



Be.CULTOUR
Beyond cultural tourism

Be.CULTOUR:

“Beyond CULTural TOURism: human-centred innovations for sustainable and circular cultural tourism”



HORIZON 2020

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Dissemination Level

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Abstract

Be.CULTOUR aims to empower European regions to co-create innovative, circular solutions for heritage regeneration and regional development beyond cultural tourism. The objectives and impact of the project are based on the implementation of co-creation activities, the development of Local Action Plans and innovative solutions for circular cultural tourism in six Pilot Heritage Site Ecosystems located in Italy, Spain, Cyprus, Sweden, Serbia and the cross-border region of North-East Romania-Moldova. As a partner to the consortium, each Pilot Heritage Site ecosystem has identified a specific Pilot Heritage Site on which the project's methodology will be applied, tested, and validated. This will be done together with the local stakeholders engaged in local Heritage Innovation Networks, working together amongst each other and actively involved in the participation in the Be.CULTOUR Community of Practice. In parallel, a Community of Interest is developed to engage additional organisations (Mirror Ecosystems) committed to engaging in a peer-learning programme and replicating the Be.CULTOUR methodology in their territory, with their resources.

This document will detail the activities organised for the Community of Interest of the 16 Ecosystems consisting of five “Community Conversations”, two Meet-ups with Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites, nine Webinars, three study visits and two Policy Learning Labs.

Moreover, a specific section is dedicated to the project outputs, including the feedback gathering from the Mirror Ecosystems, the local action plans implemented in some of the Mirror Ecosystems and the collaboration opportunities created so far.



Partners involved in the document

Participant No	Participant organisation name	Short Name	Check if involved
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2	European Regions Research and Innovation Network	ERRIN	X
3	ICLEI Europe – Local governments for Sustainability	ICLEI	
4	Iniziativa Cube S.r.l.	INI	
5	Uppsala University	UU	
6	Haute Ecole ICHEC - ECAM - ISFSC	ICHEC	
7	Open University of the Netherlands	OUNL	
8	APT Basilicata	APT-BAS	
9	Diputación Provincial de Teruel	PGT	
10	Larnaca and Famagusta Districts Development Agency	ANETEL	
11	Laona Foundation	LAONA	
12	Västra Götaland region	VGR	
13	Stalna Konferencija Gradova I Opstina	SCTM	
14	Agentia Pentru Dezvoltare Regionala Nord-Est	NERDA	
15	Verde e Moldova	VEM	

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1. Description of the Project

Be.CULTOUR stands for “Beyond CULTural TOURism: heritage innovation networks as drivers of Europeanisation towards a human-centred and circular tourism economy”. It expresses the goal to move beyond tourism through a longer-term *human-centred* development perspective, enhancing cultural heritage and landscape values.

Cultural tourism entails opportunities but also risks. Tourism as a whole can be a highly volatile economic sector. If not managed properly, cultural tourism can also easily turn into a “value extractive” industry, generating negative environmental, social and cultural impacts on local communities and ecosystems. This project will **develop specific strategies to promote an understanding** of cultural tourism, which moves away from a “stop-and-go” consumer-oriented approach towards one that puts humans and circular economy models at its centre, paying attention to nature, communities and cultural diversity. “Place”, intended as the *genius loci*, the ancient spirit of the site expressing its “intrinsic value” and “people” as co-creators of its uniqueness, culture, art, tradition, folklore, productivity, spirituality, as well as its “time space routine”, are the focus of Be.CULTOUR, which aims at realizing a longer-term development project for the pilot areas involved.

The overarching goal of Be.CULTOUR is to **co-create and test sustainable human-centred innovations for circular cultural tourism through collaborative innovation networks/methodologies and improved investments strategies**. Targeting deprived remote, peripheral or deindustrialized areas and cultural landscapes as well as over-exploited areas, local **Heritage innovation networks** will co-develop a long-term heritage-led development project in the areas involved enhancing **inclusive economic growth, communities’ wellbeing and resilience, nature regeneration** as well as **effective cooperation** at cross-border, regional and local level.

Wide and diversified partnerships of stakeholders from **18 EU and non-EU regions** of Northern-Central and Southern Europe, the Balkans, the Eastern neighbourhood and the Mediterranean will be the driving force of the project. A **community of 300 innovators** (which includes regional authorities and municipalities, clusters and associations, museums and tourist boards, entrepreneurs, chambers of commerce, citizens, researchers, practitioners as well as project

partners) in 6 pilot regions will co-create innovative place-based solutions for human-centred development through *sustainable* and *circular* cultural tourism.

Collaborative “Heritage innovation networks” will be established in 6 European deprived remote, peripheral and deindustrialised areas and cultural landscapes identified as “pilot innovation ecosystems”: committed to the project’s objectives, they have defined clear cultural tourism-related challenges requiring innovation that will serve as the basis for the collaboration with the 16 additional “mirror innovation ecosystems”. Mutual learning and up-scaling of business solutions will be the objectives of the collaboration between pilot and mirror ecosystems, building the sustainability of the project's results beyond its lifetime.

By adopting a human-centred quadruple/quintuple helix approach to co-design, Be.CULTOUR will result in 6 community-led Action Plans, 18 innovative human-centred solutions and 6 close-to-market prototypes of new cultural tourism integrated services and products: these will directly contribute to inclusive economic growth, communities’ wellbeing and resilience, and nature regeneration in pilot and mirror regions, stimulating effective cooperation at a cross-border, regional and local level. The core partners of the Consortium will progressively build Be.CULTOUR sustainability by broadening the interregional collaboration while anchoring it to relevant EU initiatives in the academic, business and institutional realms.

1.1 Be.CULTOUR specific objectives

The scopes of the Be.CULTOUR project will be achieved through a set of specific, measurable, achievable, realistic and time-constrained (SMART) specific objectives:

Objective 1 – To assess the impacts and market potential of sustainable and circular cultural tourism at national, regional and local level through multidimensional quantitative and qualitative indicators, innovative statistical methods and advanced smart data management systems;

Objective 2 – To build a Community of Practice of 6 pilot regional ecosystems and a Community of Interest with 16 “mirror ecosystems” in EU and non-EU countries actively engaged in knowledge-sharing and exploitation of Be.CULTOUR’s approach, methodology, tools, and innovative solutions for sustainable and circular cultural tourism;

Objective 3 – To co-develop 6 Action Plans for sustainable and circular cultural tourism by establishing collaborative “Heritage innovation networks” in 6 pilot regions in Northern-Central and Southern Europe, the Balkans, the Eastern neighbourhood and the Mediterranean;

Objective 4 – To co-develop, prototype and test human-centred and place-specific product, process and service innovations for sustainable and circular cultural tourism in pilot heritage sites;

Objective 5 – To provide policy recommendations for more effective use of European Structural Investment Funds (ESIFs) and other EU funds to support cultural tourism innovation ecosystems in pilot and mirror regions, and develop a proposal of evolution of ESIFs through synergies with other public funds;

Objective 6 – To contribute to deepen cultural Europeanisation through information and educational activities focused on the European history, identity and culture expressed in tangible and intangible cultural heritage and cultural landscapes, developing European Cultural Routes and European Heritage Labels in pilot heritage sites.

All partners have wide experience in developing and testing the Be.CULTOUR proposed approach, methodology and tools, ensuring the effective and time-constrained achievement of all the above-mentioned specific goals.



2. Introduction

The following report is a mid-term review reporting all activities, exchanges and collaboration opportunities emerged from the Be.CULTOUR peer-learning Scheme. The aim of this document is to give a clear overview of the actions put in place through the project and the engagement of the members of the two project communities: Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites and Mirror Ecosystems.

The participating territories, despite being geographically and culturally different, have found several commonalities when dealing with circular cultural tourism strategies, both in the challenges faced and the potential solutions proposed. This allowed them to weave new connection and spark collaboration opportunities among different actors to successfully implement new approaches to circularity.

This report, by outlining step by step every activity and target achieved, aims to demonstrate how the peer-learning scheme has been beneficial to both Mirror Ecosystems, Pilot Heritage Site heritage and advisors involved in the project, creating an open space of dialogue where to share good practices, project ideas and innovation in the core areas of the project.

Mirror Ecosystems have also been asked to provide their feedback on the peer-learning scheme, included here below in Section [4.4](#), which will be useful to improve the peer-learning activities for the last part of the project.

2.1 Document structure

The document is structured as follows:

Section 1 describes the Be.CULTOUR project in brief;

Section 2 introduces the objectives of the document and structure;

Section 3 outlines each peer-learning activity carried out so far and the activities planned in the following months

Section 4 provides an overview of the project outputs, including the feedback gathered from the regions, the local action plans produced so far and the collaboration opportunities sparked;

Section 5 draws the conclusions and key takeaways of the peer-learning scheme.

3. Be.CULTOUR Peer-Learning Activities

3.1 Community Conversations

Be.CULTOUR Community Conversations are online meetings that bring together members of the Community of Interest and the Community of Practice within the Be.CULTOUR project.

These interactive sessions serve as platforms for participants to learn from each other, share challenges and good practices related to circular cultural tourism, and collaboratively identify innovative approaches to overcome barriers and enhance actions and strategies towards sustainable tourism. By fostering knowledge exchange, promoting collaboration, and encouraging collective problem-solving, Community Conversations play a crucial role in driving positive change and enabling the development of more sustainable and inclusive tourism practices.

3.1.1 First Community Conversation, 26 October 2021 : The circular approach in cultural tourism

On 26 October 2021, the first Community Conversation took place involving the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites and the 16 Mirror Ecosystems. Besides presenting the project activities and the Pilot Heritage Site's cases, the event was the occasion for building the Be.CULTOUR Community let the Mirrors introduce themselves and gather their expectations regarding Innovation Areas and peer learning activities.

Table 1 – Agenda of the first Community Conversation

15:00	Check-in, ice-breaker and introduction of the Mirror Ecosystems
15:25	Beyond Cultural Tourism: the project in a nutshell Antonia Gravagnuolo, CNR IRISS, Project Coordinator
15:35	The six Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites Representatives from the 6 Pilot Heritage Sites
15:50	Q&A & interactive session

16:20	Connection time! Social media get-together... and grab a coffee!
16:30	Be.CULTOUR Community of Interest: structure and activities Gaia Marotta, ERRIN, WP4 leader
16:40	Q&A & interactive session
17:00	Check out and end of the event

The first part of the event was dedicated to introducing the Mirror Ecosystems, the main features of the Be.CULTOUR project and the Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites. Every representative of a Mirror ecosystem was invited to take the floor and introduce the local case focusing on the circular cultural tourism aspects.

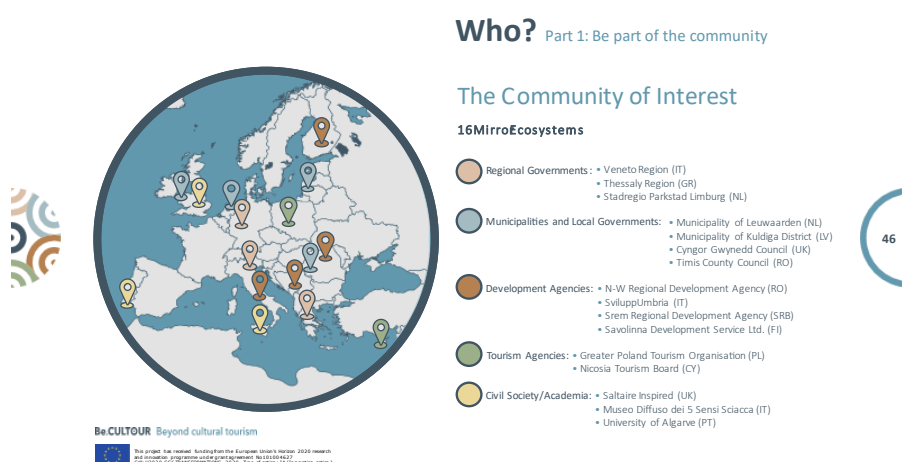


Figure 1 – Community of Interest

Then, the coordinator (Antonia Gravagnuolo from CNR-IRISS) gave an overview of the Horizon 2020 funded project, highlighting the specific approach, key objectives, methodology and innovation areas. The representatives of the Community of Practice presented the six heritage sites focusing on the specific challenges, the type of heritage and the related innovation areas.



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Gaia Marotta from ERRIN presented the main activities of the Be.CULTOUR Community of interest, divided into four main parts:

- The last interactive session was dedicated to gathering information on the Mirror's expectations.

The first discussion was dedicated to the Be.CULTOUR project four main innovation approaches:

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- European culture and identity, strengthening its common roots, enhancing its shared heritage and valorising its beauty.
- A human-centred, fair and responsible tourism models attentive to the impacts generated in the territory.
- A Smart and human-centred data management that supports managers and institutions to enhance tourism flows and provide immersive, engaging cultural experiences.

From the discussion, it emerged that the 16 Mirror Ecosystems are generally interested in all of them. In particular, most of them indicated their interest in learning and implementing new innovative solutions for Circular Tourism.

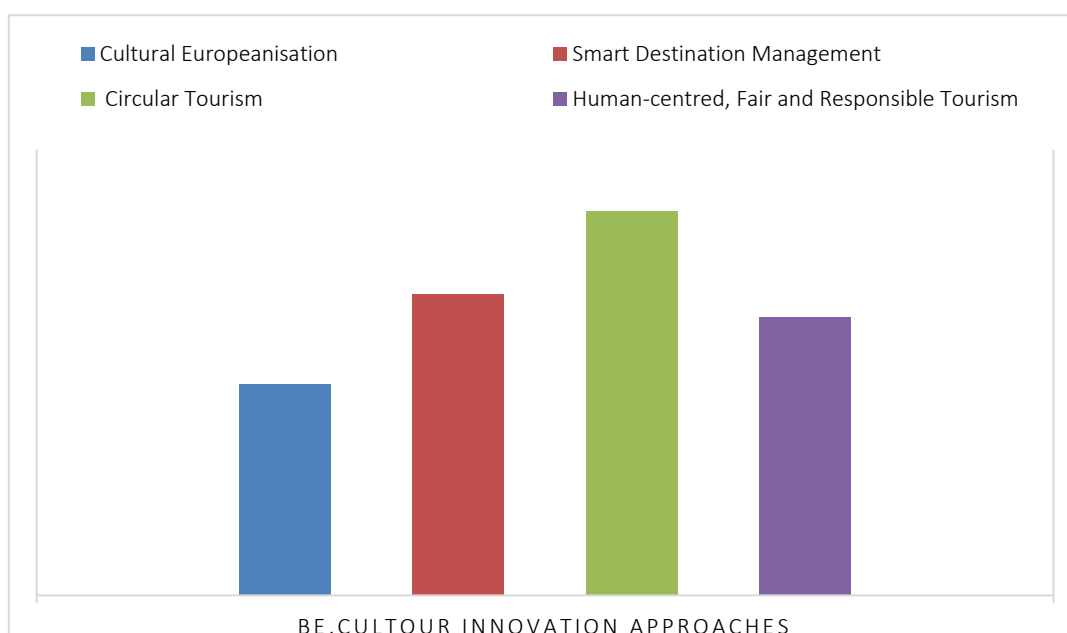


Figure 3 – Ranking of the Be.CULTOUR transversal innovation approaches

Interest in replicating the methodology

The Be.CULTOUR methodology is based on four phases: exploration, strategy definition, solutions co-development, and solutions prototyping. The 16 Mirror Ecosystems can be involved and learn from all of them. The second discussion was about what parts of the project methodology is more interesting for them to plan the peer-learning programme accordingly.

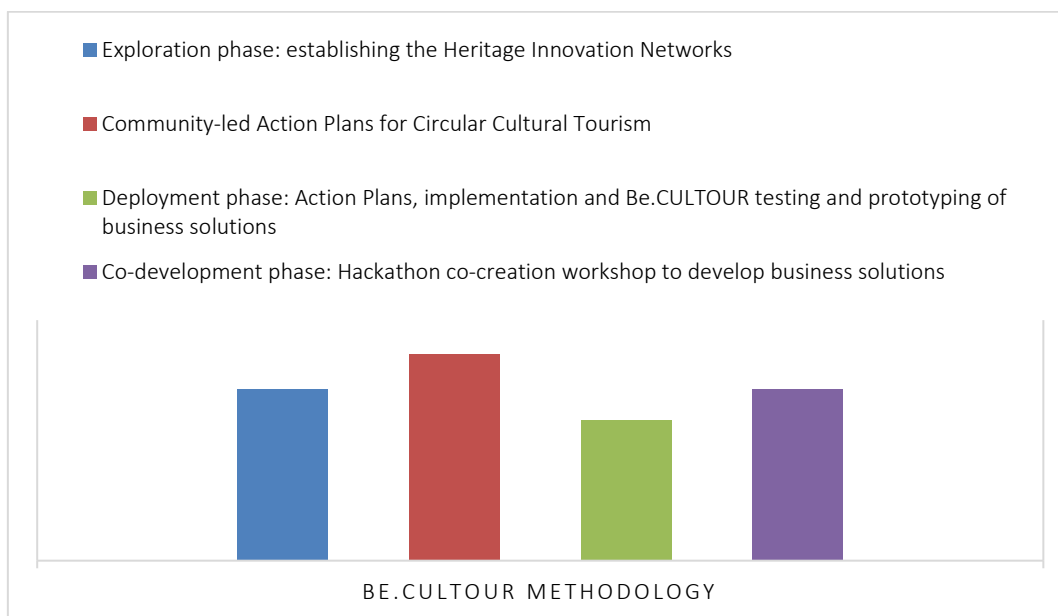


Figure 4 – Ranking of the Be.CULTOUR methodology assets

Most Mirror Ecosystems have indicated an engagement in learning and replicating the first two Be.CULTOUR methodology phases, the exploration phase with establishing the local heritage innovation networks and the co-designing phase to produce community-led action plans for circular cultural tourism.

Interest in peer learning activities

The third topic was the interest in the different project activities. Indeed, the Mirror Ecosystems will have the possibility to be involved and benefit from many dedicated project activities and services. The main interesting output of this discussion was that the Be.CULTOUR methodology is the output the Mirror Ecosystems are interested in the most. The session highlighted a general agreement on the interest in learning and replicating it, especially concerning its circular cultural aspects. The second output that every Mirror ecosystem considers beneficial is being part of the Be.CULTOUR community to discuss challenges and innovative solutions with peers and experts. While the peer learning activities, both online through the Community Conversation and in-person in the two Learning Labs in Brussels and Naples, are considered crucial for the Mirror Ecosystems, the less interesting activities focus on their visibility.

The overall main output from this interactive session is that the 16 Mirror Ecosystems are more interested in the project's innovative topics and methodology than in benefiting from the project visibility. Their strong commitment to implementing the Be.CULTOUR innovation actions will be a strong basis for the deployment of the Community and peer-learning activities.

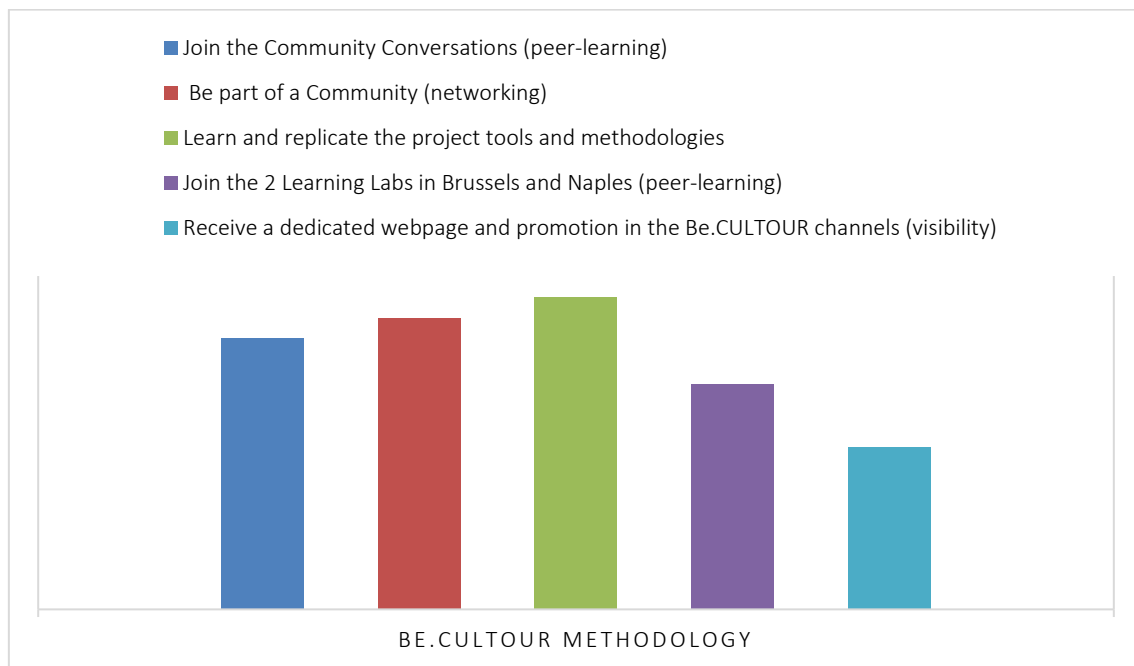


Figure 5 – Ranking of the Be.CULTOUR peer-learning activities

Practical aspects and other discussions

The last interactive session of the first Community Conversation was an occasion to plan and discuss future meetings and activities. Indeed, a general agreement was found on the duration and the logistics of the future Community Conversation. The forthcoming activities have been presented, including the dedicated interviews.

3.1.2 Second Community Conversation, 24 February 2022: Insights from the first local workshop in the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites and focus on the inclusion of the local communities

The second Community Conversation gathered the Community of Practice and the Community of Interest to present insights from LWS1 and discuss the importance of circular cultural tourism strategies to include local communities in the decision making and implementation process.

Two good practices from the Community of Interest (Mirror Ecosystems) were invited to present their cases **The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca, Sicily** and **Saltaire Inspired in Bradford, UK**.

Table 2 – Agenda of the Second Community Conversation

14:00	Check-in and ice-breaker
14:15	ICLEI presentation of methodology for the first workshop: human-centered design ICLEI
14:25	Experiences from the six Pilot Heritage Site regions on the inclusion of the local communities and the creation and boosting of a local ecosystem Representatives from the 6 Pilot Heritage Site regions
14:55	Interactive session
15:00	Connection time! Social media get-together... and grab a coffee!
15:10	Be.CULTOUR Community: Focus on the inclusion of the local communities Museo Diffuso dei 5 Sensi Sciacca Cooperativa di Comunità Identità e Bellezza Saltaire Inspired
16:30	Q&A session and have your say
16:40	Check out and end of the event Be.CULTOUR smile
16:45	Community Meetup – (For Pilot Heritage Sites only)

In the first part of the meeting, participants learnt and discussed the concept behind Be.CULTOUR methodology on **human-centred design**.

Representatives from the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites joined to present to the community their first-hand experience in the implantation of the **project Local Workshops** (main challenges, great success and lessons learned).

In the second part, participants had the chance to learn from two interesting good practices on the inclusion of local communities through human and community-centred bottom-up approaches to valorise your local heritage from two Mirror Ecosystems: **Saltaire Inspired**, UK and **Museo Diffuso dei 5 Sensi Sciacca Cooperativa di Comunità Identità e Bellezza**, Italy.

3.1.3 Third Community Conversation, 28 April 2022: How to align bottom-up community plans with municipal, regional or national strategies

The third Community Conversation focused on practices aligning bottom-up community plans with municipal, regional or national strategies. This was done by involving four speakers from both municipal and regional level, members of the community of Interest.

Table 3 – Agenda of the Third Community Conversation

10:00	Check-in and welcome
10:10	<p>Be.CULTOUR Community: focus on How to align bottom-up community plans with municipal, regional or national strategies</p> <p>Veneto Region, Italy Giuliano Vantaggi, <i>Site Manager, Associazione Colline Conegliano Valdobbiadene UNESCO</i></p> <p>Municipality of Leeuwarden, The Netherlands Jonathans Yannick, <i>Senior Advisor Citymarketing, Events and Tourism Department of Economic Affairs</i></p> <p>Region of Thessaly, Greece Angeliki Veneti, <i>Rural and Surveying Engineer MSc</i></p> <p>Savonlinna Development Services Ltd, Finland Pellervo Kokkonen, <i>Senior advisor – tourism and international cooperation</i></p>
10:50	<p>Q&A and open discussion on the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you consider it helpful to integrate your local Action Plan into, or align it with, other relevant existing local/regional strategies?

	<p>2. What is the biggest challenge you face in integrating your Action Plan with other local/regional strategies?</p> <p>3. What change is needed to improve cooperation between multi-level (local/regional/national) actors to foster the development of circular cultural tourism?</p>
11:20	Interactive session with MIRO board
11:35	Final discussion
11:45	Presentation of the open call
11:55	<p>Check out and end of the event</p> <p>Be.CULTOUR smile</p>

In the first part of the meeting, participants could learn more about the strategies and practices put in place by local and regional authorities from the Mirror ecosystem. Giuliano Vantaggi, Site Manager for the Associazione Colline Conegliano Valdobbiadene UNESCO, presented the innovative approach that the Veneto Region adopted towards the promotion and preservation of the Prosecco Hills, fostering sustainable tourism based on local resources.

At the same time, participants could also hear from an example on the Municipal level. Jonathans Yannick, Senior Advisor Citymarketing, Events and Tourism Department of Economic Affairs at the Municipality of Leeuwarden, explained to the participants how Leeuwarden has become the center of a think-renaissance in the region. The city was EU Capital of Culture 2018 and by directly involving citizens and local communities in the planning of cultural activities that had direct impact and benefit them, it managed to capitalize on the legacy of being Capital of Culture.

Leeuwarden's cultural projects **have a clear focus on a transformation to a more sustainable planet**. The strategy put in place was not focusing solely on the projects produced, but on the people involved and empowered. The events were not only held in the historic capitol of Fryslân (Leeuwarden's region), but also in the raw, versatile landscape of the province. Among the activities promoted: festivals, exhibitions, permanent installations around the region, inclusive

and immersive theatre shows in 32 locations throughout Fryslân and in the greenhouses of Hartman, the Giants of Royal de Luxe parade and much more. The legacy of Leeuwarden as Capital of Culture is then represented by 1 main community programme, [Arcadia](#).

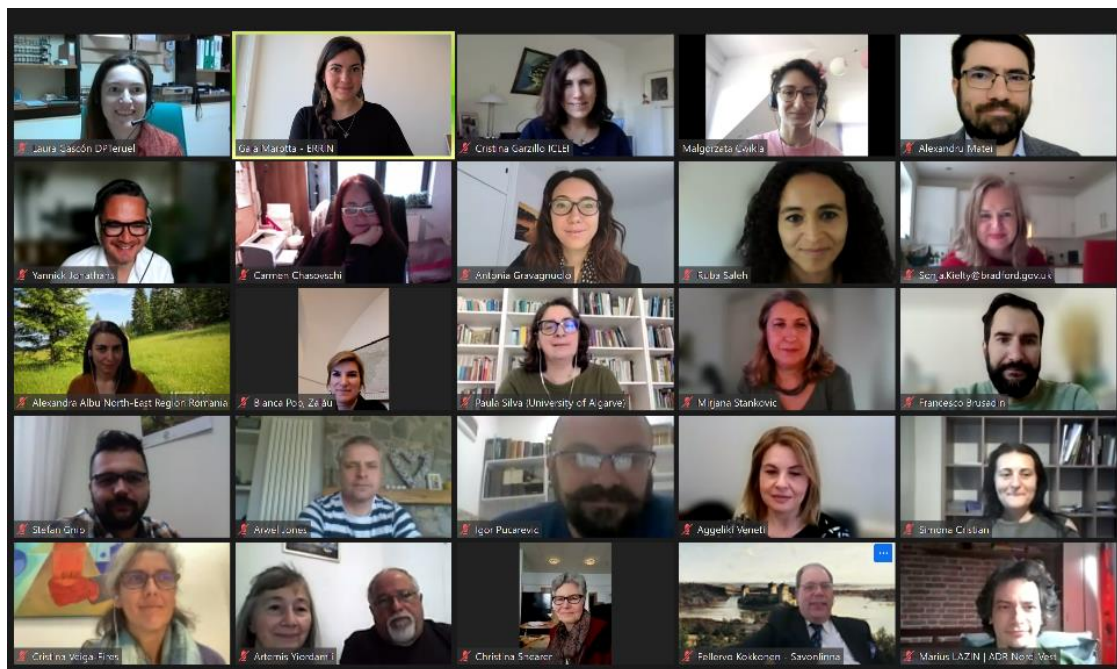


Figure 6 – Third Community Conversation

The second region representative speaking was Angeliki Veneti from the Region of Thessaly, Greece, who presented to the participants the process of opening of underwater monuments and archaeological sites to divers in Greece.

The underwater museum is part of the project, which supports the economic recovery of coastal and island areas in the Mediterranean. The aim was to strengthen alternative tourism and sustainable development throughout the region, while raising awareness of cultural and natural marine heritage. The operation of the Underwater Museums and the know-how that emerged, are a model for the development of corresponding activities throughout the Mediterranean area. The creation of underwater museums opens new perspectives, extending the tourist season and stimulating the local, real economy. In this way we connect smart tourism with culture and create jobs, upgrading the image of our country on the international tourism map.

Pellervo Kokkonen, Senior Advisor at Savonlinna Development Services, sparks participants' interest by presenting the dichotomy and effectiveness of both bottom-up and top-down

approaches. As a matter of fact, Savonlinna's strategy relied in the grass-roots initiatives in support of strategic regional goals. The Municipality implements actions such as Local democracy fora, engaging and consulting twice per year with the local stakeholders. The outcomes are then concretised and enhanced through the support of the local development agency and local authorities, who provide also the economic support required. Through this process, the municipality builds trust among citizens towards local authorities, ensuring transparency and openness, and fostering participatory planning processes.

The second part of the third Community Conversation was dedicated to active discussion and interaction among participants to learn more about their experience of integrating local Action Plan into relevant existing local/regional strategies and the biggest challenges they faced in doing so.

The exchange was followed by an interactive exercise using **Miro boards** in which participants had to identify a metaphor that could capture their experience with aligning bottom-up community plans with municipal, regional or national strategies.

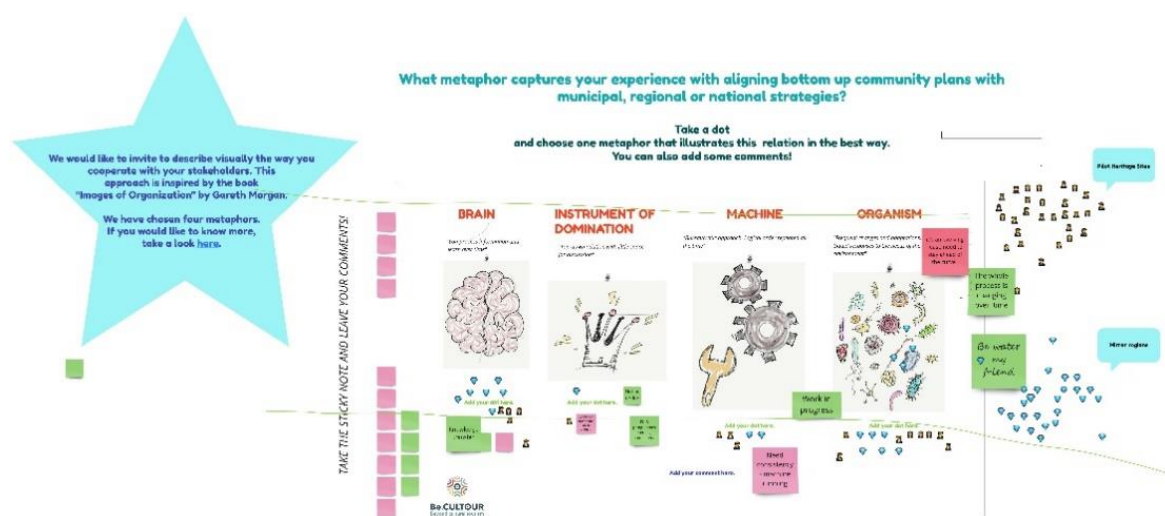


Figure 7 – Miro board from the third Community Conversation

3.1.4 Fourth Community Conversation, 8 July 2022: How are heritage sites rethinking and promoting circular cultural tourism in the 'post-covid' summer?

The fourth online Community Conversation focused on how heritage sites are rethinking and promoting circular cultural tourism in the first 'post-COVID' summer, focusing on the

participants' experience in designing and planning strategic approaches, actions, and visions for the valorisation of local circular cultural tourism in the upcoming season.

Table 4 – Agenda of the Fourth Community Conversation

10:00	<p>Check-in and welcome</p> <p>Ice-breaker using Mentimeter</p>
10:05	<p>Pilot Heritage Site presentations on the work on the Action Plans preparation (5 mins. Each)</p> <p><i>Västra Götaland, Sweden</i> <i>Vojvodina, Serbia</i> <i>Basilicata, Italy</i> <i>Romania-Moldova, Cross-Border Region</i> <i>Larnaca, Cyprus</i> <i>Aragon, Spain</i></p>
10:35	<p>How are heritage sites rethinking and promoting circular cultural tourism in the 'post-covid' summer?</p> <p><u>Presentations from Mirrors:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • LIVE project in Llŷn, Cyngor Gwynedd Council, UK Rethinking Cultural Tourism Sustainability: Key performance indicators that look at sustainable, regenerative, and circular performances in the tourism industry <i>Leonie Schulz, Knowledge Gatherer LIVE Operation</i> • Sviluppumbria, Italy Sustainable Cultural Heritage in Urban Locations: 3 festivals fostering resilience during and after covid in Umbria, Italy <i>Chaiara Dall'Aglio, Responsible EU Projects, PL Interreg Europe SHARE, Sviluppumbria</i> • Timis County Council, Romania <i>Simona Cristian, Office for tourism development and events, Timis County Council</i>
11:15	<p>Q&A and open discussion on the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you implementing specific strategies/plans/actions to enhance sustainable tourism in your region over the next months? 2. How are you trying to address the risk of overcrowded tourism destinations in your areas and, on the other side, under-exploited remote heritage sites? 3. What stakeholders are you involving in your strategy/planning? 4. Mention 3 essential elements/steps to successfully design and implement sustainable tourism strategies. 5. Where are you spending your summer holidays this year?

11:50	Final discussion – Wrap up

The meeting started with a short presentation of Be.CULTOUR's methodological approach and the updates by Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites on the preparation of their Action Plans, followed by 3 pitch presentations by some selected members of the community of interest, presenting their local examples:

Rethinking Cultural Tourism Sustainability: Key performance indicators that look at sustainable, regenerative, and circular performances in the tourism industry

Leonie Schulz, Knowledge Gatherer at the Ecomuseum of Pen Llŷn Island, North Wales shared her work within the framework of the project LIVE, co-funded by the European Regional Development Fund. She discussed the development of new regenerative tourism Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) based on socio-cultural, environmental, and economic impact. Her presentation highlighted the importance of measuring the holistic value of cultural tourism impact beyond mere economic indicators. This approach will support the tourism sector sustainability in the future, despite global challenges.

Sustainable Cultural Heritage in Urban Locations: 3 festivals fostering resilience during and after covid in Umbria, Italy

Chiara Dall'Aglio, Responsible EU Projects at Sviluppumbria, Italy, presented the region's strategy to ensure the sustainable promotion of Cultural Heritage in Urban Locations. She specifically discussed a set of actions put in place for the promotion of 3 festivals (**Umbria Jazz** – started 1973; **Spoletto Festival** – started 1957 **Umbria Libri** – started 1994) within the framework of the Interreg Europe SHARE project, fostering resilience during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Umbria, Italy. Chiara emphasised the integration of sustainability practices and community engagement in cultural heritage promotion proved to be successful in the post-

covid recovery, however progress on digitisation, skills development and sustainable transports still needs to be done and seriously taken into account.

Timis County Council, Romania: A dynamic, multicultural, modern and innovative city that keeps alive the memory of past times through a rich historical, architectural and cultural heritage

Simona Cristian from the Office for Tourism Development and Events at Timis County Council presented the tourism plan to promote Charlottenburg: Circular² (circular to power two). This plan focused on implementing circular economy principles in tourism, creating a symbiotic relationship between the tourism sector and local communities. Simona emphasised the need for sustainable development while harnessing the unique cultural heritage of the region.



Figure 8 – Summer Community Conversation

Following the presentations, an interactive discussion, facilitated through Mentimeter, took place, engaging participants from various regions and backgrounds. The discussion revolved around the following key questions:

1. **Are you implementing specific strategies/plans/actions to enhance sustainable tourism in your region over the next months?** Participants shared their ongoing initiatives to enhance sustainable tourism in their respective regions, including the development of

eco-friendly accommodations, promoting local products, and implementing waste management systems.

2. **How are you trying to address the risk of overcrowded tourism destinations in your areas and, on the other side, under-exploited remote heritage sites?** Strategies to address overcrowded tourism destinations involved implementing visitor management systems, promoting alternative attractions, and distributing tourism flows more evenly. For under-exploited remote heritage sites, participants discussed the importance of infrastructure development, marketing campaigns, and community involvement to increase visibility and accessibility.

What is the leading cause of over/under tourism?



Figure 9 – Mentimeter results 4th Community Conversation

3. **What stakeholders are you involving in your strategy/planning?** Stakeholders mentioned included local communities, government authorities, tourism industry representatives, NGOs, and educational institutions. Collaboration and engagement with diverse stakeholders were considered vital for the successful implementation of sustainable tourism strategies.

Throughout the discussion, participants stressed once again the importance of actively involving and consulting local communities, assessing their needs and aspirations to help create a sense of ownership and foster sustainable tourism development that aligns with local values and traditions. It emerged also that an overarching approach to sustainable tourism strategy is necessary, considering the socio-cultural, environmental, and economic aspects of the destination. It is crucial to strike a balance that benefits the local community, protects the environment, and ensures economic viability. Developing partnerships and collaborating with various local, national and international stakeholders, such as government agencies, businesses, community organisations, and NGOs, also enhanced the effectiveness underlined as an essential element to build successful sustainable tourism strategies. Joint efforts and knowledge sharing enable the pooling of resources, expertise, and funding for better outcomes.

Mention 3 essential elements/steps to successfully design and implement sustainable tourism strategies.



Figure 10 – Mentimeter results 4th Community Conversation

The fourth Community Conversation provided valuable insights into the experiences and strategies of Be.CULTOUR Mirror Ecosystems and the participating heritage sites. The presentations and discussion highlighted the importance of sustainable tourism practices, community engagement, and partnerships for successful implementation. These insights will contribute to the development of effective strategies to promote circular cultural tourism in a

post-pandemic world, ensuring the preservation and appreciation of heritage sites while benefiting local communities and the environment.

3.2 Meet-Ups with the Community of Practice

In addition to the Community Conversations, a series of meet ups have also been held between the Community of Practice (Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites) and the Community of Interest (Mirror Ecosystems).

The meet ups aim to gather the entire project community and create a space for dialogue and exchange between the different project partners. Each meet up focuses on a different innovation area of the project and allows both Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites and Mirror Ecosystems to present their experience and challenges.

In each meet up, Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites are invited to share the updates on the implementation of their Local Action Plans, developed using Be.CULTOUR methodology, while the Mirrors’ representatives are given the floor to present similar approaches and potential solutions to common challenges to circular cultural tourism.

3.2.1 Fifth Community Conversation & Christmas MeetUp, 15 December 2022: Launch of the Be.CULTOUR Working Groups and discussion on the regions’ winter cultural traditions (sustainability, tourism attractiveness, inclusivity and human dimension of the tradition).

The Be.CULTOUR Christmas Community Conversation & MeetUp took place on Thursday 15 December. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the progress and needs of the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites and introduce the newly launched Be.CULTOUR working groups, and engage in a discussion on winter traditions and tourism strategies in different regions. With the winter festivities approaching, regional representatives and tourism experts from the Mirror and Pilot Heritage Site Ecosystems were focusing their strategies on the promotion of local winter traditions, heritage and celebrations. This meeting was an occasion to discuss the different approaches implemented and the cultural heritage traditions shared among different regions.

Table 5 – Agenda of the Fifth Community Conversation & Christmas MeetUp

10:00	Check-in and welcome Interactive Ice- breaker (ICLEI)
10:05	412 days left. What needs to be done? Prioritising actions, engaging stakeholders, looking for synergies (ICLEI)
10:20	Where is more support needed? PHS expressing their needs for all WPs (ICLEI)
10:30	Welcoming the CoI and introducing the new WG structure for the CoI & CoP: 1. Presentation of the Proposed Working Groups <u>Feedback using Jumboard (not anonymous) and open discussion:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interested in any particular topics? Which ones? • Do you have any ongoing activity/plan in one of these areas? • Which best practices could you share? • Which specific challenges do you want to work on with your peers? • Do you have a LinkedIn account? Are you active on LinkedIn? (ERRIN)
10:45	Virtual Glühwein & Campfire Stories <u>Present your Christmas Heritage traditions</u> Three 5 minutes pitches on local Christmas Heritage traditions with a few representative pictures. Guiding questions for open campfire chat: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there a circular element or climate adaptation action that you have put in place regionally/locally to make your tradition sustainable? • Is there a Europeanisation element in your local winter festivity? • Does your festivity attract tourism? • Can you give an example of experiential tourism related to your Christmas tradition? (ERRIN)
11:25	Presentation of the Webinars calendar (ICLEI)
	End of Meeting for Mirrors and Pilot Heritage Sites Christmas Greetings and Community Picture (ALL)
11:30	Meeting with mentors (ICLEI)

The first part of the meeting started with a session dedicated to **Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites' progress**, to assess their needs and make the point in what was done so far in the project. Participants had the opportunity to ask questions and provide opinions, fostering an interactive and collaborative atmosphere.



Figure 11 – Winter traditions: City of Savonlinna, Veneto Region, Saltaire Inspired

When the Community of Interest joined, the management team presented the recently launched Be.CULTOUR working groups on LinkedIn. The participants were invited to provide feedback on the potential use, opportunities, and desired focus of these working groups. The discussion resulted in the establishment of the four online working groups, better explained here-below in a dedicated paragraph of the deliverable¹. The main part of the meeting was dedicated to the session titled "**Virtual Glühwein & Campfire Stories.**" Representatives from three regions, namely Savonlinna (Finland), Saltaire Inspired (UK), and Svilupumbria (Italy), were invited to present their winter traditions and tourism strategies. Each representative had

¹ See paragraph 4.3

five minutes to showcase their activities, strategies, and cultural heritage associated with Christmas time.

Following the presentations, a "campfire" discussion was opened to all participants to share their thoughts and experiences. The following guiding questions were provided to facilitate the conversation:

1. Is there a circular element or climate adaptation action that you have implemented regionally/locally to make your tradition sustainable?
2. Is there a Europeanisation element in your local winter festivity?
3. Does your festivity attract tourism?
4. Can you provide an example of experiential tourism related to your Christmas tradition?

Participants engaged in a lively discussion, exchanging insights, ideas, and best practices related to the sustainable, tourism-driven and experiential activities linked to their winter traditions. Risks and solutions associated with winter over-tourism in particular areas (mountains in remote destinations or city centers crowded by tourists travelling to stroll around Christmas markets and winter fairs) were also shared among the group. The winter online Community Conversation provided a special opportunity for project stakeholders to promote their tangible and intangible heritage assets, while acquiring more knowledge of the other 22 regional Ecosystems.

The meeting represented an enjoyable moment to discuss up-to-the-moment challenges related to the winter season. Mirror Ecosystems particularly appreciated the linkages among the different regional tangible and intangible cultural heritage and landscapes. These commonalities created a shared sense of belonging based on the common European history and cultures expressed in them. An article summarising the different traditions discussed and presented during the meeting was published on the [project website](#).

3.2.2 *Sixth Community Conversation & MeetUp: Financing opportunities, Presentation of draft financial toolkit to Mirrors and Pilot Heritage Sites – June 2023*

The sixth online Community Conversation and meetup happened on Tuesday, 13 June 2023. In this occasion, participants had the chance to learn and discuss updates on the implementation of local action plans by the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites, as well as the main outputs and key takeaways from the study-visit and local workshop that took place in Saltaire, UK. The event also featured presentations on a newly launched financial toolkit by the partner Iniziativa and two good practices from the community of interest: CREATOUR Project and WritersBlockMurals.

Table 6 – Agenda of the Sixth Community Conversation & MeetUp

10.00	Welcome Check-in and Agenda
10.05	Quick Project Updates 5 minutes - Updates from ICLEI - Gosia 5 minutes - Sharing about Saltaire study visit (Julia Calver)
10.15	Iniziativa Financial Opportunities – Aliona Lupo
10.45	Q&A
11.00	Working on stakeholder engagement – case studies from the community of interest 10 minutes - CREATOUR Project, Mariana Calaça Baptista 10 minutes – WritersBlockMurals, Peter Reen
11.20	Sharing Breakout rooms on community engagement
11.50	Next steps <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Webinar 5 - 23 June 2023 - Community-led and innovative entrepreneurship for circular cultural tourism • Webinar 6 • Policy Learning Lab & Study visit in Sciacca
12.00	End of meeting

The meetup started with updates by one of the Mirror Ecosystems, sharing their experience and outputs from the Saltaire Study Visit and Workshop. Participants who had attended the event

shared their experiences, highlighting key insights, best practices, and lessons learned. This session served as a valuable knowledge exchange opportunity among the different Ecosystems involved in the Be.CULTOUR project.

Following the updates, Iniziativa, one of the project partners, presented its newly launched **financial toolkit**. They provided an overview of the toolkit's features and functionalities, demonstrating how it could support the community members in their cultural initiatives. Iniziativa also shared various opportunities available through the toolkit.

The next session was dedicated to showcasing two good practices from the community of interest. Mariana Calaça Baptista presented the **CREATOUR Project**, emphasising the importance of community involvement in planning cultural activities that benefit the citizens. She shared successful case studies and highlighted the social and economic impact these activities had on the local community.

Peter Reen then presented **WritersBlockMurals**, another exemplary initiative that focused on community engagement. He discussed how the project fostered collaboration between local writers and artists to create murals that reflected the community's heritage and aspirations. Peter emphasised the positive outcomes of this collaborative approach, including increased civic pride, cultural preservation, and economic benefits.

The presentations by **Mariana Calaça Baptista and Peter Reen** sparked a lively conversation among the participants. They discussed the importance of involving the community in the planning and implementation of cultural activities, considering their needs and aspirations. The participants shared their own experiences, ideas, and challenges related to community involvement. The conversation revolved around the social and economic impacts that these activities could have on the community, highlighting the potential for sustainable development and positive change.

The Be.CULTOUR online Community Conversation and meetup on 13 June 2023 successfully provided a platform for knowledge sharing, updates on project implementation, and discussions on community involvement in cultural activities. The event demonstrated the value of collaboration, highlighting good practices and emphasising the significance of considering the social and economic impact on the community. The presentations and conversations served to inspire and motivate the participants to continue working towards creating cultural initiatives that benefit and empower the local communities.

3.3 Webinars

How can members of the Be.CULTOUR community better support each other and also share their experience with a wider audience? The Be.CULTOUR Webinars provide another platform for peer-to-peer exchanges.

Based on the principles of peer learning, replicability of practices and co-creation methodology, the Be.CULTOUR webinar series aims to accompany the participants towards a comprehensive understanding of circular and sustainable cultural tourism practices. A mix of on-ground experience and expertise guide participants into innovative practices and show how to apply them context-specifically.

Nine editions throughout 2023 will touch on different but interrelated topics:

- 1) Circular cultural tourism: the role of Heritage Innovation Networks for co-creation and communities' empowerment - *24 February 2023*
- 2) Understanding the European value of cultural heritage: Power of networks - *24 March 2023*
- 3) Innovative solutions for circular cultural tourism - *20 April 2023*
- 4) Values-based innovative marketing for less-known cultural tourism destinations - *May 2023*
- 5) Community-led and innovative entrepreneurship for circular cultural tourism - *June 2023*
- 6) Creative tourism and the role of arts, interpretation and storytelling - *September 2023*
- 7) Circular economy implementation in the tourism sector - *October 2023*
- 8) Innovative finance for circular cultural tourism - *November 2023*
- 9) Smart data management for circular cultural tourism assessment and monitoring - *December 2023*

A dedicated page was created on the [project website](#), sharing updates, recorded videos and key takeaways on the discussions happened during each webinar episode.

3.4 Study-Visits in Mirror regions

3.4.1 Stadregio Parkstad Limburg

In the context of the first Policy Learning Lab happened in Brussels in September 2022, a daily study visit was organised in one of the Mirror Ecosystems: Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg, The Netherlands.

About the Hosting Mirror Ecosystem

Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg has developed particular expertise in collaborating with relevant stakeholders in the field of tourism to create an attractive touristic region out of an industrialised black coal mine region. The region has a rich history that has known many ups and downs for the inhabitants. Through the years, a lot of the unique reminders of this rich history have been torn down, but a few have been saved, and some even restored. While history may not be so clearly shown in the environment, it's still significant for the region and its inhabitants. By turning down the reminders of the heydays of the region, the pride of its inhabitants faded. The main challenge is to find a way to let inhabitants and tourists experience the region's rich history and, by that, win back the pride of the region.



Be.CULTOUR
Beyond cultural tourism



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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No. 101004627
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Figure 12 – Study visit at Stadsregio Parkstad Limburg

Objectives

The visit aimed to provide an opportunity for the 35 project members to engage with the local cultural tourism initiatives and gain insights into the strategies and actions implemented in Heerlen, a city known for its industrial buildings and mines. The main objective of the study-visit was to enhance the understanding of circular cultural tourism strategies and actions in Heerlen. Additionally, it aimed to foster collaboration and knowledge sharing among project members, thereby strengthening the project community.

Activities

Visit to the Royal Theater in Heerlen

The study-visit commenced with a guided tour of the Royal Theater in Heerlen. An historical theater opened during the economic heydays of the region, as a mining area. Anya Niewierrra, director of Visit South-Limburg, presented how the **Parkstad Limburg region** tells its story based on **5 timelines** (Roman period, Middle Ages, Mining Period, Transition Years and the Tourism and Cultural Spring).² Project members had the opportunity to learn about the challenges and benefits associated with transforming industrial spaces into cultural hubs. The local community's involvement in the project was emphasised, highlighting the social and economic advantages generated through the theatre's activities.

Exploration of the National Mine Museum

The second part of the study-visit included a visit to the National Mine Museum, which provided a comprehensive understanding of the region's mining heritage. Participants learned about the museum's efforts to preserve and promote the cultural significance of mining, while also addressing the sustainable development goals. The integration of circular practices, such as repurposing mining sites for tourism and environmental initiatives, was particularly inspiring to the project members.

Visit Castle Schaesberg

² To watch the **movie and presentation of Anya Niewierrra** (director Visit South-Limburg) click [here](#).

The visit to Parkstad Limburg ended at **Castle Schaesberg**, which was rebuilt with the use of new technological tools applied to traditional craftsmanship. During the study-visit to Castle Schaesberg, one of the notable aspects observed was the castle's commitment to preserving traditional crafts and engaging the local community.

The castle's management has implemented educational programs that focus on teaching and promoting traditional crafts to visitors. Castle Schaesberg offers educational workshops and demonstrations where visitors can learn about various traditional crafts. These workshops provide hands-on experiences in skills such as woodworking, blacksmithing, pottery, weaving, and other traditional crafts that were once prevalent in the region. The goal is to preserve these skills and promote their cultural significance to both locals and tourists. The educational programs not only provide visitors with an opportunity to learn these traditional crafts but also emphasise the importance of heritage conservation and the cultural value attached to them. By engaging visitors in these activities, Castle Schaesberg aims to foster an appreciation for the historical and cultural heritage of the region. The management of Castle Schaesberg is supported by a dedicated group of 100 volunteers who contribute their time and skills to the castle's operations and activities. These volunteers play a vital role in various aspects, including guiding tours, assisting with workshops and events, maintaining the castle grounds, and supporting administrative tasks.

Outcomes

1. Enhanced knowledge and inspiration: The study-visit provided project members with valuable insights into the strategies and actions employed in Heerlen for circular cultural tourism. The examples of adaptive reuse, heritage preservation, and community involvement demonstrated the potential for sustainable cultural tourism practices.
2. Collaboration and knowledge sharing: The study-visit acted as a catalyst for collaboration and knowledge sharing among the project members. The diverse backgrounds and expertise of the participants led to vibrant discussions and exchange of ideas, fostering a sense of community within the Be.CULTOUR project.

3. Integration of learnings into project activities: The visit's outcomes will be incorporated into the ongoing activities of the Be.CULTOUR project. The knowledge gained from the study-visit will contribute to the development of innovative strategies and actions for circular cultural tourism, aligning with the project's overall objectives.

The study-visit to the Parkstad Limburg region, specifically Heerlen, proved to be a fruitful and enlightening experience for the 35 project members participating in the Be.CULTOUR project. The engagement with the Royal Theater, the National Mine Museum, and Castle Schaesberg showcased the region's successful endeavours in implementing circular cultural tourism practices. The visit not only enriched the participants' knowledge but also fostered collaboration and community spirit within the project.

3.4.2 *Saltaire Inspired Study Visit & Local Workshop*

From the 27th to the 30th May 2023, members of the Community of Practice and Community of Interest of the Be.CULTOUR project have gathered in the unique historical post-industrial context of Saltaire Village, where Saltaire Inspired, one of Be.CULTOUR Mirror partners is based.

About the Hosting Mirror Ecosystem

Saltaire Inspired is an arts charity, creating quality contemporary art events inspired by the unique historical & contemporary context of Saltaire Industrial Village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Residents, schools, community groups & businesses, are involved in cultural experiences for all who live, work & visit Saltaire. **Saltaire has a standing collaboration with one of Be.CULTOUR Pilot Heritage Sites**, Rydal in Sweden, which began in 2018 when delegates from Rydal and Gothenburg visited Saltaire. They were inspired by the heritage projects, and they began developing a collaboration by exchanging artists' work. These were exhibited in residential homes in Saltaire Village and in the Museum windows in Rydal each December.

Objectives

The study visit and local workshop aimed to **broaden the collaborations and increase connections** among the members of project community which are working on similar areas of tourism, specifically dealing with **adaptive re-use of industrial buildings, traditional crafts and community engagement for sustainable tourism**. The objective of the visit was to help attendees develop policies and practices of local cultural tourism development initiatives and

projects. It provided insights of human-centred, co-creative, sustainable and circular cultural experiences. This has been timely for partners from Saltaire as Bradford works towards being **UK City of Culture 2025**, and therefore was keen to build connections between cultural organisations and Mirror regions with similar experiences participating in Be.CULTOUR.

Activities

The visit started on **Saturday 27 evening** with a **Stakeholders & Partners Reception in Salts Mill** and continued with the **Saltaire Inspired [Makers Fair & Open Village](#) on Sunday 28 and Monday 29**. On **Tuesday 30 May** dedicated workshops were held addressing strategic approaches to city wide cultural heritage tourism strategies and operational approaches led by artists and cultural organisations:

Table 7 – Agenda of the Living Labs in Saltaire

<p>Living Lab 1: Strategic and operational approach to Culture – working towards a city of culture Bradford 2025</p> <p>Aim: brainstorming and building an analysis on common challenges and good practices of Bradford and Be.CULTOUR Mirrors, boost European collaboration opportunities in view of Bradford 2025, set new paths for cooperation in the future</p> <p>Led by: <i>Nic Greenan, Head of Culture, City of Bradford Metropolitan District Council</i></p>
<p>Living Lab 2: ‘Think like a Pirate’ - collaborative and creative networking with purpose: how to be more decisive, more inclusive and more creative</p> <p>Aim: Unlocking the potential of creativity in circular cultural tourism approaches. What worked well in Bradford? What is the experience of Be.CULTOUR local contexts? How can we transfer that approach and keep collaborating?</p> <p>Led by: <i>Sarah Shead, Bradford Cultural Voice</i></p>

Key takeaways from the workshops

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: It is important to raise awareness of heritage assets and contemporary interpretations of heritage. The regeneration and adaptive re-use of heritage spaces for community use helps develop a feeling of ownership by local communities. By engaging the community and local volunteers, stories are built around that heritage, enhancing its value for social and economic development, nurturing through arts a sense of belonging to the place and community and creating authentic sense of place.



Figure 13 – Saltaire Salt mills, Bradford Industrial Museum, People Powered Press

This strategy helps build trust with audiences and artists, including young people. Being aware of demographic of Bradford (youngest city in Europe) and [Bradford Cultural Voice](#), member-led network of over 300 people, who work in the Bradford District's cultural sector, is a positive vehicul to reflect that across the district.

EXPERIENTIAL/IMMERSIVE TOURISM: Tourists become temporary residents when local communities are involved. In Saltaire Arts Trail, local inhabitants in the village open their houses to the artists that exhibit their art in their households.

MULTI-STAKEHOLDER DIALOGUE AND ENGAGEMENT: Multi-stakeholders dialogue and engagement is essential to enhance visibility of heritage assets through. Public authorities play a key role in the preservation and promotion of cultural heritage. They ensure all policy and external drivers chime with the cultural vision of the city (e.g. trainings and schools' curriculum; politicians' rhetoric). Public/private partnerships are also fundamental to ensure inclusivity and long-lasting support from planning to delivery and legacy of cultural initiatives. Bradford local authority is "ahead on inclusion" in working with organisations and taking a broad creative approach, as well as undertaking hyper-local activities with artists in houses and local venues/locations.



Figure 14 – Study visit at Saltaire Inspired: Living Labs

The collaboration between the public and the private sector is also important to ensure that past and future visions match and move beyond gentrification. Planning, monitoring and evaluation are essential.

PEER-LEARNING AND COOPERATION: The excellent experience of the partnership built between Saltaire Inspired and Rydal Museum in Sweden, highlighted the need and demonstrated added value of establishing and nurturing international collaboration and fostering peer-to-peer exchanges across cultural partners.

BEING CAPITALS OF CULTURE: Two of the participants, from the Municipality of Leeuwarden and the Basilicata Region, were able to bring the experience of their cities as previous EU capitals of Culture. This facilitated the exchange of good practices and lessons learned among the partners. In particular Leeuwarden explained their strategies on how to build the legacy of the activities and actions promoted and implemented when they became EU Capital of Culture (e.g. Arcadia Festival and Bosk). Basilicata region instead introduced the concept of the Cultural passport, put in place during Matera year as EU Capital of Culture.

Collaborations and shared ideas

Keep these **collaboration opportunities open**, share good practices on common topics and connect artists between and beyond Bradford with our European partners.

1. Develop a **cultural passport** / single ticket to connect all events and activities (experience shared by Basilicata and implemented during Matera EU Capital of Culture 2019)
2. Develop **emotional maps and memories** of a city (experience shared by Basilicata)
3. Connecting with **European film festivals** – exchanging and co-creating and extending to further opportunities. (CREATOUR project)

Next Steps

Understanding and critiquing the feedback

- Each point made in the key takeaways above could be taken as a start for discussion and ideas for a discussion paper.

Follow-up and partnership building

- The possibility of scheduling a series of conversations and partnership building meetings, following the workshops, has been proposed among participants.
- The idea of setting up the basis for a 'Be.CULTOUR Mark II' project was also discussed, together with a follow-up conference to review the lessons learnt from the Be.CULTOUR field visits and Community Conversations.

Extend the partnerships & networks

- Identify potential arts-led regenerative cultural tourism initiatives across Europe and build a network.

Feedback: highlights from participants

"The visit made me rethink and re-evaluate some of the collaborative models I have experienced particularly regarding inclusion and the meaning of 'doing culture together'."

"I gained a lot of insights in i.e. Bradford acts upon the challenge of inclusion and how different community led initiatives have developed over time. This could be of use in the future."

"As the organization's name says, Saltaire is inspiring, and the things I saw and learned in the days spent there will be part of my next research and curatorial projects."

3.4.3 Be.CULTOUR Sciacca Study Visit

Within the frame of the second edition of the Policy Learning Lab, a study-visit will be held in September 2023 in one of the Mirror Ecosystems of the project: Sciacca, Italy.

The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca has proven to be a successful example of community-led cultural initiatives, valorising not only tangible but also intangible cultural heritage such as crafts and traditional know-how. The model developed in Sciacca transfers tourists from passive spectators to inhabitants through an inclusive and bottom-up tourism project managed by the community itself, which can therefore also benefit directly from the economic revenues.

The Sciacca Widespread Museum was recognised as a successful good practice of circular cultural tourism by other international projects and institutions, which is why it was selected to host the second edition of the Policy Learning Lab and last study visit in a Mirror ecosystem.

3.5 Policy Learning Labs

3.5.1 Policy Learning Lab 1 - September 2022

On the 9th of September 2022, the first **Be.CULTOUR Policy Learning Lab** on circular cultural tourism took place in Brussels. The event aimed to address the challenges and opportunities for circular cultural tourism in the post-pandemic era. The event brought together approximately 50 participants, including 10 representatives from Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites, 21 individuals from Mirror Ecosystems, 15 project partners, and 3 advisors. The lab was structured into two main parts: a panel discussion and two interactive workshops. The objective of the lab was to foster collaboration and exchange knowledge between Mirror and Pilot Heritage Site Ecosystems, while addressing the challenges and opportunities associated with circular cultural tourism in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic recovery.

Table 8 – Agenda of the Policy Learning Lab

9:00	Welcome coffee
09:15	Welcome and introduction Jorge Nieto Angulo, EC Project Officer - tbc Antonia Gravagnuolo, Be.CULTOUR Project Coordinator
09:30	Panel discussion: challenges and opportunities for circular cultural tourism in the post-pandemic era <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emma Taveri, Destination Makers - online • 3 Be.CULTOUR advisors: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Vanessa Glindmeier, <i>Responsible Tourism Coordinator</i>, Cultural Assets Directorate, Historic Environment Scotland ○ Nancy Duxbury, CREATOUR ○ Jordi Mallarach, Future for Religious Heritage
10:10	Q&A session
10:40	Coffee break
11:00	Workshop pt.1: Circular Cultural Tourism challenges definition and solution identification (divided into 6 groups) <i>Every Pilot Heritage Site/mentor will lead one group</i> <i>The workshop will Mirror the Be.CULTOUR methodology used during the local workshops.</i> <i>Participants will co-define solutions to the challenges identified ahead of the workshop.</i>

12:30	Networking lunch
13:30	Workshop pt.2: Preparation of Policy Recommendations <i>Every Pilot Heritage Site/mentor will lead one group</i> <i>Participants will draw a series of policy recommendations based on the conclusions of the previous workshop sessions.</i>
14:30	Plenary session: report from the workshops and discussion

Panel Discussion

The event kicked off with a panel discussion focusing on the challenges and opportunities for circular cultural tourism in the post-pandemic era and featuring the 3 project advisors. The panel consisted of prominent experts in the field, namely Vanessa Glindmeier, Responsible Tourism Coordinator from the Cultural Assets Directorate at Historic Environment Scotland; Nancy Duxbury, representing CREATOUR; Jordi Mallarach, representing Future for Religious Heritage; and Emma Taveri from Destination Makers, the organization supporting the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites in their implementation of sustainable solutions.

The panelists provided valuable insights on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on cultural tourism, the need for sustainable and circular approaches, and the potential benefits that arise from embracing circularity, sharing their respective expertise, highlighting the importance of collaboration, sustainability, and community engagement in the context of circular cultural tourism.

Workshop Sessions

Following the panel discussion, the participants engaged in two workshop sessions, which were designed to promote interactive discussions and practical learning, Mirroring the methodologies developed for the local workshops run in the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites. The workshops focused on specific themes related to circular cultural tourism and aimed to identify potential solutions and strategies for the main challenges identified.

Participants were divided into six groups, each facilitated by one representative of the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites, providing a platform to exchange lessons learnt, successes, and innovative ideas for implementing circular cultural tourism practices. The groups were assigned to focus on one of the main challenges of circular cultural tourism identified during the Pilot Heritage Site's local workshops.



Figure 15 – Policy Learning Lab 1 - Brussels

The Groups

CIRCULAR INVESTMENTS - Circular investments for infrastructure, mobility and tourism services

Remote and less-known cultural sites aiming at becoming attractive destinations for sustainable and circular cultural tourism need to find innovative solutions and increase investments to realise high-quality infrastructure, including digital infrastructure, sustainable mobility systems and tourism services oriented to circularity, towards circular cities and regions (e.g. circular strategies in accommodation, food chains, transport, energy, water management, etc.). Public and private investments, if linked to clear circularity strategies and business plans, in line with

the EU Taxonomy, can provide important resources to enhance cultural tourism and quality of life in the target cultural sites. To reach circularity objectives, particular importance should be given to reaching higher self-sufficiency in terms of energy, water, and materials through renewables, recycling, and reusing strategies. How to strengthen circularity in the cultural tourism sector (e.g. green certifications / eco-labels, circular procurement, sustainable mobility, collaborative networks, biodiversity enhancement, energy communities, traditional landscape maintenance)? Which conditions are needed to increase and enhance circular investments? Which innovative solutions can be identified to enhance the quality and circularity of infrastructure, mobility and tourism services?

DIGITALISATION - Digitalisation and smart data management: exploiting the potential of digital tools for better accessibility and monitoring of cultural sites

Digital infrastructure, digital tools and smart data management can enhance the accessibility and sustainability of remote and less-known cultural sites. Digital tools such as applications for cultural events, virtual travels, augmented reality, sharing economy services such as shared mobility, accommodation, guide etc., can significantly improve the overall quality of the cultural experience, as well as supporting marketing strategies. Digital infrastructure is also key for enabling territories to become "remote working" destinations. Moreover, implementing a human-centred approach, digital tools can be implemented to monitor the performance and attractiveness of cultural sites. However, the availability of quality data in remote areas remains an open question, calling for enhanced data management systems that can provide the information needed for better decision-making over time. Finally, digital skills are required to make the "smart" and human-centred digital tools work in the target areas. How to collect and use data in remote areas? Which new potential for remote areas through digital tools (e.g. remote working destinations, smart data management tools, innovative storytelling and marketing strategies, etc.)? Which new infrastructure, services, tools and investments can be leveraged to enhance digitalisation of remote cultural sites to enhance their attractiveness?

SYNERGIES - Cooperation and collaboration towards higher circularity: heritage innovation networks potential, barriers and experiences


Circularity is based on the capacity of cooperating and collaborating between different actors: public institutions, private companies and organisations, as well as the third sector and research

actors, in a quadruple helix synergistic model. However, this cooperative capacity is not done, especially in remote and depopulated areas, and should be enhanced identifying strategies, networks/actors, as well as inspiring managers and leaders. In some cases, the local community developed as a territorial "enterprise" in which all actors have a role and contribute to shared objectives (e.g. the "community enterprises", community cooperatives and foundations). Trust is a key element of this capacity for cooperation and collaboration. How to build trust and enhance interest in cooperation, in contexts of isolation and discourage? Which instruments can be used to support collaborative behaviours and enhance territorial synergies?

INNOVATION ECOSYSTEM - Stimulating the local innovation and entrepreneurial ecosystem through cultural tourism: barriers and solutions / experiences

The experience of the Open call for Innovators in Be.CULTOUR Pilot Heritage Site has led to additional considerations regarding the development of the innovation and entrepreneurial Ecosystems in remote areas and less-known cultural sites. Entrepreneurial skills, knowledge, innovation capacity, institutional capacity and support, networks and connections with larger innovation communities, are often lacking in areas subject to depopulation and brain-drain, lowering the opportunities for youths and innovators to develop skills and invest them in these territories. How to build the innovation and entrepreneurial capacity in remote areas suffering from depopulation and brain-drain? Some answers can be given thinking about the key elements and actors constituting entrepreneurial and innovation Ecosystems, which range from universities and research, knowledge and entrepreneurial centres, advanced education systems, "pillar" companies able to drive and inspire other businesses, public and private investors, institutions, as well as the relationships between them and shared values, identity, sense of community. Cultural heritage can have a role in stimulating the recognition and regeneration of shared identity and values in local communities. Moreover, entrepreneurial skills and capacities, as well as skilled and motivated workers (as "intrapreneurs"), are fundamental to turn remote cultural sites into places of new attractiveness. How to stimulate the development of innovation and entrepreneurial Ecosystems in remote and less-known areas?

HUMAN CAPITAL - Enhancing human capital towards human-centred development: skills, knowledge, education, culture & heritage



Human capital development is fundamental for the development of circular and human-centred cultural tourism destinations, often neglected in sustainability strategies to focus on more tangible aspects such as economic and environmental issues. However, the circular and human-centred development of cultural areas is strictly linked to the capacity of local communities to develop innovations and high quality cultural tourism services, enhancing territorial resources such as cultural and natural heritage. However, the capacity to recognise, re-interpret and regenerate less-known cultural heritage and provide high quality services for cultural tourism can be limited. Capacity building strategies and networking can support the development of knowledge and skills of local community members, including entrepreneurs, workers, activists, policy-makers, and researchers. Moreover, it is more and more clear that Arts can have a key role in developing human-capital, through enhancing qualities such as creativity, empathy, critical thinking, as well as exploring the "real" (not induced) and emerging needs of people, both residents and visitors, helping identifying "the right questions" and thus stimulating overall innovation processes. How to strengthen the attention to the rights, needs and capacities of people towards human-centred cultural tourism?

REMOTENESS - Remoteness as value? Transformative travels in less crowded cultural sites

Despite remoteness, less-known areas can be particularly rich in tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and natural heritage. These places can offer an unusual cultural experience, grounded on authenticity, connectedness, slowness, silence, genuine human relationships, nourishing food, nature. In this perspective, remoteness could become a value for a specific target of visitors, as well as for temporary or stable residents. The need of providing basic services and enhance accessibility and quality of life as attractive destinations should be balanced with the conservation of their authenticity, integrity and sense of place, focusing on quality rather than only quantity, to avoid turning today's less-known places into usual/mass tourism destinations. Less crowded areas can offer deeper relationships with local people, heritage and nature, "slow" tourism and "diffused" hospitality models, learning opportunities, while reducing costs, identifying diverse revenue streams, and enhancing quality of life and services should be a priority. How to enhance less-known and remote cultural sites as "human-centred" cultural tourism destinations?

The **first workshop, "Circular Cultural Tourism Challenges Definition and Solution Identification,"** was run following the Be.CULTOUR methodology used in the Pilot Heritage Site's local workshops. Participants worked collaboratively to define the challenges faced by their respective heritage sites and brainstorm potential solutions. By leveraging their collective knowledge and experiences, the groups aimed to identify practical and sustainable approaches to address these challenges.

The **second workshop, "Policy Recommendations Preparation,"** focused on translating the conclusions from the previous workshop sessions into actionable policy recommendations. Drawing upon the co-defined solutions to the identified challenges, participants worked together to develop a series of policy recommendations aimed at promoting circular cultural tourism. These recommendations were informed by the insights gained throughout the lab and aimed to guide future policies and initiatives in the field.

Outcomes and Recommendations

The Policy Learning Lab generated valuable outcomes and inputs for the final recommendations from the project:

- Collaboration and Networking: Emphasize the importance of collaboration and networking among heritage sites, Mirror Ecosystems, and project partners to share best practices, resources, and knowledge in the implementation of circular cultural tourism initiatives.
- Sustainable Infrastructure: Promote the development of sustainable infrastructure, including energy-efficient facilities, waste management systems, and eco-friendly transportation options, to minimise the environmental footprint of cultural tourism activities.
- Visitor Engagement: Enhance visitor engagement through interactive and immersive experiences, such as digital technologies, storytelling, and participatory activities, to foster a deeper appreciation for cultural heritage and promote sustainable behaviours.
- Local Community Involvement: Encourage the active involvement of local communities in the planning and decision-making processes related to cultural tourism, ensuring that their perspectives and interests are considered.

- Capacity Building and Education: Provide training and capacity-building programs to empower heritage site managers, local communities, and tourism professionals with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement circular cultural tourism practices effectively.

The Policy Learning Lab was a successful event that brought together various stakeholders to exchange ideas, experiences, and strategies for the sustainable development of cultural tourism, generating significant outcomes and insights. Both the panel discussion and workshop sessions facilitated in-depth discussions and generated practical solutions for and from the participants. The interactive workshops enabled project members to collaborate, share knowledge, and develop practical solutions to the challenges faced by heritage sites. The policy recommendations formulated during the lab sessions will be a starting point and valuable guidance for future policy development in the field of circular cultural tourism.

The event fostered a sense of collective responsibility among the participants and emphasised the importance of collaborative efforts in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by both Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites and Mirror Ecosystems. To follow up on the key takeaways and take the learnings of the first Policy Learning Lab further, a second edition has been planned in September 2023. This time, the Policy Learning Lab will be hosted by one of the Mirror Ecosystems: The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca, good practice of community engagement and experiential tourism.

The outcomes of the labs will serve as a valuable resource in shaping future policies and initiatives aimed at promoting circular cultural tourism and its positive impacts on heritage preservation, local communities, and the environment, both at the local and European levels.

3.5.2 *Policy Learning Lab 2 – September 2023*

The Second Policy Learning Lab will take place in September 2023 in Sciacca.

The primary objective of this edition of the Policy Learning Lab is to delve into a comprehensive set of policy recommendations that will enhance strategies, actions, and plans promoting circular cultural tourism. These recommendations are derived from the firsthand experiences of the project community members, encompassing both Pilot Heritage Site heritage sites and Mirror Ecosystems.

Building upon the fruitful discussions and valuable insights gained from the first edition of the Lab held in Brussels, this second Policy Lab promises to build upon previous accomplishments and further advance the support and implementation of human-centred and sustainable cultural tourism.

4. Peer-learning Outputs

4.2 Local workshops and Action plans

Within the context of the project, several synergies and collaboration opportunities between the different community members arose. Each of the partners involved are active in different projects and initiatives, at local, regional and European level. This boosted collaboration and connections among them, even outside of the project scope and resulted, for some of them, into workshops and conferences held at local level, touching upon the project objectives and working areas, thus contributing to the peer-learning scheme itself.

The following examples involved some of the Mirror Ecosystems of the project and provide an interesting perspective of the early stage results of the peer-learning process.

4.2.1 *Sustainability as an element for competitiveness: The local action plan of the Veneto Region*

In collaboration with the Mirabilia European Network of Unesco Sites and the Chamber of Commerce Treviso – Belluno, the Veneto Region, Mirror ecosystem in Be.CULTOUR, organised an international conference from the 28 to the 31 June 2022 on **sustainability as an element for competitiveness in cultural tourism**. Around 200 national delegates and international representatives, UNESCO directors and representatives of the European Commission arrived in Treviso, with the aim of drawing up a memorandum on sustainability for the development and internationalisation of the territories.

All national and international delegates took part in different workshops aimed at both raising awareness of the importance of the UNESCO territories and their sustainability, as well as promoting even lesser-known areas, far from the usual ones, where experiential tourism and discovery of traditional and innovative places, routes and products co-exist.

Be.CULTOUR, of which the UNESCO heritage site of the [Prosecco hills in Venice Veneto region](#), was presented during one of the sessions as an innovative model “beyond” tourism, towards a circular regenerative economy embedding a clear human-centred approach, focusing on human capital, human rights, education and attention to both visitors and residents, inspiring the conversation around the tourism institutions and sustainable economic development.

The conference provided an occasion for key actors of the culture & tourism sector to meet and discuss the future sustainability of tourism, facing more and more challenges linked to climate change, over-tourism and lack of awareness of the social and economic importance of cultural heritage assets.

The discussion brought to the issue of an official document, presented during the last day of the conference and signed by the event organisers and key representatives of the sector: The **Charter of Cison di Valmarino**³. The charter is a comprehensive document looking at sustainable tourism as a tourism able to respond to the market demand while increasing future opportunities. The key to sustainable tourism strategies according to the charter lies in the management of resources, which must be done respecting the economic, environmental and social requirements, thus preserving the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biodiversity and the life systems in the promoted areas.

4.2.2 *Sviluppumbria Co-creation Workshop*

With the support of Mirabilia, the European Network of UNESCO sites and Destination Makers, both sub-contractors of the Be.CULTOUR project partners, a local co-creation workshop was organised on 26 January 2023 in Perugia, Italy.

Perugia is the main city of Umbria, region that with **Sviluppumbria is part of the Community of Interest of Be.CULTOUR**. The event, organised within the framework of Be.CULTOUR, is part not only of the **peer-learning scheme implementation**, but also of the **replication of the project methodology**, which was tested and implemented firstly by the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites, with the aim of identifying challenges and possible solutions to sustainable and human-centred approach to cultural tourism.

³ See Annex 1

Three groups of diverse regional stakeholders participated in the workshop, sharing experiences and knowledge of the respective challenges and points of value of promoting sustainable and human-centred tourism in Umbria.

Together they identified critical elements as well as perks linked to the local realities of the region and came up with 3 key action points to be implemented:

1. **Collaboration** and **networking** between the public and private sectors,
2. The **training** of tour operators,
3. An appropriate **communication strategy**

The full report of the workshop is accessible in Annex 2.

4.2.3 *Sciacca Place-branding Workshop*

In the context of the Second Policy Learning Lab, a place-branding workshop will be also held, aimed at fostering collaboration and shaping the future tourism destination in the project territories. In the first part, participants will dive into a Canvas Analysis of needs and desires. This session will be a dynamic and interactive experience, where participants will have the opportunity to share and express their needs and desires, identifying common ground among the territories involved. Moving forward to Session 2, they will engage in a Canvas activity called "Destination 2030." Building upon the insights gained from the previous session, they will collectively imagine and envision a strategic direction that aligns with the aspirations and goals of all participating territories. This exercise will serve as a catalyst for collaboration and cooperation in shaping the future. In Session 3, the focus will shift towards creating a Canvas Map of key factors. Here, Mirror and Pilot Heritage Site representatives will examine and identify the cultural, economic, social, and environmental elements that play a significant role in directing and influencing the development of their tourism destinations. By mapping out these factors, they can gain a holistic understanding of the challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Finally, in Session 4, participants will delve into the Canvas User Profiles. This exercise aims to personify the positive and negative factors identified earlier, allowing to define the necessary characteristics that a sustainable and enduring project must possess. By understanding the needs and preferences of the individuals who will be impacted by the project, tourism operators and local authorities can better design strategies and initiatives that cater to their specific requirements.

4.3 LinkedIn Working Groups

The four Be.CULTOUR LinkedIn Working Groups were created in January 2023.

Gathering the stakeholders from all over Europe into four thematic hubs, the aim is to create a community which is connected, updated and learns from the good practices and success stories of other Ecosystems, boosting innovation and increasing learning opportunities among European Regions.

Objectives:

- **Replicate** in Mirror Ecosystems the **methodology** developed and Implemented by Pilot Heritage Site Heritage sites to co-develop synthetic and strategic Action Plans for circular and human-centred cultural tourism, providing workshop resources and mentoring support.
- Foster the **engagement of local networks** in the planning of circular cultural tourism actions;
- Create **thematic hubs** where Mirrors and Pilot Heritage Sites can **share news and opportunities, enhance transferability of best practices, collaborate and make connections** within and beyond their local networks;
- Strengthen **collaborative innovation networks** within and beyond local cultural destinations, **fostering European regional cultural cooperation** in the innovation areas of the projects;
- **Learn about innovative solutions and funding/financing opportunities** in the field of circular and cultural tourism.

Opportunities linked to the Working Groups:

- Building strong **cross-regional networks and partnerships** for new project proposals development at European territorial level (e.g. Horizon 2020, Single Market Programme Cosme, Interreg, etc.);
- Increase **learning opportunities** among European regions through good practices sharing, events, workshops, research and analysis tools;
- **Connect** innovators and stakeholders with developed and implemented **innovative solutions** for circular and human-centred cultural tourism with territories facing similar challenges;

- Replicate **Be.CULTOUR methodologies** for circular and human-centred cultural tourism Action Plans to reach important goals for your territory through stakeholders cooperation and collaboration.

4.4 The feedback from the Mirror Ecosystems

Representatives from the Mirror Ecosystems have been very active and engaged actors throughout the implementation of the project. Mirror Ecosystems have a lot to share in terms of good practices at local level, challenges connected to over or under tourism and impact of top-down approaches towards cultural governance.

Their feedback and contribution into the project activities have been insightful and stimulating, creating more and more collaboration and peer-learning opportunities among participants.

To better monitor and collect the impact of the peer-learning scheme on the members of the community of interest, Mirror Ecosystems have been asked to provide their feedback on the learning opportunities and collaborations, as well as sharing **their activities, actions, learnings and reflections** in a progress report. The following paragraphs summarise the feedback provided by some of them.

4.4.1 Involvement in Be.CULTOUR activities

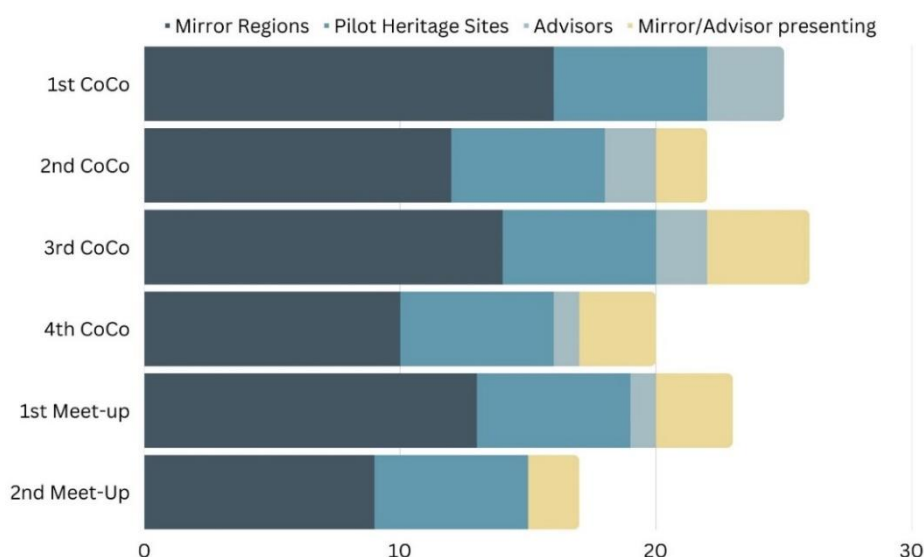


Figure 16 – Participation in the online project activities

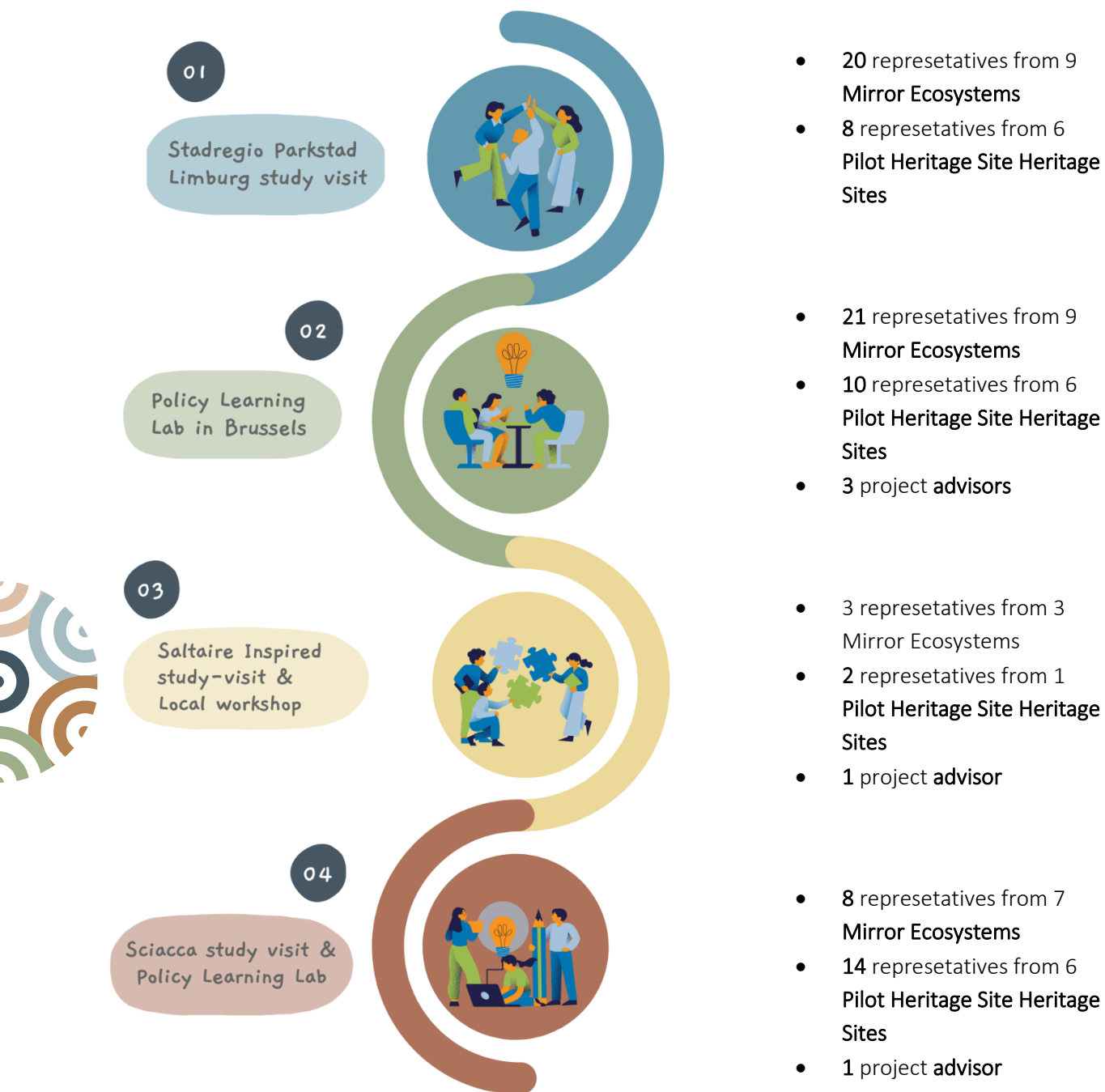


Figure 17 – Participation in in-person activities

4.4.2 Project Impact

From the feedback gathered through the Mirror Ecosystems report, it was clear that the Be.CULTOUR project has had a significant impact on the various actors involved.

The Regional Development Agency of Srem found the peer-learning experience valuable for their focus on infrastructure regional projects, with circular cultural tourism being an integral part. **Algarve University** gained valuable knowledge of new tourism concepts and models through their participation, along with concrete examples of their practical application. This knowledge has provided themes for academia, stimulating design exercises and reflections on current challenges faced by the rural world amidst climate, social, and economic changes. They also recognized the crucial role of local communities and producers in cultural tourism.

Cluj City Council learned how to implement tourism promotion strategies centered on individuals while embracing aspects of the circular economy, nature, community, and cultural diversity. The **Kuldiga Municipality** highlighted the great experience of co-creating and testing sustainable human-centered innovations for circular cultural tourism through collaborative networks and methodologies.

The **Municipality of Leeuwarden** appreciated the knowledge exchange, openness, and forthcoming nature of participants, leading to the formation of new ideas. The **Northwest Romania Development Agency** took away valuable insights from their participation in the first Policy Learning Lab in Brussels, particularly regarding circular tourism in the post-pandemic era, which significantly influenced their Tourism Sectoral Strategy. Most of the ideas and good practices shared during the debates were taken over and introduced in the final version of the [2021-2027 Tourism Sectoral Strategy of the North-West Development Region](#).

The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca emphasised the usefulness of discussing common challenges and finding ways to overcome them, especially during the Bruxelles Policy Learning Lab, while **Sviluppumbria**, already committed to circularity and sustainability, found inspiration in the experiences of like-minded partners and confirmed the importance of involving local communities in the organisation and delivery of circular cultural tourism experiences. The toolkit and methodology, as well as the lessons learned during meetings both online and onsite will be an important integration of their roadmaps when managing projects in cultural tourism.

Timis County Council discovered additional local resources with potential for responsible and sustainable tourism development through their participation in Be.CULTOUR, prompting them to rethink new approaches for area development and promotion.

Overall, the Be.CULTOUR project has provided valuable knowledge, inspiration, and practical insights to its participants, contributing to the advancement of circular cultural tourism.

4.4.3 *Peer-to-peer exchanges and networking opportunities*

Knowledge shared in the peer-to-peer exchanges

The Be.CULTOUR project fostered peer-to-peer exchanges among its Mirror Ecosystems, leading to the acquisition of valuable knowledge and the sharing of practical examples, good practices, and challenges. These exchanges provided a platform for fruitful interactions and partnerships with local government entities, associations, cooperatives, and creative design companies dedicated to local development and creative tourism.

The Municipality of Leeuwarden found great interest in the experiences and knowledge shared by Västra Götaland, which had similarities in rural Ecosystems and demographic design. The collaboration extended to other European Union groups. Similarly, the exchange with Cyngor Gwynedd Council showcased their intriguing research and approach to data collection and monitoring, leading to further cooperation. The insights gained from Bradford's community-led cultural and touristic development served as practical examples applicable to the challenges faced by Bradford and its surrounding districts.

The University of Algarve participated in a presentation meeting with Mirror Ecosystems such as Saltaire (UK), Cyngor Gwynedd County (Wales), Kuldiga District Municipality (Latvia), and VGR (Rydal och Forsvik) in March 2022. This interaction facilitated the exchange of examples associated with good practices and offered insights into creative tourism-related industries.

Kuldiga Municipality identified **two challenges** during the peer-to-peer exchanges. Firstly, **resource constraints** posed limitations in terms of financial and human resources required for participation. Overcoming this challenge involved seeking funding opportunities and collaborating with other organisations. Secondly, sustaining the momentum of **knowledge exchange beyond the project** duration and maintaining relationships built among Mirror Ecosystems required dedicated strategies.

The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca appreciated the inclusion of a variety of stakeholders in the project, which allowed for a comprehensive consideration of their responses, involvement, and collaboration in addressing different challenges, particularly in engaging tourism businesses and ensuring their trust and cooperation. **The visit to Saltaire** served as a source of inspiration for involving public and private actors in a common project,

showcasing how a community can create a new cultural experience. The experience differed from Italy's bureaucratic approach but offered insights on engaging entire villages in projects, which could be applied to smaller towns with simplified participation processes.

The Northwest Development Agency had a memorable experience exchanging ideas with colleagues from the UK on the use of Geographical Information Systems tools for data analysis and mapping in tourism strategy and planning.

RDA Srem found practical examples from the Vojvodina region (Sremski Karlovci, Irig, Bač) highly useful, as they were part of the Srem region. Collaborative projects with these municipalities on bicycle tourism and the establishment of a regional cycling route provided tangible results that could be applied within the context of Frušking 8x4x4 and the creation of new tourism products.

Timis City Council highlighted transformative projects, such as the 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca, which emphasised inclusive and bottom-up tourism innovation managed by a community non-profit cooperative. Additionally, the Geopalcos project presented by the University of Algarve showcased the integration of art, science, and nature in the Geopark territory, serving as a practical example of collaboration and innovation.

Overall, the peer-to-peer exchanges in the Be.CULTOUR project facilitated the acquisition of diverse knowledge, inspiring practical examples, and an understanding of challenges faced by different Mirror Ecosystems. These exchanges fostered collaboration, innovation, and the adoption of new approaches in cultural tourism development.

Building Networks and Collaboration Opportunities within the Be.CULTOUR Project Community

The Be.CULTOUR project has provided ample opportunities for the participating entities to build new networks and identify collaboration opportunities within the project community. The feedback from various Mirror Ecosystems highlights the diverse ways in which these connections were established.

Sviluppumbria found collaboration potential with the Bradford-Saltaire partners. Their experience was shared with local stakeholders, and a request for collaboration has already been received from a regional film festival. They also expressed interest in future cooperation with Saltaire-Bradford partners for sustainable approaches to cultural heritage and tourism projects.

The Municipality of Leeuwarden greatly benefited from the Be.CULTOUR project, expanding its international network. This network led to collaboration opportunities, such as participation in



another European project proposal named "Circular and human-centred business and governance models to empower European cultural and creative tourism Ecosystems in rural and remote areas (CHER)." They also established new networks and collaborations within the Netherlands itself.

Algarve University, through its academic and scientific activities, collaborated with stakeholders and local communities. Students from the master's degree in Landscape Architecture and the Postgraduate degree in Urbanism engaged in innovative training actions related to cultural landscape designs. Their studies, including the proposal of cultural routes and ideas for rural area reactivation, will be exhibited publicly in villages within the Geopark territory. The university also presented their research and organised study tours during the International Congress on Rural Studies, strengthening their network and involving community members.

Kuldiga Municipality emphasised the importance of project meetings, conferences, workshops, and other events within Be.CULTOUR. These gatherings facilitated networking and connections with other project members, fostering discussions, knowledge sharing, and collaboration. Additionally, they mentioned building new networks with national partners for Smart City solutions.

The 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca instead experienced network expansion and gained awareness of various calls and prizes through the Be.CULTOUR project. They received support in applying for the ECTN Destination of Sustainable Cultural Tourism Awards and were selected as part of the good practices list for the [Cultural Heritage in Action](#) call⁴. They also participated in the International Conference on Naples as a side event of the New European Bauhaus festival, further expanding their network and collaboration opportunities.

The RDA Srem, with its wide network of stakeholders at the local and regional level, utilises the principle of Inter-municipal working groups (IMWG) for project management and implementation. This collaborative approach involves all seven municipalities in Srem and focuses on regional infrastructure and sustainable development.

In summary, the Be.CULTOUR project has fostered the creation of new networks and collaboration opportunities among its participants. Through project meetings, events, academic activities, and participation in international conferences, the project community has established

⁴ Annex 3

connections, shared experiences, and found avenues for cooperation. These networking efforts have the potential to lead to future joint initiatives and the exchange of best practices in cultural tourism and sustainability.

4.4.4 *Replication/transferability of the lessons learnt*

Implementation of Actions on Circular Cultural Tourism and Human-Centered Approach

The Be.CULTOUR project has inspired and facilitated the implementation of various actions and activities in different regions, promoting circular cultural tourism with a human-centred approach. The participating entities have actively engaged local communities, enhanced local resources, and leveraged cultural heritage assets to create sustainable and responsible tourism experiences.

RDA Srem has implemented the projects "Bicycle tourism towards rural and regional development Srem" and "Cycling Danube - the establishment of the regional cycling route Srem", focused on bicycle tourism and the development of regional cycling routes in the National Park "Fruška Gora," along the Danube and Sava rivers, and the protected natural areas "Obedska bara" and "Zasavica." These initiatives have enhanced the infrastructure, trained service providers, and provided opportunities for eco, ethnic, agricultural, gastronomic, and health-focused rural tourism.

Sviluppumbria, as a region already committed to sustainable approaches, emphasises the continuous involvement of local communities in projects related to cultural heritage and assets. They have learned that community engagement is crucial for preserving the environment while attracting visitors. The success of their St. Francis Way project further highlights the importance of community involvement.

Timis County Council has taken action to enhance local resources and cultural heritage assets by including the village on the route of villages with traditional architecture. They have secured funding for the rehabilitation of eight private houses, which will subsequently be incorporated into the tourist circuit.

The Municipality of Leeuwarden has adopted an open society approach and considers circular cultural tourism an ongoing mission. They have been actively working towards becoming an ECOC (European Capital of Culture) and strive to implement circular cultural tourism aligned with their core value of "iepen mienskip" (open society).

Algarve University has forged partnerships with the Installation Commission of the Aspiring Geopark, municipalities, cooperatives, non-governmental organisations, and tourism companies dedicated to nature and creativity. They are undertaking a Master's thesis in Landscape Architecture to develop a sustainable tourism case study based on the landscape and heritage of the Geopark. Additionally, a meeting will be organized to present project ideas and proposals to the network of stakeholders identified within the Mirror project.

Cluj City Council has collaborated with the local community and private tourism sector to promote events, cultural activities, and artistic initiatives through its app. This approach aims to empower the local community and highlight their cultural offerings.

Kuldiga Municipality has implemented various tools for data analytics and Smart Tourism. They have specifically focused on developing Augmented Reality/Metaverse tools for cultural tourism and engaging the local community in these initiatives.

The North West Romania Development Agency has made significant contributions to the Tourism Strategy of the North-West Region, which serves as a guiding document for tourism projects in the region. They have also coordinated actions to register the Limes Dacicus, the former borders of the Roman Empire, on the Indicative List of UNESCO World Heritage. This recognition aims to position the region as an internationally significant tourist attraction.

Overall, the actions and activities implemented in these regions demonstrate a commitment to circular cultural tourism and a human-centered approach. Through community engagement, resource enhancement, and sustainable practices, these initiatives contribute to responsible tourism development and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Some of the members of the community of Interest, notably North West Romania, Sviluppumbria and the 5 Senses Widespread Museum of Sciacca have already been involved or expressed their interest in joining new project opportunities in the field of sustainable tourism, as Pilot Heritage Site areas together with other members of the project community.

Sviluppumbria in particular, has already joined the EU-funded project RurAllure as an associated partner thanks to the link developed through Be.CULTOUR. Ideally, as new calls are launched in different programmes, this will also be a topic for future partnerships both within the Be.CULTOUR community and in other, different regions in Europe.



5. Conclusions

The Peer-learning activities in Be.CULTOUR have created several opportunities for both Mirror and Pilot Heritage Sites to exchange lessons learnt and good practices, co-create new approaches and solutions based on local resources and strategies and spark collaborations among the different regions, within and beyond Be.CULTOUR.

As already outlined during the project, from the activities carried out with the Mirror Ecosystems, it has emerged that there are common threads and potential pathways in terms of shared challenges and solutions related to circular cultural tourism, in particular:

- **CIRCULAR ECONOMY IN CULTURAL TOURISM: CREATIVE, SUSTAINABLE, BEAUTIFUL DESTINATIONS** – Circular tourism strategies, sustainable events and festivals, eco-labels for the tourism sector, collaboration and cooperation towards higher circularity in cultural destinations, the link between environmental projects and tourism, fair and responsible tourism, regenerative and transformative tourism
- **DIGITALISATION & SMART DESTINATION MANAGEMENT FOR CIRCULAR CULTURAL TOURISM** - smart data management, digital tourism, impact assessment, digital tools for higher resilience of cultural heritage in crisis time (pandemic, war, climate change)
- **ENHANCING THE HUMAN DIMENSION OF CIRCULAR CULTURAL TOURISM** – Human capital development in cultural tourism destinations, skills, knowledge, education, creative tourism, experiential tourism, storytelling, proximity tourism, tourists as temporary residents, remote working destinations, industrial heritage, heritage reuse and regeneration
- **ENTREPRENEURIAL ECOSYSTEM, INNOVATIVE BUSINESS AND FINANCIAL MODELS FOR CIRCULAR CULTURAL TOURISM** – innovation ecosystem and entrepreneurial ecosystem development, collaborative innovation networks, innovative finance, Sustainable infrastructures, Legislation and strategies for circular cultural destinations

These core topics have been mainstreamed in the peer-learning activities and integrated in the LinkedIn Working Groups, which act now as thematic hubs where cultural experts, tourism

operators, regional representatives, and EU officers share key updates, news and opportunities in the field of circular cultural tourism.

Although the results achieved so far through the peer-learning scheme are already visible and have been evaluated as positive by the community members themselves, more activities are foreseen in the last implementation period of the project, including: Policy Learning Lab 2, Study visit in Sciacca – 5 Senses Widespread Museum and four webinars involving case studies from both the Pilot Heritage Site Heritage Sites and the Mirror Ecosystems.

Further achievements will be documented following the last peer-learning activities and the feedback from the community members will be updated based on the new inputs and data gathered.



Annex 1: The Charter of Cison di Valmarino



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
TREVISO - BELLUNO | DOLOMITI
bellezza e impresa



CHARTER OF CISON DI VALMARINO

Sustainability as an
element for
competitiveness

CASTELBRANDO
CISON DI VALMARINO (TV)
31 May 2022



UNIONCAMERE



UNIONCAMERE
VENETO



eurosportello
del veneto



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
VENEZIA ROVIGO



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
PADOVA
il futuro a portata di impresa



CAMERA DI COMMERCIO
INDUSTRIA ARTIGIANATO
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• REFERENCE OVERVIEW •

Sustainable tourism is defined as "tourism that meets the needs of present tourists and host regions, while foreseeing and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems of host communities."^[1]

This definition holds within it the three value pillars that allow the definition of sustainable tourism development^[2]:

1. **Environmental sustainability:** make optimal use of environmental resources to protect ecological processes, natural heritage and biodiversity;
2. **Economic sustainability:** ensure long-term economic strategies to provide socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders, ensuring that they are equitably distributed, including stable employment and social services for host communities;
3. **Socio-cultural sustainability:** respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities, conserve their heritage and contribute to intercultural understanding and tolerance.

In this age of major social, environmental and economic changes, that have been abruptly accelerated by the pandemic and the recent war in Europe, the tourism supply chain as a whole has also been put to the test: from the businesses involved to demand trends, nothing has remained the same. Within this context, sustainability plays a key role and the evolution of the entire system has become the priority. Investing in the new, innovating consolidated products, enhancing the transversality of tourism by coordinating the businesses that operate in this segment and developing preparatory skills are but some of the possible actions outlined within the new *Veneto Strategic Plan for Tourism, 2022-2024*.^[3]

Mindful of the need to raise awareness on the theme of sustainable tourism development and to expand the knowledge of main concepts and operational tools, the Veneto Region Directorate for Tourism has started, within the broader Interreg Italy - Croatia programme "Take it Slow", to draft a "Handbook on Sustainability", that will soon be published and disseminated. Inspired by the same aims, this Manifesto aims to provide an overview of the main Goals to be pursued by Tourist Destinations, in order to build a shared and effective strategy.

The reference to the global scale is supplied by the framework of the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda, drawn up by the United Nations (UN) and adopted in 2015, the achievement of which reserves a strategic role to tourism.

More specifically, in terms of promoting a sustainable approach to destination management, sites with UNESCO designations (World Heritage Listed sites, Biosphere Reserves, Geoparks and Creative Cities) have a major role to play. UNESCO and the World Tourism Organisation have long collaborated in formulating policy advice for Member States on sustainable and responsible tourism: in particular, the World Heritage Centre has adopted the World Heritage and Sustainable Tourism Programme that helps the various institutional stakeholders and, in particular, site managers, to take all possible measures to preserve their outstanding universal value in space and time. Finally, the Italian Strategic Tourism Plan (STP) based on the four fundamental principles of Sustainability, Innovation, Hospitality and Accessibility acknowledges that UNESCO sites play a key role in helping to increase the attractiveness of the Country System.

The universal call to implement a paradigm shift requires all the players in the supply chain to play an active role by making their own contribution: within this scope, the DMOs have a crucial role in conveying the values of sustainability, respectively within the scope of their governance, destination management and destination marketing activities. This document commits the representatives of regions and destinations to implement all the measures needed to promote sustainable tourism within their territories, in order to preserve environmental, social and cultural resources and to distribute the benefits of tourism to their inhabitants and guests, thus improving their quality of life.

• SUSTAINABILITY GOALS FOR TOURIST DESTINATIONS •

PRODUCT

1. TOURIST OFFER

Implement synergic actions with all the players in the territory to develop high-quality tourism offers that, by focusing on sustainability as a founding value, are able to: compete in the market amongst sustainable destinations, de-seasonalise tourist flows and combat overtourism.

By updating sustainability values within their Destination Management Plan's vision, strategic objectives and actions, DMOs share with this Manifesto the approaches of the Regional Strategic Plan and the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. Itineraries, products, integrated offers encourage the discovery of lesser-known places and activities linked to experiential tourism while fully respecting local identities, and allow the Destinations to position themselves in the market as valid alternatives to standard products. The involvement of all players in a synergic endeavour is strategic to make the Destinations attractive, allow them to be served throughout the year and to balance tourist flows sustainably and within their overall carrying capacity, and the individual components of their system.

2. SLOW TOURISM

Develop and promote an organised and variegated slow tourism offer in each tourist destination, to foster the sustainable activities that can be practised as a response to the main motivational groups: cycling, trekking and walking, river and water tourism, equestrian tourism.

By investing more in the infrastructure that is functional to the development of the tourist product, the Destinations offer quality slow tourism, where main services are guaranteed by the adequately supported entrepreneurial chain. Appropriate communication of these products, including toolkits that range from proper signposting on site, to online and offline promotion, ensure their adequate usability.

MANAGING NATURAL AND CULTURAL RESOURCES

3. GENIUS LOCI AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

Enhance the cultural identities and the local authenticity that are the essence of tourist destinations, and bring out the intrinsic characteristics that make them unique - the so-called *genius loci*.

Involving resident communities through different kinds of initiatives reinforces their cultural identity and allows the positive appreciation of the *genius loci* to design competitive tourism products, that include authentic experiences, encourage contacts between locals and tourists, and the discovery of local traditions and customs. Destinations that carefully design experiential tourism activities facilitate the emergence of new creative and innovative economies, better enhance traditional economies and their ancient crafts - including local handicraft, traditional and sustainable forms of agriculture/farming/fishing - and promote their intangible cultural heritage. In particular, sites of outstanding universal value, both natural and cultural, recognised as World Heritage by UNESCO, are particularly important assets for the Destinations to promote.

4. NATURE AND BIODIVERSITY

Encourage actions to safeguard fragile natural areas as well as areas of high landscape value in the Destinations, promoting forms of responsible and/or restricted tourism, fully respecting the sites and their ecosystems.

To safeguard the landscape of the Destinations, it is strategic to promote actions to combat overbuilding and to restore natural areas, including reforestation, beach nourishment, reclamation and/or ecological restoration of areas damaged by human activities, etc.. Awareness-raising for residents and tourists on the need to protect the natural heritage and biodiversity, as well as the promotion of active awareness-raising actions are equally essential.

5. MOUNTAIN AREAS

Provide guidance to mountain destinations in their response to the main contemporary issues affecting them: the fragility of natural ecosystems, the size issues affecting micro-entrepreneurship and the evolution of market demand.

Mountain tourism has reached the stage of maturity in its life cycle: it is essential to act to liven up the offer, create new strategies and align with market trends. The sustainable approach to adopt to adapt to climate change - which is a strong threat mainly to the winter offer - has proven to be the best combination of economic growth and protection of natural resources. The knowledge generated and ensured by opportunities for dialogue and collective growth, territorial collaboration and the drive for innovation develop an entrepreneurial approach and a professional image that are beneficial to the Destination. The quality value permeates the variegated and organised offer of resources, specific features and services, shared with all the Destination's stakeholders in a systemic perspective for the promotion of an area as a product.

6. COASTAL SYSTEM

Enhancing the sustainable development of the Destinations on the sea and the lagoon ^[4].

Destinations aim at strengthening their collective governance endeavours in order to deploy a coordinated and integrated management approach for the entire regional coastal system. Eliminating illegal or excessive fishing, that threaten the aquatic ecosystem, safeguards marine life and gives new life to traditional segments and activities, such as fishing tourism. Educating tourists and residents on biodiversity is a fundamental step towards its protection. Equally important are actions to reduce overbuilding along the coastline, limit desertification, together with sustainable fishing practices.

TRADE & INVESTMENTS

7. LOCAL ENTERPRISES AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

Aim at consolidating an ethical and sustainable local economic system, which is strong and competitive on the market, and draws part of its lifeblood from the positive effects of the destination's tourism chain.

Business innovation, corporate social responsibility and responsible production are areas where the support of the Destinations is essential to disseminate the opportunities and funding offered by territorial, national and European public bodies to the entire tourism system, also through effective internal communication actions. In parallel, monitoring the environmental impact of the activities performed within the Destinations makes it possible to achieve carbon neutrality.

INFRASTRUCTURE

8. GETTING TO THE DESTINATION

Develop suitable infrastructure networks that allow travel to the Destinations to be sustainable, setting out from the main intermodal hubs and giving priority to low-impact connections.

The Destinations promote the establishment of strategic agreements with the main stakeholders of the regional infrastructure and transport system and support them in co-designing strategic plans. The promotion of intermodal systems and the enhancement of collective, low environmental impact transport fleets and lines, also on long distances, are essential actions to allow tourists to travel to the various Destinations in a sustainable manner.

9. GETTING AROUND AT THE DESTINATION

Within each tourist Destination, develop an integrated sustainable mobility and micro-mobility offer, which is user-friendly and suited to the characteristics of the site, in addition to a system of itineraries and cycling-pedestrian routes.

The Destinations foster the use of low-impact public transport to easily reach the main points of interest as well as strategic interchange points. The adoption of shared sustainable micro-mobility solutions, the installation of charging points for e-cars and e-bikes, and the implementation of cycling and pedestrian networks are strategic solutions that favour internal mobility within the Destinations that fully respects the environment.

10. URBAN DEVELOPMENT AND LAND CONSUMPTION

Design increasingly ecological, efficient and liveable cities that can offer quality spaces to their inhabitants and visitors.

The Destinations re-plan their urban centres through policies aimed at regenerating the existing building stock, promoting the energy efficiency of buildings and actions to "build on built-up areas", thus restricting the consumption of new land and the impoverishment of green and natural spaces due to new buildings. The design of sustainable destinations cannot fail to include the innovative recovery of degraded urban areas and the regeneration of public spaces. At the governance level, it is strategic for DMOs to be involved in co-designing the urban plans of their respective territories.

CONSUMPTION

11. ENERGY, WATER AND WASTE

Increase each Destination's level of performance in terms of sourcing energy from renewable resources, water resource management and waste management.

To cope with climate change and limit environmental degradation, the Destinations aim to increase the amount of self-produced clean energy and improve water resource management, combating water pollution, restricting water wasted in public spaces and encouraging individuals to use rainwater harvesting systems and devices to reduce waste. In waste management, they aim to increase the percentage of differentiated waste collection and promote virtuous practices as an alternative to the use of disposable goods, promoting, amongst others re-use initiatives, the sale of pre-loved items and bulk purchases. The Destinations locally promote carbon pricing, carbon tax and carbon credit policies and actions, in line with the Green New Deal, to raise community awareness on the fight against climate change.

DATA AND COMPETITIVENESS

12. DIGITAL^[5]

Support the digital transition of Destinations.

DMOs, MICE and SMEs increasingly employ the regional Destination Management System in their activities. To foster the digital transition, technological dissemination instruments for promoting and enjoying cultural and natural heritage is encouraged, as well as the use of digital tools to support sustainable mobility and intermodal connections for the benefit of residents and tourists. Awareness raising on digitalisation in SMEs is fostered through desks and promoters, simplified and direct communication, and participation in sector-specific events. The deployment of assessment tools is essential to monitor e.g. online reputation and visitor sentiment, performance of accommodation facilities, distribution of arrivals and presences^[6].

13. MEASURING THE LEVEL OF SUSTAINABILITY

Measure and constantly monitor the sustainability level achieved and the impact of tourism both on single DMOs and on the Veneto Region as a Destination.^[7]

The achievement of community-wide sustainability certifications and certification pathways for accommodation facilities, businesses and event organisers are strategic tools for Destinations, as they guarantee greater competitiveness and better market positioning. Constantly monitoring and measuring the impact of tourism on the territories and its own level of sustainability, by using management tools and life cycle assessment (LCA) tools for

CHARTER OF CISON DI VALMARINO

the various products and services offered, allows the Destinations to implement policies and actions aimed at achieving the sustainability objectives stated in this Manifesto.

14. COMMUNICATION OF RESULTS

Ongoing and transparent communication of the sustainable actions implemented by the Destinations, to compete effectively on the market by positioning themselves as green destinations.

The Destinations undertake to periodically update the community on the sustainable actions undertaken, creating initiatives to directly involve tourists and residents, also through social campaigns. The Destinations collect, enhance and disseminate their own initiatives and those promoted by the businesses in the area, to increase their competitiveness and present themselves on the market as green destinations.

INFORMATION AND WELCOME

15. INFORMATION AND WELCOME

Turn the Destination's Tourist Information and Welcome Offices into its first local ambassadors of the values expressed and shared by this Manifesto, as well as of the sustainable tourism offer promoted by the Destination itself.

Having drafted and adopted the "Welcome Charter", Destinations ensure that welcoming tourists becomes a strength, involving all the DMOs' reference persons through dedicated meetings.^[8] The Information Office and Info Point staff are trained in issues pertaining to sustainability and, in particular, on green offers and products available in their Destination, turning them into the Destination's local ambassadors. Destinations disseminate information on sustainable mobility and sustainable events, to keep residents and tourists updated on the events available in the destination. Where possible, printed materials should be replaced by digital channels and devices.

16. TRAINING AND AWARENESS-RAISING

Raise awareness and inform residents and tourists of the priority importance of sustainable tourism development, providing adequate references and tools for the application of sound behaviour. The provision of clear and accessible communication on all the possible practices and/or initiatives promoted by the individual Destination on sustainability is fundamental to involve and raise awareness of tourists and residents. Destinations develop dedicated multi-channel marketing plans and promote the organisation of positive-impact events to broadcast sustainability messages and encourage the community to actively participate in sustainable initiatives and proposals.

HUMAN CAPITAL, FAIR AND QUALITY WORK, CAPACITY BUILDING, SOCIAL INCLUSION

17. SOCIAL INCLUSION

As stated in the 10th Goal of Agenda 2030, reducing inequalities is a universal aim to strive for full social sustainability. Tourism can be a powerful tool that acts in this direction, if it involves local populations and all key stakeholders in its development.^[9]

The labour, political, health, educational and services backdrop of all the territories under the DMO are accessible to all, bridging gender, social and geographic gaps. The Destinations are attentive to the specific needs of specific categories of tourists and do their utmost to ensure that each one can benefit from services and products that meet their specific needs, without any discrimination or clustering.

GOVERNANCE & POLICY

18. THE STRENGTH OF THE NETWORK

Start up a permanent Coordination Table involving the Region, the respective territorial DMOs and the UNESCO site Management Bodies, to discuss sustainability issues, the priority actions to be implemented and the development of an integrated sustainable tourism offer.

Drafting and sharing reports and data on sustainability linked to tourism in reference destinations and the establishment of green product clubs, both at destination and regional level, favours coordination amongst stakeholders and the creation of a strong and strategic network for the Destination itself. The Destinations undertake to share sound sustainable tourism practices, particularly those that are easy to apply, with a view to developing a sustainable and integrated tourism offer.

Cison di Valmarino, 31 May 2022

Mario Pozza
President
Chamber of Commerce of Treviso - Belluno |
Dolomites



Angelo Tortorelli
President
Associazione Mirabilia Network



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- [1] Source: UNWTO
- [2] Source: *Glossario & Termini per uno Sviluppo Turistico Sostenibile* (2021), a cura di E. Mingotto e A. Miotto
- [3] Source: PSTV 2021 - 2023
- [4] Rif. ad Agenda 2030, Ob.14 - *La vita sott'acqua*
- [5] Source: PSTV 2021-2023, A.4.2 *Digitale*
- [6] Source: <https://osservatorioturismoveneto.it>
- [7] Rif. al PSTV 2021-2023, A.2.1.1. *Avviare un programma regionale coordinato di certificazioni ambientali (per imprese e destinazioni) con la prospettiva di pervenire ad un marchio unico oggettivato di sostenibilità*
- [8] Source: PSTV 2021-2023, A.1.2.3
- [9] Source: *Glossario & Termini per uno Sviluppo Turistico Sostenibile* (2021), a cura di E. Mingotto e A. Miotto



Annex 2: Report from the Event and Co-creation Workshop in Perugia, Umbria



BE.CULTOUR 26 January 2023 PERUGIA

Report from the Event and Co-creation Workshop in Perugia, Umbria, Italy

On 26 January 2023, the presentation event of the Be.Cultour project and related workshop on the topics of circular and human-centred tourism was held at the Galeazzo Alessi Centre in Perugia.

The event opened with institutional greetings by the Secretary General of the Chamber of Commerce of Umbria Dr. Federico Sisti, followed by the President of the Chamber of Commerce of Umbria Ing. Giorgio Mencaroni, the Sole Administrator of Sviluppumbria Dr. Michela Scurpa and the Director of Mirabilia Network Dr. Vito Signati.

The following experts intervened: Dr. Antonia Gravagnuolo - CNR IRISS and Be.Cultour Project Manager, to introduce and present the project and its aims, Dr. Chiara Dall'Aglio - European Planning Manager Sviluppumbria, to give an overview of the governance of the paths in the Umbria Region, and Dr. Simona Polli - Destination Makers, to introduce the current tourist trends and travel motivations, accompanied by case studies of international destinations that are developing strategies on sustainability and people-oriented issues.

In the second part of the morning, a workshop was held, dividing the participants into three heterogeneous working groups who, through the use of canvas and design thinking methodology, discussed the current characteristics of the area and the future prospect of positioning it as a circular and human-centred tourism destination.

Below are the participants at the tables:

Group 1

Micaela Rengo Giulio	UMBRIASI
Cesare Lepri	AGENZIA VIAGGI YELLOW RABBIT TRAVEL SRL AGENZIA
Federica Mariani Marini	VIAGGI STOPPINI
Stefania Berardi	Incipit Consulting
Luca Trapolino	Fuori Itinerario / Discover Your Italy Molly
Emanuela Zara	& partners srl

Group 2

Raffaella Rossi	Saint Francis' Ways
Simona Fanelli	Guida turistica

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This project has received funding from the European Union's Horizon 2020 research and innovation programme under grant agreement No 101089627
Call H2020-GC-TRANSFORMATIONS-2018 - Type of action:
3A (Innovation action)



Monica Migliorati	CAMPING PUNTA NAVACCIA SRL
Fabio Roscini	Faro Lab Creative
Claudia Sanvito	Associazione Guide Turistiche Umbria

Group 3

Giovanni Capecci	Università per Stranieri di Perugia
Monica Giommini	Helios srls
Maurizio Rossi Tufo	
Giuseppe	Associaz. Turistica Pro Casacastalda APS NK
Alessandro Maniucca	TRAVEL
Virginia Giori	NKTRAVEL
Marta Giampiccolo	Zafferano e Dintorni Soc. Agr.

The work of the groups was done through the use of 2 different canvases.

With the **first canvas**, the groups identified the **value and critical elements of the destination**, with a particular focus on the Pilgrimage routes product.

What emerged from all the groups were the **elements of historical and religious heritage**, such as the Franciscan and Benedictine places, the characteristic well-maintained and manned villages, and the strong natural component, but also elements of intangible value such as **genuine gastronomic traditions, literary heritage**, and, of particular importance, the **human component** in terms of hospitality.

Critical issues included trail maintenance and signposting, as well as fragmented and uneven communication.

The **needs** that emerged concern **specific services for travellers**, whether pilgrims or cycle tourists, for example public toilets, drinking fountains, luggage transport service, laundry, and electric bike shelter and recharging. Group 3 also discussed the possibility of enhancing other paths in addition to those already known, such as the existing **Via del Sale between Perugia and Ancona**, and the emerging **Cammino Dantesco**, between Gubbio and Foligno.

All the groups agreed on the need to start with the people in order to enhance the tourist destination through **information and training** to make them aware of their heritage, and the possibility of **developing a network** to participate in the co-design and coordination of services.



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Call: HORIZON-GCS-TRANSFORMATIONS-2020 - Type of action: 36 (Innovation action)

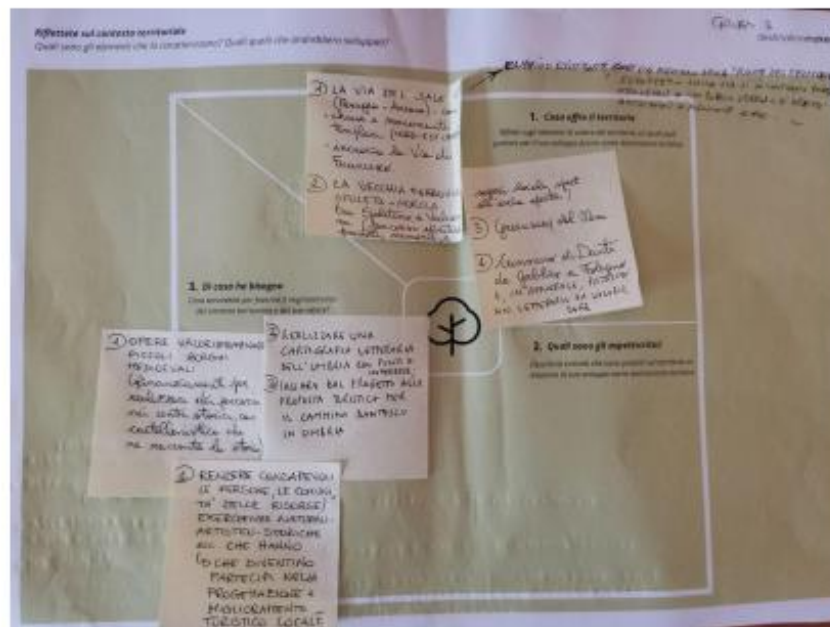


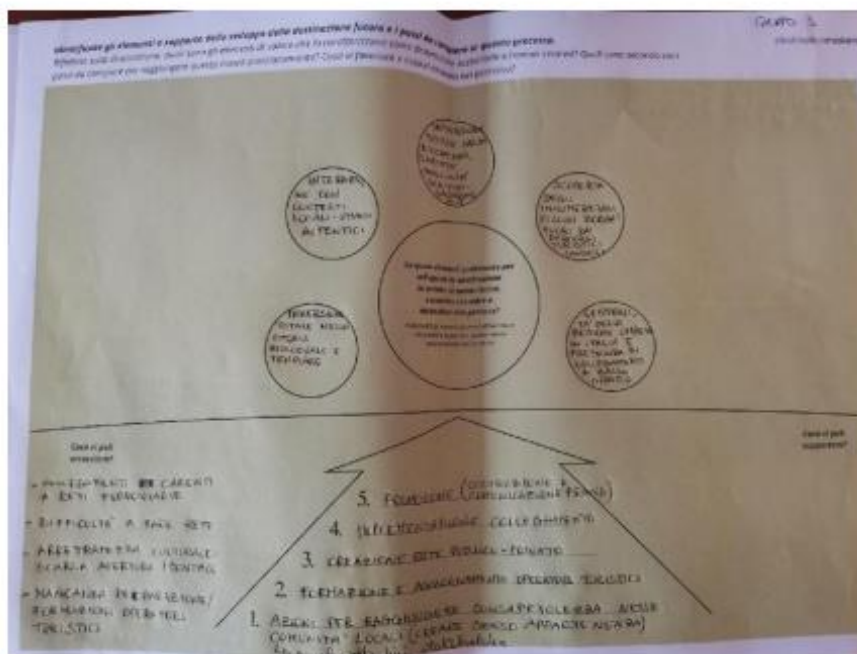
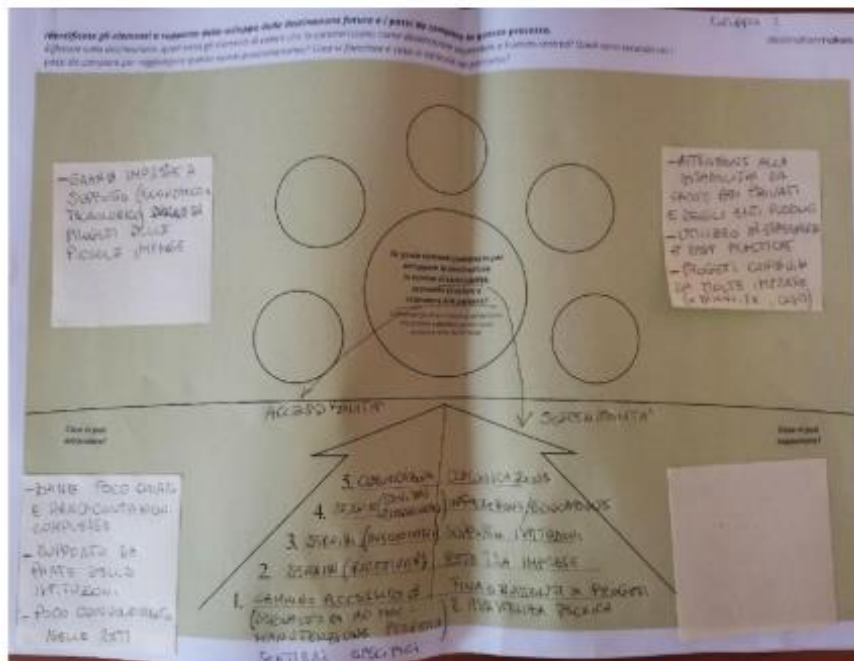
Less attention is currently being paid to **sustainability**, meaning not only environmental impact but also cultural and social sustainability. Only group 3 included as a value element the centrality of the Umbria region and the presence of low-impact connections that could encourage sustainability-conscious travellers, but at the same time connections to the rail network and infrastructure need to be implemented.

The groups agreed that among the five key actions to be implemented in order to enhance the destination are:

- collaboration and **networking between the public and private sectors**,
- the **training of tour operators**,
- an **appropriate communication strategy**.

Other actions that were suggested were the creation of **greater awareness** not only among the stakeholders directly involved but also in the local community (citizens and schools) with a view to creating a **human-centred destination in which the entire population is involved and an active part**, and an improvement in the definition and maintenance of the paths, also with a view to accessibility in order to **make the paths inclusion**





Annex 3: Cultural Heritage in Action Good Practice

The 5 Senses Open-Air Museum

Experiential, transformative and sustainable tourism enhancing local cultural heritage

SCIACCA

38,989

Cultural heritage for sustainable development
Governance and financing

Challenge

Sciacca is a town located on the South-Western coast of Sicily. It was hit by an economic, social and cultural crisis starting 30 years ago which culminated with the town thermal spa closing, causing a drop in local incomes. Tourism trends in the area were characterised by short visits, with overnight stays declining each year.

Solution

The 5 Senses Open-air Museum of Sciacca was created in 2019 as a bottom-up tourism innovation project. Locals and artisans are protagonists and work together to feature the city's cultural heritage - art, crafts, history, gastronomy and landscapes - into unforgettable, immersive, cultural tourism experiences. The city becomes an open-air living museum for visitors to experience with their five senses. Three thousand years of history, cultures, and traditions are made accessible in a responsible way by:

- enhancing existing buildings and sites;
- enhancing locals' knowledge and sharing meaningful stories through experimental, transformative, and emotional tourism;
- reducing use of plastic and resources;
- building community competencies and skills, empowering individuals to transform local resources, and generating sustainable and long-lasting economic well-being.

How ?

- The project started as a participatory workshop involving representatives from businesses, cultural associations and locals to assess how their cultural assets could be enhanced. They wanted to generate valuable tourist products and services focused on an authentic cultural experience and local identity making Sciacca an attractive destination.
- The 5 Senses Open Air Museum association was created, and 50 memorandums of understanding directly engaging local stakeholders and artisans were signed with cultural and philanthropic associations, trade entities and public institutions. It received the official Sicilian Regional recognition as an eco-museum.
- A participatory governance model was created through the community cooperative Identità e Bellezza.
- 50 experiences were created. Restaurants and accommodation facilities improved thanks to the "care of hospitality" specifications. A network of info-points was created involving shops, artisans and locals. Cultural heritage sites reopened and are managed by volunteers acting as "custodians of shared heritage".
- A website promotes and sells experiences, accommodations, meals and local products. A "community home" was set up and is used as the front office, as a co-working space and as a home for all project partners.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN ACTION Sharing solutions in European cities and regions

#EuropeForCulture

Funded by the Creative Europe Programme of the European Union



Budget/Financing

€ 150,000

- The budget of the initiative was €150,000, excluding the staff cost as the project relied on volunteers.
- The budget comes from private grants (21%) and public funds (79% including national and regional funds). For each project element a proposal was submitted, which then was evaluated and awarded.



Management

The cooperative governance is ensured by three management levels:

- The board of directors with transversal skills. They define strategies and objectives, and they plan time, budget, and resources.
- The board of managers, composed by young people with specific skills. They coordinate resources and teams for the implementation of strategies and objectives.
- The supervisory board, which is an ethics committee with a representative of each category and association present in the city.

Numerous stakeholders are involved, including: 125 cooperative associates, 47 tourism businesses, 40 associations, 27 accommodation facilities, 15 restaurateurs, 14 artisans, 10 neighbourhood associations, 10 schools, 10 institutions, 7 museums.

The project's heart and true strength is the community. Locals participate with their own resources and take responsibility for project tasks.



Transferability

Many places are ready to enhance the value of their local historical, artistic, and cultural heritage. This project offers an innovative method ready to scale-up. To develop a similar initiative local administrations should:

- choose a neutral party as the leading actor, someone without political ties or strong conflicts of interests, in order to engage as many people as possible;
- display confidence and competences;
- ensure to deliver on its promises and the objectives set, even if they are small, whilst celebrating each achievement.



Impact

- Community members from all sectors developed a sense of ownership of local cultural heritage. They worked together to protect and promote it, establishing a more cohesive and healthy community.
- Social and economic value was generated following the re-opening of heritage sites. Community members created audio-guides narrating their history. In one year, the Vapourous Caves of Mount Kronio hosted more than 10,000 tourists with visits managed only by volunteers.
- Accommodations are adopting sustainable solutions and slow tourism experiences are increasing.
- The new cultural experiences generate new direct income for artisans and cooperatives, with revenues increasing by 30% for shops located in the regenerated neighbourhood. Sciacca has also become a destination for digital nomads and has joined the Community of Interest of the Be.CULTOUR EU-funded project, sharing challenges and solutions on circular cultural tourism strategies with other 25 regional ecosystems.



Links

Website: www.sciacca5sensi.it/en

Facebook: www.facebook.com/sciaccacittadel5sensi

Instagram: www.instagram.com/sciacca5sensi/?hl=it



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CULTURAL HERITAGE IN ACTION

Sharing solutions
in European
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