

SUSTAINABLE

Conferences & Events



Ευρωπαϊκή Ένωση

Ευρωπαϊκό Ταμείο
Περιφερειακής Ανάπτυξης



Διαρθρωτικά Ταμεία
της Ευρωπαϊκής Ένωσης στην Κύπρο



Κυπριακή Δημοκρατία

ReSTART 2016-2020
SEARCH
ΠΡΟΓΡΑΜΜΑΤΑ ΕΡΕΥΝΑΣ, ΤΕΧΝΟΛΟΓΙΚΗΣ ΑΝΑΠΤΥΞΗΣ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΙΝΟΤΟΜΙΑΣ

A JOINT EFFORT

Towards the achievement of a Sustainable future in Cyprus according to the EUROPE 2020 Strategy (EU strategy for smart, sustainable & inclusive growth)



Two Leading Organizations





TOP KINISIS TRAVEL PLC

CONFERENCES & EVENTS DEPARTMENT

A leading tourism organization with access to the local and international markets and with immense experience in tourism and in particular the organization and handling of high-profile conferences and events.

TOP KINISIS is the host organization and will lead 6 out of the 7 Work Packages of the Sustainable Conferences & Events project. Furthermore, the TOP KINISIS team members will contribute to all WPs based on their knowledge and expertise.



AKTI Project and Research Centre

An NGO that has been working on sustainability in Cyprus for over 15 years and has developed strong ties with the island's hospitality industry through essential initiatives aiming at raising environmental awareness and promoting sustainable development.

AKTI is the partner organization of the Sustainable Conferences & Events project and will lead WP3. AKTI will be responsible for the successful development and implementation of the actions of WP3 as well as for providing valuable input to all other Work Packages and activities that will be led and implemented by TOP KINISIS.



PROJECT OVERVIEW

Conference Tourism is a major business sector; according to the International Congress & Convention Association, it has witnessed a rapid growth during the last decade. Although the conference & events industry is highly contributing to Cyprus economy, at the same time the arrival of hundreds of participants can overwhelm the local infrastructure, creating a significant amount of waste and generating a large amount of greenhouse gases, which leave behind a big carbon footprint.

Stakeholders involved in the sector need to understand the carbon impact of the Conferences & Events industry and undertake the responsibility of keeping the positive impact higher than the negative by educating themselves and by using the right tools to plan and manage their conferences/events in a sustainable way. Adapting sustainability in planning conferences/events will lead to financial advantages, environmental improvements, social benefits, the creation of a positive image for the stakeholders involved and help raise awareness of climate change issues and actions that must be taken to reduce or offset greenhouse gas emissions.

Although currently there are several sustainability standards and tools available in the market to help measure and track the overall sustainability of an event; standards like ISO 20121, the event management system and certification launched for the 2012 London Olympics, the Convention Industry Council's APEX/ASTM Green Meeting and Events Standards, Cypriot enterprises in the tourism industry are not utilizing them effectively for many reasons; lack of sustainability awareness, insufficient legal framework & policy enforcement, misconceptions about the cost of sustainability adoption and lack of easy "all-in-one" friendly user tools.

SCE project is aiming at contributing substantially towards the achievement of a Sustainable future according to the EUROPE 2020 Strategy (EU strategy for smart, sustainable & inclusive growth) through balancing the environmental, social and economic responsibilities of the conferences and events that are organized by Top Kinisis, envisioning to become one of the top preferred providers for sustainable conferences & events in Cyprus and Europe, and inspiring other organizations to follow their lead.

KEY PERSON PROFILE

Despina Papadopoulou-Kakkoura, Project Manager at Research, Innovation & New Markets Department – TOP KINISIS

Mrs Kakkoura holds an MSc degree in Management Information Systems from the Maastricht School of Management, Netherlands and a BSc degree in Management Information Systems from the University of Indianapolis, USA.

With an experience of over 20 years in managing EU funded projects and an extensive knowledge on professional training methods, Mrs Kakkoura has been assigned the coordination of the SCE project.

Mr Kakkoura is a Certified Training Professional; knowledgeable about theories and methods used in designing, developing and delivering successful training programs and adult learning concepts. She has developed numerous training manuals for training seminars and has helped hundreds of trainees reach their goals. She has also designed numerous training seminars to meet the specific needs of several companies and organizations both in the private and public sectors in Cyprus.

Ms Kakkoura has also served as the Project Manager/Coordinator/Partner in several EU projects and events and has been the Training Partner in a number of Leonardo and Equal (Channel of Access) EU funded projects. She is also the author of many successful European co-funded projects, two of which; FEMINA and HERMES were selected among the best of their year of call and were presented as best practices in the annual contacts meeting in Brussels.

As the Project Manager of the Research, Innovation & New Markets Department, Ms Kakkoura is engaged in new product research and development, existing product updates, quality checks and innovation and she supports the organisation to get involved into high-end research to enrich its product line.

Kakkouras Constantinos, Managing Director – TOP KINISIS

Dinos Kakkouras has been working in the Travel & Tourism industry for more than 30 years. He holds a BA degree in Economics, and he is the Managing Director of Top Kinisis Travel Public Ltd as well as the former President of the Board of ACTA (Association of the Cyprus Travel Agents). Mr Kakkouras will greatly assist in the efforts towards creating links with governmental bodies and travel & tourism associations and groups for facilitating the effective adoption and promotion of the products delivered through the project.

The Work Package Leaders

Maria Vilanidou, Project Coordinator – TOP KINISIS

Maria Vilanidou holds an MA in Communications, NYIT degree with 20 years of experience mostly within the Publicis network, in creating powerful strategies and leading brands and communication teams. Her business experience stems from the Account Management of National and International Brands and it expands in the spectrum of Business and Strategic Planning, Communication, Advertising, Public Relations, Event Management, Digital Marketing, Consultancy and New Business Development.

Ms Vilanidou has also managed and supervised Governmental and European co-funded projects as well as International Projects under most of the Ministries in Cyprus.

Ms Christina Distra, Conference Manager – TOP KINISIS

Christina Distra has over 14 years of practice in Business Administration activities and extensive experience in Conference Management. She holds an MBA degree from CIIM, Cyprus, a BA degree in Tourism Studies from Bournemouth University, UK and a Higher National Diploma in Travel and Tourism Management from Alpine Center, Greece. After completing her studies, Ms Distra joined Top Kinisis Travel, at the position of Executive Conference Coordinator until 2009 where she undertook the organization and operation of local and international conferences on behalf of private and public sector organizations. In 2010 she was promoted to the position of Operations Manager. Her position involved the coordination of day-to-day operation matters of the Organization including project preparations, proposals for introducing new services, human resources and preparation of EU funding proposal and management following their approval.

As of 2013, Ms Distra has been the Conference Manager of Top Kinisis. She is in charge for its Business Development and is accountable for client proposals and contracts.

Kyriaki Demetriou, Head Project Manager – AKTI

Kyriaki Demetriou is the Head Project Manager of AKTI. She has graduated the Department of Turkish Studies of the University of Cyprus and she has a Master Degree in Contemporary European Studies from the University of Sussex, United Kingdom.

She has extensive experience in leading European and nationally funded projects working with diverse target groups.

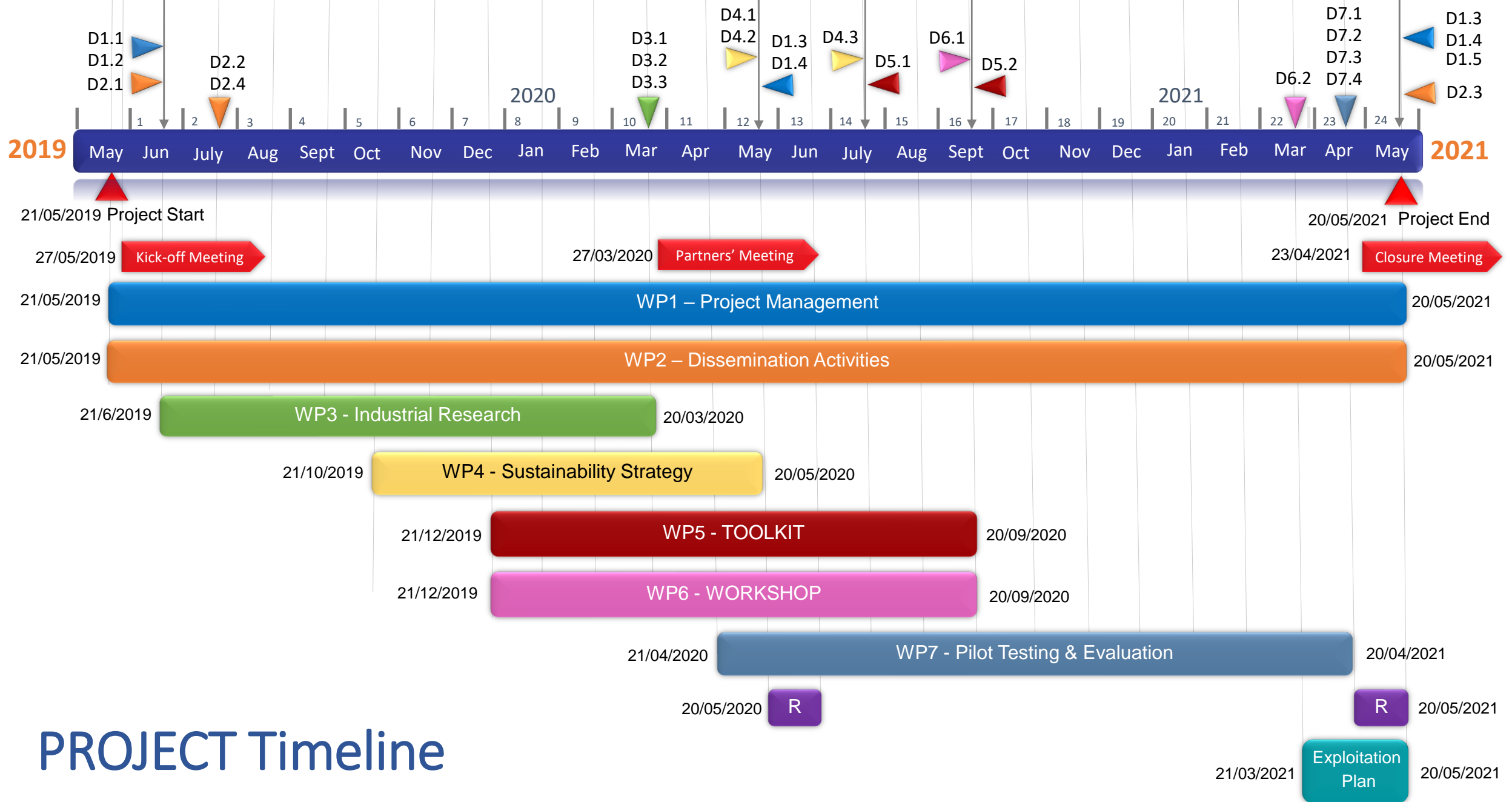
Xenia I. Loizidou, Founder and member of the Board of Directors - AKTI

Xenia I. Loizidou holds a Degree in Civil Engineering from the National Technical University of Athens (Hydraulics Section, Harbour and Coastal Works Laboratory), an MSc, DIC in River, Estuary and Coastal Engineering from Imperial College of Science, Technology and Medicine of London, and a PhD in Participatory Decision-Support Systems from Aristotle University. Since 1990 she has been working with issues relevant to Integrated Coastal Zone Management, coastal erosion control, coastal adaptation to climate changes, decision support systems, peace-building and blue growth.

She is one of the founders and a Member of the Board of Directors of the NGO AKTI Project and Research Centre, and she is active in the area of environment, education, social inclusion and awareness raising. She was the first Chair-woman of the Environmental Committee of the Cyprus Chamber of Engineers (1997- 2002), she was Ambassador of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Greece for the European Network of Coastal Research (2007-2011), she is a Member of the European Jury of the Quality Coast Award.

The President of the Republic of Cyprus appointed Xenia as the Greek Cypriot Chairwoman of the Technical Committee on Gender Equality within the peace-building negotiations in Cyprus and as a Member of the Board of Directors of the Cyprus Tourism Organisation (2014-2018). In September 2019, Xenia was awarded the title of ‘Ambassador of the Mediterranean Coasts 2019’ by the United Nations Environment Programme’s PAP/RAC.

She is an experienced trainer and training module writer, having implemented trainings to hundreds of key stakeholders, in Cyprus and abroad.

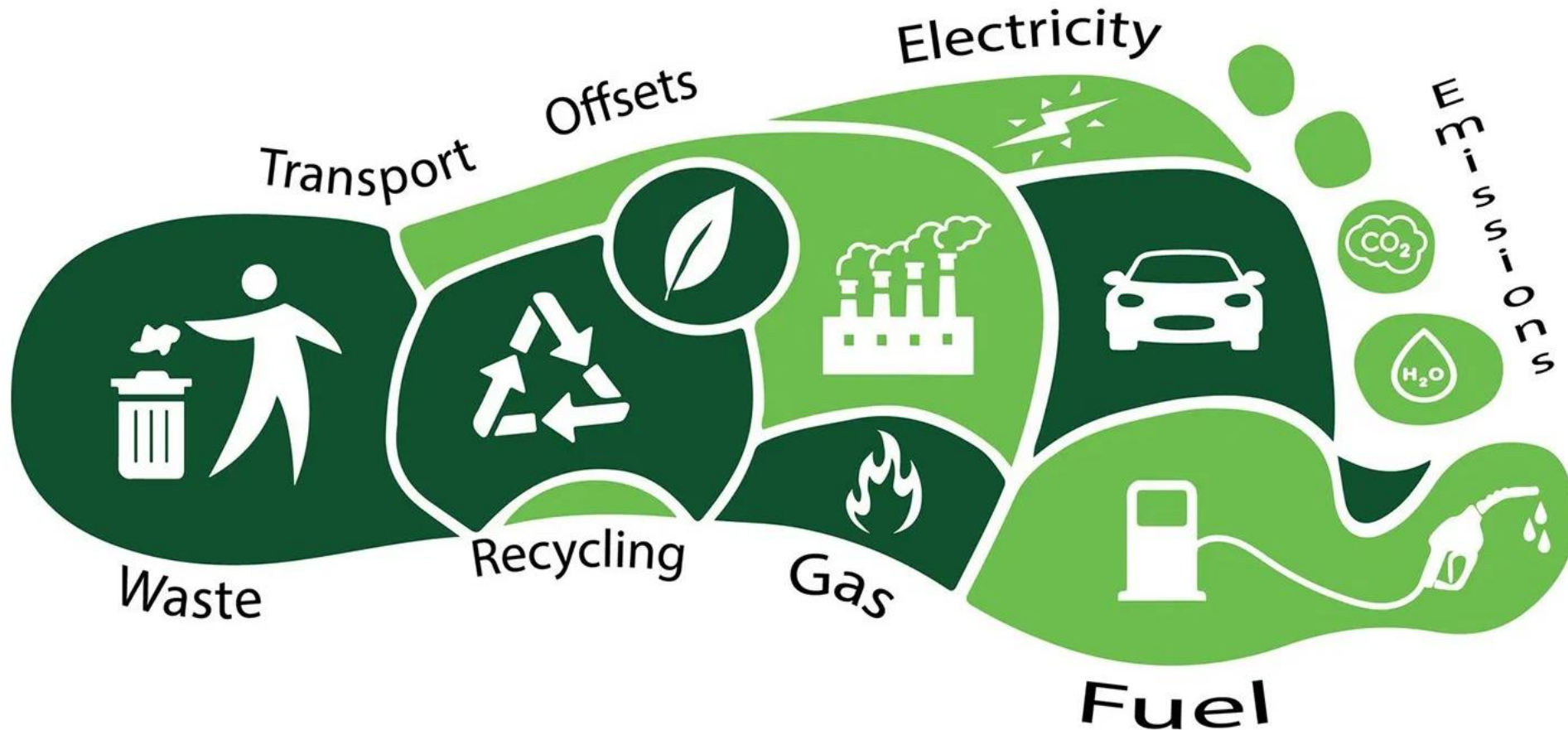


THE CONCERN ABOUT CONFERENCES & EVENTS

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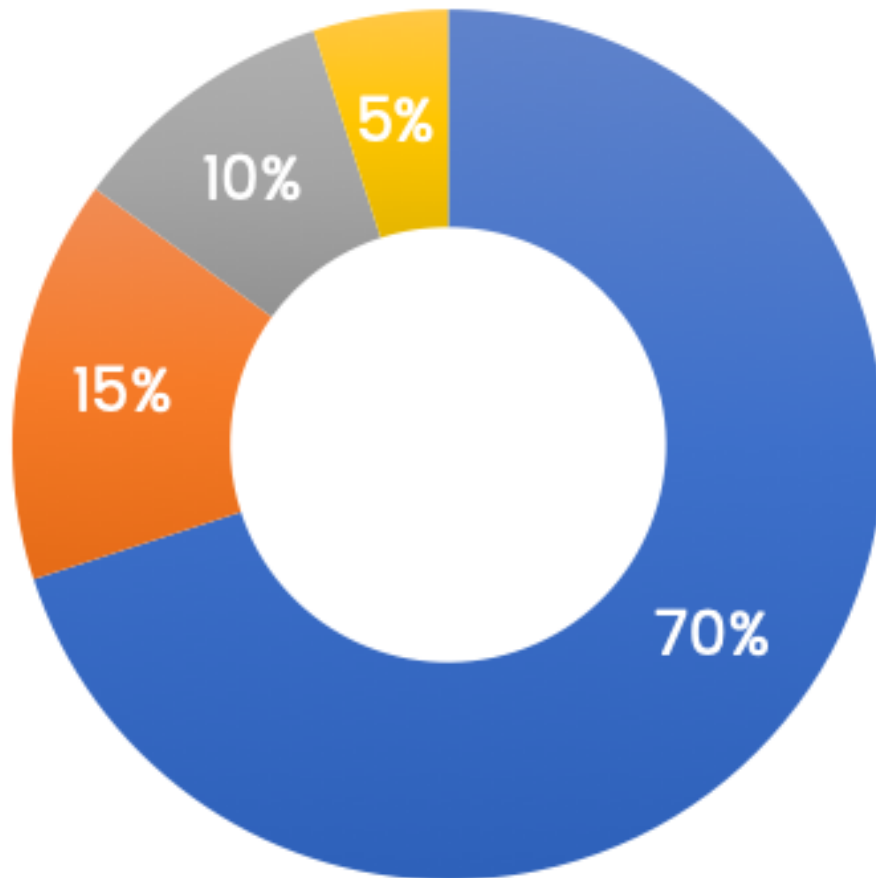
CARBON FOOTPRINT

Is the total amount of greenhouse gases produced to directly and indirectly support human activities, usually expressed in equivalent tons of carbon dioxide (CO₂).



CARBON FOOTPRINT PROFILE OF A TYPICAL CONFERENCE

Conferences can produce 1,000 – 2,000 lbs of CO₂ or more per attendee, depending on the event.



- Travel
- Lodging
- Food and beverage
- Energy requirements

THE PROBLEM

The problem that exists in Cyprus and to a lesser degree in Europe, is the lack of understanding and sensitivity of the environmental damage that tourism creates in general, and more specifically conferences and events.

This problem derives from lack of environmental education and resistance to change.

AWARENESS

Stakeholders involved in the sector need to understand the carbon impact of the Conferences & Events industry and undertake the responsibility of keeping the positive impact higher than the negative by educating themselves and by using the right tools to plan and manage their conferences/events in a sustainable way.

DO IT RIGHT



Being able to offer high quality Sustainable Conferences and Events, the tourism industry will ensure the viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations and enterprises, so that they are able to continue to prosper and deliver benefits in the long term. It will also strengthen the quality of life in local communities, including social structures and access to resources, amenities and life support systems as well as engage and empower local communities in planning and decision making on the management and future development of tourism in their area.

WE ARE AIMING AT

- ✓ Introducing a new upgraded service in the Cyprus travel and tourism industry: *“Planning and Management of Sustainable Conferences and Events”*.
- ✓ Establishing and steadily increasing by at least 10% the economic, social and environmental benefits through the organization of sustainable events on a yearly basis.
- ✓ Creating and strengthen awareness on sustainability matters related to the organization of conferences and events.

POSITIVE IMPACT

The organization of Sustainable Conferences and Events has a range of positive impacts on the environment, culture and economy:

- ✓ Minimises the negative impact on the environment by aiming to 'green' the entire value chain of conferences and events, thus minimising the overall GHG emissions. This is achieved through, inter alia, the reduction of the consumption of resources, including water and energy, the implementation of the waste hierarchy of reduce-reuse-recycle-dispose, the promotion of reusable over disposable products, the selection of locally and organically produced items/food, and the minimisation of the emissions related to transport.
- ✓ Promotes the local culture by utilizing local food, services and products during the conference/event.
- ✓ Increases the social benefits for all stakeholders involved (recruiting local people, supporting SMEs (catering, cleaning, IT supply) and showcasing successful local products.
- ✓ Creates a demand for more Sustainable products and services.
- ✓ Promotes the development of innovative and Sustainable technologies and techniques.

BENEFITS

The benefits of incorporating sustainability considerations into conference and event organisation can be numerous; **causing environmental improvements, economic advantages and social benefits.**

This can also spark secondary positive effects such as **innovation** in the marketplace by stimulating new product development and growth and finally by **raising awareness and inspiring change**, creating long-term benefits for the broader community.

Cyprus can take advantage of this developing new “sustainable” market and become a key player by providing Sustainable Conference and Events tourism services. The organization of such services may become a new Unique Selling Point (USP) or a strong competitive advantage in Cyprus and lead to an increased number of Conferences and Events especially during the low season periods.

PROJECT DELIVERABLES

The overall deliverable of this project is a new upgraded service in the travel industry; “Planning and Management of Sustainable Conferences and Events” that will utilize the following products developed through the project:

- 1. *The “Planning and Managing Sustainable Conferences and Events” Toolkit***
consisting of a collection of efficient and simple to use electronic documents and other online tools that will allow the user to plan, manage and deliver successfully Sustainable Conferences and Events.
- 2. *Event Management platform:*** the structure of the Sustainability Module of the online Event Management platform presented through rapid prototyping, to provide the user with the tools required for creating a Sustainable conference/event profile within the event management platform.

...PROJECT DELIVERABLES

- 3. *Training Workshops leading to certification:*** the pilot workshops will focus on creating sustainability awareness/appreciation and fostering effective use of the “Planning and Managing Sustainable Conferences and Events in Cyprus” Toolkit and the use of the sustainable online electronic platform. The structure and contents of these workshops will result in the development of certified training material for key stakeholders (event/conference planners, service providers etc.).
- 4. *Sustainability Strategy:*** this strategy aims to contribute to a better world through the implementation of Sustainable business, focusing on the Conferences and Events business. The strategy will also include suggestions and actions for influencing the existing policies towards making them more efficient, thus, contributing to a sustainable future in Cyprus.

WHAT IS EXPECTED

The implementation of the ***Sustainable Conferences & Events*** project is expected to have a positive impact in the adoption of Sustainable Conferences and Events in Cyprus.

The deliverables of the project will offer the opportunity to any Conference and Event Organizer to become more aware about sustainability issues and work effectively and efficiently with the new “Planning and Managing Sustainable Conferences and Events in Cyprus” Toolkit provided which will breakdown the planning process of Sustainable Conferences and Events into manageable steps.

For further information please contact us



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