



THE VILAFRANCA DEL PENEDÈS TOWN COUNCIL SEEKS TO MAKE THE TOWN A SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DESTINATION

Recognising that:

1. Tourism is one of the world's largest industries and it is consequently a powerful creator of economic wealth and social and intercultural development which can stimulate social cohesion and integration among peoples, contributing to peace, prosperity and mutual cultural enrichment in an unequal world.
2. The development of tourism is based on the use of social, cultural and environmental resources. Therefore, the suitable conservation of these resources will be a key factor for the future competitiveness of the various tourist destinations.
3. Unsuitably conceived and managed tourism may have negative impacts on the identity, heritage and natural resources of the territory where it is focused and especially in the territories where there is a fragile balance of the various elements.
4. Likewise, tourist resources, including the intangible heritage of territories, are by definition a common good of humanity and, consequently, the preservation of such resources for future generations is a responsibility shared by all.
5. For this reason, tourist development should be responsible and sustainable in economic, sociocultural and environmental terms both at global level and for the local receiving system itself.
6. The wealth of humanity's history and cultural diversity are a permanent source of creativity and innovation, so they will be as necessary for tourism development as the selfsame hosting infrastructures and services of the tourist destinations. In this respect, the new technologies can offer strategic alternatives for the diversification of the tourist offer in the knowledge society, providing imaginative proposals for the enhancement of the cultural and social heritage of each destination.
7. This new scenario requires a change in the way of conceiving, managing and consuming tourism. The Public Administration on its various levels, the tourist organisations and enterprises, the social agents and the tourists themselves should form an active part of this process of change towards the sustainability of the tourism system as a whole.
8. The tourism policy should consequently be the outcome of a process of open, participative and interactive dialogue among all the stakeholders in tourism development, and the local community should play an essential role in this process.
9. A tourist destination is a complex system in which various biophysical environments and social lifestyles coexist, and this system is defined by a network of environmental, socio-economic and cultural relations.
10. The structure and functioning of destinations are defined through the exchange of practices and information derived from the



interaction of tourism stakeholders, visitors and local residents within an organisation marked by its own patterns of behaviour.

11. A tourist destination, as in the case of Vilafranca del Penedès, is based on the concept of a sustainable town with a history and a know-how of the greatest value, which is committed to ongoing improvement within its facet of sustainable tourism.

The Vilafranca del Penedès Town Council undertakes

to advance towards a new model of tourism development based on the principles of sustainability, cultural diversity and social responsibility, sharing a common future and defining a set of strategic actions based on:

1. The promotion of international discussion on the problems relating to cultural diversity and sustainability and their connection to tourism development, in the social, professional and scientific forums.
2. The development of means for raising awareness and of forms of cooperation among all the stakeholders concerned with the destination, oriented towards the safeguarding and enhancement of cultural diversity and towards a greater knowledge of the tangible and intangible heritage.
3. The promotion and favouring of the exchange of knowledge and good practices in the field of tourism addressed to fostering tourism that encourages responsible interaction with cultural diversity and sustainable development.

4. The promotion of demonstration projects which may serve as references for the development of sustainable tourism and which may highlight the cultural diversity of the destination.
5. The incorporation of cultural diversity as an essential tourism resource into programmes of research, training and education specialised in tourism.
6. To foster the application of the new information and communication technologies as instruments for the enhancement of the cultural diversity of destinations, and the favouring of a better understanding of these instruments by tourists.
7. The incorporation of policies and strategies for the preservation and enhancement of the cultural and natural heritage into the tourism planning process, with special attention to the intangible heritage because of its fragility.
8. The contribution to the creation, development and implementation of new tourism products and activities which favour the respectful use of the cultural, natural and intangible heritage.