

Crisis and Hospitality – How Sustainability supports your business in hard times.

Panel Discussion

ITB Berlin 2023, 18th Green Business Forum for Tourism Professionals

08 March 2023

14:00 – 14:30

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Hall 4.1b – Adventure Travel • Responsible Tourism

Inspired by nature's resiliency, let's network to develop effective strategies towards a responsible, sustainable and regenerative tourism industry.

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	<p>Prof. Dr. habil. Torsten Fischer Vice Rector International Affairs Scientific Director FHM Berlin Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) University of Applied Sciences, Germany</p>
	<p>Prof. Dr. Heike Bähre Project Lead, CREDinGREEN Project, FHM Berlin Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) University of Applied Sciences, Germany</p>
	<p>Oliver Winter CEO, a&o Hostels GmbH & Co. KG; Germany</p>
	<p>Carsten Herold, Owner and Chief Executive Officer - HEROLÉ-Reisen GmbH; Germany</p>

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Greeting

by Prof. Dr. habil. Torsten Fischer
Vice Rector International Affairs
Scientific Director FHM Berlin

Fachhochschule des Mittelstands
(FHM) University of Applied
Sciences



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Introduction

by Prof. Dr. Heike Bähre
Project Lead, CREDinGREEN Project,
FHM Berlin



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CREDinGREEN

Results on the futureproofing of SMEs in the hospitality and tourism sector



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Agenda

by Heike Bähre and Torsten Fischer

- Introduction
 - CREDinGREEN Project in brief
 - Research methodology
- Summary of results of desk research and qualitative interviews **on the futureproofing of SMEs in the hospitality and tourism sector**

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CREDinGREEN Project in brief (I/II)

Project Lead/Co-ordination:

P0 FACHHOCHSCHULE DES MITTELSTANDS (FHM), Germany

And 8 partners from 5 EU member states

P1 CENTROS ESCOLARES DE ENSINO PROFISSIONAL LDA Portugal

P2 E.N.T.E.R. GMBH, Austria

P3 UNIVERSITATEA STEFAN CEL MARE DIN SUCEAVA, Romania

P4 ASOCIATIA IABUCOVINA, Romania

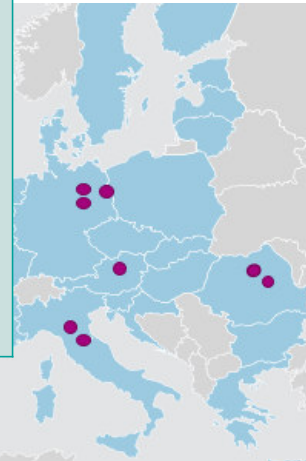
P5 CO&SO -CONSORZIO PER LA COOPERAZIONE E LA SOLIDARIETA'-CONSORZIO DI &
COOPERATIVE SOCIALI-SOCIETA' COOPERATIVA SOCIALE, Italy

P6 CENTRO STUDI TURISTICI DI FIRENZE, Italy

P7 IHK-PROJEKTGESELLSCHAFT MBH, Germany

P8 GREENSIGN GMBH, Germany

KA220-VET - Cooperation
partnerships in vocational education
and training
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CREDinGREEN Project in brief (II/II)

ERASMUS+ Project

Title: How Covid-19 and the EU's Green Deal policies are changing tourism behaviour in Europe and how services, knowledge and skills of tourism managers need to adapt

Project duration: 01/2022 - 12/2023

Project volume: 294,021 EUR

Key words:

- SME: Small and medium-sized enterprises
- Facets of the "European Green Deal" => in relation to climate policy
- Hard times: COVID19 as an external shock
- How quickly and how successfully are companies "allowed", "willing" and "able" to adapt?
- New instrument "Micro-Credential" (micro certificate of vocational and academic education: VET in the process of so-called lifelong learning)

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Research Methodology (IO1)

- **Quantitative Survey**

- ...questionnaire conception

- => **Topic blocks**

- Covid 19 pandemic: lasting change?
- Sustainability and the European Green Deal
- Micro-Credentials/Education and Training

- => **Online survey: 19.05.2022 to 13.09.2022**

- **Response rate:** 355, evaluation refers to 339 participants from the EU, of which 6 from non-project EU partner countries (2 each from Ireland, Czech Republic, Greece), 333 from project EU partner countries

- **Tools**

Google Forms

SPSS evaluation from the generated Excel result lists

- **Qualitative Interviews**

- => **9 Microcredential/educational experts**

- RO 2
- PT 2
- IT 1
- AT 1
- DE 3

- => **9 Tourism experts**

- Germany - 2: Otto Lindner (1), Rene Skiba (2)
- Austria – 0
- Italy – 2
- Portugal – 2
- Romania – 3

- **Desk Research**



Market changes and trends after COVID 19

With the return of travel,

=> **destination management** should adopt new principles for the planned management of tourist flows

=> avoiding over-tourism and

=> significantly reducing the negative impact of tourism on the quality of life of inhabitants and on natural ecosystems

Trends (I/II)

Environmental issues are clearly emerging, leading to greater demand for environmentally sustainable travel.

The Booking.com 2021 Report, dedicated to sustainable tourism, confirms that the pandemic could be a turning point for the tourism industry, as the habits of a large proportion of tourists could change.

The place of travel, the duration of travel and relative expenditure are factors directly influenced by inflation, rising energy costs and the general increase in the cost of living (hotels, restaurants, ...) and have a greater impact on long-distance travel, which is becoming increasingly expensive. There is **a risk that leisure travel will no longer be considered a priority** by consumers with limited purchasing power.

Business Travel: With borders opening up again, companies are now finding ways to re-evaluate the way they work. Reducing business travel has helped contain costs for companies, but eliminating travel has also reduced carbon emissions, achieving sustainability goals.

Trends (II/II)

MICE: However, the desire for face-to-face interaction and relationships remains strong. On this front, the situation appears quite fluid and, probably, **the integration strategies between online and offline** will consolidate in the coming months, i.e., the ability to offer the market new proposals and unique experiences. Many live events will probably be organized, with the addition of virtual and immersive experiences, in a hybrid way.

Insurance: Many travellers are willing to take out travel insurance to reduce the risk of further medical expenses or cancellation of service bookings and may prefer nearby destinations.

Booking time: To increase travel security, bookings are not made too far in advance and trips are therefore planned more precisely and in more detail.

Flexibility will continue to play an important role for most travellers; this will also have an impact on the search for accommodation, where the possibility of cancelling the reservation or personalised services will be in the foreground.



Experts` opinion about market changes in the post-pandemic period (I/II)

In terms of the activities most affected in the long term, respondents mentioned the following:

- Air transport, due to travel restrictions,
- Business travel / MICE and events,
- Accommodation in major cities, mainly due to their dependence on event tourism,
- Cruises,
- Coach travel and group travel
- Travel agencies.
- All businesses that operate with a traditional mindset and without innovation.



Experts` opinion about market changes in the post-pandemic period (II/II)

After the pandemic, it will be necessary

- to pay **attention to innovation** in order to overcome business crises.
- In particular, hotels established between the 1950s and 1980s, managed with a rigid and old model, structured as micro-enterprises, family-run, face the problem of generational change, **employees** who have **to adapt to the new demand and lifestyle changes accelerated by the pandemic**.



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Panel discussion

	<p>Prof. Dr. Heike Bähre Project Lead, CREDinGREEN Project, Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM) University of Applied Sciences, Germany</p>
	<p>Oliver Winter CEO, a&o Hostels GmbH & Co. KG; Germany</p>
	<p>Carsten Herold, Owner and Chief Executive Officer - HEROLÉ-Reisen GmbH; Germany</p>



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Thank you!

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Berlin, March 2023

Oliver Winter and A&O HOSTELS



Oliver Winter is a prominent executive and founder and CEO of a&o Hostels, the largest hostel chain in Europe. Born and raised in Germany, Winter has always been passionate about the hospitality industry.

Under Winter's leadership, a&o Hostels has experienced significant growth and expansion. He has implemented a strategic plan that has seen the company expand from a single hostel in Berlin to over 40 hostels across Europe. Winter is known for his innovative and forward-thinking approach to business. He has been instrumental in introducing new technologies to a&o Hostels, including a mobile check-in system that allows guests to check-in and access their rooms via their smartphones.

a&o Hostels is a leading chain of budget-friendly hostels in Europe, offering affordable accommodation to travelers since its inception in 2000. With 40 hostels in more than 20 cities across Europe, a&o Hostels has established itself as a trusted brand for budget-conscious travelers looking for a comfortable and convenient place to stay.

The hostels cater to a range of travelers, from backpackers to families, offering a variety of room options to suit different needs and budgets. Guests can choose from private rooms or shared dormitories, all of which are designed to provide a comfortable and safe experience.

a&o Hostels prides itself on its modern and innovative approach to hospitality. Its hostels feature a range of amenities, including free Wi-Fi, 24-hour reception, luggage storage, and in-house bars, restaurants, and lounges. The company also offers additional services via third parties, such as bike rentals and guided tours, to help guests explore the cities in which they are staying.

The company has also placed a strong focus on sustainability, implementing eco-friendly initiatives across its properties. With its affordable rates, convenient locations, and commitment to guest satisfaction, a&o Hostels has become a popular choice for budget-conscious travelers seeking a comfortable and enjoyable stay in Europe. (School-) Groups represent 1/3 of all A&O customers, followed by couples and families.

Berlin, March 2023

**Carsten Herold, Owner and Chief Executive Officer
- HEROLÉ-Reisen GmbH; Germany**



Carsten Herold co-founded HEROLÉ Reisen in 2002 with Franz Olender. The company has become a leading specialist tour operator for school and study trips in Germany under their leadership. Herold prioritizes sustainability and social responsibility, ensuring that his company's trips meet ethical and environmental standards. He is recognized as a visionary entrepreneur who uses his innovative strength and trend-spotting abilities to make HEROLÉ Reisen a successful and prominent player in the German travel market. During the pandemic, Herold deepened his knowledge in strategic sustainability management by studying at the Eberswalde University for Sustainable Development. This has equipped him with valuable insights and skills that he now leverages in his advisory services to other companies.

HEROLÉ Reisen is a company founded in 2002 and based in Dresden. The company has over 100 employees; and sustainability is at the core of its corporate philosophy. Since 2019, HEROLÉ has been a pioneer in sustainability and operates as a carbon-neutral company, protecting rainforests, planting trees locally and reducing its environmental footprint in all areas of the business.

From a provider of low-cost air travel, HEROLÉ has transformed itself in recent years into a leading provider of sustainable school trips. The company creates tailor-made school trips that offer all participants unforgettable experiences they will remember for a long time. With several hundred thousand students and teachers travelling with HEROLÉ each year, the company can influence and raise awareness of sustainability issues. With a fleet of 17 modern coaches, passengers are transported to over 100 destinations in more than 20 countries across Europe. The aim of HEROLÉ Reisen is to offer sustainable school trips with quality and educational content.

THE PROJECT

Responding to **tourism market changes** caused by **Covid-19** and the **EU Green Deal** through **micro-credential-certified upskilling of SME tourism managers**

CREDinGREEN is a European partnership of tourism expertise from industry and education collaborating on an innovative and flexible training program that enables company managers and their staff to embrace the significant long-term challenges facing the tourism sector posed by climate action and the aftermath of the Corona pandemic. This 2-year cooperation project is co-funded by the EU Commission through the Erasmus+ programme.



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Mittelstands (FHM)**



Programm: Erasmus+ KA2 Cooperation Partnership in vocational education and training
Project N°: 2021-1-DE02-KA220-VET-000029979
Project timeline: January 2022 to December 2023
Project Coordinator: Fachhochschule des Mittelstands (FHM)

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CREDinGREEN

Futureproofing companies and businesses in the Tourism Sector across Europe



PROJECT RESULT

CREDinGREEN EU wide Survey of Tourism Sector

Milestone 1: EU wide survey of more than 250 tourism enterprises and of leading experts on how impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic and the EU Green Deal policy are changing tourism behaviour in Europe and how services, knowledge and skill sets of tourism managers need to adapt.

Target group: Management of Tourism companies and leading expertise in tourism as well as training and education across Europe

Please take part in the survey



SCAN ME



PROJECT RESULT

CREDinGREEN VET course Training program on Green Tourism

Milestone 2: Micro-credential VET training program based on upskilling of SME managers to meet the needs of a changed market after the Covid-19 experience and under the impact of the EU Green Deal Policy

Target group: Tourism managers across Europe



PROJECT RESULT

CREDinGREEN Policy Paper

Milestone 3: Green paper of recommendations for educational and training policy makers on the sustainable anchoring of micro-credentials in VET and the promotion of the EU Green Deal through innovative training programs in tourism

Target group: Educational and training policy makers at local, national and European levels.

