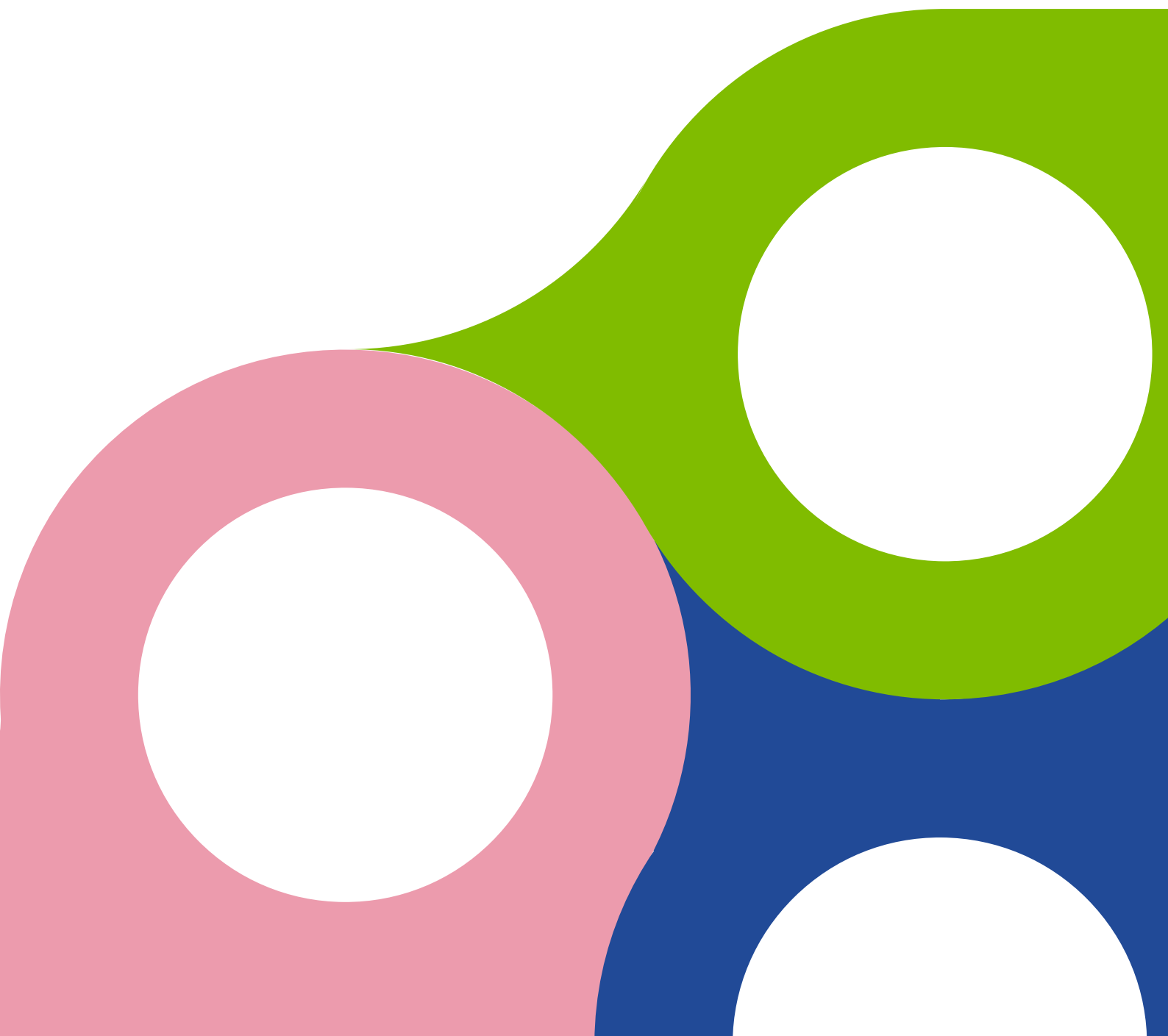


Green Parking and Ecotourism in the Tarnów region



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Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna, operating within the Tarnów subregion covering the city of Tarnów and the Brzesko, Dąbrowa, and Tarnów counties, is developing „ecotourism,” thereby entering a new phase of region promotion. This form of tourism aligns with current travel trends in an environmentally friendly manner.

At the heart of the activities of Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna is the creation of awareness among residents, including the young generation, and the image of the region as open to tourists seeking places with this type of offer. Activities include culinary workshops for the catering industry and lectures/meetings in schools for children. Among the topics discussed are the prevention of food waste in catering facilities and the creation of attitudes of eco-travelling and eco-tourism habits. According to FAO data, approximately 1/3 of food is wasted worldwide and 5 million tonnes in Poland.

Over the last few years, we have seen increasing production of rubbish, food waste, lack of environmentally friendly tourism, low popularity of ecotourism facilities and industries and a growing number of tourists interested in ecotourism. This form of tourism is becoming more and more common among foreign tourists; on the other hand, the younger generations need to be made aware of environmentally friendly travel.

Therefore, Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna sees a need to disseminate knowledge on the subject through culinary workshops (for the industry) and lectures/meetings for children.

Source: <https://www.lot.tarnow.pl/> (30.04.2024)

Participants in the workshops are provided with knowledge on how to combat food waste in the kitchen (creative use of unused products). Children attending lectures/meetings at schools are introduced to knowledge about ecotourism, inclu-



ding information on how to be an ecoto-



urist and travel in a way that does not harm the natural environment. This will raise awareness of ecotourism and draw attention of the participants to new trends in tourism, including ecotourism.

As a result of the task, the following is taking place:

- Building and creating environmental awareness and developing correct environmental attitudes (in tourism),
- Promoting a circular economy and the prevention of waste (in tourism by managing leftover food and travel in a waste-free manner, including using e.g. your own crockery to buy drinks)
- Wasting food also has a negative impact on the environment, including soil degradation, littering and global warming,
- Selective collection/recycling and treatment of waste (in tourism, on tourist routes),
- Education and promotion of Zero Waste (in tourism, in terms of not generating food and other waste such as product packaging).

There are more measures to protect the environment. Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna, together with its members including Communes such as Pleśna, is developing a network of so-called Green Car Parks, which are being built with the support of funds from European Union rural development programmes. The partners are creating places where tourists can leave their cars and switch to ecological means of transport such as bicycles, electric bicycles, melexes, etc., and travel emission-free around the Podgórze.

At the same time, a social media and Internet campaign is being run, as well as the development of a tourist offer and designation of places such as hotels, catering facilities, bicycle and canoe rentals, etc., which fit in with ecotourism trends.

Both initiatives are an important tool in promoting ecological values, shaping a conscious approach to eco-tourism and promoting the „zero waste” philosophy.

Although, due to the development of tourism in the Podgórze and the arrival of tourists who can potentially cause an increase in waste, occupied car parks, traffic jams and related emissions, Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna continues its efforts to promote tourism within a circular economy and selective waste collection.

In addition, Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna plans to develop a support system for educational activities aimed at local residents by organising workshops and information meetings on ecotourism. These initiatives will involve Centrum Produktu Lokalnego (CPL) operating in the Pleśna commune and the local tourism operator INSTYTUT MIEJSC Sp. z o.o.. The aim of these activities is to raise the environmental awareness of residents and tourists visiting the region and to shape the image of the region as a suitable place for ecotourism. It is also important to develop a comprehensive ecotourism offer. By organising workshops in schools and for adults, educational meetings and information campaigns, Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna is actively involved in the process of building ecological awareness, demonstrating that even small changes in everyday habits can have a significant impact on the state of the environment.

To conclude, it is worth emphasising that the effectiveness of these initiatives depends on the cooperation between Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna and local authorities, NGOs, businesses and residents themselves. This proves that by working together, significant changes for a better future and environment can be achieved. Tarnowska Organizacja Turystyczna shows that with commitment and the right tools, even a small community can have a big impact on its surroundings and inspire others.



Bibliography:

<https://www.lot.tarnow.pl>

