



Project

Greece: Covid-19 Tourism Recovery Technical Assistance
Cooperation Package – Facilitating Tourism Recovery in
Aftermath of Covid-19

Activity

**Support Programme for Greek Tourism MSMEs
and Job Retention**

Deliverable

Trainings Report

April 2022

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1. Training seminars programme

This project included a series of training seminars for tourism businesses. The purpose of the seminars was to offer the strategic guidance and practical advice to support to tourism MSMEs in their efforts to recover from the pandemic crisis.

The topics selected were ultimately based on the findings of the survey conducted among the national tourism associations and the priorities set during the interviews and the working meeting of this project's stakeholders (representatives of the UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism) with the associations in Athens. Specifically, the following overarching seminar topic was proposed to the participating representatives of tourism bodies:

Strategic decisions for the future of my business

Participants agreed with the proposed overarching topic. Furthermore, representatives of the Hellenic Chamber of Hotels and the Hellenic Federation of Tourism Enterprises submitted their comments in writing and also agreed with the sub topics of the seminar. This led to the decision to organise three webinars based on the above thematic, adapted to the specific requirements of three different tourism industries:

- Hotels
- Secondary accommodation and camping sites
- Travel agencies

The invitations for the above seminars were sent out to the interested bodies as well as to the local Chambers of Commerce of the Cyclades and Arcadia, who were asked to inform their members on participating in the seminars. Season workload (start of the tourist season with Easter break) resulted in limited attendance in the webinars. To solve this problem, it was agreed between the UNWTO and the Ministry of Tourism to make all presentations available on tape to industry associations so that they can communicate them to all their members. The Ministry of Tourism was invited to participate in the webinar in order to have first-hand knowledge of the outcomes, while the UNWTO remains at the Ministry's disposal for any relevant clarification required.

Below are the three webinars that were organised:

- 19 April 2022 (morning): Webinar for travel agency owners entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"
- 19 April 2022 (afternoon): Webinar for owners of secondary accommodation establishments entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"
- 26 April 2022 (afternoon): Webinar for hotel owners entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"

Participants were asked to evaluate the seminars they attended. In particular, towards the end of each seminar they were asked to complete a short questionnaire with the following two points:

i. Evaluate the seminar

- 1 The seminar did not fulfil my requirements at all and was not useful to me
- 2 The seminar fulfilled my requirements to a small extent and I found it a little useful
- 3 The seminar rather fulfilled my requirements and I found it somewhat useful
- 4 The seminar greatly fulfilled my requirements and I found it useful
- 5 The seminar fulfilled my requirements entirely and I found it very useful

ii. Evaluate the trainer

- 1 The trainer was not good and unable to impart knowledge
- 2 The trainer was slightly good and slightly able to impart knowledge
- 3 The trainer was satisfactory and relatively able to impart knowledge
- 4 The trainer was good and able to impart knowledge
- 5 The trainer was very good and very able to impart knowledge

A good score revealed the high degree of satisfaction among those who attended the seminars. Specifically, the average score for the first question ("**Evaluate the seminar**") was 4.66 out of 5, and for the second question ("**Evaluate the trainer**") the average score was 4.83 out of 5.

2. Webinar for travel agency owners

Seminar information

Topic: Webinar for travel agency owners entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"

Intended audience: Travel agency owners

Date: 19 April 2022

Duration: 3 hours

Platform: Zoom

Attendance: 6 people

Note: Limited attendance due to last minute notification of businesses by industry associations, but also because the seminar was held during the peak period just before Easter. The tape is available for those wishing to view the seminar at their own time and both partners remain available for any inquiries by the travel agency owners.

Seminar modules

- Diversity in the field of travel agencies
- The tourism market hereafter
- The directions of development policies
- Analysing the data of my business
- Identifying opportunities for my business
- Choosing the right strategy for my business
- Designing and offering high quality experiences and services
- Implementing the right marketing for my business with emphasis on digital marketing
- Successfully managing my staff and connecting with customer experience

Seminar slides

See Annex

Discussion and participants' comments

After the end of the presentation – and very little during – webinar participants commented on the issues raised during the seminar:

- Participants agreed with the new market trends as these have emerged during the pandemic and as described during the seminar. They also agreed with the recommendations made during the seminar on the strategic planning of each business.
- The difficulty of finding staff is quite a pressing problem for travel agencies. They are now looking for more flexible forms of staffing, such as external associates. So, instead of employees, the aim is to find freelancers, who will carry out specific tasks, such as receiving and accompanying clients, and will be paid on a flat-rate basis.
- Each travel agent is invited to create a network of associates to train and guide them based on the particular culture of each agency. This concerns associates such as tour guides, coach drivers, activity providers, etc.
- Market developments justify those travel agencies that have moved towards specialisation, a trend highlighted during the seminar. One participant described their path to specialisation and the positive results.
- The importance of sustainable development from the point of view of travel agents was stressed.

3. Webinar for owners of secondary accommodation establishments

Seminar information

Topic: Webinar for owners of secondary accommodation establishments entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"

Intended audience: Owners of secondary accommodation establishments (rooms to let, furnished apartments, tourist villas, camping sites)

Date: 19 April 2022

Duration: 3 hours

Platform: Zoom

Attendance: 13 people

Seminar modules

- The tourism market hereafter
- The directions of development policies
- Analysing the data of my business
- Identifying opportunities for my business
- Choosing the right strategy for my business
- Designing and offering high quality experiences and services
- Implementing the right marketing for my business with emphasis on digital marketing
- Successfully managing my staff and connecting with customer experience

Seminar slides

See Annex

Discussion and participants' comments

The participants of this seminar were – compared to the other seminars – the least talkative and made very few comments.

- One point discussed was the importance and potential for upgrading a hospitality business, on the occasion of the case study of Margarita Studios in Paros.
- There was a discussion on which professionals to involve in planning a renovation and how can a hospitality professional receive assistance to renovate their

business in the best possible way.

- The importance of online marketing to ensure more direct bookings was also mentioned.

4. Webinar for hoteliers

Seminar information

Topic: Webinar for hotel owners entitled "Strategic decisions for the future of my business"

Intended audience: Owners of secondary accommodation establishments (rooms to let, furnished apartments, tourist villas, camping sites)

Date: 26 April 2022

Duration: 3 hours

Platform: Zoom

Attendance: 22 people

Seminar modules

- The tourism market hereafter
- The directions of development policies
- Analysing the data of my business
- Identifying opportunities for my business
- Choosing the right strategy for my business
- Designing and offering high quality experiences and services
- Implementing the right marketing for my business with emphasis on digital marketing
- Successfully managing my staff and connecting with customer experience

Seminar slides

See Annex

Discussion and participants' comments

Compared to the other seminars, the webinar for hoteliers had the most interventions during the presentation, with relevant clarification questions and comments.

Interventions focused on the following points:

- The new trends highlighted in the webinar's presentation received extensive and positive comments.
- There was extensive discussion on the cooperation of hotels with tour operators. Both the advantages of this cooperation and the problems arising from it and the

impasse that many hotels have found themselves in, were highlighted. The need to phase out dependence on tour operators was stressed and there was agreement on the seminar's approach on how to achieve this.

- Although participants stressed the importance of sustainability, there was disagreement over the withdrawal of plastic water bottles from hotels. This discussion was triggered by the mention of examples from third world countries, where hoteliers have now stopped offering water in plastic bottles. The difficulties of a hotel producing its own food were also discussed, although examples of hotels already doing so were given.

5. Annex: Presentations of the three webinars

The presentations are provided as accompanying files.