

# CODE OF ETHICS FOR TOURISM IN VALENCIA

FOR RESPONSIBLE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM



**HOSPITALITY**



GENERALITAT  
VALENCIANA

**INVAT·TUR**  
Instituto Valenciano de  
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# Contents

## 1. Introduction by the Regional Secretary

- The ethical basis of hospitality

## 2. Our hospitality

- Cordiality
- Respect
- Inclusion
- Sustainability
- Professionalism

## 3. Our commitment: an alliance for hospitality

- The Regional administration of Valencia
- Business
- Local authorities
- Tourists

## 4. Ethics and compliance

- Tourism Ethics Committee
- Ethics Line
- Register of Good Practices



# 1. The ethical basis of hospitality

In full awareness that trust in the tourism sector relies on the ethical and responsible behaviour of all the people and organizations involved, The Valencia Tourism Authority joined the World Tourism Organization, adopting the commitment to: “Apply where appropriate the content of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism in its corresponding laws, regulations and professional practices”.

This commitment by the Administration is not limited to simply raising awareness of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism but drives it to take an active role in its development and application, with the goal of achieving a tourism sector that respects these values and its reputation. One unavoidable step in this direction is the forthcoming Law on Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality, and we must also rely on the public commitment of all those involved. With this in mind, we are presenting this adaptation of the Global Code of Ethics to the peculiarities and real situation of the Region of Valencia as the first step in the construction of a common effort that demands a commitment from all agents and the people of Valencia to achieve tourism that is both sustainable and responsible.

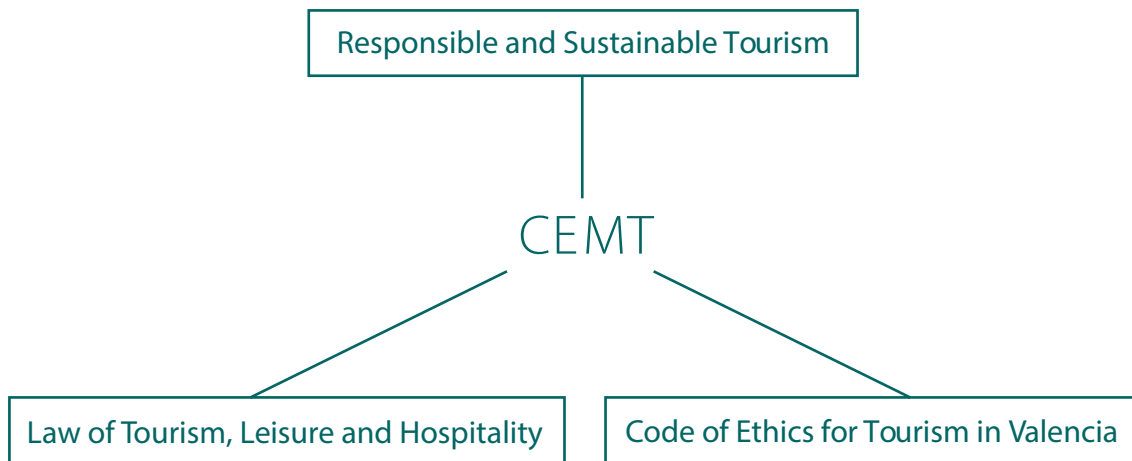
Tourism is a form of travel that depends on hospitality, precisely because it is the best antidote to the vulnerability that is a feature of human nature, especially in foreign countries. That is why tourism in Valencia has always focused on hospitality as the principal basis for its existence and the fundamental value that sustains it. These values have always been part of our identity and way of life, the result of a meeting of peoples and cultures who needed to get along with each other in order to exchange their ideas and goods. What we aim to do is to convert these values that define our community into a capacity, a domestic resource that can order and manage our tourism activities in a particular way, marking the attributes of our reputation and competitiveness as a tourist destination.

These goals cannot be achieved without cooperation and participation, without the shared responsibility of all those involved in tourism in Valencia. This Code is therefore intended to explain the values that order and manage our hospitality, but also the commitments and codes of conduct that the main agents must follow to achieve this common goal, to bring our tourism resources and their agents together to make hospitality a central feature of our sustainable and responsible tourism.

This Code is an adaptation of the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism that is based on the main features of our culture and identity, arranged around the main principles of sustainable tourism, which is conscious of its financial, social and environmental impact, and is aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals.

These values and commitments are accompanied by an Ethics System for Compliance.

It expresses the demands for participation by all agents involved in tourism in Valencia and the effectiveness and exemplary nature of the values and conducts described here. Doing things the right way is the only option to create trust in our way of understanding and practising hospitality.



## 2. Our values

Valencian tourism and its agents see the sustainability and responsibility of our day-to-day tourist business by placing hospitality as its basic principle and frame of reference in all our activities. This is a principle that must define our welcome and how we relate to our visitors and residents, grounded in the following values that reflect our culture and identity:



## CORDIALITY

Affectionate regard for everyone, responding to the interests and needs of tourists and sharing our way of life with them, is the fundamental quality of a friendly, welcoming tourism space. Attentive reception and care requires that we know and show an interest in the social traditions and customs of our visitors from our own culture and identity, establishing intercultural dialogue and mutual understanding as the context for satisfying each other's expectations.

## RESPECT

The mutual, cordial recognition of the dignity of all people, in the observance and support for human rights and fundamental liberties are the foundations of our hospitality. Respect for dignity implies promoting equality between men and women, rejecting all kinds of exploitation of others and protecting the social, linguistic and cultural identity. These actions require collaboration between the agents responsible for developing tourism and the tourists themselves.

## INCLUSION

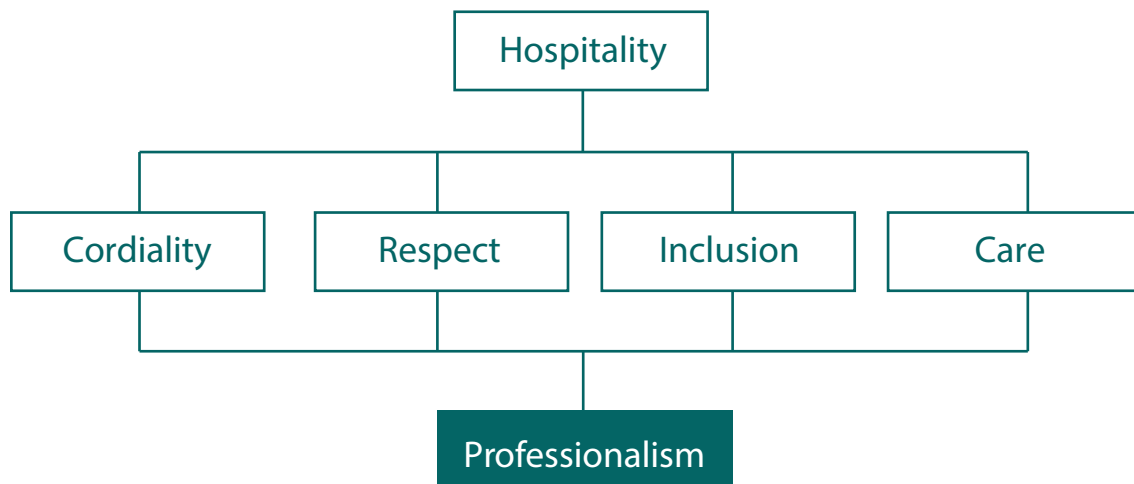
Responsible and sustainable tourism is an activity that is open to all, especially more vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Hospitality means guaranteeing tolerance and respect for diversity, and the fair distribution of the benefits of the activity. Only when the tourist sector offers value to all the people and territories involved and affected by the activity, especially through the creation of quality employment, can it earn the credibility necessary for sustainable development.

## SUSTAINABILITY

Tourism resources form part of our shared human heritage, so the organization of all tourist activities must be tackled from the perspective of protecting, caring for and improving the natural, artistic, archaeological, ethnological and cultural resources. This means it must be able to satisfy both the needs and aspirations of the present generation without endangering the capacity of future generations to satisfy their own needs. Hospitable tourism is sustainable tourism, prepared to nurture our environment without harming it.

## PROFESSIONALISM

One condition that must be met if we want our tourism to be defined by hospitality is the attentive and sincere attitude of all those working in the sector. Doing things right means aspiring to excellence, innovation and continuous improvement, always with the goal of integrating technical and human resources, and public commitment to fair, honest and truthful behaviour. It is up to the good practices of our professionals whether we can achieve the reputation and trust necessary to consolidate hospitality as the basic attribute of our tourism sector.



## 3. Our commitments: an alliance for hospitality

Hospitality and the values that sustain it must be reflected in our decisions and conduct, in our relations with the different tourism assets, until it becomes converted into good practices. Hospitality in tourism requires the participation and cooperation of all the public and private agents involved and affected by the activity. We can only make hospitality the essential quality of our tourism sector when it is a shared desire. That is why the public commitment of the following actors is necessary:



## THE VALENCIA REGIONAL AUTHORITY

The commitment of the Public Administration in the promotion and organization of tourism in the Region of Valencia is one of the basic values and has to be the starting point to provide governance and a necessary example to guide the other parties. For this reason, the regional authority undertakes to:

1. Promote the participation and involvement of the other participants in tourism activities in Valencia in the observation and development of this code through adherence to the same and participation in the monitoring and control instruments. The mechanisms necessary for informing tourists of the values and commitments enshrined in this code will be created, so that they participate in compliance as part of their experience on this visit.
2. Set up the communication channels to allow the different stakeholder groups to make their contributions and suggestions, and to report any bad tourism practices that they see, addressing the Tourism Ethics Committee through the Ethics Line.
3. Design and provide training to ensure that Valencian society is receptive to tourism, and professionals in the sector learn to know and respect, implement and strengthen the ethical values of our tourism sector, so that it boosts intercultural dialogue and tolerance and avoids any kind of prejudice.
4. Reinforce the actions and good practices derived from this Code, applying suitable policies and creating a register of good practices that serves to highlight and stress the commitments and efforts of the companies, towns and tourism facilities to develop the values and conduct set out in it.
5. Organize its tourist policy so that it structures the territory, respects its identity and improves the quality of life for residents of the Region of Valencia, paying special attention to rural, inland areas and applying the policies necessary to stop and combat illegal practices and unlicensed practitioners.
6. Promote compliance of workers' fundamental rights, whether employees or self-employed, in the tourism sector, encouraging their social protections, fighting against precarious employment, guaranteeing salaries and respectful treatment, and supporting the social responsibility of the companies involved.
7. Protect and care for the tourism assets, promoting traditions and the social, linguistic and cultural customs of Valencia, preventing it from being misused, standardised and cheapened.



8. Preserve the environment and natural resources, promoting all forms of tourism development that can reduce the consumption of natural resources, and establishing effective means of collaboration with local tourism agents as a way to make excellent environmental management possible.
9. Ensure that all tourism practices are in alignment with the Sustainable Development Goals, fighting human exploitation in any form, assessing the risk of non-compliance and creating suitable prevention strategies.
10. Build new alliances between science and tourism, given that scientific research and its contribution to knowledge is essential for increasing the capacity of the sector to face the new challenges of sustainable tourism.

## LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Our proximity and close relations are essential factors for developing hospitality and for generating trust. This is why it is important for municipal authorities and tourist spaces to create spheres of interaction to reinforce hospitable attitudes and convert the region by engaging in spaces for effective coordination and collaboration with the other actors. To this end, towns and tourist spaces agree to:

1. Collaborate with the regional administration to ensure that tourism becomes a driver of sustainable development, promoting human rights and especially the specific rights of more vulnerable sectors of the population, such as children, the elderly, those with functional diversity and ethnic minorities.
2. Plan and manage the tourism resources so that our language and culture can be an integral feature, and appreciate and protect our artistic, ethnological heritage and landscapes to prevent them being lost or degraded.
3. Encourage the training and communications necessary so that the tourism development agents can learn about their own resources and acquire the skills necessary to offer tourists a hospitable welcome. Citizens participation through neighbourhood associations and federations will be encouraged, to extend hospitality through attitudes of openness, respect and tolerance towards tourists.
4. Ensure that tourism policies are organized so that they contribute to the fair and sustainable economic development of the population, resisting seasonal focus and setting up the social conditions necessary to promote the values of this Code.

5. Ensure observance of salaried and self-employed workers' fundamental rights in the tourism sector and related activities, through their working conditions and remuneration, limiting the seasonal focus and precarious employment wherever possible.
6. Respecting the environment and natural resources, offering incentives for all types of tourist development that make it possible to save scarce and valuable resources, especially water and energy, and reduce waste, promoting tourism that respects our natural heritage and landscapes.
7. Distribute tourist movement over different times and areas, to reduce the pressure that tourism can impose on the environment, and to increase the beneficial effects for the tourism sector and the local economy, encouraging tourism that enables the majority of our citizens to have access to leisure, travel and holidays.
8. Ensure compatibility between the growth of tourism activities and improved quality of life for the local population, with respect for the right to peaceful residence and rest, preventing any behaviour that disrupts the traditional way of life of the villages and regions of Valencia.
9. Devote the resources derived from visits to sites and monuments of cultural interest to the upkeep, protection, improvement and enrichment of this heritage.
10. Set up the communication channels to allow the different stakeholder groups to propose improvements and report non-compliance with the values and standards of this Code, and any bad practices observed, setting up mechanisms to progressively eliminate them.

## TOURISM COMPANIES

This Code is a fundamental reference framework for defining and implementing the social responsibility of tourism companies. The private sector, as the main provider of goods and services, has an essential role in complying with and developing the values that shape hospitality in tourism. The prospect of environmentally sustainable social economic development through the creation of stable, quality employment has to dominate the horizon of their activities. In view of this responsibility, tourism companies commit to:

1. Respect and promote the Sustainable Development Goals, especially those specific rights for the more vulnerable sectors of society. As agents of hospitality, companies must encourage tolerance, gender equality and the respectful inclusion for all persons, offering accessible facilities and services and stressing the basic features of our identity and culture.

2. Protect the environment and natural resources to achieve a sustainable economic development that can satisfy the needs and aspirations of present and future generations. Tourist activities and their infrastructure must be designed so as to safeguard our natural heritage, expressed in the conservation of resources and control of waste products.
3. Integrate the management and exploitation of tourism resources in the local social and business fabric, giving priority to equality in personnel employment and local suppliers.
4. Adopt the values and rules of this Code in their management policies, informing the Tourism Ethics Committee of the measures adopted to put the principles of the Code into practice as part of its Social Responsibility Plan.
5. Take part, in accordance with the protocols set up by the Regional Administration, in the register of good practices and the composition and function of the Tourism Ethics Committee.
6. Offer tourists objective and truthful information about destinations and travelling conditions, reception and accommodation, cooperating with the public authorities to guarantee safety and avoid any hostile behaviour, acting with respect and tolerance and rejecting any kind of racist or xenophobic attitudes.
7. Guarantee the fundamental rights of employed and self-employed workers in the tourism sector, ensuring sufficient social protection and avoiding precarious employment, trying at all times to offer a fair salary without discriminating between men and women, and the training they need for their jobs.
8. Ensure that their employees learn to appreciate and respect our culture and language, and that of the visitors and residents, and to protect and care for our natural and cultural resources.
9. Prevent multinational companies in the tourism sector from abusing their dominant position at destinations to impose artificial social and cultural models in the host communities and preventing the excessive repatriation of their profits or the entry of imports, offering collaboration and balanced relations among companies from the guest and host countries to guarantee sustainable tourism.
10. Encourage the use of this system of ethics and compliance among all their employees and clients, to enable monitoring and control of the application and the growth of these values and commitments.

## TOURISTS

As users, tourists have great responsibility for the growth of sustainable tourism that contributes to individual and collective development. Their responsibility starts with the choice of destination, including ethical considerations in the decision, and their behaviour in the chosen destination and what they say about it afterwards. With this in mind they are committed to:

1. Respect human rights, based on equal dignity for all persons, and to learn and satisfy the values of this Code, so that their behaviour encourages understanding and friendship, elements that contribute to the intercultural dialogue that is a value of Valencian society.
2. Collaborate in compliance with the values of this Code, so that tourism progresses along the path of tolerance and hospitality and can become a shared experience.
3. Respect the social, linguistic and cultural customs and traditions of the people living in the region of Valencia, acknowledging its diversity and richness.
4. Help to conserve the natural surroundings, to protect the wild flora and fauna and its habitat, considering the consequences of their actions on this heritage and their shared responsibility for protecting it.
5. Support the local economy by acquiring products and services in the region, through responsible consumption that supports the sustainability of the tourism activity and the resources that make it possible.
6. Avoid any kind of behaviour that can damage the resources and way of life of the local people or harm the image and reputation of our tourism.
7. Refrain from any type of conduct that, through the consumption of banned products or abuse of legal ones, leads to danger to people and disrupts the calm and order of the chosen destinations.
8. Avoid and reject and intolerant, racist or xenophobic attitudes derived from religious, ethnic, cultural or linguistic differences, or sexual orientation, whether directed at other tourists, the employees of the tourism companies or members of the local community.

9. Prepare information in advance about the nature of the destination in Valencia to be visited, reducing the health and safety risks inherent in any journey outside their normal environment.

10. Use the channel made available by authorities and tourist companies for raising suggestions, alerts and reports of all failures to comply with the values and conduct contained in this Code of Ethics for Tourism in Valencia.



## 4. Ethics and compliance

Public and private agencies for tourism development in Valencia will cooperate in applying the values and standards of behaviour contained in this Code, encouraging and monitoring its effective implementation. This is why the following supervision system for ethics and compliance with the Code of Ethics for Tourism in Valencia has been set up:

### TOURISM ETHICS COMMITTEE

As part of the drive for participation on the part of the sector operatives and the general public in the development of responsible, sustainable tourism, and applying the recommendations of the Global Code of Ethics for tourism, the Tourism Ethics Committee represents a space for mutual engagement, dialogue and conflict solving, for informing about and applying this Code, as well as monitoring and observing compliance.

The Committee will be consultative in nature and have representatives from the main tourist activity agents involved and affected, from the whole spectrum of actors and agents, in conditions that ensure free and equal participation. The law will establish the Committee's composition, scope and working methods, and how it forms part of the institutional structure, bearing in mind that its main role lies in advising and promoting responsible and sustainable tourism based on hospitality and its underlying values, as well as the processing of reports, suggestions and complaints about possible failures to comply with this Code.

### ETHICS LINE

In accordance with the directives of the World Tourism Organization, trust in tourist activities relies on the creation of a solid base of ethics and social responsibility by the different agents involved. Within this context for action, the present Code includes the commitment of the respective tourist agents to inform about the good practices carried out, and to warn and report any type of non-compliance that affects the values and standards of this Code. It is about promoting an ethical culture from a sense of shared responsibility, participation and collaboration between all those who are involved and affected, to be the impulse behind hospitable and sustainable tourism.

To this end, this Code establishes the need to set up a line of communications that is open to the many private sector establishments as well as the authorities and tourism spaces so that the different stakeholders can inform the Tourism Ethics Committee of suggestions, warnings and reports of any failure to comply with the Code, creating the protocols necessary to guarantee confidentiality and to prevent any reprisals.

## REGISTER OF GOOD PRACTICES

Because of the ways this Code complements the Law of Tourism, Leisure and Hospitality, any conduct that is regulated by law will be subject to the disciplinary procedures included in the legislation.

The hard work done by the agents of the tourism sector will be recorded in the register of good practices to give them visibility, alongside the initiatives that the Regional Administration set up to encourage sustainable and responsible tourism. Failure to comply with the commitments contained herein will entail automatic expulsion from the register. The Tourism Ethics Committee will be responsible for managing and updating this register.

SIGNATURE:

I hereby promise to base my decisions and behaviour on the values and conduct contained in the Code of Ethics for Tourism in Valencia, adapting the WTO's Global Code of Ethics for Tourism, and to report any failure to comply to the Ethics Committee using the ethics line, and all measures taken to promote and implement these principles.

Signed in..... on .....

Name and position of the signatory:

Company/Organization:

CIF:

Send to Turisme Comunitat Valenciana when signed



