

TO: Mateja Kregar Gliha
MAIL: m.kregar@siol.net

November 26th, 2016

Dear Mateja,

Thank you for applying as association for membership within WFTGA. We are very happy to see your effort to enrich the quality for tourist guides in your area.

I am aware about the constant discussion between tour managers and tourist guides, because these two professions have many things in common:

1. Both professions need core knowledge and professional skills, group and crises management; they work with tourist and they explain/show tourism attractions.
2. Many tourist guides add tour managing to their work, either because the country is so large (Argentina, France, Poland ...) or because they do not find enough work within their area and travel off season across borders.

The difference is quite clear though: the tour manager is solely responsible to the travel agent/operator, he/she does not make programmes but fulfils them; travels long distances and over a long period (between 2 days – 5 weeks) and needs to care for beds, meals, coordination; is all day with the group, stays in the same hotel; has no influence on the path due to given programme. Elementary knowledge of the country visited and some language proficiency might be demanded, usually the driver has the main order. In no EU country does this profession need any training, students of any kind, teachers, spouses and priests may do this; if engaged, the responsibility remains with the travel agent.

The tourist guide is area specific, meaning to stay in the personal area/city and to be engaged for a certain limited time or tour. Where the authority demands a qualification – in-house or region/country -, more in-depth knowledge is compulsory because an assessment is included for this; additionally this guide needs to be competent with temporary events and exhibits, to know road works and change of opening time etc. The tourist guide may work for one agent only or be self-employed; in both cases, he/she can cooperate in preparation and if covering all the sites demanded, may do the path according individual ideas – including commentaries, order of visit and is responsible for advising the driver! When self-employed, he/she can accept guests via his own promotional material, suggest variations of programmes and will use individual homepage etc. Usually will remain in the own bed/home and is responsible for tax, insurance and all legal issues according country law.

I am working as an area specific tourist guide since 50 years, mainly in Vienna, although the licence is for all of Austria, and very rarely take groups/individuals out of my city even: I would be responsible for their breakfast, ask whether they like the hotel or complain about the noise - I would not be able to concentrate on art and interpretation! After an accident I would need to accompany the wounded person to hospital and my group would remain without anyone. So these examples show certain differences.



WFTGA

World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations

Felicitas
Wressnig
WFTGA President
mail:
info@wftga.org
www.wftga.org

**In Operational
Relations with
UNESCO**

**Affiliate Member
of UNWTO**

Registered Office:
Vienna, Austria

**17th WFTGA Convention
Tehran, IR Iran
January 2017**

WFTGA is sponsored
and supported by:

- Androus Foundation
- Armenian Tourism Department
- Cyprus Tourism Organisation
- Cyprus Tourist Guides Association
- The A. G. Leventis Foundation
- University of Cyprus
- University of Yerevan
- Vienna Chamber of Commerce

**We are the
Professionals!**

Most travel agents find it perfect to save money and not engage a professional tourist guide for the site; they even hand you 45 people with Whisper System and you never get any personal contact to give the visitor the needed/missing information. This, in my opinion, is not guest friendly! Funny enough, this was one of the reasons why EU Commission did not liberate TG profession – no green card! – guest contentment is a high value. It also included the fact that liberation would mean loss of tax and control of safety; no income for sites and infrastructure, no 'stretching' of season, less sustainability.

According UNWTO latest statistics, 40% of the 1,2 billion tourists this year, are travelling for experiencing culture and different ways of life; another 30% go along with adventure; 20% are Cruise (who include both). Most interesting is the fact, that repeaters and adventure tourists are the big spenders: what is demanded today, is QUALITY.

Quality can be gained only by learning and training, up-dating and constant feedback. We, the tourist guides, should promote our abilities and great knowledge, to give our guests the best care. Niche-tourism is the growing branch for survival for any cultural heritage – our own area.

Both professions – tourist guide and tour manager - will survive. They will and should support each other to achieve excellent cooperation: it is the only way forward. Just compare to doctors: the good old generalist and the specialists additionally.

Wishing you and all your colleagues, partners and friends a great meeting!



Felicitas Wressnig
WFTGA President