

BEST PRACTICE: LYON, FRANCE



Key Challenge

Changing consumer preferences towards more sustainability.

Type of Solution

Stakeholder participation and management; Certification; Promotion campaign; Investments in infrastructure and product development.

Case Classification

Type of Destination | Urban

Territorial Level | < NUTS 3

Size of the Tourist Area | 102.4 km²
(533.68 km² Greater Lyon)

Population | 522.250 (1.424.069 Greater Lyon) in 2021

Type of Tourism | Cultural; City; Business; Gastronomy.

DMO | Non-profit organisation with nearly 600 tourism professionals as members.

Main Stakeholders Affected | Local residents; Tourists; ALL tourism service providers; Local producers; Local businesses.

Additional Challenges Covered | Creating local added value through tourism; Maintenance and conservation of cultural heritage; Lack of visitor participation in tourism development.

Context & Background

Lyon is a sustainable and modern tourism destination (carbon neutral airport, high level of stakeholder engagement, sustainable AR-enriched experiences, etc.). In 2023, the city welcomed 6 million visitors, 60% of whom were for business trips and the remaining 40% for leisure trips. 9.4 million overnight stays were recorded in 2023, of which almost 25% were international. The contribution of tourism to Lyon's economy in 2023 is between 5 and 10% of the city's GDP and around 5% of local employment.

Key Challenge

Lyon faces some negative impacts of tourism, partly due to visitors' behaviour and consumption preferences. These include the displacement of local shops and services by those that focus exclusively on tourists and often offer cheap imported goods. A major challenge for Lyon is therefore to educate tourists about sustainability and encourage them to make sustainable consumption choices for local sustainable products and services.

Implementation of Solutions: Based on the Sustainable Tourism Strategy 2021-2025, Lyon has identified sustainability and quality labels as well as the involvement of local producers, businesses and residents as key pillars to promote sustainable visitor behaviour.

SOLUTIONS

- Launch of the "[*Ville Equitable et Durable*](#)" quality label in 2010, which promotes a social and solidarity economy for companies, shops, artisans, places and events. Lyon has also launched the "[*Bouchons Lyonnais*](#)" quality label to guarantee quality and a sustainable local approach in traditional "Lyon cuisine", and the [*Accueil vélo label*](#) which ensures quality services for cyclists. Using these labels allows both locals and visitors to make more conscious consumption choices.
- Promotion of waste reduction, for example through the national [*#gourdefriendly initiative*](#) with more than 115 partners (shop owners, bars, restaurants) who refill water bottles with fresh water for free or by promoting [*zero-waste shops*](#) and organic products.
- Lyon actively [*promotes local products*](#) with the "[*Fabriqué à Lyon*](#)" label in four product categories: fashion and design, manufactured products, artisanal food and decorative items, design and handicrafts. There are currently more than 100 certified products in Lyon.
- To maintain smooth access to Old Lyon, visitor flows are diverted to less frequented areas, the schedule of guided tours has been modified and the number of people per group is limited to 25, a walking team for guidance is present in the old town and a [*charter of good behaviour*](#) to respect the place and its inhabitants is distributed to visitors.
- Promotion of [*environmentally friendly alternative means of transport*](#), especially bicycle infrastructure (5,000 bikes at 428 bike stations in the metropolitan area), but also Segways, e-scooters and car sharing to promote the use of public transport when arriving and departing.
- The [*LyonCityCard*](#) (LCC) not only includes discounts on museums and major attractions, but also allows free use of public transport. Work is currently underway on the Low Carbon LCC, which offers additional discounts for travelling by train or bicycle.
- The [*Greeters initiative*](#) enables interactions between residents and visitors. The Lyon City Greeters introduce tourists to their neighbourhoods and favourite places, which they show them during a walk. The "Lyon Greeters" are affiliated to the [*International Association of Greeters*](#).
- Inviting visitors to get involved in local social issues by encouraging them to [*support social organisations*](#) in Lyon.

Replicability potential: High (requires leadership and stakeholder cooperation).

Cost & funding source: The municipality and the tourist board have made a total of 300,000 euros available to support the transition to more responsible tourism in the 2021-2025 strategy period.

Success Factors & Barriers Regarding the Implementation

Success factors: Dedicated staff; Funding to overcome the financial obstacles faced by some stakeholders; Involvement of pioneers among stakeholders; Support from local professional networks; Training and awareness raising of all Tourist Office teams and stakeholders.

Barriers: Lack of time; Giving priority to business and financial issues; Lack of financial and human resources; Difficulties faced by small businesses.

Results and Impacts

- In 2023, Lyon scored 83% in the Global Destination Sustainability Index (GDS Index), ranking 13th in the world.
- More than 240 establishments have already received the "[*Ville Equitable et Durable*](#)" quality label.
- In 2023, 72 residents of the metropolitan area shared their favourite places in Lyon and the surrounding area so that visitors could experience them "like a local", with 292 outings for 708 people.

Takeaways

- Start by identifying good practices and sharing them with all stakeholders.
- Set an example and commit to sector-specific certification processes to inspire others.
- Fund the first steps to facilitate engagement.
- Communicate stakeholders' initial commitments.
- Intensify awareness-raising and training of all stakeholders.

Useful Links

- [Responsible Tourism in Lyon](#) | [Act for more Responsible Tourism](#) | Only Lyon Tourism and Conventions

Contact Person

Carton, Virginie, Managing Director, direction@lyon-france.com