

Best Practice 8: The European Cities Tourism (ECT) network

Scale: Transnational

Stage of tourism development: Mature

Main objective: Destination promotion

Categories of effects:

Effects on urban governance

- Networks of cities

Effects on quality of life

- Urban economies

The European Cities Tourism network aims at strengthening city tourism through exchange of information, knowledge, expertise and collaborative working on an operational level. Today, European Cities Tourism gathers more than 80 active members across 30 European countries. Different commissions work on specific themes, including information and communication technologies (ICT), research, statistics, marketing, benchmarking, communication and tourism management tools such as city cards. The network represents cities' interests at the European level and attracts all cities that nourish professional interests beyond national borders. The network comprises active, associate and affiliate members. Only cities with a population of 100 000 and more, a minimum of 3000 hotel beds, a congress centre, historical and architectural heritage and cultural events can become active members. Associate members can join all projects and activities but are not eligible to the Board; Affiliate members have a consultative role in the general assembly only. Main activities include exchange of expertise between cities, a permanent forum, the development of direct and personal contacts for long-life training and exchange of solutions between experts. For example in 2002, the Saint-Etienne tourism office (France) sent a delegation to Turin (Italy) - preparing the Winter Olympic Games of 2004 - to present its event management experience acquired during the Football World cup of 1998. A full time service centre is in charge of organizing the daily administration and the yearly conference of the network, which has become one of the more stable and visible in Europe. It has been selected as a good practice example in the recent Networking Study of EU Tourism Unit.

Sources: EC, DG Enterprise, Tourism Unit, Feasibility Study Networking Final Report. Cahier Espaces 78, "Tourism Urbain", July 2003.

Links:

<http://europa.eu.int/comm/enterprise/services/tourism/policy-areas/studies.htm>

http://www.revue-espaces.com/2003/librairie_espaces-3651.html

<http://www.europeancitiestourism.com/>