



## Budapest Beyond Sightseeing (Hungary)

### Summary

Budapest Beyond Sightseeing is a very different city tour that takes the participants to one of the most neglected districts of Budapest where they get to experience the area's hidden treasures through active participation, stories and encounters with locals, aiming to change the perception of the neighbourhood and its residents.

### The project

"Budapest Beyond Sightseeing" offers guided tours to a neglected district in the heart of Budapest in order to change perception on the poor reputation of the district and its inhabitants. It is also a way of preserving local history and creating employment for the guides.

#### Sector(s) covered

##### Main sector

Society: Urban regeneration; Action to foster the social, economic and physical regeneration of cities; Place marketing, Development of niche tourism.

##### Other Sectors:

Education and Training

The tours are open to Hungarian and foreign adults with special tours for secondary school students.

### Approach

The main activities are specialised walking tours in the 8th district of Budapest, such as the socio-cultural tour, contemporary art tour and living history lesson. The groups are kept small and are guided to 'hidden corners' where the guides highlight important historical events with local tales, pictures and tasks.

The residents in the district are involved to share their stories and the participants get to meet local artists, gypsies and people working in that area.

### Element of innovation – the process

The tour takes a new perspective on guided tours in cities, involving active participation of the visitors and residents.

Each tour starts with teambuilding activities and includes creative elements such as playing games and illustrating stories with simple home-made tools. The residents of the district are also actively involved: the tourists visit the locals in their homes and hear their stories and memories of the district. Through this, the practice creates an innovative way of turning a neglected neighbourhood into a visited and appreciated area. It gives a new perspective and makes local people open their eyes to the richness of their cultural and social environment.



## Key successes

### (outcomes, results, impacts)

The project helps change negative attitudes toward the 8<sup>th</sup> district into a more positive perception. The project has received good media coverage and people read and talk about the district in a new way.

The district is increasingly accepted and the negative stereotypes are challenged. It also motivates responsible involvement in the city and the historical memories it keeps such as the buildings, and the historical events. Citizens of the area are particularly welcoming and friendly towards the tour participants.

## Challenges

As there were no books specifically on the 8th district, the information had to be collected little by little, using various techniques. The involvement of the locals also proved to be difficult at first, but as the project managers spent a lot of time in the district, the residents slowly opened up and provided their input and stories.

At the beginning of the project advertising was done by giving free tours to people. Promotion was also helped by the media picking up on the story.

## Transferability and sustainability

The practice is easily transferable: the elements of forgotten treasures, hidden corners, good historical anecdotes and active locals can be found in many places. There are already examples of tour participants starting to research the history of their own neighbourhood and creating similar tours.

## Special Highlights

The project was started entirely without external funding, based on the creative ideas and work of the founders. It takes a new approach to tourism and urban regeneration as it is built around the local environment and possibilities, actively involving the residents in promoting the image of their neighbourhood.



## Key characteristics

<b>General purpose of the practice</b>	Stimulating creative/innovative behaviour and thinking and promoting creative and innovative solutions to society problems
<b>Target group</b>	Adults and secondary school students.
<b>Type of learning</b>	Informal
<b>Level of implementation</b>	Local
<b>Funding</b>	None
<b>Time frame</b>	2007- ongoing
<b>Leading organisations</b>	Two private individuals; founders and project managers.

## Further information

### Website of the project

[www.beyondbudapest.hu](http://www.beyondbudapest.hu)

<http://sightseeingbudapest.blogspot.com>

### Contact details

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### Link to video/pictures:

[http://picasaweb.google.hu/beyondbudapest/EU\\_Good\\_Practice\\_Budapest\\_Beyond\\_Sightseeing\\_Appendices#](http://picasaweb.google.hu/beyondbudapest/EU_Good_Practice_Budapest_Beyond_Sightseeing_Appendices#)