

"European Tourism: Building a sustainable future"

3rd meeting of the project in Scotland

LLP Leonardo da Vinci program

A two-year multilateral Partnership

In relation to the above-mentioned partnership we report on the third meeting of the concerned project. It took place from the 14th to 18th October in Scotland where representatives for the "Leonardo da Vinci" were the teachers: Alosi, Picciolo and prof. L. Celebre expert of tourism and external coordinator. During the study visit the Italian beneficiaries met the Spanish (APLALS) and the British partners (ARCH) to deepen the topics as the subject of the partnership. The preparatory visit, following the principles and aims of the program "Leonardo da Vinci", aimed at the improvement of the quality of the long-term life building through the transfer of innovative knowledge and the related practices in order to update the staff involved in the formation. Besides, it gave the people the opportunity to transfer and learn contents and competences by the exchange of information with the colleagues of the European countries through conferences, seminars...

Each member of the group gave his/her own contribution according to his/her work experience for the sector they belonged to. Theme of discussion was the sustainable tourism and in particular that one of the improvement of the tourist product through new ways and practices of sustainability.

As first day, after a preliminary meeting of the participants, we went to Cromrie Croft, an example of enterprise that uses natural resources to let visitors experience cycling, campsite or hostel accommodation, then we visited Crannog centre, a unique example of the Neolithic civilization existing in Scotland. The museum is well run and includes facilities for schools. Before lunch we saw an Open studio, an artisan factory of the chocolate. Everywhere, owners or managers illustrated the history, development of each location and what strategies are used to run and improve them. In the afternoon we had a land rover safari. An unforgettable experience and a very ecological way to visit places. Here also, we were informed by the owner about the successful results of this new enterprise. On the second day as study visit we moved to see the Hotel Crieff Hydro where we heard the presentation of the Director. The Hotel is very big and it gives employment to about 800 workers. Soon after we visited an information tourist centre in Pitlochry where the employees themselves explained how it is run.

Lunch was served at Hotel Atholl Palace, situated in the middle of a woods and in an ancient castle. There we met Sally Spaven, the coordinator of a city committee who has invented "Pitlochry in bloom". As regards this event the city has won several national and international awards, today it is the avant-guard city in the world.

Then we visited Blair Atholl Castle where Mr A. B. Wootton manager of Blair Atholl Estate reported on the private enterprise and how it is run; here the group was joined by Mr Mike Strachan, policy and development Officer forestry Commission, who took us around the Park and to the Queen's View, a very famous and photographed view in Scotland.

On the third day we enjoyed the visit of a big economic and tourist reality such as the Castle of Stirling. Firstly, Mr Bill Cameron, manager of all Historic Scottish sites, informed us on the way they are managed and then we had a very interesting tour of the Castle with a very prepared guide.

We reached Edimburgh by train to see the Whisky Museum and after a presentation by Scotch Whisky Experience we had a conference on the sustainable tourism in Scotland held by Mrs Liz Buchanan, Regional director of VisitScotland.

At the end of the day the participants drew the conclusions on these three days and discussed what topics the partners are interested in deepening on the next study visit which will take place in Sicily.

The conclusion of all the meetings will be widespread in each country of origin in both the public and private sector, small and medium enterprises and in the educational context, so that the operators of the sector may exploit knowledge, competences and skills of the students, future operators of tourism. The project in its complex, leads to encourage actively a long term formation of professional figures working in the tourist sectors, of teachers and students. It all so contributes to the personal and professional development of the beneficiaries as continuous formation and enriches their personal curriculum.

The main objectives achieved in the second meeting of the project were the following:

-exchange of experiences and practical examples for the development and diffusion of the training and for the exploration of any chance of transfer of experience and practical examples of professional training from a country to another communitarian one

- identification of eventual gaps in their own tourist offer.
- Development of European approaches to the teaching of new technologies to increase the tourist sector.
- Exchange of experiences among tourist operator, trainers and educational figures who will have to interact in the tourist field.
- Improvement of operational skills within the tourist European industry.
- Planning of activity in current or in evolution project
- building of the basis for future partnerships.

The group of teachers from ITCGT "Leonardo da Vinci,"to widespread the beginning of the project, has also agreed to adopt some measures in the immediate future. In particular they will start with the classes of the teachers involved in the study visit then they will extend the project to the students of all the tourist sector and to the whole community.