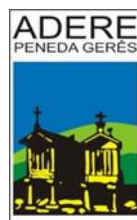




CRinMA 2.0

COVID-19: AND NOW, HOW SHOULD WE ACT?

(Proposal of Good Practices resulting from the need to respond to the demands of Tourists, Visitors, Residents and those who work in the Territories)



Associação de Desenvolvimento das Regiões do Parque Nacional da Peneda-Gerês

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I. CURRENT SITUATION

We are now living a period of more serenity and calm regarding the pandemic that devastated us in 2020/2021, a calm that is the result of the massive vaccination process that occurred in almost every country in the world, which allowed us to greatly reduce the severity of the disease caused by COVID-19.

However, we know that we are subject to moments like those experienced in 2020/2021 happening again, which transmits great uncertainty to entrepreneurs regarding the future.

We can say without doubt that the adaptation to the constraints caused by the pandemic was quite fast, with the entrepreneurs having managed, as much as possible, to change procedures, behaviours, and properly equip themselves so that tourists could safely enjoy the contact with rural world and Nature.

II. WHAT WE LEARNED FROM THE PANDEMIC

As mentioned in the Dossier Summary of the Project's debate tables, Mountain areas have experienced a large increase of visitors since they have become "safe destinations".

There was an increase in tourism activity for many of the tourist entertainment companies, and the same happened with tourist accommodations.

The companies have been able to adapt to the change, and most of them have adopted the safety rules required so that tourists would not be afraid to book a vacation in these territories. The fact that, apparently, these were less crowded places, where contact with nature allowed to create the necessary distance to avoid possible transmission of the disease, ended up causing exactly the opposite phenomena, with a lot of demand, a lot of people crowding together, and higher occupancy rates.

So, it was necessary to change behaviours, make new adaptations, show that "*our company, our accommodation, our restaurant, our territory is even safer than others*".

III. CRInMA 2.0

The CRInMA 2.0 project as a priority deals with the impact of the pandemic on the cultural and natural heritage of mountain border areas. The implementation of the CRInMA action plans for the relevant policy instruments of Cross-Border cooperation programs has already shown the importance of the economy based on the use of cultural and natural resources for regional policies. The significant connection between culture, nature and numerous social relationships, including opportunities and threats related to tourism development, have already been seen. The influence and impact of the pandemic on culture and tourism has also affected other sectors, which directly affect people's quality of life. Among the regions most afflicted by the negative effects of the temporary economic downturn are border regions, mountainous and rural areas rich in cultural and natural resources. Measures and restrictions against the spread of COVID-19 closed cultural institutions on which the economic survival of artists and cultural workers depends, but they likewise made impossible the long-term functioning of many institutions and services whose operation affects quality of life, regional development or the satisfaction of tourists and visitor

IV. CRInMA 2.0 Online Meeting February 7th

Summary of the debate table results: Culture, Pandemic and Tourism

Considering the quality of the session held online on February 7th, 2022, as well as the valuable contributions made by the various stakeholders, it seems important to recall some of the information, based on data from the report conducted:

- Mountain areas have experienced a large increase of visitors, as they are considered "safe destinations".
- There has been an increase in economic activity and in the financial return of tourist entertainment companies and local businesses.
- In some mountain destinations, especially in protected areas, the carrying capacity was exceeded and there were difficulties in access control.
- During this Seminar, some solutions that have been implemented in protected Mountain areas were mentioned, as well as some solutions for post-covid period.

Also mentioned were some important measures that resulted from the "Clean and Safe" certification of most tourism enterprises (businesses, accommodations and restaurants).

Other ideas came up during the discussion:

- Taking advantage of the fact that tourists have discovered the protected areas as a safe place to spend vacations, in full contact with nature.
- The need to think about organizing tourism supply throughout the year, thus contributing to increased profitability in low seasons.

Due to the importance and relevance of the issues addressed in the debate, it's important to transcribe all the conclusions in this document:

How the sector of culture and tourism, especially in the mountains regions handled with pandemic?

- *Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, impacting economies, livelihoods, public services and opportunities on all continents. All parts of its vast value-chain have been affected. During recent decades, tourism has become one of the most dynamic and fastest growing economic sectors in the world, also in mountain regions.*
- *In the case of mountain areas. these areas have seen a huge increase in the number of visitors by becoming "safe destinations". Rural, cultural, sports and*

nature tourism have been some of the main tourist segments that have suffered an increase in their turnover during the pandemic. Likewise, its direct contribution to the economic activity of rural and mountain destinations has increased.

- *In many destinations, the pandemic has increased the tourist activity of local companies, but at the same time it has been a great challenge for the managers of these territories, since in many cases they are not prepared to receive a number of visitors that far exceed their maximum levels. of load capacity. This situation, especially in protected natural areas, has caused situations of limit capacity in many territories.*
- *This situation, if it continues over time, will force measures to be taken to control the negative effects of mass tourism as loss of income for conservation projects and stoppage of activities and impairment and crimes against wildlife, in the absence of a control authority. At the same time there are unexpected benefits as ecological recovery and restoration and higher demand for trips to natural*

What obstacles, problems have been identified?

Some potential risks generated by the pandemic have been identified in the tourist activity of these territories.

- ***POTENTIAL RISKS OF TOURISM IN PROTECTED AREAS SOCIOCULTURAL***

A greater number of tourists can disturb the activities of the community, even compete for leisure spaces and other services.

Poorly planned tourism development can lead to increased congestion, waste accumulation, vandalism and crime

Sometimes tourism in protected areas only generates seasonal employment to the residents are left at the mercy of underemployment during low or medium seasons

- ***ENVIRONMENTAL***

Tourism, like many other forms of development, will always have an environmental impact, even if it is of low intensity.

-Environmental risks can affect: ecosystems, soils, vegetation, water, air and wildlife.

- ***ECONOMIC-FINANCIAL***

As the number of visitors increases, so does the demand for basic services

Any increase in visits necessarily entails higher costs for the body responsible for managing the protected area.

What solutions were used in the time of pandemic?

Some solutions that have been implemented in protected mountain areas

▪

*Book in advance
Respect permitted capacity Maintain social distance and safety Bring sanitizer and mask*

What kind of solutions can be used after pandemic? How were the activities during the restrictions and in the time of their easing?

Authorities recommends visiting natural spaces, as a beneficial practice for physical health, and improvements in the economic and social sphere. These spaces are very relevant for tourism:

- *They have a remarkable landscape value*
- *They promote health*
- *It prevents illnesses*

They also recommend MEASURES TO ENSURE SAFETY:

Prepare visits (in 2018, with more than 30,000 visits in Serra do Xurés Regional Natural Park)

Book in advance

Respect the permitted calibers

Maintain social distance and safety

Use disinfectant and mask.

The post-pandemic tourism in natural areas presents some trends:

The tourism to be carried out in this area is a tourism that links/connects the visitor with nature

Post-pandemic tourism is in line with the protection of natural spaces and their resources

Tourist activity presents a more diurnal, close, perceptive profile (slow); The new spaces allow the adaptation of health self-protection measures, consistent with nature tourism It is necessary to repeat the studies on physical load capacity, adding a decrease in social contact and the risk of crowds

Need to propose structural changes

Establish Management Plans for the control of natural areas

What are the plans of the time during after of the peaks of pandemic?

The World Tourism Organization has set itself the goal of approving, among other measures, a legal code that gives confidence to the traveler in times of peaks of the pandemic. In addition, sustainability, digitization and understanding new traveler trends will be key issues for natural and mountain destinations to remain competitive.

It looks very important to calculate load capacity of touristic destinations, as a tool to control and protect a tourist space, we can add some relevant contributions of the "Safe Tourism Certified" Seal, for natural spaces:

Control of capacity and distancing in facilities and services for public use

Parking control

Surveillance e in public areas

Surveillance services and visitor limitation cleaning and disinfection (viewpoints)

Signaling on trails

Specific control of capacity to view birds cleaning and disinfection (glasses, telephoto lenses...)

Control and sanitation of dining room capacity in nature classrooms

Distance control between visitors

Reception and reception (signaling of movements, use of information, POS disinfection...)

Reservation and sale of tickets

Management of guided tours of the Natural Area

Are the any other ideas, concerning the relations between the pandemic and tourism?

There is an opportunity for everyone to restart tourism in a more sustainable, inclusive and resilient way

Tourists have discovered the potential of mountain destinations: safe destinations

New business opportunities for entrepreneurs who want to start or transfer their tourist activity

in this type of destination

The new offer that has to emerge supposes the moment to co-create the destination thinking about the 12 months of the year and throughout the territory (tourism 360° / 365 days).

Telecommuting as a formula to expand the offer: It is one of those trends that has come to grow exponentially, as shown by some destinations that are already looking for their place in the market.

Necessary joint work: Synergies and public-private, public-public and private-private collaboration will be more necessary than ever in the reconstruction of the tourism sector.

Regenerative and conscious tourism: Travelers who opt for this type of tourism no longer want to leave the place as they found it. Now they want to leave it better after their passage due to the participation in typical activities of the area, respecting the destination as if it were their home, leaving money and contributing to local economic development.

V. RECOVERY STRATEGIES

A study by Prideaux et al. (2020) lists four factors that determine the outcome of strategies undertaken to deal with crisis events, such as the COVID-19:

- 1- identify the main objectives of the strategies adopted to deal with the crisis, in this case, destinations that prioritized health showed fewer deaths and fewer infections than those that identified the needs of business and politics;
- 2- ally leadership, which is characterized as an important element in determining the success or failure of the crisis response, the need for clear communications honest, accurate, and regular communications, both with the public and with organizations;
- 3- getting advice from experts on developing strategies for responding to crisis events;
- 4- respond quickly to the threat, avoiding delaying responses into the future.

Main priorities should include:

- **Restore tourist confidence;**
- **Supporting tourism businesses to adapt and survive;**
- **Support domestic tourism;**
- **Provide clear information and limit uncertainty (as far as possible)**

- Support the safe return of international tourism;
- Begin to build towards more resilient and sustainable tourism;
- Evolve in proposing response measures and addressing gaps.

Also according to Jiménez-Barreto et al. (2021), marketing communications on how hospitality and tourism service providers deal with COVID-19 is an important aspect of achieving the new normal.

VI. GOOD PRACTICES ADOPTED IN THE TERRITORY GERÊS-XURÉS

Good practices for Gerês-Xurés Cross-border region (Portugal-Spain)

General information about the methodology used:

Analysis of the documents produced as part of the CRInMA 2.0 project;

Analysis of literature on the tourism sector and the implications of the pandemic on the development of activities;

Contacts via email and telephone with entrepreneurs in the territory, to obtain information about new procedures adopted;

No. of entrepreneurs and entities contacted: 20

No. of Good Practices reported: 9

NEW PRACTICES ADOPTED:

1. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION MUST HAVE A MANDATORY 48-HOUR UNOCCUPIED PERIOD BETWEEN OCCUPANCIES.
2. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION HAS ADOPTED NEW PROCEDURES FOR THE DELIVERY OF BREAKFAST, MEALS AND RESERVATIONS
3. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION NO LONGER PROVIDES SHARED KITCHEN EQUIPMENT. CHECK-IN TIME PREVIOUSLY BOOKED BY EMAIL OR SMS
4. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED ITS EMPLOYEES WITH QUICK TESTS AVAILABLE AND HAS ORGANIZED, FOR CAMPING SITE USERS, A SNEW SYSTEM FOR BATHROOMS USE
5. ACCESS TO LAGOONS AND WATERFALLS IS MADE, MANDATORY, USING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

6. THE TOURIST ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY, IN THE ACTIVITIES IT DEVELOPS, STARTED TO PREPARE INDIVIDUAL PICNICS AND SNACKS FOR THE CLIENTS

7. THE CASTLE OF LINDOSO, DURING THE PANDEMIC CLOSED ITS VISITATION SPACES (MUSEUM AND EXHIBITION ROOMS)

8. THE TOURISM ENTERPRISE STARTED TO MAKE IT COMPULSORY TO BOOK IN ORDER TO HAVE ACCESS TO THE THERMAL WHALEBOAT AND THE THERMAL WATER POOL

9. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN SCHOOLS

1. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION MUST HAVE A MANDATORY 48-HOUR UNOCCUPIED PERIOD BETWEEN OCCUPANCIES

A. PRACTICE

Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Lindoso, municipality of Ponte da Barca
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Small companies <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist accommodations <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism promotion associations
Brief description of the practice	<p>The owners of the accommodation did not book consecutive days to different groups. Between each booking the house would remain unoccupied for a period of 24 hours, after all cleaning and sanitizing done.</p> <p>This practice created more confidence in the tourist and ended up increasing the occupancy rate (people preferred to stay in this accommodation and travel around the National Park, returning, rather</p>

than changing accommodation depending on the municipality they were going to).



C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS


Major difficulty experienced Some tourists did not understand why they could not book the house if it was already unoccupied.
 Eventual loss of clients who intended to occupy the house after a certain day, which could coincide with the day dedicated to disinfection and airing procedures.

Benefits Increased confidence in booking this accommodation and passing this information to friends, who preferred this accommodation.

2. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION HAS ADOPTED NEW PROCEDURES FOR THE DELIVERY OF BREAKFAST, MEALS AND RESERVATIONS


A. PRACTICE

Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Gerês, municipality of Terras de Bouro
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local

	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period and the practice still holds
B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE		
Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Small company <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism promotion associations	
Brief description of the practice	They made several changes in services, and provided customers with more privacy and convenience during the pandemic, such as home delivery of breakfasts or restaurant meals. Online check-in.	
Image		
C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS		
Major difficulty experienced	Adaptation of the computer system to allow the entire reservation process, including payment, to be made online. Introducing the self-check in system: delivery and return of the keys to the accommodations in a secure place to avoid contact with customers. Reorganization of the breakfast service concept: private PA taken exclusively in the lodgings: Preparation of individual PA and delivery at each accommodation. Pre-booking for meal service in the restaurant, making it mandatory to pre-book the desired time to enjoy the meal service at the table.	
Benefits	These measures provided customers with greater privacy, trust, and convenience during the pandemic.	

	<p>Fluidity in the act of purchasing, and at check-in.</p> <p>Increased feeling of security and professionalism.</p>
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3. O THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION NO LONGER PROVIDES SHARED KITCHEN EQUIPMENT. CHECK-IN TIME PREVIOUSLY BOOKED BY EMAIL OR SMS		
A. PRACTICE		
Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Fiães do Rio – Municipality of Montalegre
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period
B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE		
Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Small company <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism promotion associations	
Brief description of the practice	<p>In this establishment, resting and cooking area are common to all guests. Besides the hygiene and safety measures that were implemented, the guests were informed that the common area was still accessible, but the kitchen utensils (pots, plates, cutlery, glasses...) were no longer available.</p>	

	Also, check-in could be done from 2pm to 8pm and check-out before noon. Customers were asked to send an email or SMS the day before their stay to confirm the arrival time.
Image	
C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS	
Major difficulty experienced	Depending on the length of stay, the fact that there were no utensils in the lodging forced the clients to bring them from home, or to eat only sandwiches.
Benefits	Limitation of virus transmission risk

4. THE TOURIST ACCOMMODATION PROVIDED ITS EMPLOYEES WITH QUICK TESTS AVAILABLE AND HAS ORGANIZED, FOR CAMPING SITE USERS, A NEW SYSTEM FOR BATHROOMS USE		
A. PRACTICE		
Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Campo do Gerês, municipality of Terras de Bouro
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period and the practice still holds

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

<p>Stakeholders involved</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Small company <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist accommodation <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist entertainment companies
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<p>Brief description of the practice</p>	<p>Performing rapid tests, every 2 days, when there are infected employees, until the outbreak stabilizes.</p> <p>In the sanitary blocks (camping), a sanitary block was made available without separation by sexes, in order to favor the use of the same equipment by cohabitants. This measure is well accepted by the clients.</p> <p>Coinciding with the pandemic period, private bathrooms were made available for exclusive use by cohabitants.</p>
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<p>Image</p>	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around; align-items: center;">   </div>
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C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS

<p>Major difficulty experienced</p>	<p>Increased costs for the purchase of rapid tests for the team.</p>
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<p>Benefits</p>	<p>These measures have increased customers confidence.</p> <p>Brought greater comfort, safety and reduced costs with cleaning and disinfection service.</p> <p>Increased feeling of security and professionalism from the tourist accommodation</p>
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5. ACCESS TO LAGOONS AND WATERFALLS IS MADE, MANDATORY, USING ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORTATION

A. PRACTICE

Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Gerês, municipality of Terras de Bouro Fafião, municipality of Montalegre
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism <input type="checkbox"/> Nature and Landscape
Duration	Implementation Period	During summer period

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipalities <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist entertainment companies
Brief description of the practice	<p>The municipalities of Terras de Bouro and Montalegre faced every summer a large influx of people to the ponds and natural waterfalls. In the years of the pandemic this affluence was even greater, having caused situations of traffic excess and some serious accidents.</p> <p>The municipalities, together with tourist entertainment companies and the Peneda-Gerês National Park want to create access rules that do not allow people to travel in their own vehicles to the places of greater contact with nature. Some parking lots are already being created and others are already planned, so that cars will have to stay parked there.</p> <p>Access will be made using tourist entertainment companies duly</p>

	accredited for this purpose, limiting the number of people who access the sites (imposing a maximum load capacity).
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C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS	
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Major difficulty experienced	<p>Adapt the sites for parking lots.</p> <p>Convince people that it is better to use alternative transportation than to use their own car.</p> <p>The timetables of the service should be compatible with the timetables of visitors.</p> <p>The need for awareness and information to companies so that they can provide the service in an articulated manner.</p>
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Benefits	<p>Decreases the number of simultaneous visitors to the same places.</p> <p>Increases the confidence of the user of the service because it has the guarantee of transportation and knows that there will not be an excessive number of people.</p> <p>It allows controlling the carrying capacity of the most vulnerable sites with natural values that need to be protected.</p>
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6. THE TOURIST ENTERTAINMENT COMPANY, IN THE ACTIVITIES IT DEVELOPS, STARTED TO PREPARE INDIVIDUAL PICNICS AND SNACKS FOR THE CLIENTS
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A. PRACTICE

Location	Country	Portugal
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	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Arcos de Valdevez
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

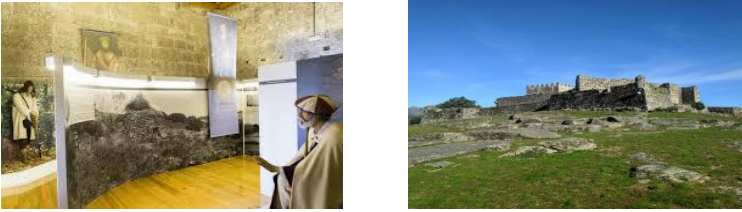
Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist entertainment company
Brief description of the practice	<p>In the activities developed, namely jeep tours, guided walking tours and cultural visits, the entertainment company always took the most care in the prevention and protection of customers, complying with the DGS and the "Clean & Safe" seal.</p> <p>The company started to prepare individual picnics or snacks for the clients and not shared ones as they used to do before the pandemic.</p> <p>At this moment, the company is returning to normality, using utensils that, after being sanitized, can be reused again.</p>
Image	 

C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS


Major Difficulty Experienced	<p>The biggest difficulty felt was when it came to food: tea, coffee and cookies for brunch time, picnic or snack.</p> <p>They became less sustainable, which goes against the company's philosophy, since everything they used was single-use and therefore discarded at the end.</p>
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	By adopting this measure, the costs that this entailed were also higher than pre-pandemic.
Benefits	Limited risk of virus transmission. Increased customer confidence.

7. THE CASTLE OF LINDOSO, DURING THE PANDEMIC, CLOSED ITS VISITATION SPACES (MUSEUM AND EXHIBITION ROOMS)		
A. PRACTICE		
Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park
	Village	Lindoso – Ponte da Barca
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Local
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Culture <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period
B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE		
Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Municipality of Ponte da Barca	
Brief description of the practice	<p>They implemented, during Covid, the measures imposed by DGS, with the exception of the museum space and exhibition room, where they chose to close the space, instead of limiting the access of people, as was imposed by DGS.</p> <p>At this time there is no restriction on access to the space.</p>	

Image	
C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS	
Major Difficulty Experienced	<p>Misunderstanding by some visitors who wanted to visit the exhibition space and museum.</p> <p>Reduction of income</p>
Benefits	<p>Limited risk of virus transmission.</p> <p>Increased customer confidence.</p>

8. THE TOURISM UNIT STARTED TO MAKE IT COMPULSORY TO BOOK PREVIOUSLY FOR ACCESS TO THE THERMAL WHALEBOAT AND THE THERMAL WATER POOL		
A. PRACTICE		
Location	Country	Spain
	Region	Natural Park of Baixa Limia Serra do Xurés
	Village	Rio Caldo – Municipality of Lobios
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> International
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period and the practice still holds
B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE		
Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist Accommodation	


<p>Brief description of the practice</p>	<p>In this establishment, to comply with the regulations and protocols of capacity and hygiene, an appointment is required for thermal treatments and techniques; also for access to the medicinal mineral water pools an appointment is required (limited to 2 hours per day per person).</p> <p>This measure was implemented during Covid, and has been maintained until now, although there is now no longer any restriction about space capacity.</p> <p>In the spa area, and since it is considered a health center, mask use is mandatory. During the treatments the mask must be worn and until the professional indicates that you may remove it. This measure is still in effect, even though there is no restriction at this time.</p>
<p>Image</p>	
<p>C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS</p>	
<p>Major Difficulty Experienced</p>	<p>Some clients do not understand that access to the leisure areas (Spa and mineral and medicinal water pools) are subject to appointment and to a limited number of people.</p>
<p>Benefits</p>	<p>Limited risk of virus transmission.</p> <p>Increased confidence from guests and employees.</p> <p>Organization of spaces and control of the number of people accessing common spaces (indoor pool, spa).</p>

9. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT IN SCHOOLS

A. Practice

Location	Country	Portugal
	Region	Peneda-Gerês National Park and Northern Region
Implementation	Geographical level	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional
	Sector of activity	<input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Education
Duration	Implementation Period	The entire pandemic period and the practice still holds

B. DESCRIPTION OF THE PRACTICE

Stakeholders involved	<input type="checkbox"/> Elementary Schools from north region <input type="checkbox"/> Companies of Environmental Education
Brief description of the practice	The environmental educational activities, normally carried out at the 5 Gates of the PNPG, were taken directly to the targeted schools of the Eco-Passaporte project (1st cycle students) in order to "carry" Peneda-Gerês National Park to elementary school students (unable to leave school during the pandemic).
Image	

C. BARRIERS AND FACTORS OF SUCCESS

Major Difficulty Experienced	Calendar management difficulties due to cancellations caused by covid outbreaks in classes/schools.
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Benefits	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Students were able to perform practical pedagogical activities outside (school playground) at a time when this type of actions was not being carried out or were performed remotely/online. - Schools unable to go out/make study visits, also had the opportunity to participate, contributing to a larger number of students having access to environmental education activities. - Students were excited to visit the Peneda-Gerês National Park with their school and/or family. Teachers also showed interest in making study visits to the PNPG in the next school years.
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VII. CONCLUSIONS

Considering the unexpected pandemic situation that emerged in 2019 (with greater impact in 2020 and 2021), all economic sectors were caught off guard and had to adapt quickly to the changes, since if they did not do so, the consequence would be the end of their economic activities, which would turn into an unprecedented economic crisis.

Even with their capacity for change and resilience, it was very difficult for micro-business entrepreneurs, as is the case of most of the tourism and culture sector, to be able to resist and adapt their activity to the new demands caused by the pandemic.

However, the will to "overcome" the situation caused by the pandemic was greater than the will to give up, and they quickly began to adapt their activities to new working conditions and new ways of receiving tourists, creating tools that allowed them to overcome, in most cases, the difficulties experienced.

Some of the changes implemented are still being maintained today and will possibly be maintained for a long time, since there is no certainty about the future and what may arise in the meantime (new pandemics, very hot summers that may lead to fires in protected areas, tourists' fear of spending their vacations in places that may be safer but are also farther from hospitals in case of emergencies).

With this project we have realized the importance of guaranteeing entrepreneurs the necessary means so that they can register in crisis situations, being clear that they do not give up and face the problems with new solutions and creativity.

Many businesses have remained, with high costs both financially and personally, but they are slowly recovering and have not abandoned the tourist and cultural activity.

The tourist and cultural resources in Mountain areas are more and more an attraction factor for the visitor

and tourist, who wants to calmly enjoy Nature, biodiversity, and the culture of the regions.

Let us know how to preserve it, supporting those who maintain these Mountain territories with their economic activities and their sustainable way of life.



<https://www.interregeurope.eu/crinma/>

