



BEST TOURISM VILLAGES INITIATIVE

VERSION 5.0
MARCH 2023

Our Vision

Make tourism a driver of rural
development and wellbeing

Our Mission

Advance the role of tourism in valuing and safeguarding rural villages along with their associated landscapes, knowledge systems, biological and cultural diversity, local values and activities.

Promote innovative and transformative approaches to the development of tourism in rural destinations that contribute to the three pillars of sustainability – economic, social and environmental – in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Our Objectives

1. Reduce regional inequalities in income and development
2. Fight depopulation
3. Progress gender equality and women's and youth empowerment
4. Promote rural transformation and strengthen traction capacity
5. Strengthen multi-level-governance, partnerships and the active involvement of communities
6. Improve connectivity, infrastructure, access to finance and investment
7. Advance innovation and digitalization
8. Innovate in product development and value chain integration
9. Promote the relationship between sustainable, equitable and resilient food systems and tourism
10. Advance the conservation of natural and cultural resources
11. Promote sustainable practices for a more efficient use of resources & a reduction of emissions and waste
12. Enhance education and skills

The Best Tourism Villages initiative

1. Best Tourism Villages
2. Upgrade Programme
3. Best Tourism Villages Network

Best Tourism Villages

The **Best Tourism Villages** aims to recognize a village which is an outstanding example of a rural tourism destination with recognized cultural and natural assets, that preserves and promotes community-based values, products and lifestyle and has a clear commitment to sustainability in all its aspects – economic, social and environmental with the fundamental aim of making tourism one of the drivers of positive transformation, rural development and community well-being.

Upgrade Programme

The **Upgrade Programme** will benefit a number of selected villages among those that do not fully meet the initiative criteria. These villages will be receiving support from UNWTO and Partners in improving elements of the areas identified as gaps in the evaluation process.

Best Tourism Villages Network

The members of the Network are those villages recognised as Best Tourism Villages by UNWTO, and those selected to participate in the Upgrade Programme.

The BTV Network is a space for exchanging experiences and good practices, learning, and opportunities among its members, and it is open to contributions of experts and public and private sector partners engaged in the promotion of tourism as a driver for rural development.

Requisites for application

In line with the UNWTO definition of Rural Tourism, a village must present the following features to be eligible for application:

- Have a low population density and a maximum of 15.000 inhabitants.
- Be located in a landscape with an important presence of traditional activities such as agriculture, forestry, livestock or fishing.
- Share community values and lifestyle.

UNWTO Member States are invited to submit up to a maximum of eight applications (villages)

Areas of evaluation



Cultural and Natural Resources



Promotion and Conservation of Cultural Resources



Economic Sustainability



Social Sustainability



Environmental Sustainability



Tourism Development and Value Chain Integration



Governance and Prioritization of Tourism



Infrastructure and Connectivity



Health, Safety and Security

Areas of evaluation

(1)



Cultural and Natural Resources

The village has natural and cultural (tangible and intangible) resources recognized at national, regional or international level.



Promotion and Conservation of Cultural Resources

The village is committed to the promotion and conservation of its cultural resources which make it unique and authentic.



Economic Sustainability

The village is committed to promote economic sustainability supporting business development, entrepreneurship and investment.

Areas of evaluation (II)



Social Sustainability

The village is committed to promote social inclusion and equality.



Environmental Sustainability

The village is committed to environmental sustainability through the promotion and/or dissemination of policies, measures and initiatives that advance the preservation and conservation of its natural resources and minimize the impact of tourism on the environment.



Tourism Development and Value Chain Integration

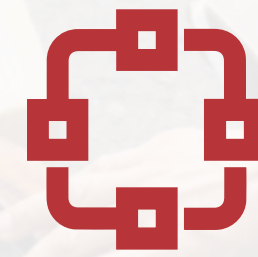
The tourism in the village is significantly marketed and developed. The village further promotes the enhancement of the tourism value chain and the competitiveness of the destination in areas related to market access, marketing and promotion, innovation, product development and quality.

Areas of evaluation (III)



Governance and Prioritization of Tourism

The village is committed to make tourism a strategic pillar for rural development. It promotes a governance model based on public-private partnerships, cooperation with other government levels and the engagement of the community.



Infrastructure and Connectivity

The village has infrastructure to facilitate access and communications that improve the wellbeing of rural communities, business development as well as visitors' experience.



Health, Safety and Security

The village has/is close to health, safety and security systems to safeguard residents and tourists.

PROCESS



UNWTO Best Tourism Villages Selection Process



WHAT IS A BEST TOURISM VILLAGE BY UNWTO?




A photograph of three hikers walking through a field of tall grass under a bright sky. The hiker on the left is a woman with curly hair, wearing a denim jacket and a backpack. The hiker in the middle is a woman wearing a plaid shirt and a beanie. The hiker on the right is a man with a beard, wearing a dark t-shirt and a backpack. The scene is bright and sunny, with a blue sky and rolling hills in the background.

*A village committed to a vision
of tourism as a tool for positive
transformation, inclusive and
sustainable development*

A group of women in traditional black and red beaded dresses performing a dance outdoors. The dresses are intricately decorated with colorful beads and patterns. The women are captured in a dynamic pose, with their arms raised, suggesting a traditional dance performance. The background is a bright, outdoor setting with green foliage.

*A village that
promotes and
protects its nature
and its culture*

A collage of food items including onions, a bowl of beans, and fresh produce. The background features a close-up of several onions with their roots, a bowl of white beans in a terracotta dish, and various fresh vegetables like green leafy herbs and a red bell pepper. The text is overlaid on a dark green semi-transparent banner.

*A village that
values its
gastronomy, its crafts
and its people*

*A village
that fosters
innovation &
entrepreneurship*

Air 84° F
Humidity 68%

National Park
KRKA, Croatia

Water 68° F



*A village
that
empowers its
community*

*A village that works
for the wellbeing
of residents and
visitors*



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<https://www.unwto.org/tourism-villages>

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