

The ethical charter is promoted by:



ETHICAL CHARTER OF THE SCHOOL TOURISM

The school trip, one of the most beloved rituals by students, as it reveals itself to be a moment of discrepancy between the educational function of the school and the results that are managed to be obtained on the field: it is experienced as an exclusively leisure time instead of being **an experience of "non-formal" learning**.

The school trip in general, and in particular the educational trip, should be **an occasion for developing better knowledge of oneself, of others, and their relations**. This involves the **knowledge of the places, culture, memory, history and experiences of others**. The school trip is especially the construction of the sense of a journey, of a **training process** that fully engages the school curriculum, becoming an important part of it. Indeed it is itself a curriculum, able to forge links with many issues and push a rethinking of disciplinary maps.

General principles

The educational school trip, in this conception, is one of the many possible expressions of **responsible tourism**, which as stated in the definition of AITR¹, *Tourism is implemented according to the principles of social and economic justice and full respect of the environment and cultures. Responsible tourism recognizes the centrality of the local host community and its right to be a leader in sustainable tourism development and socially responsible for its own territory.* According to this definition, any trip and an educational trip require special attention on the consequences of their behaviour, from an environmental, social and economic point of view, and can therefore contribute to a greater awareness on the consumption patterns and new forms of active citizenship among young people.

You can then think about the construction of a new framework for tourism education starting from some **general principles** according to different types of tourism:

- 1.** Could and should contribute to the sustainable development of an area;
- 2.** It's an instrument of justice and social inclusion: it protects gender equity and the rights of the weaker section of the population;
- 3.** Recognizes the centrality of the local community and promotes opportunities for democratic participation;
- 4.** Supports the struggle for justice and condemns all criminal organizations, including mafias;
- 5.** It's an instrument for the protection of the environment and biodiversity;
- 6.** Promotes human rights and thus protects the dignity of people and their work;
- 7.** It's a tool to promote consumption patterns that are attentive with the impact it has on the community, the local environment and with the principles of fairness;
- 8.** Supports the production chain of a territory, promoting forms of sustainable economy: as organic farming, critical consumption, use of renewable energy;
- 9.** Promotes the exploitation of local cultural traditions, the respect for differences, and intercultural dialogue;
- 10.** The school can contribute to the development of citizenship skills , in particular those relating to the acquisition or consolidation of a responsible, collaborative and participatory behaviour.

The birth of the “Ethical Charter”

There are many people who for various reasons are engaged, in school tourism, including schools, institutions, specialized Tour Operator and associations. Yet on this issue there are few reference documents. The need to renovate school tourism directed us towards the construction of a participatory process of analysis and sharing for the creation of a school ethics charter of tourism, a path that lasted from 2010 to 2013.

In 2011, some high school teachers from “N. Copernicus” in Bologna, after an in-depth study on the theme of responsible tourism in collaboration with COSPE², have started a process of reflection on educational trips that led to the elaboration of a first charter on school tourism (adopted by the institute) based on the principles of AITR (Italian Association for Responsible Tourism).

In 2012 the seminar “For a quality tourism: travel experiences education in Italy and abroad” and the workshop “Which way for responsible tourism at school” were organized in Bologna, events promoted by COSPE and Yoda³ in collaboration with the Festival of Responsible Tourism IT.A.CA⁴, AITR, Coonger⁵ and the Province of Bologna. Thus, a work group⁶ was created on the theme, composed of teachers, representatives of travel agencies and/or tour operators, Ong, associations, local authorities and other interested subjects who have implemented a shared process of developing an “Ethics Charter on Tourism School” to be spread in Italian schools.

In 2013, thanks to the analysis of other cards (such as “Quality Charter” of the WWF, the “Identity Card for sustainable travel” and the Handbook “There are no bad travellers, there are misinformed travellers” of AITR) the document has been discussed and integrated at the world cafe “For a shared charter on responsible school tourism”, during the Festival IT.A.CA’.

We’ve therefore come to create this “Ethics Charter of School Tourism” which has **the following objectives:**

- promote the principles and values of responsible tourism in the educational institutions, and any person / entity responsible for organizing educational trips;
- promote the practice of organizing educational trips according to the principles of responsible tourism;
- use the trip as an instrument of education and multidisciplinary learning that can enrich the curricula of students who play an active role;
- use educational trips as an important opportunity for active citizenship by young people.

1 www.aitr.org

2 www.cospe.org

3 www.gruppoyoda.org

4 www.festivalitaca.net

5 www.coonger.net

6 Thanks to the participation of: Cospe, Yoda, Coonger, AITR, Province of Bologna, Italy Oxfam, WWF Italy, Istoreco, Atlantis Soc.Social, High School Artistic Isart Archangels of Bologna, Bologna ITCS Rosa Luxemburg, High School, Copernicus Bologna Planet Travel Association Cultural Interchange Italy China, Free, Wild Art Institute of Padua, LoveFlorence

Recommendations

In applying the principles above, we suggest, without limitation, certain guidelines or recommendations to inspire the realization of educational trips that can serve to enrich and deepen the learning modules already included in the school curricula.

AT SCHOOL: BEFORE DEPARTURE

(for headmasters, teachers and students)

- Involve students in the selection of content and organization of the trip, reducing to minimum the disclosure front, emphasizing teamwork and giving space to different expectations. For students, particularly in the tourist sector institutions, it can represent an experience of "education in action";
- Diversify the destinations, considering the huge value (cultural, artistic, historical) of "minor" resorts in Italy and seek as much information as possible about the place / country that you are about to visit: history, culture, economy, nature, religion, gastronomy;
- Verify the possibility of organizing the trip, not only during the usual months where the school has trips (April / May) but also during the school year. If possible, give priority to the exchange trips with reception of a foreign family allowing direct experience with the locals and a reduction of costs;
- Evaluate the possibility of recognizing credits for students who undertake travel arrangements (eg. looking for information) during after school's hours;
- Analyze and capitalize on the experience already experienced in previous years by the children or by other schools, with whom to contact, and also to create a network between different referents;
- Work for the creation of a "project" on a topic that can proceed throughout the school year. As a consequence, this journey becomes a moment of experiential learning integrated into the educational project. This also facilitates the possibility of obtaining partnerships with private subjects willing to support the projects (and travel), and funding from public entities;
- Create projects in collaboration with tour operators / associations to identify tourism education packages that respond to educational needs that can be replicated in schools;
- Choose travel agencies / tour operators professionally and ethically oriented (subjects with licensed for commercialization and / or mini licenses in accordance with local regulations);
- Ask the travel organizers and / or service providers to guarantee the quality of travel from an ethical point of view (environmental, economic, social).

WHILE TRAVELING

(for students and teachers)

- Organize meetings with representatives of local community associations to learn about individual and collective experiences and stories;
- Provide opportunities for sharing of local everyday life, focusing on stays at adequate reception facilities for this purpose;
- Give priority to practical experiences, direct observation and data collection in the field, creating travel diaries or blogs that help to document and convey the experience even from an emotional point of view;
- If possible, provide moments to explore nature, respect the environment, accompanied by an experienced guide of the place;
- Minimize the ecological footprint of the class (waste reduction, use of transport collective waste, reduction in the consumption of water, energy, ...);
- Privilege tourist services (transport, accommodation, services ...), managed by the local population, to support the local economy, and low environmental impact;
- Privilege meals based on local produce, even when it comes to packed lunch (preferably consisting of local products that students can buy directly from producers: cheese and bakeries, mills, etc.);
- Observe elementary rules of conduct in respect of the host community and environment (respect for rules, not engage in an offensive conduct to the uses and local customs, choose a dress code, ask permission to take photos and videos, do not take souvenirs from natural environments and / or archaeological sites; do not buy products made with plants and / or animals at risk of extinction ..).

AT SCHOOL: RETURNING FROM THE EDUCATIONAL SCHOOL TRIP

(for headmasters, teachers and students)

- Carry on the learning “path” undertaken after the journey to reflect, make synthesis, process the data and experiences (through discussions, written assignments, questionnaires, etc.);
- Keep track of the events and places you visited during the experience (video, photos, website ...) in order to preserve the memory and make it accessible to those who wish to repeat the experience or spread this experience to a wider audience;
- Take cues from the trip and exploit the incentives created during the meetings to develop projects that will have an effect on your school and on your home territory, identifying associations that work on the voyage theme (legal education, environmental education, intercultural education, etc...);
- Maintain relationships and bonds with people, associations, institutions of the visited place;
- Evaluate the ecological impact of travel and identify any “compensation”;
- Facilitate the translation of your experience into concrete actions and promote pathways to promote active citizenship.

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