

## How do tourism service buyers list their requirements in contracts?

This study gives you an idea how European tourism buyers formulate their requirements in contracts. Most European tour operators publish their terms and conditions online, such as [TUI's Information for Suppliers](#). The example used in this study is the current [Code of Conduct of Better Places](#), a Dutch tour operator committed to responsible and sustainable tourism. Throughout the code, tips are added to provide you with additional information on the specific topics.

### Code of Conduct

Better Places acknowledges its responsibility towards society to be a good corporate citizen. In order to reach its goals regarding corporate responsibility, Better Places cooperates closely with its own employees, customers, partners such as non-governmental organisations (NGOs), locals at destinations and its suppliers. Better Places wants to ensure that its local agents and any other suppliers (herein referred to as "Supplier" or collectively as "Suppliers") take part in this action towards more responsible tourism. This Supplier Code of Conduct forms an integral part of Better Places' contract with its Suppliers.

### Compliance with applicable law in general

Better Places expects its Suppliers to comply with all applicable international, national and local laws and regulations, industry minimum standards and any other relevant statutory requirements, whichever requirements are more stringent.

#### Tips:

For more information on travel legislation and other common requirements, see our study about the [requirements you must comply with to attract European tour operators](#).

Consult your own country's regulations for the type of products you offer, as well as those on health and safety. Make sure you comply with the legal requirements and have all the required permits.

### Transport

Means of transport should comply with the legal local standard. The Supplier should consider minimum quality and safety arguments when selecting coach transport. The Supplier is responsible for training of drivers and a code of conduct with regard to driving. The Supplier will take care of environmentally friendly transport, if available. The Supplier will make efforts to use the latest models of transport, which emit the least amount of CO2 and will try to renew these models on a regular basis.

#### Tips:

Most sections of this code include aspects of sustainability. Where European tour operators used to focus mainly on environmental sustainability, their codes now include social issues and animal rights. They expect you to avoid a negative impact on the environment, local communities and animals, respect basic human rights, provide decent labour conditions for your personnel and not be involved

in any kinds of bribery.

For more information, see our study about [the demand from European tour operators for sustainable tourism suppliers in developing countries](#).

## Accommodation

The Supplier will stimulate the use of accommodations that do not damage the environment and will prefer the use of sustainable accommodation, if a choice exists. In case of clear evidence that contracted accommodations jeopardise the provision or integrity of basic resources and services (e.g. food, water, energy, healthcare and soil) to the neighbouring communities it can be reason to terminate the cooperation with the accommodation. Preference is given to accommodations that work with internationally acknowledged (e.g. GSTC recognised) and/or Travelife certification (taking into account price and comfort criteria). A basic/standard sustainability clause is or basic/standard sustainability clauses are included in all Supplier's contracts with accommodation providers. (e.g. child labour, anti-corruption and bribery, waste management and protection of biodiversity).

### Tips:

Explore your options for certification with programmes such as [Travelife](#). The [Global Sustainable Tourism Council](#) (GSTC) provides additional information on internationally recognised schemes.

For a list of other certification schemes in the tourism sector, check the [ITC Standards Map](#).

## Entertainment/excursions

Excursions and attractions in which captive wildlife is held are not offered, except for properly regulated activities in compliance with local, national and international law. Excursions which include interactions with wildlife comply with relevant codes of conduct. Any disturbance of natural ecosystems is minimised.

Where available, preference is given to excursions that operate on the basis of acknowledged and controlled sustainability standards. The company offers no products or services of excursion providers that harm humans, animals, plants, natural resources (e.g. water or energy), or which are socially and/or culturally unacceptable, such as elephant rides or a visit to an orphanage or school.

### Tip:

As attention for animal welfare is increasing, many European tour operators have eliminated animal attractions like elephant rides from their offers. To provide responsible and sustainable animal experiences, study the [Global Welfare Guidance for Animals in Tourism](#) and try to commit to it.

## Sexual exploitation of children and adolescents

The Supplier allows or tolerates no child prostitution at the premises and facilities of subcontracted

accommodations. Any suspicious behaviour from guests, employees, staff from suppliers of the Supplier or any other person on the Suppliers premises or during excursions must be report to the local authorities by the Supplier. Better Places will end the contractual agreement prematurely if the Supplier does not take adequate measures to prevent sexual exploitation of children within the direct supply chain (e.g. accommodations and excursions).

### **Tips:**

Many European tour operators have signed [The Code](#), an industry-driven code of conduct against the sexual exploitation of children in travel and tourism. It includes a zero-tolerance policy throughout the value chain. Learn more about The Code and its [members](#).

Read the [Compilation of Good Practices](#) based on the work of the [UNWTO World Tourism Network on Child Protection](#).

## **Human rights & labour conditions**

Local partners comply with all relevant national laws protecting the rights of employees. Basic Rights:

The Supplier shall not discriminate based on gender, age, religion, race, tribe, caste, social background, disability, nationality, membership in workers' organisations, political affiliation, sexual orientation, or any other personal characteristics. All employees shall be free to enter their employment with the Supplier through their own choice and shall also be free to terminate their employment when they choose without penalty, as long as the process occurs in accordance with the (oral or written) employment contract.

All forms of forced labour are forbidden; the freedom of association and the right to collective bargaining shall be recognised by the Supplier; workplace practice and conditions which violate basic rights are not allowed: physical abuse or punishment or threat of physical abuse or punishment, any kind of sexual or other harassment and other forms of intimidation are prohibited; the Supplier provides a means through which staff can make representation to senior management about key employment issues. The Supplier provides for an effective complaints procedure through which employees may raise grievances (including those about harassment) and seek redress.

## **Safe workplace**

The Supplier shall not employ children younger than 15 years of age unless local minimum age law stipulates a higher age for work or mandatory schooling, in which case the higher age shall apply. If, however, local minimum age by law is set at 14 years of age in accordance with developing country exceptions under International Labour Organization (ILO) Convention No. 138, the lower will apply; if the Supplier employs young people between the age of 14 and 18, the Supplier must treat them with particular consideration, for example by restricting their working hours.

The Supplier does not directly or indirectly contract accommodations which are involved in compulsory labour or which employ children to complete work which is normally undertaken by adults. There are special working times and conditions for children (aged 13 and under) working within the business, in accordance with the United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child and/or the ILO convention 138. The condition is mentioned in Supplier's contract with the accommodation.

## Wages and working hours

Wages paid by the Supplier must meet or exceed legal minimums and/or industry standards. No illegal or unauthorised deductions from wages are allowed; working hours of the employees are to be kept in line with the legal requirements and/or industry standards; the employees shall be granted their stipulated annual leave and sick leave without any form of repercussions; female employees shall be granted their stipulated maternity leave and other rights in case of pregnancy.

## Environment

Suppliers shall minimise their negative impact on the environment; the Supplier shall actively reduce the amount of energy and water used and shall minimise the use of chemicals known to cause damage or pose risks to health and/or the environment; the Supplier shall comply with mandatory national and international law, particularly in regard to the procedures and standards for waste management, handling and disposal of chemicals and other dangerous materials, emissions and effluent treatment; the Supplier shall monitor and control wastewater and solid waste generated and shall treat it as required prior to discharge or disposal; waste of all types shall be reduced to the greatest extent possible by the Supplier.

## Local sourcing and benefiting communities

The Supplier shall actively choose locally produced goods in preference to imported ones wherever possible.

The Supplier shall promote local products and services to guests, by recommending guides, restaurants, markets and craft centres wherever possible.

### Tips:

Besides preventing negative effects of tourism on the local environment and/or community, many European tour operators are looking for ways to positively contribute to sustainable development. For example, they wish to aid in the preservation or restoration of biodiversity, as well as the development and economic growth of local communities.

To show your commitment, you can develop projects or join existing initiatives. Cooperate with non-governmental organisations (NGOs) or sustainability experts to ensure a truly positive impact, but be aware that sustainable development is complex.

## Monitoring & enforcement

As a principle, Better Places trusts all its Suppliers to respect the terms and conditions of this Supplier Code of Conduct and to actively do their utmost to achieve Better Places standards. The Supplier shall ensure that the principles set forth herein are communicated, implemented and adopted within their own business. The Supplier shall involve employees, management and other stakeholders such as the communities in an appropriate way; the Supplier is encouraged to take steps to promote adherence to this Supplier Code of Conduct throughout their own supply chain. However, the Supplier's sub-contractors are not bound by the terms of this Supplier Code of Conduct. When being prompted, the Supplier shall report in a self-assessment modus about its compliance and progress in all matters mentioned herein. The Supplier shall complete the self-assessment forms fully, promptly and accurately; the Supplier agrees that its premises and facilities may be inspected, and its compliance may be audited at any time by Better Places and/or its representatives. The Supplier shall support such audit as far as reasonably possible. If the Supplier is in breach of the terms and conditions of this Supplier Code of Conduct (e.g. evidence of child labour, or an employee of the Supplier acting as an intermediate for child prostitution, or disregard of ecological legislation), Better Places shall be entitled to

terminate any contract and cooperation with the Supplier with immediate effect and reserves to take any further legal action at its discretion.

### Tips:

European tour operators like you should be able to prove that your suppliers also meet their standards. A good way to arrange this is to set up your own supplier code, which your suppliers must sign.


Use your buyers' codes of conduct to shape your own policy. Integrate sustainable practices into your product, like efficient waste, electricity and water management.

Make sure your promises and measures are realistic. If your code is just empty words, this could result in substantial damage to your image.


Also be aware that non-compliance with your buyer's code of conduct may end your business relationship!

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