



## Press Release

### **AIDA and Futouris start pilot project for sustainable shore excursions**

New catalog of criteria identifies 18 sustainable AIDA excursions in the Baltic Sea Region

AIDA Cruises is one of the cruise industry's pioneers in "sustainable shore excursions" and continues to expand its options. The cruise line started working with the sustainability initiative Futouris e.V. and the State Chancellery of Mecklenburg-Western Pomerania to develop standardized criteria for sustainable shore excursions as part of a joint project. Their goal was to create a transparent basis for comparing the sustainability of the individual shore excursion options and to base the assessment on measurable and scientific criteria. The Baltic Sea Region was assessed as a model region based on the new catalog of criteria. The result: Eighteen AIDA shore excursion options in the Baltic Sea Region have already obtained the sustainability seal.

Whether a guided city walk through Tallinn, bike excursion in Helsinki, or pedelec tour to Copenhagen - AIDA excursions in the Baltic Sea Region that meet the social, ecological, and cultural criteria are now being specifically marked with a tree symbol. AIDA guests can thus easily identify which options are particularly sustainable well before their voyage when they are booking their excursions on myAIDA. The new assessment model will be expanded gradually to additional destinations.

By introducing standards for assessing the sustainability of shore excursions, AIDA is once again playing a pioneering role in the cruise industry.

"Taking ecological and social criteria into consideration during our trips is a matter of responsibility and an expression of respect for the countries we visit as well as their culture and people. The new catalog of criteria makes it possible for guests to compare the options," says Dr. Monika Griefahn, Chief Sustainability Officer at AIDA Cruises.

The four main criteria for assessing the individual shore excursion options include transport services, the content as well as the main focus of the excursion (e.g. culture, nature, etc.), the dining options and the local partner agency's commitment to sustainability. The assessment also considers numerous subitems. With respect to the transport component, preventing CO<sub>2</sub> emissions is the primary focus. Bike excursions leaving directly from the ship are thus scored higher than using low-emission buses. If the commissioned local agency offsets the CO<sub>2</sub> emissions produced by an excursion, then this also positively impacts the assessment. Nature excursions are also scored particularly high on sustainability if, for example, a trained ranger tells the visitors about wildlife conservation and special aspects. Dining options is another main topic. Sustainable excursions are focused on using regional products for local specialties. Complying with minimum standards for staff according to the core labor standards of the ILO (International Labour Organization), a specialized agency of the United Nations (UNO), also plays an important role in the catalog of criteria.

Rostock, April 24, 2014

#### **About AIDA Cruises**

As a cruise line and tour operator, AIDA Cruises currently operates and markets a fleet of 10 of the most modern and environmentally friendly cruise ships in the world. The ships are operated in compliance with the highest international quality, environmental, and safety standards.

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By 2016, the AIDA fleet – one of the world's most modern cruise fleets – will have grown to twelve ships that will be offering voyages in the Mediterranean, all around the Canary Islands, in the North Sea, the Baltic Sea, the Caribbean, in North America, in Dubai, and in Asia.

[www.aida.de](http://www.aida.de)

### **About Futouris**

Futouris was founded in 2009. The common goal of the volunteer work by the Board and the members: Sustainable development in tourist destinations over the long term with the targeted support of ecology and biodiversity products and to promote sociocultural responsibility. To ensure the highest standards in qualifying the global projects, Futouris is supported by an international Scientific Advisory Board of seven members that provides advisory support for project development and accredits the projects. Futouris received the "Grüne Palme" (Green Palm) Award from GEO SAISON in 2014. The German Travel Association (Deutscher ReiseVerband - DRV) and the Austrian Travel Association (Österreichische Reiseverband - ÖRV) support the objectives of Futouris and are actively involved in a sponsoring role.

[www.futouris.org](http://www.futouris.org)

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