



## Capacity Building of VET providers in the Sustainable Tourism

### Newsletter no. 1

Welcome to the first edition of the SustainTour Newsletter!

SustainTour is a three-year Erasmus+ project designed to strengthen the capacity of VET providers and boost sustainable transformation in the tourism sector across the Western Balkans. By introducing the new occupational profile of the “Sustainable Tourism Advisor”, the project connects training institutions with SMEs in hospitality and tourism, supporting businesses to integrate green, digital, and social practices into their daily operations.

### Shaping the Future of Tourism in the Western Balkans

Tourism is a vital driver of growth and employment in the Western Balkans, yet the sector faces challenges in adapting to sustainability demands, digitalisation, and changing market expectations. SustainTour addresses these challenges through innovative training opportunities, closer links between education and the labour market, and a strong focus on future-oriented competences.

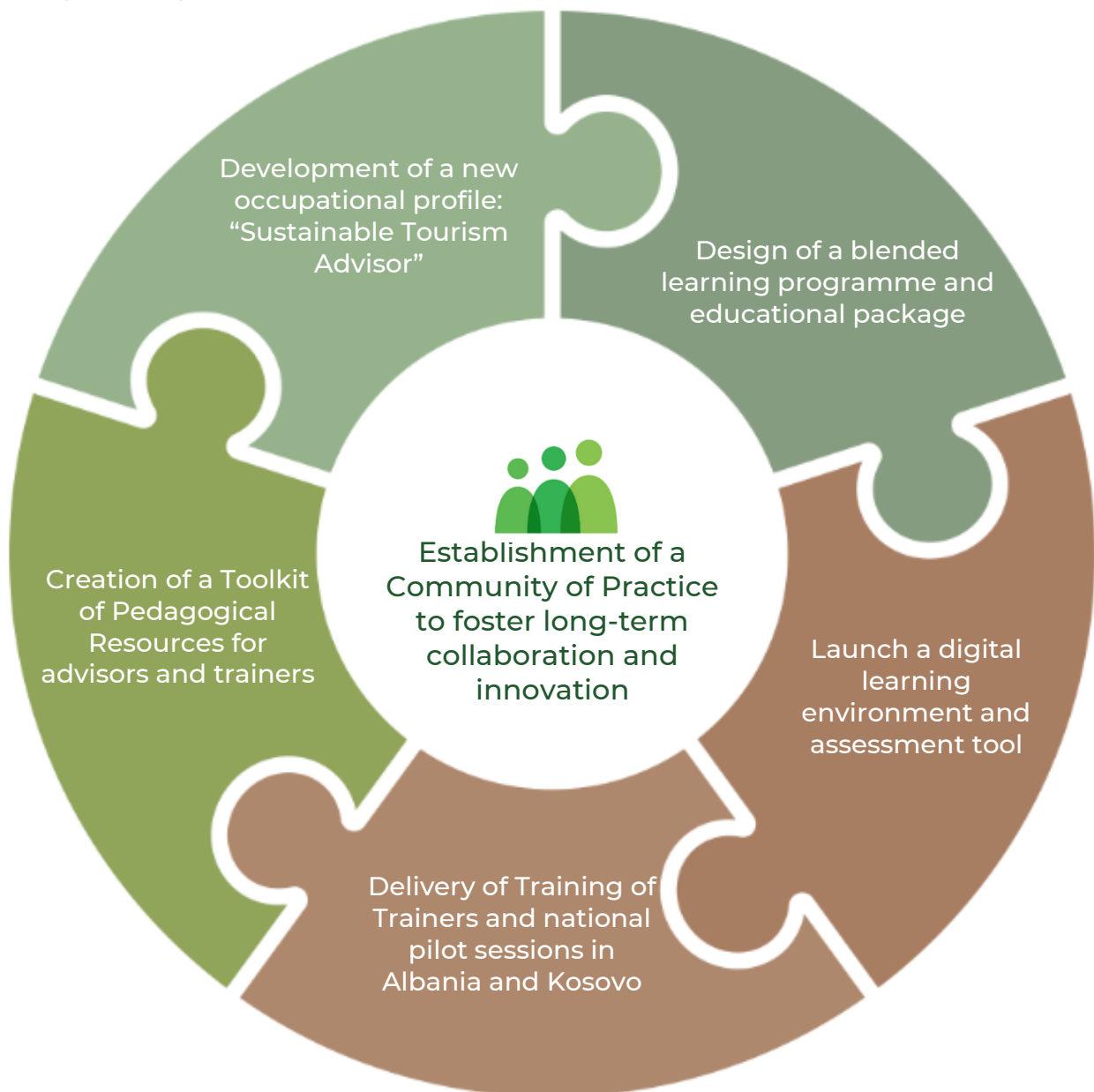


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## What to Expect from SustainTour

Discover the **key outcomes** that will drive our work, delivering tangible results for VET providers, trainers, and SMEs:



## Our Progress So Far

In the first months of SustainTour, we carried out **desk research** in Albania and Kosovo, reviewing policies, strategies, and sustainability tools in tourism against European standards. This allowed us to identify the main needs and challenges SMEs face in adopting sustainable practices.

Building on these insights, **field research** through focus groups in both countries provided valuable perspectives on the current situation and future skills needed in the tourism sector.

The findings are being consolidated into **National Reports for Albania and Kosovo**, which will feed into a **Comparative Report**. This will guide the identification of competence areas and support the design of the Sustainable Tourism Advisor profile and training curriculum.

These initial steps have created strong momentum, ensuring the next phase of the project directly addresses the realities of the tourism sector in the Western Balkans.

## Kick-Off Meeting & Familiarization Workshop – Larissa, Greece

The SustainTour partnership came together in Larissa, Greece, on March 19–21, 2025, for the project's first in-person meeting.

The Kick-off Meeting, hosted by BEE GROUP, set the stage for our collaboration. Partners shared their expertise, built a common understanding of the project's goals, and discussed how we will work together to shape the new Sustainable Tourism Advisor profile. The meeting was also a chance to strengthen ties across countries and set the foundations for smooth cooperation in the months ahead.

Following the TPM, DIMITRA hosted a two-day Familiarization Workshop, where partners explored how European frameworks such as the EQF and EQAVET can guide the design of training content. With a mix of presentations and group activities, the workshop helped translate theory into practice and encouraged reflection on how learning outcomes can support the tourism sector's transition to greener, more digital, and more inclusive pathways.

These first steps in Larissa created a strong sense of partnership and prepared the ground for the important work that lies ahead.

## SustainTour Partnership

The consortium brings together 8 partners from Greece, Cyprus, Spain, Albania, and Kosovo, joining forces to advance sustainable tourism through innovation in VET.

### Lead partner: Bee Group (Greece)



Bee Group proudly coordinates the SustainTour project, bringing 30+ years of experience in

innovative solutions across Greece and Europe. Based in Larissa, the organization combines expertise in digital transformation, project consulting, and strategic communication through its three divisions: bee.Technology (e-learning systems and platforms), bee.Consulting (planning, funding, and project management), and bee.Communication (visibility campaigns

and events). As project leader, Bee Group ensures smooth implementation, fosters collaboration, and promotes innovation in sustainable tourism with a strong focus on impact and excellence.

### Project Partner 2: Dimitra Education & Consulting (Greece)



Founded in 1989, DIMITRA is a leading Greek provider of Vocational Education and Training (VET), Adult Education, and Lifelong Learning. Accredited for both Initial and Continuing VET, it has modernized the Greek



**KICK-OFF MEETING**  
of SustainTour

VET system and contributes to European initiatives on inclusive, sustainable, and skills-based education. With training centres in five cities and ISO 9001:2015 certification, DIMITRA delivers blended and digital learning tailored to labour market needs. It brings expertise in vocational training, sustainability, and capacity building, supporting green, digital, and inclusive skills for VET providers and SMEs in tourism.

**Project Partner 3: Mediterranean Management Center (Cyprus)**



Founded in 2002 in Nicosia, MMC

empowers organizations and individuals through innovative training, development, and project solutions. It delivers tailored programs in communication, leadership, project management, and personal development, led by internationally recognized consultants. MMC also implements EU and co-funded projects promoting education, sustainability, entrepreneurship & inclusion and organizes impactful events such as the Annual Conference for Personal Assistants. With a client-focused approach and strong commitment to quality, MMC helps organizations achieve meaningful results in a fast-changing world.

**Project Partner 4: Albacademy (Albania)**



Founded in 2017 in Tirana, Albacademy empowers

individuals and organizations through high-quality education and training. With expertise in vocational training, sustainability, and capacity building, it offers professional programs and consultancy tailored to the tourism sector. Offering 30+ courses in hospitality, IT, marketing, sales, and management, Albacademy provides online,

offline, and hybrid formats to meet diverse needs. Its focus on hospitality management, customer service, and sustainable practices equips learners with industry-relevant skills, while EU-funded projects support innovation and growth in education and tourism.

**Project Partner 5: Universum International College – UNI (Kosovo)**



Universum International College (UNI) is a leading higher

education institution in Kosovo with campuses in Prishtina, Ferizaj, and Gjakova. Accredited by the Kosovo Accreditation Agency and holding the Erasmus Charter, UNI offers recognized degrees in the EU. In partnership with Arizona State University, UNI provides dual degrees, international curricula, and mobility through 220+ Erasmus+ projects in 26 countries. UNI offers bachelor's and master programs in business, IT, design, health sciences, law, political science, psychology, and more, focusing on innovation and global careers.

**Project Partner 6: University Aleksandër Moisiu Durrës – UAMD (Albania)**



UAMD is Albania's fastest-growing public university, with around 20,000 students across three study cycles. A student-centred

institution, it fosters critical thinking, responsibility, and social commitment, offering degrees in Albanian and English under ECTS and USCs systems. UAMD leads and partners in multiple Erasmus+ projects, with over 100 international mobility agreements enabling staff and student exchanges. It hosts three research centres and is part of the European University Alliance STARS EU. With modern infrastructure, strong partnerships, and a focus on innovation, UAMD is shaping

Albania's higher education with a global outlook.

### Project Partner 7: DOCUMENTA (Spain)



Founded in 1996, DOCUMENTA is a non-profit

institute for training and development with experience in 70+ European projects and partnerships with 230 organizations in 27 countries. Its team promotes sustainable and responsible local development through applied research, tourism, cultural sectors, social economy, and equal opportunities. The organization designs innovative training curricula, fosters citizen participation, supports business creation, and advances social inclusion. With expertise in project management, dissemination, and policy innovation, it builds knowledge and networks driving sustainable territorial development.

### Project Partner 8: Chamber of Hospitality & Tourism of Kosovo - CHHT (Kosovo)



CHHT is a leading professional organization representing 700+ members across the hotel, tourism, and food & beverage sectors in Kosovo. With seven

regional branches, it plays a key role in promoting industry growth and competitiveness by fostering public-private cooperation, attracting investment, and advocating for reforms. Its services include professional development, B2B networking, and participation in regional and EU-level projects. A strong focus on Vocational Education and Training ensures alignment with market needs, offering curriculum support, internships, and lifelong learning opportunities to strengthen the tourism workforce.

**What's Next?** Stay connected with SustainTour!



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