FOSTERING SME AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP DEVELOPMENT IN THE TOURISM SECTOR IN BULGARIA
Sofia, 22 June 2007

“Enhancing alternative tourism development”

Nicholas Vagionis
Economist,
Centre of Planning and Economic Research (CPER), Greece
What is Alternative Tourism?

- Non-massive tourism
- Environmentally sustainable
- Adapted to the local social resources
- Adapted to local natural resources
- Targeting environmentally & socially responsible customers
Why Alternative Tourism?

• Higher % of value added is locally produced and spread
• Unique area-specific Tourist Product
  – Better marketing with “Product -branding”
• Sensible use of local natural resources
• Better integration to social structure
  – (e.g. Vs all-inclusive mass tourism!)
• Creation of local “tourism receiving” culture
What types of Alternative Tourism?

1. Non massive & environmentally sustainable tourism

– Traditional mass-tourism receiving centres:
  • congested and stressing natural resources

– New, “small scale”, “all-over the country” potential destinations:
  • better natural and social adaptation
  • better development potential
What types of Alternative Tourism?

2. Adapted to the local social resources:
   Social structure and Production base

- Eco-museums of woodlands and carpentry
- Eco-museums of vineyards and vineries
- Eco-museums of ceramic producing villages / societies
- Eco-museums of silk producing farms
- Eco-museums of rose-farms
- Eco-museums of horse breeding villages / societies
What types of Alternative Tourism?

3. Adapted to local natural tourist resources

- *Wild life Reserves*: hosting birds, butterflies, deer and other wild life.
- *Monuments of Nature*: like Caves, Canyons, Waterfalls, that are sensibly touristically developed
- *Mountainous Land*: with mountain Refuges and connecting Network of Paths
- *Wetlands*: of the Ramsar treaty, and others
What types of Alternative Tourism?

4. Targeting environmentally & socially responsible customers

- They respect the social structure and natural environment
- They are willing to communicate with the local population
- They are willing to support the local economies
  - Buying local and exclusive “branded” products
  - Becoming customers of such products
  - Becoming “ambassadors” of Products and Region in their countries
What preconditions are needed?

1. Supporting legal framework
   - For agro-tourism, rural tourism, adventure tourism, eco-tourism, small tourism firms

2. Public – Private cooperation via
   - Local development agencies
   - Local, private, tourism developing agencies

3. Information flow to local level
   - With public and private efforts
What preconditions are needed?

4. National/Regional accrediting & auditing
   - For the new alternative tourism firms, according to the legislation and (inter)-national quality / safety specifications

5. National / regional training for alternative tourism staff
   - Specially designed multi level (entry-level, medium, expert) training for receiving alternative tourists.
   - Firms should employ a minimum of trained staff
Alternative tourism in Greece

1. National Authorities

Ministry of Tourist Development
National Tourism Organisation of Greece (www.ntog.gr)

2. Legislation

* 3rd Community Support framework 2000-2006
  “Fostering of entrepreneurship in alternative tourism”
  Investments from 40.000 to 200.000 Euro.
  new entrepreneurship at the local level of the provinces
3. Intermediate (private) development actors
Private tourism development companies

Example:
Agrotouristiki s.a. [www.agrotour.gr](http://www.agrotour.gr) (ΑΓΡΟΤΟΥΡΙΣΤΙΚΗ Α.Ε.)

* Forwards information for potential investments to local entrepreneurs all over the country.

* Carries out studies for development of alternative tourism private business.

* Is accredited by the government to audit such business for compliance to national specifications and provide the appropriate accreditation.
4. Local private alternative tourism firms

Example
Karteros Riding Center, Iraklion, Crete, Greece
Tel. +30 2810 380 244, mob. +30 6937 306 540

A family company. They have been carrying goods with horses and carts for two centuries.
The last generation saw the horse-cart business fading.
They started the “Holidays on Horseback” business.
They have success, mainly with international tourists.
Alternative tourism in Greece
Alternative tourism in Greece
Alternative tourism in Greece
Alternative tourism in Greece
Alternative tourism in Greece