic activities must be carried out in harmony with the attributes and traditions of the region and the state while primarily respecting their laws and customs.
3. The local community and tourism employees should become acquainted with and respect tourists and inform themselves about their lifestyles and expectations, as education and training in tourism contribute to a better experience for tourists.
4. Public authorities have the duty to protect tourists and their property, with particular emphasis on the safety of foreign tourists; they should facilitate the introduction of appropriate information, prevention, and security measures. Attacks or threats directed at tourists or workers and intentional destruction of tourism resources or cultural or natural heritage must be strictly condemned and penalized under national laws.
5. Tourists and visitors must avoid criminal activities and behaviors that are offensive or harmful to the local community or environment and prevent trading in prohibited or dangerous products.
6. Tourists and visitors are responsible for informing themselves about the characteristics of the countries they intend to visit. They must be aware of the health and safety risks associated with travel outside their usual environment and act to minimize these risks.

### **Article 2.**

#### **Tourism as a Means of Personal and Collective Fulfillment**

1. Tourism should be planned and practiced as a means of personal and collective fulfillment, contributing to education, tolerance, and understanding of cultural diversities.

2. Tourism activities must respect gender equality and promote human rights, especially the rights of vulnerable groups such as children, the elderly, persons with disabilities, and ethnic minorities.
3. Any human resource exploitation is incompatible with tourism objectives and must be strictly penalized under national laws.
4. Forms of tourism oriented towards religion, health, and education, and cultural and language exchanges should be particularly encouraged.
5. The introduction of educational content on the values and risks of tourist exchanges should be encouraged among stakeholders and the local community.

### **Article 3.**

#### **Tourism as a Factor of Sustainable Development**

1. All tourism development stakeholders should protect the natural environment with the aim of sustainable and ongoing economic development that meets the needs and aspirations of current and future generations.
2. Priority should be given to promoting tourism development that conserves rare and valuable resources, particularly water and energy, and minimizes waste production, supported by public authorities at all levels.
3. Efforts should be made to distribute tourist and visitors flows evenly throughout the year to reduce environmental impact and increase benefits for the tourism industry and local economy.
4. Touristic infrastructure and activities should be designed to protect natural heritage, including ecosystems and biodiversity, and preserve endangered species. Restrictions or preventive measures may be imposed on activities in sensitive areas.
5. Nature-based tourism and ecotourism are recognized as tourism that significantly contributes to enriching and enhancing the reputation of tourism, provided that they respect the natural heritage and local communities and are by the carrying capacity of locations.

### **Article 4.**

#### **Tourism as a Beneficiary and Contributor to the Cultural Heritage of Humanity**

1. Touristic resources are the common heritage of humanity; communities in whose territories these are located have special rights and obligations towards them.
2. Touristic policies and activities must be carried out with respect for artistic, archaeological, and cultural heritage. Special attention must be devoted to preserving and enhancing monuments, shrines, museums, and archaeological and historical sites, which should be widely open for tourist visits.
3. Financial resources collected from visits to cultural sites and monuments should be partially used, at a minimum, for the conservation, protection, and enhancement of these assets.
4. Planning of touristic activities should enable the preservation and development of traditional cultural products, crafts, and folklore rather than their degradation and standardization.

## **Article 5.**

### **Tourism as a Beneficial Activity for Host Countries and Communities**

1. The local community should be involved in touristic activities and fairly share the economic, social, and cultural benefits they generate, especially in creating direct and indirect employment.
2. Touristic policies should be implemented in a manner that helps raise the living standards of the communities in the visited regions and meet their needs. Planning and architectural approaches, as well as the operation of tourist resorts and accommodation facilities, should aim for their integration into the local economic and social context; where skills are equal, preference should be given to local labor.
3. Particular attention should be directed towards the specific problems of coastal and island areas and vulnerable rural or mountainous regions, for which tourism often represents a rare opportunity for development in the face of declining traditional economic activities.
4. Tourism professionals, especially investors, following rules set by public authorities, should conduct impact studies on the environment and natural surroundings. They should also transparently and objectively provide information about their future programs and their anticipated consequences and encourage dialogue on their content with interested parties.

## **Article 6.**

### **Obligations of Stakeholders in Tourism**

1. All operatives and individuals engaged in tourism shall be obliged to furnish tourists with objective and truthful information concerning destinations and conditions of travel, accommodation, and stay. Furthermore, they shall ensure that contractual terms are rendered transparent about the nature, cost, and quality of services provided, as well as financial indemnities in the event of unilateral termination of the contract on their part.
2. In collaboration with public authorities, all operatives and individuals in tourism shall be responsible for the safety, health, and food safety of those availing themselves of their services. They shall establish appropriate insurance and aid systems, adhere to the reporting duty under national regulations, and duly compensate for non-fulfillment of contractual obligations.
3. To the extent within their purview, all operatives and individuals in tourism shall contribute to the cultural and spiritual enrichment of tourists and afford them the practice of religion during their travels.

## **Article 7.**

### **Right to Tourism**

1. The right to personally and directly discover and enjoy the planet's resources shall be equally accessible to all world inhabitants. Increasing participation in national and international tourism should be considered one of the finest forms of leisure growth, unimpeded by barriers.
2. The universal right to tourism is recognized as ancillary to the right to rest and leisure, inclusive of reasonable limitations on working hours and periodic paid annual holidays, as guaranteed by Article 24 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and Article 7.d of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights.

## **Article 8.**

### **Freedom of Movement for Tourists**

1. Tourists and visitors, by international law and national legislation, shall be free to move within their countries and between states, consistent with Article 13 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They should have access to transit points, accommodation, and tourist and cultural locations without excessive formalities or discrimination.
2. Tourists and visitors shall have access to all available modes of communication, either internal or external; they should have quick and straightforward access to local administrative, legal, and health services; they should be free to contact consular representatives of their countries of origin in compliance with prevailing diplomatic conventions.

## **Article 9.**

### **Rights of Workers and Entrepreneurs in Tourism**

1. The fundamental rights of employees and self-employed individuals in the tourism industry and related activities shall be guaranteed under the supervision of national and local administrations of both their countries of origin and host countries, especially considering specific limitations related to the seasonality of their activities, the global dimension of their industry, and the flexibility often required due to the nature of their work.
2. Employees and self-employed individuals in the tourism industry and related activities have the right and duty to acquire appropriate initial and ongoing training; they should have suitable social protection; job insecurity should be minimized as far as possible; seasonal workers in the sector should be offered a special, especially in terms of their social care.

## **Article 10.**

### **Implementation of Principles of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism**

1. Public and private stakeholders in tourism development should collaborate in implementing these principles and oversee their practical application.
2. Stakeholders in the development of tourism should recognize the role of international institutions, among which the World Tourism Organisation holds a primary position, and non-governmental organizations competent in the field of the promotion and development of tourism, human rights, environment, or health, with due respect to general principles of international law.
3. The same stakeholders should indicate their intention to submit any disputes relating to the application or interpretation of the Global Code of Tourism for mediation before an impartial third party known as the World Committee on Tourism Ethics.

## **SUPPLEMENTARY PRINCIPLES**

### **Article 11.**

#### **Establishment of Anti-Corruption Mechanisms, in Touristic destination Activities**

1. All stakeholders in the tourism industry, including both the public and private sectors, are obligated to work towards establishing and applying mechanisms designed to combat corruption throughout all stages of the development and management of touristic destinations.
2. Public institutions overseeing touristic activities shall implement anti-corruption protocols, including impartial audits and transparent procedures for allocating licenses and permits. The private sector is expected to promote a culture of integrity and ethical conduct and shall be subject to laws and regulations fostering transparency and accountability.
3. Public reporting on anti-corruption measures and their outcomes should be regularly conducted and easily accessible to encourage public scrutiny and accountability.

### **Article 12.**

#### **Implementation of Transparent and Equitable Public Procurement**

1. Public institutions involved in the development and management of tourism are required to conduct general procurement processes that are transparent, equitable, and in conformity with international standards and practices.
2. All stages of public procurement, from the issuance of tenders to the awarding of contracts, must be documented and open to public review to minimize the potential for corruption or inequitable dealings.
3. In instances of a conflict of interest, parties involved in the procurement process should be recused from decision-making, and the situation should be resolved transparently and forthrightly.
4. Parties participating in public procurement processes, including bidders and service providers, are subject to ethical codes and standards prohibiting corruption, bribery, and other unethical behavior.

## **FINAL PROVISIONS**

### **Article 13.**

#### **Oversight and Reporting**

1. All stakeholders in the tourism sector are obliged to conduct regular audits to ensure compliance with this ethical code.
2. An independent body shall be established, tasked with monitoring the application of this code and reporting on its effectiveness.
3. Any party with a grievance or report regarding a breach of this code may approach the relevant authority for case consideration.

#### **Article 14.**

##### **Updates and Revisions of the Code**

1. This code is subject to periodic reviews to ensure its relevance and efficacy.
2. Any stakeholder may submit proposals for updating or amending the code and will be considered by the competent authority.

#### **Article 15.**

##### **Legal Status of the Code**

1. While this code represents a set of ethical guidelines, all parties involved in touristic activities are expected to adhere to its provisions.

#### **Article 16.**

##### **Commencement**

1. This ethical code shall come into force immediately upon its official publication.
2. All stakeholders are expected to take appropriate steps to ensure full compliance with all provisions of this code.