

**EUROPEAN AGENDA  
FOR CULTURE**

**WORK PLAN FOR CULTURE  
2015-2018**

**NOVEMBER 2019**



# **SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM**

**REPORT OF THE OMC (OPEN METHOD OF COORDINATION)  
WORKING GROUP OF MEMBER STATES' EXPERTS**



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# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY & RECOMMENDATIONS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## 1. Introduction

Every 4 years, EU Member States agree a Council Work Plan for Culture. The Work Plan for Culture, 2015-2018<sup>1</sup> incorporated a mandate for a Sustainable Cultural Tourism Open Method of Coordination working group (SCT OMC) as outlined below.

### Mandate

Identify ways to create a European tourism offer based on tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a competitive factor in order to attract new forms of sustainable tourism.

Explore how digitisation of cultural content and digital services can foster the expansion of trans-European tourism networks and further the development of itineraries, including small emerging destinations, also taking into account contemporary arts activities, festivals and cultural events.

### Target outputs

Guidelines for policy-makers

The Open Method of Coordination is a voluntary cooperation amongst Member States, sharing and exchanging best practices and experiences. It involves each Member State being invited to nominate a representative to the working group to prepare a report according to the mandate.

This SCT OMC working group, comprising representatives from 23 Member States<sup>2</sup> plus Iceland, met over a 19-month period (March 2017 until September 2018). It engaged in lively debate, and drafted this report using existing research and case study examples. The group continued their dialogue via email and telephone until September 2019 to finalise the report, which is aimed at policy-makers and practitioners.

The European Commission hosted the group's meetings, led by the Directorate General for Education and Culture, with support from group members for meetings held in Bruges, Nuremberg and Graz. Invited guest speakers included Dr Mariá Tajtáková (Assoc. Prof., Ing., PhD.), Professor Marc Jacobs (coordinator of UNESCO Chair on critical heritage studies and safeguarding the intangible cultural heritage), Sandra de Puig (Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism), Maaïke Van Hoecke (Visit Bruges), Manos Vougioukas (European Cultural Tourism Network), Florian Dierl (Director, Documentation Centre Nazi Party Rally Grounds), Annekatrin Fries (Kulturreferat der Stadt Nürnberg), Elisabeth Pacher (Federal Chancellery of Austria), Patrick Schnabl (Head of Department Culture, Europe, Foreign Relations), Fotios Papoulias (DG ENV), and Eric Philippart (DG GROW). Christof Kienel (European Committee of the Regions) and Dorota Tomalak (European Committee of the Regions) attended two separate meetings as observers.

The work of the group was also informed by the results of an informal survey completed by 10 Member States in relation to the issue of sustainable cultural tourism.

Contemporaneously during this period, 2018 was designated the European Year of Cultural Heritage<sup>3</sup> and, given its importance, sustainable cultural tourism was highlighted as one of 10 initiatives for the European Year. As a result, the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 provided an unprecedented opportunity to explore the relationship between cultural heritage and cultural tourism. Several events held during the year encouraged discussions around the mandate and examined the conundrum of protecting and safeguarding cultural

**1**

Draft Conclusions of the Council and of the Representatives of the Governments of the Member States, meeting within the Council, on a Work Plan for Culture (2015-2018). <https://data.consilium.europa.eu/doc/document/ST-16094-2014-INIT/en/pdf>

**2**

Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Germany, Spain, Estonia, Finland, France, Greece, Croatia, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, and Sweden.

**3**

<https://europa.eu/cultural-heritage>

heritage while making use of that unique asset to encourage economic growth and employment.

In addition, 2018 was designated the EU China Tourism Year with the aim of promoting mutual understanding, tourism links and cultural exchange between the EU and China.<sup>4</sup>

## 2. Existing research and practices

The issues surrounding the protection, safeguarding, conservation and enhancement of cultural heritage associated with the rapid evolution of the tourism economy present new challenges and opportunities. These issues are set against a background of long-term trends, such as changing demographics, mobility, evolving demands from consumers, digitalisation, and the problem of climate change and biodiversity loss. Focusing on these issues at a time when an anti-tourist sentiment was growing<sup>5</sup>, the working group prepared 27 case studies outlining good practices, covering the tangible and intangible cultural heritage in both urban and rural environments. A case study summary is on page 67. The group also commissioned two reports through the European Expert Network on Culture and Audiovisual (EENCA), which, along with the case studies, fed into a definition of sustainable cultural tourism and the group's final recommendations. The EENCA reports<sup>6</sup> are:

- *Sustainable Cultural Tourism: A mapping document for the OMC (Literature Review)*; and
- *Inventory and analysis of the main tools currently available to cultural sites and authorities with regard to sustainable cultural tourism on a transnational level (EU/ Council of Europe/UN).*

## 3. Principal objectives of the report

The group identified five principal objectives to be achieved through the mandate:

- Recommend actions that can be taken by key stakeholders (executive summary);
- Explore the conceptual framework of sustainable cultural tourism (chapter 2);
- Outline the challenges and opportunities associated with its development (chapter 4);
- Propose a definition for sustainable cultural tourism (chapter 5);
- Identify the way forward for tangible and intangible cultural heritage, as well as European tourism offers (chapter 6).

## 4. Challenges and opportunities

While tourism can be an excellent tool to provide access to cultural heritage, many European tourism destinations are currently facing serious challenges relating to over-tourism, including overcrowding, massification, cultural appropriation, over-folklorisation of cultural heritage and loss of authenticity. This is contributing to a rejection of tourism by local citizens and cultural and heritage experts, who warn about the detrimental effects this phenomenon may have on our cultural heritage.

Sustainable cultural tourism places cultural heritage and their communities at the centre of the decision-making process regarding the management of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage with tourism activity. Sustainable cultural tourism necessitates the involvement of stakeholders and local communities to ensure that the benefits accrue to both the cultural heritage asset and the people. The objective is to ensure good conservation practice along with authentic interpretation, while at the same time supporting the local economy.

<sup>4</sup> <https://ecty2018.org/>

<sup>5</sup> Díaz, Almúdena López, 'Why Barcelona locals really hate tourists', *Independent*, 9 August 2017.

<https://www.independent.co.uk/travel/news-and-advice/barcelona-locals-hate-tourists-why-reasons-spain-protests-arran-airbnb-locals-attacks-graffiti-a7883021.html>

Godfrey, Kara, 'Anti-tourism protests now hit Croatia – but is your summer holiday affected?' *Express*, 11 August 2017.

<https://www.express.co.uk/travel/articles/839544/anti-tourism-spain-barcelona-riots-croatia>

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.eenca.com/>

## 5. Defining sustainable cultural tourism

During the deliberations, the working group drafted and agreed the first ever definition of sustainable cultural tourism.

### New definition

**Sustainable cultural tourism** is the integrated management of cultural heritage and tourism activities in conjunction with the local community, creating social, environmental and economic benefits for all stakeholders in order to achieve tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development.

## 6. Summary of key recommendations

This report targets policy-makers at EU and national levels, local heritage communities, heritage organisations and institutions, heritage sites, the tourism industry and tourists themselves. The working group identified 55 recommendations (see page 9). With an emphasis on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals and careful strategic planning, the fundamental messages from these recommendations focus on the need to:

- urgently establish a European Over-Tourism Task Force comprising the main stakeholders who monitor cultural heritage destinations at risk or in a state of over-capacity and report annually on trends;
- break down silos that exist between stakeholders by mainstreaming, collaborating and creating synergies at the various levels. In particular, the working group identified collaboration within the Directorate Generals of the EU, the ministries of the Member States (especially economics, tourism, cultural, and regional affairs), and the use of bottom-up approaches and tools, where applicable, in policy design, strategic planning and management that involve the relevant partners;
- promote community ownership through training, discouraging seasonality by offering activities and pricing structures that encourage longer stays in the low season, and promoting lesser known sites and cultural heritage practices to take pressure off the known 'hot-spots'. Overall, supporting local communities by consultation, engagement, incentivisation and encouraging a participatory approach to development was seen to be paramount;
- develop digital tools and technology to facilitate remote access; the continuous assessment of visitor impact; carrying capacity guidelines; new interpretation techniques including artificial intelligence (AI); marketing and business intelligence.

## 7. General conclusions

Finding common ground and consolidating the recommendations for various stakeholders to work in tandem with one another is vital to ensuring that cultural tourism can continue to be sustainable. Identifying and defining challenges, opportunities and solutions for those across the value chain is an important step towards the proliferation of sustainable cultural tourism. In summary, sustainable cultural tourism is a fresh way of looking at the relationship between culture and tourism. Sustainable cultural tourism combines two elements: 'sustainable culture' and 'sustainable tourism', and aims to bring a greater collaboration between the two sectors of culture and tourism to achieve benefits for both.



# RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The working group agreed 55 recommendations. These are outlined below.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE EU

- Facilitate wide dissemination of the report and promote the uptake of its recommendations;
- Establish a European Over-Tourism Task Force of the main stakeholders to monitor cultural heritage destinations at risk or in a state of over-capacity, and to report annually on trends;
- Conduct a mapping exercise within the EU Member States on research and policies relating to visitor access and carrying capacity at sensitive cultural sites, including intangible cultural heritage practices;
- Create a network of experts from Member States in order to exchange good practices, knowledge and expertise, and facilitate peer learning, study visits and training to promote knowledge transfer;
- Increase awareness and collaboration with DG AGRI, DG EAC, DG ENV, DG GROW, DG MARE, DG MOVE and DG RTD of the relationship between cultural heritage and sustainable cultural tourism in order to encourage sustainable development;
- Promote the *European Quality Principles for EU Funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage*<sup>7</sup> to encourage the sensitive and appropriate development of cultural heritage in Member States.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU Policy-makers and stakeholders

- Continue to invest in digital technology, visitor management and facilities, including interpretation and infrastructure, by making use of such programmes as Horizon Europe, Creative Europe, etc.;
- Encourage a participatory approach to the governance of cultural heritage places with local/community involvement;
- Promote and supplement Member State's capacity in education and training in the field of sustainable cultural tourism e.g. Erasmus+ [http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node\\_en](http://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/node_en)
- Encourage responsible tourism and assist those operating in the field of cultural heritage and the cultural tourism industry in line with the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals at European, national, regional and local levels;
- Ensure integrated and participatory management models for cultural heritage that incorporate continuous assessment of visitor usage, access and regional spread;
- Ensure that cultural heritage is foremost in plans and policies that include tourism, economics, land-use, environment, and social and other relevant areas;
- Encourage networks, digital partnership platforms, and public and private partnerships to address the issues of carrying capacity and access at Europe's hot-spots;
- Support and encourage cultural heritage sites and practices to develop off-season activities.

### RECOMMENDATIONS FOR EU Member States

#### Policy

- Develop long-term national spatial plans based on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals;
- Build capacity and improve coordinating actions across different levels of government and policy areas, including tourism, environment and innovation, to support the shift to more sustainable tourism investment and financing practices<sup>8</sup>;

<sup>7</sup>  
ICOMOS, *European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage*, 2019.  
[https://issuu.com/aegpc/docs/european\\_quality\\_principles\\_2019\\_en](https://issuu.com/aegpc/docs/european_quality_principles_2019_en)

<sup>8</sup>  
*OECD Tourism Trends and Policies*, 2018, p.22.

- Promote an integrated approach and enhance the cooperation between ministries responsible for economic, cultural and regional affairs at national and/or regional government level in order to break down thematic silos and to develop all-inclusive strategic plans;
- Implement the recommendations of international conventions of UNESCO and the Council of Europe (Faro Convention)<sup>9</sup>, as well as the Directives of the European Commission;
- Support participation in networks, partnering schemes, collaborative programmes and initiatives on multiple levels of governance (national, regional, local);
- Create synergies by forming digital working groups between members of established projects, for example the Council of Europe's Cultural Routes, UNESCO's World Heritage Journeys' web platform, programmes on national cultural routes, European Capitals of Culture, European Heritage Label, European Capitals of SMART tourism, and European Destinations of Excellence.

### Management

- Expand the use of bottom-up approaches and tools (when applicable) in policy design, strategic planning and management, and involve all relevant stakeholders;
- Actively support cooperation schemes that facilitate the exchange of good practices and knowledge, respecting the principle of subsidiarity;
- Encourage a cross-sectoral approach in all tourism sectors to ensure that sustainability of cultural heritage is prioritised;
- Encourage digital platforms with the relevant stakeholders that consolidate booking systems for transport, admission tickets and accommodation, to encourage low season visitors and facilitate market intelligence purposes.

### Awareness

- Increase awareness-raising programmes and campaigns, using all forms of traditional and digital marketing, to encourage responsible tourism with an emphasis on the environment and an ethical approach to tourism;
- Promote sustainability awareness in education policies at all levels of education.

### Research

- Support academic and innovative research on Sustainable Cultural Tourism to develop indicators (carrying capacity, access, energy efficiency, responsible handling of waste, etc.), evaluation tools and the recording of both quantitative and qualitative data;
- Use and further develop the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) to support the realisation of SCT.

### Economic/funding

- Provide adequate and continuous funding for the safeguarding and interpretation of cultural heritage (tangible and intangible);
- Consider re-investing revenue generated from tourism taxes and fees into local cultural heritage sites and practices and using it for their protection, development and upkeep;
- Support alternative forms of tourism with an emphasis on low impact and responsible tourism, especially, but not exclusively, in areas with low carrying capacity or that are burdened by overuse.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR Local and heritage communities

- Promote community 'ownership' of cultural heritage through awareness raising, site visits and capacity building;
- Incentivise and encourage local participation in networking, partnering schemes, synergies, collaborations, programmes and initiatives;
- Revive appropriate old customs, traditions and customary practices as a means of both safeguarding intangible heritage and creating additional cultural offer(s)/experiences.

<sup>9</sup> Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, Faro Convention, 2005. <https://www.coe.int/en/web/culture-and-heritage/faro-convention>

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR **Cultural heritage: religious heritage, organisations, institutions, sites and practices**

- Adopt appropriate site management plans to ensure the correct balance between safeguarding and conserving cultural heritage resources with visitor access and facilities;
- Use cross-disciplinary scientific tools to conduct research on visitor impacts and develop strategic indicators to prioritise a sustainable carrying capacity. Adjust visitor flow accordingly in favour of the cultural and natural assets' integrity;
- Make use of digital tools to facilitate remote access, interpretation, communication, marketing and business intelligence, such as the Joint Research Centre Gems App: <https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/science-update/cultural-gems>
- Explore creative ways of actively engaging local communities in projects with a focus on younger generations, e.g. European Solidarity Corps: [https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/solidarity_en) and Discover EU: [https://europa.eu/youth/discovereu\\_en](https://europa.eu/youth/discovereu_en);
- Integrate both tangible and intangible heritage into the design of new cultural tourism offers/experiences/products and consider the appropriate adaptive reuse of cultural buildings;
- Develop staff training programmes to raise awareness of sustainability, environmental issues, responsible tourism, etc.;
- Develop fundraising strategies for the protection and presentation of cultural heritage to include public-private partnerships, crowd funding, philanthropy, etc.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR **Tourism associations, operators, developers and entrepreneurs**

- Invest in long-term economic and entrepreneurial development plans that include sustainability and social responsibility as part of the business strategy;
- Consult with local communities to develop and agree high quality tourism based on authentic offers/experiences/products with cultural heritage;
- Provide guidelines and training on responsible tourism for both tourism practitioners (tour operators) and consumers (individual travellers);
- Support start-up clusters for cultural tourism entrepreneurship;
- Benefit from existing applications (e.g. United Nations Environmental) or develop new online toolkits and digital applications for measuring visitor impact;
- With the support of local communities, promote new emerging destinations;
- Develop pricing structures that encourage longer stays and visits in the low season;
- Support local businesses and favour local products to encourage unique offerings;
- Ensure a positive working environment by creating permanent employment or long-term employment through the low season.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR **Tourists (consumers)**

- Adopt responsible behaviour, both as a traveller and as a consumer;
- Be conscious of 'impact' and 'ecological footprint', and use online toolkits and applications to measure impact;
- Be conscious of the use of natural resources and follow any special instructions;
- Respect the local community and engage in the area's history, tradition and culture;
- Make use of local produce, creative industries, goods and services to stimulate the local economy.

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# INTRODUCTION



# 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Report context

The *New European Agenda for Culture* (European Commission, 2018) identifies the evolution of the cultural sector as a positive factor for Europe's societies, economies and international relations, and stresses the need to increase cooperation among different actors. Sustainable cultural tourism is recognised as a vital part of regional and macro-regional strategies and their implementation.<sup>10</sup> The *New European Agenda for Culture* notes the importance of the Open Method of Coordination for the implementation of the agenda. It also emphasises the cultural dimension of sustainable development to help implement the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Its three objectives – promoting social cohesion, encouraging economic growth and strengthening international relations – are relevant to the concept of sustainable cultural tourism.

The European Parliament recognises that cultural tourism has a major role to play in preserving and realising the value of European cultural heritage, and that both sectors can be mutually beneficial. Cultural heritage generates substantial earnings for the tourism industry, while tourism can be good for culture, encouraging the display and conservation of cultural assets and generating revenue needed for their preservation.<sup>11</sup>

For many years, the Council of the EU and the European Commission have strengthened the cross-sectoral nature of cultural policy and brought to the fore the full potential of cultural mainstreaming as laid down in Article 167(4) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union. Sustainable cultural tourism is one such cross-disciplinary field.

A valuable tool for supporting the design of cultural policies and funding programmes within the EU is the Open Method of Coordination (OMC), respecting the principle of subsidiarity and Member States' responsibility for policymaking. This form of voluntary cooperation between experts from EU Member States provides for a valuable exchange of best practices and networking opportunities. Ultimately it leads to policy recommendations, as presented in this report.

The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 encouraged more people to discover and engage with Europe's cultural heritage, reinforcing a sense of belonging to a common European space through the use of the slogan 'Our heritage: where the past meets the future'. The year highlighted the need to foster wider access to cultural heritage with its positive effects on the quality of life. Such wider access is achieved by reaching out to new audiences and by increasing accessibility – both digital and physical – to Europe's rich cultural heritage.

The Barcelona Declaration<sup>12</sup> was also launched during the European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018. It aims to be an open initiative of relevant stakeholders to address the issue of sustainable cultural tourism and, *inter alia*, encourages greater synergy between cultural heritage and tourism stakeholders.

10

European Commission, *A New European Agenda for Culture*, (2018). [https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/commission\\_communication\\_-\\_a\\_new\\_european\\_agenda\\_for\\_culture\\_2018.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/culture/sites/culture/files/commission_communication_-_a_new_european_agenda_for_culture_2018.pdf)

11

European Parliament, European Parliament resolution of 8 September 2015 towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe, 2015.

12

Barcelona Declaration: *Better places to live, better places to visit*. NECSTouR, the Network of European Regions for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism, in cooperation with Europa Nostra, European Travel Commission and European Cultural Tourism Network, with support from the European Heritage Alliance 3.3.

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## 1.2 Scope of this report

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Europe's cultural heritage is a powerful factor in social and economic development and helps achieve objectives in other sectors.<sup>13</sup> It constitutes an invaluable resource in the fields of education, employment, tourism and sustainable development. Culture is one of the key drivers of tourism attractiveness and infrastructural development.

This Report explores sustainable cultural tourism, its challenges and opportunities, and identifies a framework for achieving Sustainable Cultural Tourism as the foundation for new European tourism offers. It offers recommendations inspired by existing research and case study examples and suggests guidelines for policy makers and practitioners.

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## 1.3 Objectives of the report

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The mandate for this report is provided by the EU Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018:

*Identify ways to create a European tourism offer based on tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a competitive factor in order to attract new forms of sustainable tourism. Explore how digitisation of cultural content and digital services can foster the expansion of trans-European tourism networks and further the development of itineraries, including small emerging destinations, also taking into account contemporary arts activities, festivals and cultural events.*

The group agreed the following objectives for this report:

- Formulate recommendations aimed at the key stakeholders (executive summary);
- Discuss and explore the conceptual framework of sustainable cultural tourism (chapter 2);
- Examine the challenges and opportunities associated with its development (chapter 4);
- Create a definition for sustainable cultural tourism (chapter 5);
- Identify the way forward for tangible and intangible cultural heritage as well as European tourism offers (chapter 6).

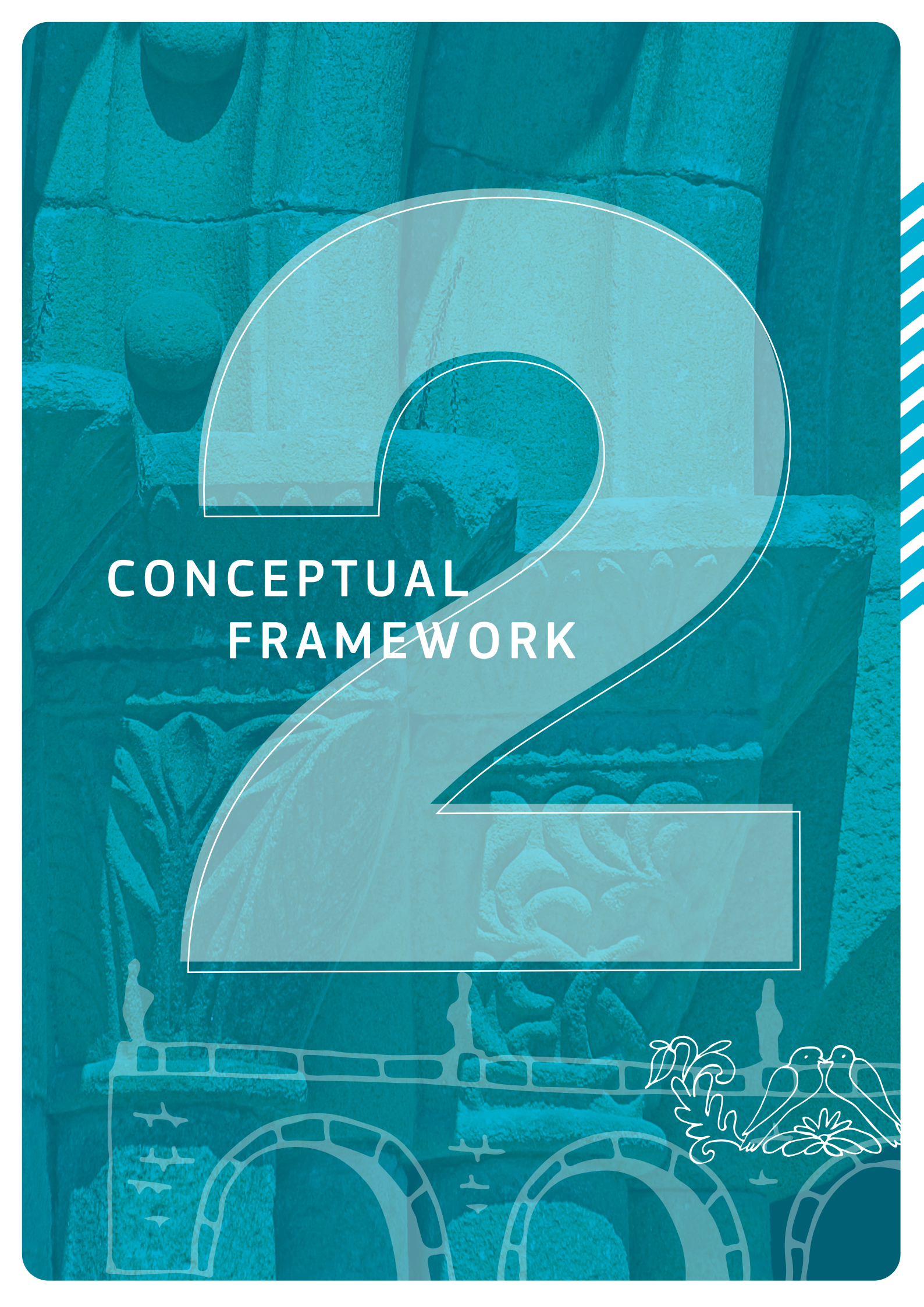
Taking into account a range of reports and studies, the group worked to ensure that all of the above objectives were fully clarified in this report and that the mandate provided by the EU Work Plan for Culture 2015-2018 was achieved.



### 13

There are around 8.7 million people in cultural employment across the EU – 3.8% of total employment (EUROSTAT December 2018). [https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Culture\\_statistics\\_-\\_cultural\\_employment](https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/statistics-explained/index.php/Culture_statistics_-_cultural_employment)



The background is a teal color with a faint, textured pattern of stone carvings, including arches and floral motifs. A large, white, semi-transparent number '2' is centered on the page. The text 'CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK' is written in white, uppercase letters across the middle of the number '2'.

CONCEPTUAL  
FRAMEWORK





# 2

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

### 2.1 Introduction

Sustainable cultural tourism supports stakeholders, including commercial operators, site managers and tourists, to work towards stewardship of these cultural heritage assets and traditions by addressing issues of carrying capacity, hit-and-run tourism and conservation while taking advantage of opportunities, such as increased employment and economic activity in the communities.

During the preparation of this report, the debate about ‘over-tourism’ featured in the media, generating new terms such as ‘tourism phobia’<sup>14</sup> due to overcapacity at honey-pot sites. The group’s achievement of its objectives took place against this background. The group operated with an awareness of carrying capacity issues and agreed to use the following definition as a basis relating to the concerns of managing visitor numbers within the context of individual sites.

#### Definition of tourism’s carrying capacity

*The maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time, without causing destruction of the physical, economic and socio-cultural environment and an unacceptable decrease in the quality of visitors’ satisfaction.*<sup>15</sup>

14

Jessop, Tara, ‘Tourist-Phobia: Why Anti-Tourism Protests Have Exploded in Spain,’ *Culture Trip*, 10 August 2017. <https://theculturetrip.com/europe/spain/articles/tourist-phobia-why-anti-tourism-protests-have-exploded-in-spain/>

15

See: UNWTO, ‘Overtourism? – Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions, Executive Summary, 2018. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/pdf/10.18111/9789284420070?download=true>

16

Relevant case studies: Ireland’s Brú na Bóinne UNESCO World Heritage site; Sweden’s app Visir Uplandia; France’s network of Centres Culturels de Rencontre/ Cultural Encounter Centres; Italy’s Romea Strata; Lithuania’s rural development programme of the Innovator’s Valley in Antaliepte; the Netherland’s Kinderdijk-Elshout mill network; and Belgium’s intangible cultural heritage example of shrimp fishing on horseback in Oostduinkerke.

17

Callot P., ‘Slow Tourism’, In: Idowu, S.O., Capaldi, N., Zu L. and Gupta, A.D. (eds), *Encyclopedia of Corporate Social Responsibility*, Berlin, 2013, pp. 2156-2160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-28036-8>

18

*The Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994). <https://www.icomos.org/charters/nara-e.pdf>

Sustainable cultural tourism means that the benefits of cultural tourism to surrounding communities in attracting visitors can be retained, while the disadvantages relating to potential degradation of cultural sites and practices through overuse and commodification can be mitigated.

The move towards more sustainable cultural tourism is important for the future of cultural tourism: developing and making use of partnerships, new technologies, strategies and business opportunities can help make it sustainable.<sup>16</sup>

New sustainable cultural tourism offers relating to both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage should place an emphasis on national strategic planning and networking, as well as concepts such as ‘slow’ tourism, ‘authenticity’, ‘storytelling’, ‘well-being’ and ‘contact with locals’. Slow tourism is a concept that challenges perceptions of travel and tourism, as it focuses on the journey as being integral to the tourist experience. It has implications for individual social responsibility in terms of effects on the environment, and promotes deeper experiences, improved cultural understanding and knowledge.<sup>17</sup>

Building on the Venice Charter (1963), the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994) discusses authenticity as a quality to be determined on the basis of each cultural context and cautions against standardised guidelines. Authenticity relates to the values of a place, in the case of tangible cultural heritage, and is integral to conservation practice.<sup>18</sup> Related to this is the idea that contact with locals promotes an authentic and mutually beneficial tourism product.

Storytelling can be a powerful way to convey the significance of cultural heritage. The EU-funded project ‘Emotive’ enabled heritage experts to create powerful stories based

closely on the heritage values of a site in order to resonate with visitors.<sup>19</sup> Under the COSME Programme, the European Commission-funded project, TraCEs also puts this policy into practice. It seeks to lay the foundations of a cultural and sustainable tourism model in European Capitals of Culture that pivots around their heritage, creative and cultural industries, and ways of living.<sup>20</sup>

Tourism experiences that promote self-reflection, a slower pace and contemplation combined with physical activity can encourage well-being. They can be met by promoting lesser-known cultural routes, pilgrim paths and sites. Connected with cultural offers, culinary heritage and facilitated by local guides, this is a combination of cultural heritage and tourism that is beneficial to both the tourists and the visited region in a sustainable and community-centred way.<sup>21</sup>

Sustainability is based on the concept that the natural, socio-cultural and economic systems are interconnected. In a manner similar to sustainable development, sustainable cultural tourism requires an interdisciplinary and holistic approach. Cultural routes<sup>22</sup>, cultural cities<sup>23</sup> and the UNESCO World Heritage Journeys of the EU<sup>24</sup> are good examples of self-sustaining networks that offer social and economic benefits to local groups and communities.<sup>25</sup>

## 2.2 Sustainable development

The Brundtland Commission in their report, *Our Common Future*, offered the first definition of 'sustainable development in 1987 as 'development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'.<sup>26</sup> These needs include 'quality of life' resources, such as clean air and water, and protection of the natural environment.

In 2015, the United Nations set out the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, *Transforming our world*.<sup>27</sup> This agenda is based on five pillars: people, planet, prosperity, peace and partnerships. It aims to address challenges and commitments that are interrelated and calls for integrated solutions. The 17 Sustainable Development Goals agreed within the agenda are the blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all.

To address sustainability effectively, an innovative approach is needed. The fundamental principles of sustainable development recognise that eradicating poverty in all its forms and dimensions, combating inequality within and among countries, preserving the planet, creating sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, and fostering social inclusion are all linked and interdependent. To be truly in line with the original Brundtland definition, sustainable cultural tourism must be developed and practiced in a way that contributes to the Sustainable Development Goals.



© Rota do Românico/Portugal

19

<https://emotiveproject.eu/>

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<http://www.cultouriscapital.eu/>

21

Relevant Case Study: The Romanesque Route, Portugal.

22

<https://www.coe.int/en/web/cultural-routes> and <https://whc.unesco.org/en/activities/875/>

23

[https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/creative-europe/actions/capitals-culture_en)

24

<https://visitworldheritage.com/en/eu>

25

Relevant case studies: Poland's Koziółek Matolek European Tale Centre in Pacanów; Portugal's Romanesque Route of the Sousa, Douro and Tâmega valleys; Ireland's Clonmacnoise Monastic Site; Greek's Paths of Culture in Epidaurus; Austria's CultTrips along with local action groups from Luxemburg, Italy, Estonia, Finland; Croatia's shepherds' dwellings in the North Velebit National Park; and Finland's representation of the Sámi.

26

*Report of the World Commission on Environment, Our Common Future*, 1987, p. 40.

<http://www.un-documents.net/our-common-future.pdf>

27

United Nations, *Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development*, 2015.

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view\\_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/70/1)

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## 2.3 Cultural sustainability

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The cultural sustainability concept is core to sustainable development and relates to the maintenance of cultural beliefs, cultural practices, heritage conservation and culture as its own entity.

The UN's system task team on the post 2015 development agenda: *Culture: a driver and an enabler of sustainable development* points out that the relationship between culture and sustainable development is a two-fold one. In this, culture is both a driver and an enabler of sustainable development.

As a driver of sustainable development, culture is implicitly viewed as one of its pillars. When we view culture as an enabler of sustainable development, it reflects a complementary understanding that development interventions must be responsive to the cultural context and particularities of a place and community. This is a human-centred approach to sustainable development that not only renders development strategies more effective and sustainable, but one that also takes advantage of the power of culture to transform people's lives.<sup>28</sup>

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## 2.4 Culture and cultural heritage

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Cultural heritage can be defined as tangible and intangible expressions of ways of living often developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, manifesting itself in customs, practices, objects, structures, artistic expressions and values.

Intangible cultural heritage refers to the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge and skills – as well as the instruments, objects, artefacts and cultural spaces associated therewith – that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognise as part of their cultural heritage. This intangible cultural heritage, transmitted from generation to generation, is constantly recreated by communities and groups in response to their environment, their interaction with nature and their history, and provides them with a sense of identity and continuity, thus promoting respect for cultural diversity and human creativity.<sup>29</sup>

**28** UNESCO, *Culture: a driver and an enabler of sustainable development*, 2012. [http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/2\\_culture.pdf](http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/pdf/Think%20Pieces/2_culture.pdf)

**29** Article 2, UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003. <https://ich.unesco.org/en/convention>

- Intangible cultural heritage, as defined in the UNESCO Convention for the 'Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage', 2003, is manifested, *inter alia*, in the following domains:
- (a) oral traditions and expressions, including language as a vehicle of the intangible cultural heritage;
  - (b) performing arts;
  - (c) social practices, rituals and festive events;
  - (d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and
  - (e) traditional craftsmanship.



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The UNESCO World Heritage Convention defines (tangible) cultural heritage as:

*monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

*groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;*

*sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.*<sup>30</sup>

Cultural heritage (both tangible and intangible) is a common good, for which responsibility lies with all elements of society. Consequently, there is a need to define the roles of those involved and to give citizens the means of participating at all levels of decision-making.

According to the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century, awareness raising, research and training are therefore essential. Training is imperative to maintain and pass on European knowledge and skills, which themselves constitute a form of heritage on which to capitalise. This approach must be based on dialogue between the state, citizens and professionals, with the aim of mutual enrichment. The transmission of intangible cultural heritage is often not possible within typical models of training and education, and this is sometimes at risk when tourism becomes an economic driver in a community.

Cultural heritage in all its forms, tangible and intangible, is a key factor for the refocusing of our societies based on dialogue between cultures, respect for identities and diversity, and a feeling of belonging to a community of values. The concept of cultural heritage has significantly changed in recent decades and its position continues to vary according to the society in which it is located. The customary divisions are disappearing and giving way to a holistic approach: cultural heritage, which encompasses an intangible dimension, know-how and attitudes, is inextricably linked to its context and its natural and cultural environment. New relationships are emerging between cultural heritage and contemporary creation, allowing further scope for creativity and innovation.<sup>31</sup>

**30**

Article 1, UNESCO Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972. <https://whc.unesco.org/archive/convention-en.pdf>

**31**

Recommendation of the Committee of Ministers to Member States on the European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century, CM/Rec (2017)1. <https://rm.coe.int/16806f6a03>



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## 2.5 Cultural rights

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Cultural rights are the rights of everyone to take part in cultural life, to enjoy and benefit from the protection of moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production.<sup>32</sup> They are rights related to themes such as language; cultural and artistic production; participation in cultural life; cultural heritage; intellectual property rights; authors' rights; minorities and access to culture. The UN Human Rights Council in 2018 called upon all states to respect, promote and protect the right of everyone to take part in cultural life, including the ability to access and enjoy cultural heritage.<sup>33</sup>

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## 2.6 Tourism and cultural tourism

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Culture is one of the key elements of tourism attractiveness, with tourism being one way of facilitating access to heritage, art, creativity, and to cultural activities and practices.

Cultural tourism is a form of tourism that focuses on the cultural aspects of a place, such as culture, cultural heritage, cultural landscapes and cultural offerings, with these being the visitor's main motivation when selecting a destination. To support this point, according to Eurostat's Eurobarometer 2017, 68% of Europeans agree that the presence of cultural heritage can influence their holiday destination.<sup>34</sup>

Tourists are often categorised by the dominant marketing priority of their destination choice (e.g. nature, food, wellness and culture). In addition, even if culture itself is not the primary reason to travel, tourists commonly use cultural services and facilities during their stay.

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## 2.7 Sustainable tourism

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Within the tourism sector, the pursuit of sustainability has led to attempts to create alternative forms of tourism that have fewer impacts on the environment and communities.<sup>35</sup> The effort of reducing the negative effects of tourism activities has become almost universally accepted as a desirable and politically appropriate approach to tourism development.<sup>36</sup>

If tourism is to contribute to sustainable development, it must be economically viable, environmentally sensitive and culturally appropriate. The concept of sustainable tourism was proposed by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in 1988 and since then has been further elaborated. In 2001, the UNWTO adopted the *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism* (UNWTO, 2001)<sup>37</sup>, which recognised 'tourism as a factor of sustainable development' (Article 3) and highlighted tourism as 'a contributor to the enhancement of cultural heritage' (Article 4). In 2005, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the UNWTO released a report entitled *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers*<sup>38</sup>, which formulated recommendations for achieving sustainable tourism development.

**32**

Symonides, Janusz, 'Cultural rights: A neglected category of human rights,' *International Social Science Journal*, December 1998: 158, p. 559.

**33**

UNHRC, HRC, 37th session. Agenda Item 3. Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, including right to development. A/HRC/37/L.30, 2018.

**34**

Special Eurobarometer 466: Cultural Heritage, 2017.

[http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2150\\_88\\_1\\_466\\_ENG](http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2150_88_1_466_ENG)

**35**

Smith, V.L. and Eadington, W.R., *Tourism alternative: Potentials and problems in the development of tourism*, Philadelphia, 1992.

**36**

Sharpley, R., 'Rural tourism and sustainability – A Critique,' in Hall, D., Roberts, L. and Mitchell, M. (eds), *New directions in rural tourism*, Aldershot, 2003, pp. 38–53.

**37**

UNWTO, *Global Code of Ethics for Tourism*, 2001.

<http://ethics.unwto.org/content/background-global-code-ethics-tourism>

**38**

UNWTO, *Making Tourism More Sustainable: A Guide for Policy Makers*, 2005.

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284408214>

Multiple definitions of sustainable tourism have been suggested, focusing on different aspects of the rapport between the tourism industry and sustainability concerns. Several perspectives are highlighted below.

### 1. Generic perspective <sup>39</sup>

A condition of tourism based on the principles of sustainable development, taking into account its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts.

### 2. Stakeholder perspective <sup>40</sup>

Both this and the following approach to tourism – i.e. the stakeholder perspective and the multi-dimensional perspective – influence:

- (1) economic health;
- (2) subjective well-being of local peoples;
- (3) protection of natural resources;
- (4) healthy culture;
- (5) optimum satisfaction of guest requirements.

### 3. Multi-dimensional perspective

This is a condition of tourism based on the principles of sustainable development, taking full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts. This approach also influences the issues detailed above, under stakeholder perspective. <sup>41</sup>

Here the purpose of sustainable tourism is to strike a balance between protecting the environment, maintaining cultural integrity, establishing social justice and promoting economic benefits, thus meeting the needs of the host population in terms of improved living standards, both in the short and long term. <sup>42</sup>

The multi-dimensional perspective on sustainable tourism explicitly addresses cultural aspects of sustainable tourism, thus anticipating specific concerns of sustainable cultural tourism. Moreover, according to the OECD report *The Impact of Culture on Tourism*, 'culture in all its forms is likely to figure strongly in the tourism product and promotion of most regions, even those which have traditionally relied on their natural assets'. <sup>43</sup> This suggests the growing importance of cultural resources currently within the tourism industry and raises a question about how to withstand the increasing visitation of cultural heritage sites and interests towards local culture in a sustainable manner.

**39**

Pfueller, S.L., Lee, D. and Laing, J., 'Tourism Partnerships in Protected Areas: Exploring Contributions to Sustainability,' *Environmental Management* (2011) 48: p. 734.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s00267-011-9728-y>

**40**

Bramwell, B. and Lane, B., 'Sustainable tourism: An evolving global approach,' *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1993:1, pp. 1-5.

**41**

UNEP/UNWTO, *Making tourism more sustainable*, 2005, pp. 11-12.

**42**

Liu, C.H., Tzeng, G.H., Lee, M.H. and Lee, P.Y., 'Improving metro-airport connection service for tourism development: Using hybrid MCDM models,' *Tourism Management Perspectives*, (2013: 6), pp. 95-107.

**43**

OECD, *The Impact of Culture on Tourism*, 2009, p. 10.



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## 2.8 Sustainable cultural tourism

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Tourism provides access to cultural heritage, but many European tourism destinations are facing issues relating to overuse and overcapacity. This in turn has a detrimental impact on the local citizens and communities, and contributes towards anti-tourism sentiments.

To be sustainable, the economic activity of tourism should 'ensure that these policies respect the integrity of the cultural heritage without compromising its inherent values'.<sup>44</sup> The role of society, heritage communities, groups and individuals in cultural heritage is intertwined with its expression, conservation, interpretation and use. They are not simply 'audiences' to receive conservation messages, meanings and expert opinions, but are essential to the participatory governance and management of cultural heritage.

The concept of sustainable cultural tourism firmly places cultural heritage and their communities at the centre of the decision-making process as regards the management of the intangible and tangible cultural heritage and tourism activity. It necessitates the involvement of stakeholders and local communities, and ensures that benefits accrue to the cultural heritage of the place and its people together. The concept supports cultural heritage conservation and authentic interpretation, along with local sustainable economies.

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## 2.9 Cultural commons

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In accordance with the Faro Convention, the recognition of heritage is conceived as a shared responsibility.<sup>45</sup> However, cultural heritage is no longer limited to those elements officially recognised as such by the national authorities, i.e. protected heritage, but now includes those elements regarded as heritage by the local population and local authorities. This development prompts new, more participatory and collaborative management approaches.

<sup>44</sup> The overall goal of a 'cultural heritage commons' is to make cultural heritage available for a broad society in a sustainable way. The maintenance of a heritage commons ought to be based on a responsibility shared between a broad range of actors. The relevant actors include policymaking bodies in the cultural field, citizens, institutions and other stakeholders involved in creating, maintaining and managing heritage resources.

Council of Europe, Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society, 2005, Article 10(c).

<sup>45</sup> Faro Convention, 2005.



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## 2.10 Stakeholders

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According to the EU Sustainable Tourism Guidelines<sup>46</sup>, sustainability embraces social, environmental and economic matters. For cultural tourism it involves considering each of the components through the following stakeholders:

- Visitors – their needs, aspirations and wellbeing;
- Industry – need for tourism businesses to be profitable, have a long-term future;
- Community – respecting the values, needs and quality of life of the local community; and
- Environment – conserving the cultural and physical environments, local identity and sense of place.

Within the context of sustainable cultural tourism, the involvement of civil society is equally important for cultural heritage maintenance, transmission and management, and for the sustainable management of the place for the economic activity of tourism. Whereas some may only assume incompatibility and conflict relationships, this is one of the overlaps between the two arenas where a paradigm shift could create sustainable benefits.

Accordingly, the group identified the principal stakeholders for the development of sustainable cultural tourism at national level:

- Government (public sector);
- Local and heritage communities (community);
- Cultural heritage (religious heritage, organisations, institutions, sites, practices);
- Tourism associations (operators, developers, entrepreneurs);
- Tourists (consumers).

Participation of any of these stakeholders in a cultural tourism project, site or policy can be at different levels, affecting the overall sustainable aspect of the cultural tourism product. Subsidiarity is a fundamental principle of sustainable development. Where the cultural tourism initiative emanates from the grassroots level – the local citizens and community – subsidiarity is the driver in the development of the tourism product, reinforcing the function of cultural heritage as a common good.

Sustainable cultural tourism places heritage and its communities at the very centre of decision-making. Participatory governance is about strengthening the relationship between cultural heritage institutions and professionals and other stakeholders, and involves a movement away from ‘governing’ towards ‘involving stakeholders in a range of activities that are usually reserved for experts, officials and politicians’.<sup>47</sup>

The Faro Convention defines heritage communities as ‘people who value specific aspects of cultural heritage which they wish, within the framework of public action, to sustain and transmit to future generations’.<sup>48</sup> The Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention<sup>49</sup> emphasises that the participation of communities, groups and individuals in intangible cultural heritage management is ‘to ensure the widest possible participation of communities, groups and, where appropriate, individuals that create, maintain and transmit such heritage, and to involve them actively in its management’.<sup>50</sup>

Local communities play a significant role in cultural heritage and in sustainable cultural tourism. Tourism creates impacts and generates economic revenues to local society that go beyond the cultural tourism sector, with indirect employment and new businesses created to support the tourism industry. At the same time, local infrastructure, such as waste management, roads, transport and water infrastructure that keeps pace with

**46**

European Commission, EU Sustainable Tourism Guidelines, 2009, p. 9

**47**

Executive Summary, Participatory Governance of Cultural Heritage: Report of the OMC (Open Method of Coordination Working Group of Member States’ Experts, 2018. <https://publications.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/1efe98ad-437b-11e8-a9f4-01aa75ed71a1/language-en/format-PDF/source-search>

**48**

Article 2, Faro Convention, 2005.

**49**

UNESCO, The Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage, 2003.

**50**

Article 15, The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

a growing tourism industry, is a prerequisite to a sustainable management approach. To develop sustainable cultural tourism, local and regional planners therefore need to factor in the impact of climate change and the surrounding natural environment when developing destinations. It also means that other players such as local communities, politicians, environmental organisations, cultural institutions and authorities need to be integrated into the process.

Cultural entrepreneurs produce and provide cultural products, services and experiences. They can be private, public or part of the non-government organisation (NGO) sector. At the time of this report, there is insufficient data on the number and types of cultural entrepreneurs directly working with cultural tourism. However, many of the tourism offers that travel agents and tour operators provide are based on culture.

Culturally sustainable entrepreneurship encourages the adaptation of entrepreneurial models that sustain and enhance the values and traditions of a community for its self-defined benefits, rather than imposing economic entrepreneurial models that may change conditions within a community.<sup>51</sup>

Many heritage sites, cultural places and events are owned or managed by public authorities, enabling long-term funding. They take an active part in cooperating with the tourism industry and in developing tourism products and offers that focus on building a sustainable cultural tourism, where revenue from tourism is sometimes re-invested into the sites and activities. Cooperation of this kind needs to be further developed.<sup>52</sup>

Cultural heritage and other cultural activities managed and/or owned by private operators or non-profit organisations sometimes struggle with limited finances, insufficient knowledge of management, and/or lack of contact with the tourism industry. Additionally, they may have little or no involvement in the local communities when developing a plan. This situation is a contributory factor that prevents the development of sustainable cultural tourism based on small local sites and activities.

**51**

Swanson, K.K., A theoretical framework for sustaining culture: Culturally sustainable entrepreneurship, *Annals of Tourism Research Volume*, 2017:62.

**52**

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/1829/sustainable-tourism-tax/>

**53**

Relevant case study: The Tin Church, Laragh, County Monaghan, Ireland.

**54**

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/christa/>

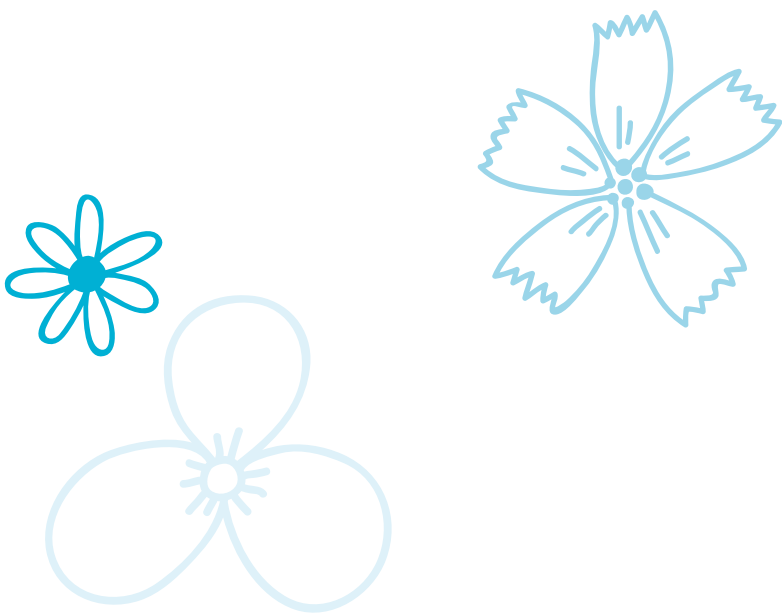
At a local level, these small operators can play an important part in developing new visitor destinations and attractive tourism products if they receive the appropriate support and incentive. Being part of a sustainable cultural tourism context where the economic and social value of culture is highlighted in local and tourism planning strengthens the opportunity to develop a management where revenue from tourism can be reinvested into heritage sites and local culture.<sup>53</sup>

Some excellent examples of how public initiative can enable small cultural actors to be part of a greater tourism context are found in the Interreg project CHRISTA.<sup>54</sup>



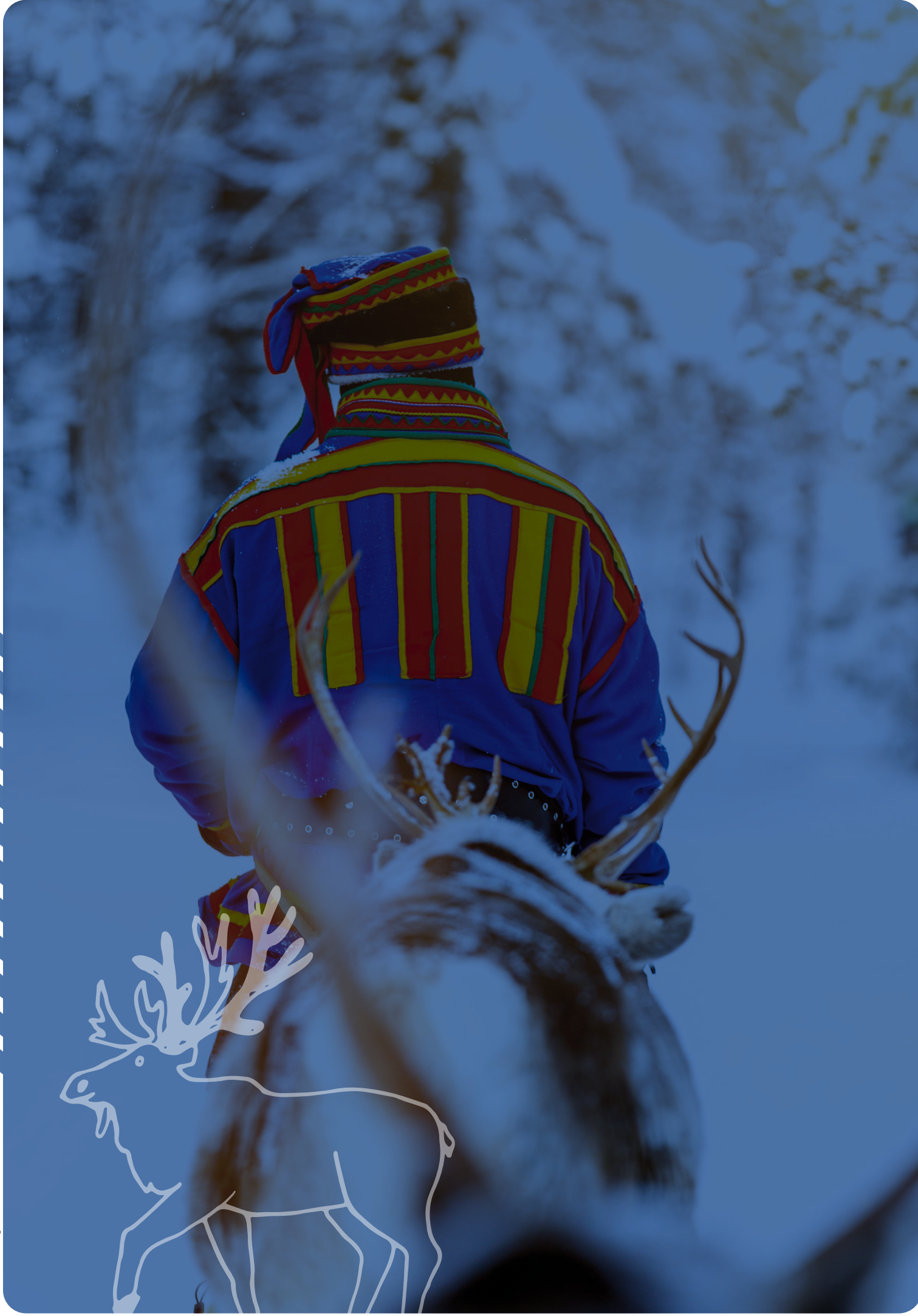
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THE POLITICAL  
FRAMEWORK  
AND NATIONAL  
APPROACH  
TO CULTURAL  
TOURISM



# 3

## THE POLITICAL FRAMEWORK AND NATIONAL APPROACH TO CULTURAL TOURISM

### 3.1 Introduction

Economic activities related to tourism centre very much on employment. Tourism employs just over 13 million people in the European Union (Eurostat figure for 2017<sup>55</sup>), nearly 8 million in the food and beverage industry and 2 million in transport. The three industries that rely almost entirely on tourism (accommodation, travel agencies/tour operators and aviation) employ 3.6 million people in the EU.

There is a common European understanding of the importance of sustainable cultural tourism as an approach, and until now there has been no generally accepted definition. Cultural tourism, sustainable tourism or sustainable cultural tourism have been recognised as specific sub-themes in tourism and cultural policy in many countries. There is variation between the Member States on how much emphasis is placed on the specific theme of sustainable cultural tourism; some countries have identified cultural tourism themes in their tourism strategies and policies, such as Ireland<sup>56</sup> and Malta.<sup>57</sup>

55

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/EDN-20190306-1>

56

Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport, Ireland, *People, Place and Policy: Growing Tourism to 2025*.

<https://assets.gov.ie/19625/0740208ab-1524fa3962da51e46bd43af.pdf>

57

Department of Tourism, Malta, *National Tourism Policy, 2015-2020*.

<https://tourism.gov.mt/en/Documents/FINALBOOKLETexport9.pdf>

58

Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (consolidated version).

[https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cel-lar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd-71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC\\_2&format=PDF](https://eur-lex.europa.eu/resource.html?uri=cel-lar:2bf140bf-a3f8-4ab2-b506-fd-71826e6da6.0023.02/DOC_2&format=PDF)

59

New political framework for tourism in Europe COM(2010) 352 final, 30 June 2010.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52010DC0352&from=EN>

60

European Commission, *Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe*, 2014.

[https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/assets/eac/culture/library/publications/2014-heritage-communication_en.pdf)

61

European Committee of the Regions, Opinion: *Tourism as a driving force for regional cooperation across the EU*, 2015.

<https://cor.europa.eu/Documents/Migrated/Events/Tourism%20as%20a%20driving%20force%20for%20regional%20cooperation%20across%20the%20EU.pdf>

### 3.2 The political framework

In line with Article 195 of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union (TFEU), tourism is the responsibility of individual Member States, and the EU has the competence to carry out actions to support, coordinate or supplement the actions of the Member States, and thus also of regional and local authorities.<sup>58</sup>

Sustainability and tourism have been a concern at EU level for some time. In 2010, a Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (*Europe, the world's No 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe*<sup>59</sup>) was developed. This Political Framework for Tourism in Europe notes:

*The sector's competitiveness is closely linked to its sustainability, as the quality of tourist destinations is strongly influenced by their natural and cultural environment and their integration into a local community.*

In 2014, a further Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions (*Towards an integrated approach to cultural heritage for Europe*<sup>60</sup>) promotes the development of sustainable, responsible and high-quality tourism, including products linked with cultural and industrial heritage.

In 2016, the European Committee of the Regions published an Opinion (*Tourism as a driving force for regional cooperation across the EU*<sup>61</sup>). In addition to other important aspects of the tourism sector, it recommends special attention to supporting cultural, natural, historical

and religious tourism that contributes to employment, multicultural understanding, and local, regional and rural development. In an Opinion published in 2018, *The contribution of Europe's rural areas to the 2018 Year of Cultural Heritage ensuring sustainability and urban/rural cohesion*<sup>62</sup> the focus is on what measures are necessary to ensure sustainability of landscapes, habitats, species and human imprints. It looks at how to ensure that initiatives will add creativity to heritage and improve cooperation between the rural and the urban, not least through promoting rural cultural tourism.

In 2017, the European Commission published *Linking Natura 2000 and cultural heritage case studies*, which presents a series of practical examples of integrated management that recognise the strong interlinkages between cultural and natural heritage.<sup>63</sup>

The Council of the European Union, in *Conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe*,<sup>64</sup> issued a call to Member States and the Commission to, *inter alia*:

- mobilise available resources for supporting, enhancing and promoting cultural heritage via an integrated, holistic approach;
- contribute to the mainstreaming of cultural heritage in national and European policies; and
- identify and build on the synergies created between the EU and national public policies beyond cultural policy, such as regional development, cohesion, agriculture, maritime affairs, environment, energy and climate change, tourism, education, research and innovation, with a view to creating added value.

The Council of Europe suggested the adoption of the following principles by all actors within the tourism industry:

- 1. Take a holistic and integrated approach** to tourism, heritage management and spatial planning. All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.
- 2. Plan for the long term.** Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long-term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.
- 3. Achieve an appropriate pace and rhythm of development.** The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.
- 4. Involve all stakeholders.** A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision-making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.
- 5. Use best available knowledge.** Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.
- 6. Minimise and manage risk** (the precautionary principle). Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be a full evaluation; preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

**62**

European Economic and Social Committee, *Contribution of Europe's Rural Areas to the 2018 Year of Cultural Heritage*, 2018. <https://www.eesc.europa.eu/en/our-work/opinions-information-reports/opinions/contribution-europes-rural-areas-2018-year-cultural-heritage>

**63**

European Commission, *Linking Natura 2000 and cultural heritage: case studies*, 2017. [https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/pdf/case\\_study\\_natura2000\\_cultural\\_heritage.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/environment/nature/natura2000/management/pdf/case_study_natura2000_cultural_heritage.pdf)

**64**

Council of the European Union, *Conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe*, 20 May 2014. [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms\\_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142705.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/uedocs/cms_data/docs/pressdata/en/educ/142705.pdf)



7. **Reflect impacts in costs and benefits** (user and polluter pays, circular economy). Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them. Sustainability should also translate into sustainable benefits and even growth.
8. **Set and respect limits**, where appropriate. The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.
9. **Undertake continuous monitoring**. Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.<sup>65</sup>

Europe has a wealth of cultural heritage, attested to by the many properties located there that have been inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List and its presence on the UNESCO List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The Council of the European Union recognises the role of cultural heritage in achieving the Europe 2020 strategy goals for a ‘smart, sustainable and inclusive growth’.<sup>66</sup> The United Nations 70th General Assembly designated 2017 as the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. The scope was to raise awareness of the need for the tourism industry to move towards a sustainable model, and to highlight the contribution of sustainable tourism among public and private sector decision-makers and the public. The International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development promoted the role of tourism in five key areas, one of which related to cultural values, diversity and heritage.<sup>67</sup>

In line with the changes in customer expectations, creating sustainable and quality cultural tourism offers is, in many cases, a more sustainable way to grow tourism revenue. To offer integrated high-quality experiences, the actors in the tourism and culture sector need to collaborate in an innovative manner and on a long-term basis, involving local residents with an appreciation for cultural background, and regional and local resources.

<sup>65</sup> Council of Europe, *European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*, 2018. <https://rm.coe.int/european-heritage-strategy-for-the-21st-century-strategy-21-full-text/16808ae270>

<sup>66</sup> *Conclusions on cultural heritage as a strategic resource for a sustainable Europe*.

<sup>67</sup> <http://www.tourism4development2017.org/>



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### 3.3 National approaches to sustainable cultural tourism

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Supportive initiatives to underpin sustainable cultural tourism programmes exist to help with practical implementation at national and regional levels, such as:

- visitor statistics for particular cultural sites or cities;
- analysing factors that are more attractive for cultural tourism;
- promotions and presentations of lesser known sites in order to spread visitors more evenly;
- developing management plans for the preservation, maintenance, restoration and renovation of sites;
- ensuring robust urban and local plans, and public realm designs;
- instigating the development of emergency and evacuation plans;
- providing adequate numbers of permanent staff for the management, research and restoration of heritage/cultural assets.

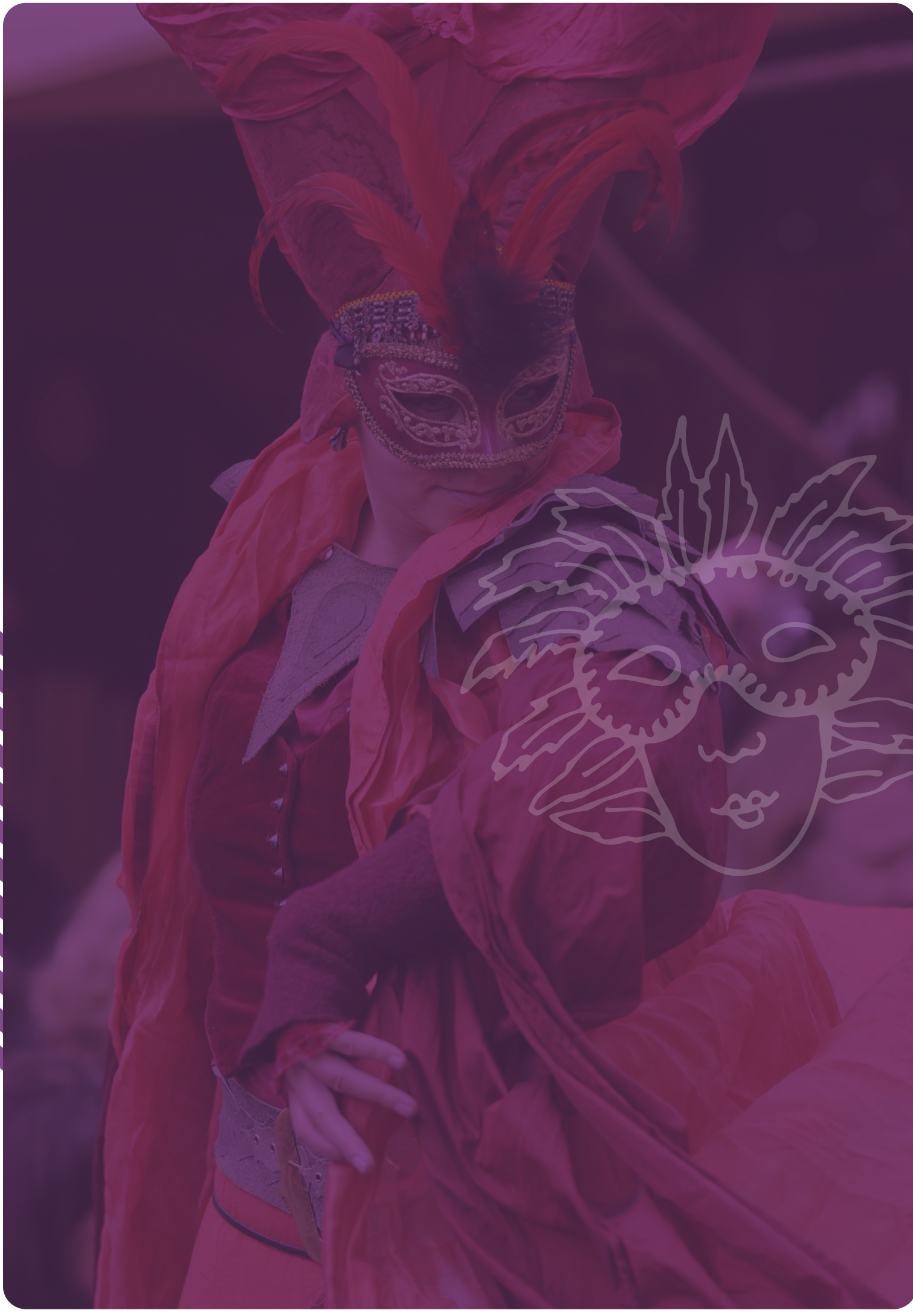
The practical implementation of sustainable cultural tourism policies varies due to differing administrative models, heritage assets, and whether the country has developed specific national or regional strategies for cultural tourism and/or sustainable cultural tourism.



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**CHALLENGES AND  
OPPORTUNITIES  
FOR SUSTAINABLE  
CULTURAL TOURISM**



# 4

## CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM

### 4.1 Introduction

The term 'sustainable cultural tourism' can be interpreted differently, depending on whether it is being led by tourism or by cultural heritage actors.

Traditional historic places are undergoing a redefinition and reinterpretation of their cultural heritage in order to be competitive and attractive amongst a greater number of destinations competing for unique tourist experiences. However, conservation and cultural values can be compromised by the use of heritage as a tourist product, leading to a land-use bias in urban areas caused by a focus on certain buildings or quarters, and to a degradation of culture as locals come to form part of a spectacle viewed by tourists.<sup>68</sup> Finding a balance between consumption of extrinsic cultural heritage values by tourists and the conservation of the intrinsic values by heritage managers is one of the main challenges to be overcome.

### 4.2 Challenges

Phenomena identified as challenges for sustainable cultural tourism are listed below.

- **Carrying capacity** is a concept associated with sustainable thresholds and can refer to the number of individuals an area can support within natural and cultural resource limits, without degrading the natural, social, cultural and economic environment for present and future generations.<sup>69</sup> Over-crowding has become a major topic of concern in many successful tourism destinations. The five challenges associated with over-crowding have recently been identified as alienating local residents, degrading tourist experiences, overloading infrastructure, damage to nature, and threats to culture and heritage.<sup>70</sup> Poor impact management and lack of integrated management on all levels contribute to the negative effects of tourism on cultural heritage.
- **Hit-and-run tourism** is a phenomenon whereby tourists visit a cultural site for a few hours and then continue their tour to other destinations. The negative impacts on heritage sites relate to dealing with increased waste generation, water consumption, damage to the cultural fabric and traffic congestion. These sometimes outweigh any positives for either the local community or the heritage site, as the income to the local area is almost absent and the community has no control on the tourism activity.<sup>71</sup> This creates an uneven distribution of tourism costs and benefits in communities.
- **Contrasting perceptions of cultural asset value by tourists and the local community**<sup>72</sup> often occurs at a local level. While tourists and tourism agencies tend to prioritise the extrinsic appeal of cultural heritage as a product to be consumed (economic value), the local community perceives its cultural asset to be intrinsically significant as an embodied heritage of their past in its cultural, symbolic and social value and as an expression of identity. This can create undervaluation and exploitation of cultural heritage by tourism and an associated loss of place character and identity.

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Nasser, Noah, 'Planning for Urban Heritage Places: Reconciling Conservation, Tourism and Sustainable Development', *Journal of Planning Literature*, 2003, Vol. 17, No 4, May, 2003, pp. 467-479, at pp. 472-474.

69

CHERPLAN, n.d., *Enhancement of Cultural Heritage Through Environmental Planning & Management – Sustainable tourism as driving force for cultural heritage sites development in south-east Europe published under the CHERPLAN project.*

70

World Travel and Tourism Council and McKinsey & Co., *Destination Stewardship: Managing overcrowding in tourism destinations*, 2017. <https://www.wttc.org/priorities/sustainable-growth/destination-stewardship/>

71

Ruoss, D. and Alfarè, L. (eds), *Sustainable tourism as driving force for cultural heritage sites development. Planning, Managing and Monitoring Cultural Heritage Sites in South East Europe*, (CHERPLAN, 2013).

72

McKercher, B., Ho, P.S.Y. and du Cros, H., 'Attributions of popular cultural tourism attractions,' *Annals of Tourism Research* (31:2), 2004, pp. 393-407.

- **Conservation vs. commodification**<sup>73</sup> occurs due to the increased competition among heritage sites. In many cases, cultural heritage managers prioritise the transformation of culture into goods and services to fit tourism destination images and promotion over the authentic conservation, representation and interpretation of the site. This can cause the degradation of local culture, the sanitisation of history and the ‘museumisation’ of the community.<sup>74</sup> The profits of commodification do not always translate to a circular economy for the people and place, resulting in a loss of sustainable financing for investment and value creation.
- **The opening up of new tourism markets and cultural commodification** is leading to an **unprecedented growth in heritage reconstruction** ranging from the complete **rebuilding** of urban quarters to more small-scale interventions of embellishment in order to increase the ‘heritage’ value of a place.<sup>75</sup>
- **The risk of ‘cultural appropriation’** within the field of intangible cultural heritage is linked to the increasing commodification of heritage for tourism development. Cultural appropriation is defined as ‘the taking from a culture that is not one’s own of intellectual property, cultural expressions or artefacts, history and ways of knowledge’. Communities are the owners of the intangible heritage. Mass tourism is putting this at risk, causing pressures that change the way in which communities express their traditions and knowledge. The intangible heritage of ideas, meanings, identity, oral and unwritten expression and the symbolism attached to these, cannot be easily protected.<sup>76</sup>

When not appropriately managed, therefore, the rapport between cultural heritage and tourism activities involves several risks for cultural heritage.<sup>77</sup>

The assessment of the tourism potential of cultural places is limited, in many cases, to a large database of ‘must see’ tourist sites at the expense of smaller emerging cultural destinations. In addition, the image and promotion of cultural places is treated as the most important aspect of development, while the assessment of their robustness (the capacity to resist and absorb negative impacts from tourism) is considered a secondary issue to be solved afterwards.<sup>78</sup>



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**73**

du Cros, Hilary, ‘A New Model to Assist in Planning for Sustainable Cultural Heritage Tourism’, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 3:2, 2001, pp. 165-170, at p. 168.

**74**

Loulanski, T. and Loulanski, V., ‘The sustainable integration of cultural heritage and tourism: a meta-study’, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 19:7, 2011, pp. 837-862.

**75**

Orbasli, A., ‘Nara+20, a Theory and Practice Perspective’, *Heritage and Society*, 2015, 8:2, pp.178-188.

**76**

George, E.W., ‘Intangible cultural heritage, ownership, copyrights, and tourism’, *International Journal of Culture, Tourism and Hospitality Research*, 2010: 4, pp. 376-388, at pp. 381-387.

**77**

These risks are of concern for all areas of cultural heritage, but especially for the conservation of difficult heritage, which can be highly contested and where interpretation must be based on appropriate expertise. An example of difficult heritage focuses on the case of Nuremberg, a city whose name is linked with Nazism, where the focus is on the city’s architectural heritage, in particular the former Nazi party rally grounds on which the Nuremberg rallies were staged. There has been a focus there on innovative museological, educational and artistic practice.

**78**

Bucurescu, I., ‘Assessment of tourism potential in historic towns. Romanian case studies’, in Banu Çelebioğlu et al. (eds), *Proceedings of the international symposium on cultural heritage protection in times of risk. Challenges and opportunities*, Istanbul, 2012, pp. 87-97, at p. 87.

## Decision making for sustainable cultural tourism

Cultural heritage management involves the actions taken to identify, assess, decide and enact decisions regarding cultural heritage, with the aim of actively protecting culturally significant places, objects and practices in relation to the threats they face from a wide range of cultural or natural causes.<sup>79</sup> Decisions about the suitable use of cultural heritage sites for different kinds of development, including tourism, should be an integral part of cultural heritage management planning.

In this context, seven styles of relationship between heritage managers and tourism managers have been identified.<sup>80</sup> They range from immature to mature, and are classed as follows:

- Denial
- Unrealistic expectation
- Parallel existence
- Conflict
- Imposed co-management
- Partnership
- Cross-purposes.

Additionally, these relationship types include five mitigating variables:

- The independent nature of tourism and cultural heritage management;
- Government policy and legislation;
- Diversity of stakeholders with different levels of knowledge;
- Diversity of heritage assets;
- Different types of heritage consumption.<sup>81</sup>

For sustainable cultural tourism, the partnership approach is essential to the governance of the cultural heritage and tourism relationship.



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Ruoss and Alfarè, eds., 2013, p. 18.

80

McKercher, B., Ho, P.S.Y., du Cros, H., 'Relationship between tourism and cultural heritage management: Evidence from Hong Kong', *Tourism Management*, 2006:26, pp. 539-548, at pp. 542-546.

81

Ibid., pp. 542-543.

## 4.3 Opportunities

*'Heritage should be re-established as the primary side in the relationship, fully recognising its capacity not just as a valuable tourism resource but as an important and largely irreplaceable form of capital (cultural, social, environmental and economic) to be wisely used, preserved, sustained and enhanced instead of being irretrievably consumed by tourism.'*<sup>82</sup>

For tangible heritage, authentic conservation, preservation and/or restoration must be an integrated part of the master plan when developing a cultural tourist destination. This means an increased exchange of knowledge, cooperation and finance between the cultural heritage sector and the tourism sector, as well as increased awareness of the cultural value to tourism among local citizens and visitors. *The European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage* offers guidance on quality principles for all stakeholders directly or indirectly engaged in EU-funded heritage conservation and management (i.e. European institutions, managing authorities, international organisations, civil society and local communities, the private sector and experts).<sup>83</sup>

At many sites, there is a need to develop a plan or process so that economic returns from tourism help fund the management of the cultural heritage upon which the tourism sector depends as part of its destination identity. With such tourism revenue, the site can be guaranteed long term and the conservation of the site with all its cultural heritage values can be secured. This may contribute to the sustainability of the environment, including the conservation of its cultural heritage.<sup>84</sup>

Innovation and continuous development are essential in addressing the potential, growth and challenges of sustainable cultural tourism. Connecting all the actors – public authorities, hospitality industries with small part-time operators, non-profit sectors and NGOs with different experiences, skills, knowledge and roles – creates a solid ground for economic, environmental and socio-cultural development.

**82**

Loulanski, T. and Loulanski, V., 'The sustainable integration of cultural heritage and tourism: a meta-study, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 2011, 19:7, p. 855.

**83**

ICOMOS, *The European Quality Principles for EU-funded Interventions with Potential Impact upon Cultural Heritage*, Charenton-le-Pont, 2013, 2019. [https://issuu.com/aegpc/docs/european\\_quality\\_principles\\_2019\\_en](https://issuu.com/aegpc/docs/european_quality_principles_2019_en)

**84**

<https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/1829/sustainable-tourism-tax/>

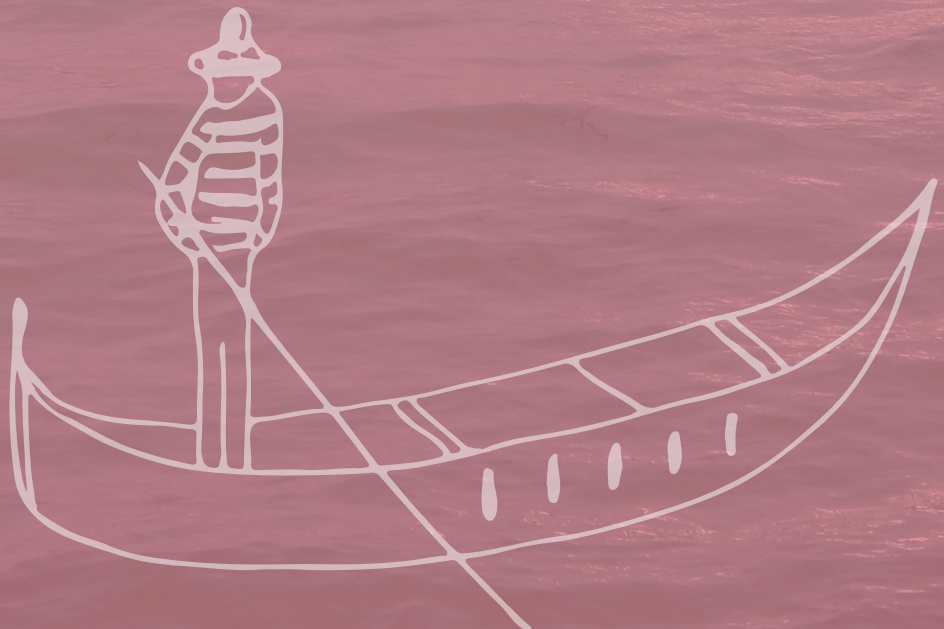


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A FRAMEWORK  
FOR SUSTAINABLE  
CULTURAL  
TOURISM



# 5

## A FRAMEWORK FOR SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM

### 5.1 Introduction

This report proposes a new definition of sustainable cultural tourism:

**Sustainable cultural tourism is the integrated management of cultural heritage and tourism activities in conjunction with the local community and other stakeholders creating social, environmental and economic benefits for all in order to achieve tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development.**

There is a need for a sustainable approach that balances the desire to boost economic growth and tourism on the one hand, with the need to work within environmental limits, enhance the environment, and achieve sustainable development and ‘the museums, the preservation of artefacts, historical sites and local traditions’ on the other.<sup>85</sup>

Risks can be better managed through a partnership of local communities, heritage communities, heritage site managers, statutory authorities, tourism operators and, ultimately, the tourists themselves. Therefore, effective policy planning is essential for sustainable development of tourism at cultural sites with a proper assessment and management of risks<sup>86</sup>, their impact on cultural heritage and opportunities for sustainable, mutual growth. In addition, cultural heritage and sustainability are perceived as entwined concepts, which have both a backward- and forward-looking perspective, seeing human activity as the sum of the legacy of the past and the potential of the future.

The harnessing of the power of culture through tourism can help to foster the cultural capability of Europeans by providing opportunities to participate in a wide range of experiences, places and cultural activities. This will help to protect and promote Europe’s cultural heritage as a shared resource, raising awareness of a sense of common European identity, history and values – a key objective of the social dimension of the New European Agenda for Culture.<sup>87</sup>

### 5.2 Purpose of sustainable cultural tourism

Sustainable cultural tourism involves local communities in the heritage and economic activities. Where tourism is closely connected to cultural heritage, reciprocal financial arrangements between tourism and the use and preservation of local cultural values could be developed to strengthen resources.

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UNWTO, *Tourism and Culture Synergies*, Madrid, 2018.

86

Hassan, A. and Rahman, M., ‘World Heritage site as a label in branding a place,’ *Journal of Cultural Heritage Management and Sustainable Development*, 2015, 5:3, pp. 210-223, at p. 213-214.

87

*A New European Agenda for Culture*.

Sustainable cultural tourism can ensure the long-term development of the tourist industry on the basis of less impact on the environment, together with respect for the heritage of locals and authenticity of the visitor experience. In the context of sustainable cultural tourism, deleterious effects of over-tourism on heritage resources are managed and mitigated, promoting the conservation of the culture that is at the heart of a region’s attractiveness to visitors.

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## 5.3 Policy framework

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The Council of Europe's *European Cultural Heritage Strategy for the 21st century* provides a useful overarching framework for the development of sustainable cultural tourism.<sup>88</sup> The overall consistency and specific nature of this strategy derives from the balance between the various components and their areas of convergence. Using this as a framework for sustainable cultural tourism, therefore, means that a holistic and inter-disciplinary view can be taken of the concept and how it can be developed to meet all its objectives.

Also of relevance are the Political Guidelines for the next Commission<sup>89</sup>, which will focus on six broad priorities over the next 5 years (2019-2024):

- A European Green Deal;
- An economy that works for people;
- A Europe fit for the digital age;
- Protecting our European way of life;
- A stronger Europe in the world;
- A new push for European democracy.

While cultural heritage is not specially mentioned in the five priorities, it is inherent to each, in addition to the guidelines recognising that the diversity of landscape, culture and heritage is one of Europe's most defining and remarkable features.

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## 5.4 Special Eurobarometer on cultural heritage

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Conducted in 2017, this was the first EU-wide survey on the topic. It investigated people's personal involvement with cultural heritage, and the importance and values they attach to Europe's cultural heritage. It also looks into the perceptions of the impact of cultural heritage on tourism, jobs and responsibilities when it comes to protecting heritage in Europe. The main results, which have implications for policy formation in the area, are outlined below.

### Knowledge and perceived importance of cultural heritage

- More than half of the respondents (52%) are involved in cultural heritage.
- Great importance is placed on cultural heritage (85%) for all levels analysed (community, region, country and the EU as a whole).
- 80% think cultural heritage is important for the EU.
- 68% would like to know more about Europe's cultural heritage.

### Values attached to Europe's cultural heritage

- 82% take pride in it, and agree it can improve quality of life and a sense of belonging to Europe.
- 70% agree that they either feel pride in cultural heritage from a European country other than their own, or that living close to places related to Europe's cultural heritage can give people a sense of belonging to Europe.

### Participation and barriers to access

- 61% of respondents have visited a historical monument or site.
- 52% have attended a traditional event and 50% have visited a museum or gallery.
- 43% have seen a traditional or classical performing arts event.

**88**

Council of Europe, *European Cultural Strategy for the 21st Century: facing challenges by following recommendations*, (2018). <https://rm.coe.int/european-heritage-strategy-for-the-21st-century-strategy-21-full-text/16808ae270>

**89**

von der Leyen, Ursula, *Political Guidelines for the next European Commission*, 2019. [https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guidelines-next-commission\\_en.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/commission/sites/beta-political/files/political-guidelines-next-commission_en.pdf)

- 30% have visited a traditional craft workplace or visited a library or archive.
- 26% have been to the cinema or a film heritage festival to see a classic European film produced at least 10 years ago.

A shortage of time is the most common barrier to access cultural heritage sites or activities (37%), followed by cost (34%), lack of interest (31%) or lack of information (25%).

### Digital engagement

- More than 55% have used the internet in the last 12 months to look up information on cultural heritage.
- 31% have used the internet in preparation for a visit or holiday (accessibility, facilities and main features of a museum, historical monument or traditional event).
- More than two-thirds (68%) agree that the presence of cultural heritage can have an influence on their holiday destination, and the majority of respondents in each EU Member State agree.

### Impact

- 79% agree that Europe's cultural heritage or cultural heritage-related activities create jobs in the EU.
- 56% disagree that Europe's cultural heritage is more for visitors from outside the EU than for EU citizens, (but almost 38% respondents agree).

### Protection

- 88% agree Europe's cultural heritage should be taught in schools, as it tells us about our history and culture.
- 74% agree public authorities should allocate more resources to Europe's cultural heritage.

Actors that should do the most are national authorities (46%), the EU (40%), local and regional authorities (39%) and citizens themselves (34%).<sup>90</sup>

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## 5.5 Implementation

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The Loulanski Factors are principles and considerations which, when combined, can offer an integrated framework for sustainability in heritage and tourism in various environments. These factors were developed from a large metadata study examining sustainable integration, tourism and heritage. These are:

- 1. Shift towards sustainability-centred tourism management and practice.** Considerations of long-term interests and local needs, resource protection, avoidance or risk and irreversibility. Revision of existing policies and practices on site.
- 2. Integrated planning and management.** The focus is on adopting multi-disciplinary, multi-agency knowledge-based approaches, which bring together all stakeholders.
- 3. Local involvement.** Local people should be a primary concern in cultural tourism planning. They must be fully engaged in all stages from planning, decision-making, implementation and control, agreeing which heritage assets should be used for tourism and which ones for community use only. Local and national governments should assist through training and support.

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Special Eurobarometer 466:  
Cultural Heritage, 2017.

[http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2150\\_88\\_1\\_466\\_ENG](http://data.europa.eu/euodp/en/data/dataset/S2150_88_1_466_ENG)

4. **Site management.** Precautionary principle and preventative maintenance of heritage assets.
5. **Integrated governance and stakeholder participation.** Well-integrated and synchronised governance at all levels is a critical factor for achieving sustainability with multi-stakeholder participation structures.
6. **Destination management.** Based on principles such as place and host-centrism, bioregionalism, priority of environment, balance of heritage and tourism uses through the application of innovative management and planning tools.
7. **Education and training for all heritage and tourism stakeholders.** Raising awareness of heritage, tourism and sustainability to enable a positive relationship, and avoid risks and irreversible damage.
8. **Balance of authenticity and interpretation.** This should be place-centred, conservation focused and pluralistic to reveal the most truthful character of the place. Interpretation should be dynamic and iterative.
9. **Incorporation of heritage and tourism in the sustainable development framework and policy.** Ecological approaches should be adopted and priorities placed on resources and their sustainable use: local quality of life and localisation of benefits, together with rigorous environmental, social and cultural impact monitoring.
10. **Controlled/balanced growth of tourism development.** Based on community values, this needs to fit in with the local area and have a 'locals-first' policy, based on intrinsic tourism development. Use growth management tools, including site management, demand management and visitor management.
11. **Market and product diversification.** Market selection and product development should be preceded by careful heritage asset assessment in terms of tourist potential and value-based appropriateness for product transformation, followed by sensitive and creative adaption of the heritage asset for the tourist needs.
12. **Sufficient and diversified funding.** Funding from tourism revenues and 'user pays' should be reallocated towards heritage conservation. More innovative funding models are essential.
13. **International governance and support.** This is essential for achieving global political commitment to sustainable development and overcoming the marginalisation of socio-cultural sustainability indicators at a global level.
14. **'Heritage capital' approach.** This is crucial for restoring the balance in the heritage-tourism relationship, but necessitates the adequate valuation and valorisation of heritage assets by employing efficient integrative concepts and tools. It prioritises the value-generating capacity of the heritage resources, maintaining the critical cultural capital stock in all its diversity.
15. **Theoretical and methodological knowledge base.** This requires interdisciplinary approaches and stronger conceptual embeddedness.



**THE WAY FORWARD**





# 6

## THE WAY FORWARD

In an increasingly dynamic technological and digital environment, this chapter underlines the need to develop strategic approaches, as well as to use regulatory and innovative business approaches.

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### 6.1 Digitalisation

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Digitalisation relates to economic, social, cultural and organisational transformations, which are the result of digital technologies. In the scope of this report, we use the term ‘digitalisation’ in the broad sense, but in this chapter the focus is on the following specific aspects:

- sustainable access (including preservation);
- documentation and storytelling;
- communication and marketing;
- business intelligence (indicators);
- innovation.

These are not aims in themselves but provide ways in which digital technology can support sustainable cultural tourism.

#### 6.1.1 Sustainable access

Digital technology is an important tool for accessing cultural heritage. Digital accessibility of cultural heritage can address sustainability issues at cultural sites, such as overcoming physical access barriers, addressing over-crowding, visitor management and other carrying capacity issues.

Some heritage sites already prohibit full physical access to visitors. Instead, they have chosen to share information relating to the site through online means.<sup>91</sup>

The digital curation of content means that the best and most interesting artefacts of cultures are collected, organised and preserved. Digital platforms such as Europeana<sup>92</sup> provide access to a variety of digital heritage material, whether it is news, objects, visual arts, 3D panoramic displays or historical interviews. In this way, it brings together the two components – tangible and intangible – on a digital platform.

In order to be able to provide access to digital objects, a sustainable approach for digital preservation needs to be in place. This approach should include the entirety of activities so as to ensure the technical and intellectual preservation of digital information objects.

**91**

Lascaux Caves, France.  
<http://archeologie.culture.fr/lascaux/en>

**92**

<https://www.europeana.eu/portal/en>

## 6.1.2 Documentation and storytelling

Cultural objects and sites convey significant messages. When an object is moved from its place of origin and its context, documentation is essential to ensure there is an accurate record associated with it. Documentation and research are also essential for the authentic interpretation of cultural heritage sites and practices. Interpreters of cultural heritage make use of documentation in order to create stories relating to the object, site or practice. Stories are an effective way of engaging the public with their significance.

Storytelling promotes cultural diffusion. Through narrative, storytelling is one way of making cultural heritage more accessible with the aim of creating qualified and differentiated experiences for the visitors to a place.<sup>93</sup>

## 6.1.3 Communication and marketing

Digitalisation is becoming increasingly important to the entire production chain of tourism and culture. The digital services chain starts from the planning of the visit, e-ticketing, to 'on-site' experiences, and sharing memories and feelings with friends and other tourists or the public.

With the full evolution of digitalisation and its use in the cultural context, authentic and quality interpretation and communication is even more important. In addition, the visitor (cultural tourist) wants increased autonomy over where, how and when to connect with the different levels of stories and experiences that are offered. Also, tourists participate in creating new heritage and transmitting the cultural heritage when they share their photos, maps and stories digitally by the way they want to remember the places: as a novelty, a curiosity or associated with their daily lives. There is a need for further research on enhancing audience participation at cultural heritage sites through the development of new platforms that can reach wider audiences, and provide deeper and more personal access to the cultural heritage experience.



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Relevant case study: The Koziolok Matolek European Tale Centre in Pacanów, Poland.

## 6.1.4 Innovation

Cultural heritage is an important source of creativity and innovation. Continuing advances in technology offer many possibilities of new experiences through gaming, virtual reality, augmented reality, mixed reality, 3D digitisation, artificial intelligence, blockchain and digital storytelling.<sup>94</sup>

In a globally competitive market, businesses and destinations need to offer experiences in the form of very high quality products and services. This demands a high level of innovative capacity, ensuring the sustainable development of businesses, products, services and processes without depleting cultural resources and assets.

New interpretative staging of the cultural heritage and historic environments is becoming increasingly important, and leads to growth in the demand for pedagogic activities and new professional roles. When developing new businesses or new tourism products on culture and cultural heritage, the unique selling points, Intellectual Property Rights and brand management are often built on intangible and tangible cultural heritage.

Nevertheless, innovation is not just about new production, presentation and distribution. It includes the development and improvement of business models, operational processes within organisations and new forms of interaction. It is necessary to further explore the role of big data, deep learning, artificial intelligence and manipulative technologies in protecting cultural heritage and allowing access at particularly sensitive cultural heritage sites.

## 6.1.5 Business intelligence

Business intelligence comprises the strategies and technologies used by cultural and tourist organisations for the data analysis of business information. Business intelligence technologies provide historical, current and predictive views of business operations.

Environmental indicators are an essential mechanism to achieve the objective of sustainable development, defined by the OECD as:

*A parameter or a value derived from parameters that points to, provides information about and/or describes the state of the environment, and has a significance extending beyond that directly associated with any given parametric value. The term may encompass indicators of environmental pressures, conditions and responses. The indicator has significance that extends beyond the properties directly associated with the parameter value.*<sup>95</sup>

The identification of relevant data sources and development of appropriate indicators are necessary for a monitoring system for sustainable cultural tourism.

The European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) is a system of indicators suitable for all tourist destinations, encouraging them to adopt a more intelligent approach to tourism planning. It is a management tool that supports destinations that want to take a sustainable approach to destination management. ETIS offers a monitoring system with an easy-to-use method of collecting data and detailed information that allows destinations to monitor their annual performance. In addition, it is a helpful information tool for policy-makers, tourism enterprises and other stakeholders. The ETIS includes 43 core indicators that gather essential information that a destination needs to understand, monitor and manage its performance. They cover the fundamental aspects of sustainability monitoring and provide the basis

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See: <https://www.vi-mm.eu/>

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United Nations, *Glossary of Environment Statistics, Studies in Methods*, Series F, No. 67, (New York, 1997).  
<https://stats.oecd.org/glossary/detail.asp?ID=830>

for effective destination management. Additional information can also be added through the use of supplementary indicators, tailored to the individual destination.<sup>96</sup>

Eurostat is the statistical office of the European Union, whose mission is to provide high quality statistics for Europe. Eurostat responds to the policy demand for more evidence about cultural heritage in Europe by collecting statistics on economic activities and occupations related to cultural heritage.

Among several relevant activities, Eurostat collects data on general government expenditure by economic function according to the international Classification of the Functions of Government (COFOG). This provides information on cultural services, though it is not possible to distinguish expenditure on culture heritage in particular.

Eurostat collaborates with the European Group on Museum Statistics (EGMUS) and with the UNESCO Institute for Statistics, in the framework of the project on Sustainable Development Goal indicator 11.4.1: expenditure on preservation of cultural heritage.<sup>97</sup>

The EU's Joint Research Centre's Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor is a relatively new tool that monitors and assesses the performance of Cultural and Creative Cities in Europe by providing quantitative information from a common evidence base on culture and creativity at city level. It supports the European Commission's efforts to put culture at the heart of its policy agenda. It provides a common evidence base at city level that illuminates the importance of culture and creativity, and their contribution to improving socio-economic perspectives and resilience.<sup>98</sup>

Additionally, the European Travel Commission (ETC) also considers research as critical in the development of marketing strategies and services. As a non-profit organisation responsible for the promotion of Europe as a tourist destination to third markets, it promotes travel to Europe by targeting travellers' passions. Its research activities identify and analyse tourism market trends and produce knowledge on the most relevant and fastest growing outbound markets.<sup>99</sup>

**96**

European Commission, *European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management*, 2016.

[https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators\\_en](https://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators_en)

**97**

<https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat>

**98**

European Commission, *The Cultural and Creative Cities Monitor: 2017 Edition*, 2018. (Second edition due in October 2019).

<https://ec.europa.eu/jrc/en/publication/eur-scientific-and-technical-research-reports/cultural-and-creative-cities-monitor-2017-edition>

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<https://etc-corporate.org/research/>



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## 6.2 Ways to create European tourism offers

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The mandate for this OMC report includes the following objective:

*Identify ways to create a European tourism offer based on tangible and intangible cultural heritage as a competitive factor in order to attract new forms of sustainable tourism.*

'Over-tourism' is a problem at a number of cultural heritage sites. The European Parliament commissioned research to improve the understanding of the wider and more recent development of over-tourism, and to identify and assess the issues associated with it. The research recognised over-tourism as a complex phenomenon and advocated, inter alia, the setting up of a European Over-tourism Task Force of the main stakeholders so as to monitor destinations at risk of, or in a state of, over-tourism and to report annually on trends.<sup>100</sup>

Many lesser-known regions in Europe are keen to attract some of the overflow of tourists at certain cities and destinations. The group discussed sustainable cultural tourism initiatives and examples.

Several strategic initiatives exist to promote sustainable tourism offers across broad regions of Europe, including:

- **Council of Europe Cultural Routes**  
Cultural routes with a variety of themes, including architecture, landscape, religious influences, gastronomy and intangible heritage, certified by the Council of Europe.
- **European Heritage Routes**  
A collaborative project of UNESCO and the European Union to combine well-known and lesser-known World Heritage sites and cultural heritage to promote sustainable development.
- **European Capitals of Culture**  
Developed in 1985, the European Capitals of Culture designation has been awarded to 50 capitals to highlight the richness and diversity of cultures in Europe and to celebrate shared European cultural features.

Additionally, the Group discussed thematic tourism offers, such as those centred on industrial heritage and cultural routes. The promotion of themed tourism offers can encourage longer stays in a region and emphasises high quality visitor experiences. The case studies presented in this report represent best practice in balancing cultural heritage management with tourism. Of particular interest to the group were tourism 'paths', which encourage slow tourism and development of an in-depth knowledge of both the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of an area. Romea Strata (Italy), Routes of the Romanesque (Portugal), and Greek Paths of Culture, are excellent examples of this type of initiative. Below are other types of thematic cultural tourism offers, with one practical example of each:

- Intangible heritage Culturally Responsible: Sámi Tourism, Finland
- Industrial heritage: Prisma Västra Götaland, Sweden
- Eco-museum: Pays des Collines, Belgium
- Restoration of historic objects/buildings for tourism: Feistritzalbahn narrow-gauge railway, Eastern Styria, Austria

100

European Parliament, *Research for TRAN Committee – Over tourism: impact and possible policy responses*, (2018).  
[http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/629184/IPOL\\_STU\(2018\)629184\\_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/RegData/etudes/STUD/2018/629184/IPOL_STU(2018)629184_EN.pdf)

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## 6.3 Conclusions

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The debate around the concept of sustainable cultural tourism will continue. The relationship is a delicate balance between protecting and safeguarding cultural heritage, and benefitting from that unique asset to encourage economic growth and employment. The European Year of Cultural Heritage 2018 provided an unprecedented opportunity to explore this relationship between cultural heritage and cultural tourism, and encouraged discussions around the concept of the sustainability of cultural heritage that contribute to the legacy of 2018.

Collaborative environments are those where communities, the tourism industry and heritage management are developed to foster a long-term sustainable management of both old and new historic environments, practices and landscapes. Such environments underpin activities that help to mitigate tourism's negative effects on the environment and climate change.

The group envisages this report as a step towards protecting Europe's irreplaceable cultural heritage, while at the same time allowing visitors to access, appreciate and enjoy the sites they encounter. The next step is to establish the European Over-Tourism Task Force of the main stakeholders so as to monitor cultural heritage destinations at risk or in a state of over-capacity and to report annually on trends.

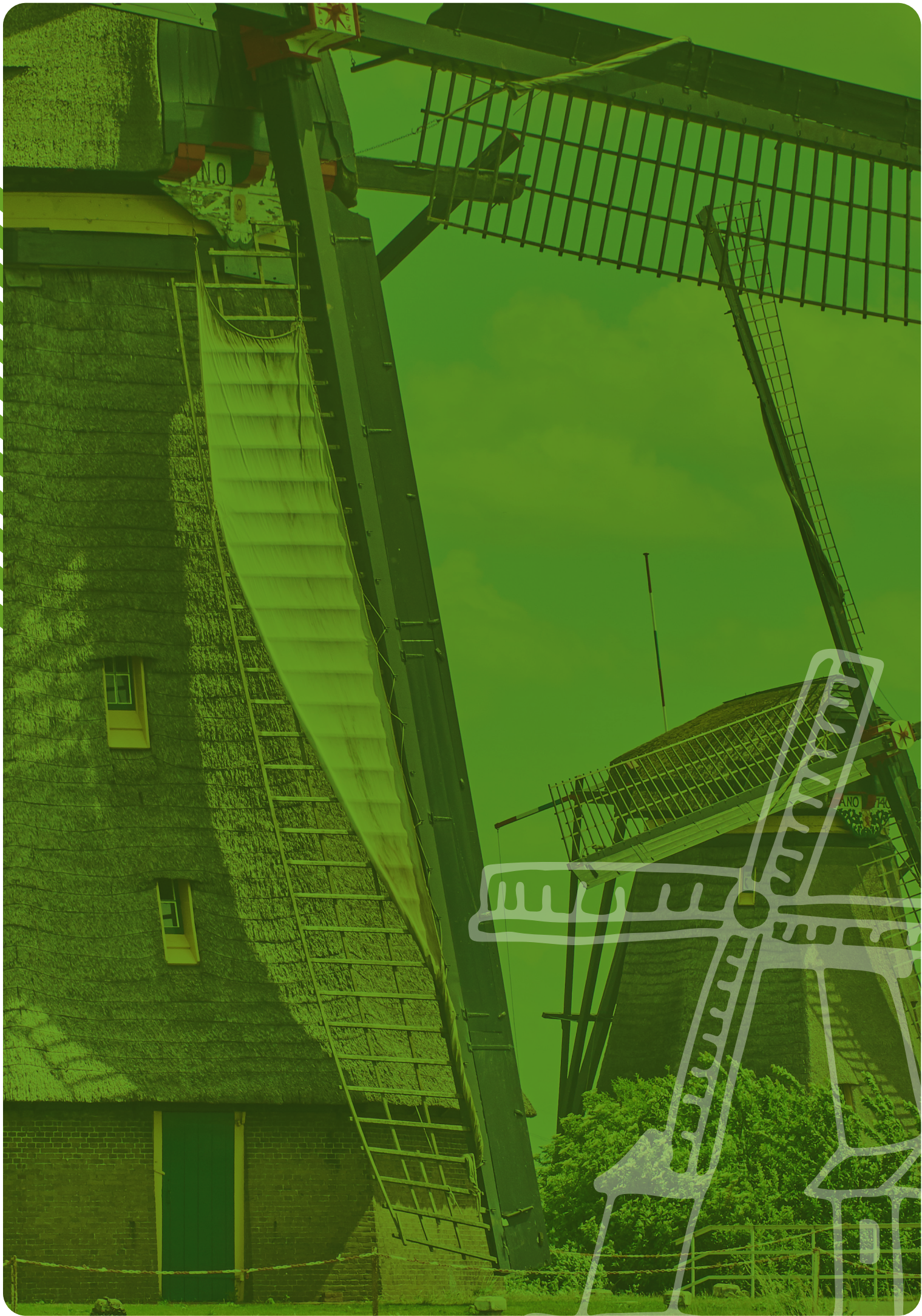
Never before does the slogan for the 'European Year of Cultural Heritage' mean so much in this context.

**OUR HERITAGE:  
WHERE THE PAST  
MEETS THE FUTURE**





# APPENDICES





## APPENDIX I: CASE STUDIES

Austria, Czech Republic, Hungary, Italy, Slovakia, Slovenia

### European Pilgrimage Paths

'Pilgrimaging' means visiting a variety of sites and destinations with a focus on self-reflection and personal enrichment. The project is based on the principle that 'the journey is the reward', which means that the adventure, close contact with nature on the way and cultural heritage are the main goals of the trip. Walking on foot means that participants can closely observe their surroundings.

The paths and trails are organised by religious organisations, local and regional authorities, private associations, tourist offices, regional development offices and stakeholders for cultural and natural heritage, together with the latest networks and (private) entities organised outside the country.

These paths offer access to spiritual, cultural and natural sites. Sustainability is at the heart of this project as it is generally lesser-known sites that feature on the paths. The availability of apps and websites relating to the sites allows for a broad access to this cultural heritage.

Diverse funding mechanisms exist to support these initiatives: private investment, national and regional-level public funds, as well as EU funding within projects, such as Leader, Interreg, and EFRD. In some cases indirect revenues are gained via tourist fees or through sponsorship provided by tourism agencies and hostellers.

The target group is pilgrims, who are usually over the age of 50 and come from a range of social and professional backgrounds. The average trip time is 10 to 30 days.



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## Austria

### CultTrips

CultTrips is a cross-border initiative involving local action groups (LAGs) from Austria, Luxembourg, Italy, Estonia and Finland. The project goal is to conceptualise a new 'slow travel experience' in rural areas, with key values and criteria, using targeted groups and initial offers that have been tested (pilot trips). The LAGs and cooperation stakeholders created touristic offers according to certain criteria (topic: slow travel) that allow guests to experience everyday culture, have direct contact with the locals, delve into the regions' cultural heritage and life, and find hidden treasures.

The main focus of the offers was on everyday culture, allowing guests to experience the way of local/rural living – provided and guided by locals – in the regions visited. The objective of the project was to promote and encourage tourism in the area by both revamping the tourism offers and marketing them to new target audiences.

It was observed that some of the participants (providers) were eager to continue it on a larger scale and that they could participate with a view to expansion. The project had a positive impact on gender equality, as it assisted female participants in the development of new skills and confidence.



### Auf der Flucht (On the run)

'On the run' is a regional project from the Austrian-Swiss border area. Guests participate in an interactive theatre with a 1-day guided mountain hike. Based on reports of contemporary witnesses, historical documents and the literary texts of Franz Werfel, Jura Soyfer, Theodor Kramer and Jean Améry, and using theatrical and dance-like highlights, *'teatro caprile'* traces the escapes from Austria to Switzerland via the Alps during the National Socialist period. This alpine tour passes by relevant sites associated with the theme. On the guided hike from the village of Gargellen upwards towards the Sarotla pass, the audience follows the fate of people who had to experience the horror of war and persecution at first hand. The performances take place at different venues, such as the historic Hotel Madrisa, mountain shelters, barns and in the open air. Actors perform the different scenes and two mountain guides guide the audience from scene to scene.

The project aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of being on the run during wartime by making use of key locations and interactive interpretation.



## Belgium



### Resident attitudes towards tourism: Bruges

For the first time in Flanders, a resident study on tourism was carried out. Since many destinations demonstrate issues with over-tourism, Visit Flanders wanted to implement new monitoring practices to measure the impact of tourism in a destination. A focus on residents' attitudes was necessary since this 'stakeholder' has often been ignored in the past in almost all destinations worldwide. The study, carried out in 2016, looked at one of the aspects of the carrying capacity of the sustainable tourism city: the residents' attitudes towards tourism. The study tests the American model 'Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale (RETS)' for the first time in a European heritage city: Bruges, in Flanders.

The more residents feel empowered (are proud, feel connected, feel they have a voice and that they can participate in policy-making and planning), the less they perceive tourism activities in a negative way. They are more likely to see positive impacts, which encourages support for tourism.



### Oostduinkerke horse fishermen

Shrimp fishing on horseback is a form of traditional craftsmanship closely connected with nature: a good knowledge of the sea and the sand, and a high level of trust in and respect for the horse are essential. These fishermen fish in the sea with horses and nets to catch shrimp just off the coast. The craft has evolved over time and has adapted to the changing social, cultural and ecological contexts. Shrimp fishing is essentially a practical activity, which means that the most important method of passing it on is by practising the craft on the beach. An experienced horseback shrimp fisherman teaches the beginner and demonstrates the techniques to him/her. Since knowledge is often passed on within households, families teach their children at a young age how to handle the horse in the specific conditions that the craft requires.

A whole series of practices, artefacts and instruments are connected to this traditional craftsmanship, which is supported by the households and families of the shrimp fishermen and by extension, the community of Oostduinkerke and Koksijde as a whole. Efforts to preserve these practices and share them with the wider public include workshops for net making/repair. It is a paradigmatic example of a dynamic and sustainable approach to nature and culture, which has been handed down from generation to generation.



© Dirk Van Hove



© Dirk Van Hove



## Croatia

### Shepherds' dwellings in the North Velebit National Park

Several shepherds' dwellings in the mountain valleys of Alan and Veliki Lubenovac have been reconstructed to provide year-round accommodation on the mountain, as well as the revitalisation of the architectural heritage of the National Park. Most of the dwellings on Velebit Mountain were dry stone rectangular buildings and structurally identical to those that can be found throughout the Dinaric cultural region. An important component of the project is enabling visitors to stay in renovated dwellings, become acquainted with the traditional way of life on Velebit Mountain and to understand how this was fully in line with nature and the principles of sustainability.

The National Park supervised the renovation of these historical spaces and has been working to ensure that the way of life these dwellings represent is preserved for all time. Modern visitors can live as the dwellings' original inhabitants did, including cooking over fires and washing dishes in a basin of water drawn from the reservoir.



## Finland

### Culturally Responsible Sámi Tourism

In cooperation with the Sámi community, the Finnish Sámi parliament has produced community guidelines for Culturally Responsible Sámi Tourism. During the project, which was funded by the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Finnish Sámi Parliament, discussions and stakeholder engagement also took place with the national and regional tourism organisations.

In Finland, Sámi tourism may be tourism based on Sáminess, i.e. tourism service providers who come from within the Sámi community. However, there is also tourism that utilises Sáminess, i.e. when tourism stakeholders from outside the culture with no connection to the Sámi community utilise different elements that are connected to Sámi culture. The development of Sámi cultural symbols has been taking place in this way for decades. The commodified Sámi image in tourism that utilises Sáminess rarely has much to do with authentic Sáminess.

The main objective of the Culturally Responsible Sámi Tourism project was to develop ethical guidelines from the Sámi point of view in order to ensure the development of a socially, culturally and ecologically sustainable Sámi tourism product and presentation in Finland.



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## Fortress of Suomenlinna



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The fortress of Suomenlinna is a UNESCO World Heritage site situated in Helsinki, Finland and maintained by the Governing Body of Suomenlinna. The fortress consists of eight islands, and is home to 800 residents and the workplace for 400 to 500 people. The Governing Body of Suomenlinna manages the fortress constructions and buildings and provides information services to tourists.

The Suomenlinna sea fortress dates from 1748 and is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Finland. Suomenlinna's appeal lies in its history, views and maritime environment.

The Suomenlinna Governing Body, in cooperation with Suomenlinna's stakeholders, has produced a strategy for sustainable tourism. The strategy has five focus areas to guide Suomenlinna's development efforts and day-to-day work in the context of the local tourist economy:

1. Managing the impacts of tourism and taking advantage of its benefits;
2. Maintaining a high-quality visitor experience;
3. Emphasising the image of a year-round destination;
4. Developing networked activities;
5. Communicating World Heritage values.



© The photo archives of the Governing Body of Suomenlinna/Dorit Salutskij

The main task for the future of cultural tourism is to develop a visitor experience and to maintain and develop Suomenlinna. This work will be carried out using extensive stakeholder cooperation and monitored by local impact analyses of tourism.

## Collaboration between Finnish World Heritage sites and National Parks

Metsähallitus, Parks & Wildlife Finland and UNESCO World Heritage sites of Finland are collaborating in order to monitor and ensure the sustainability of tourism and recreation in cultural heritage sites and protected areas. Parks & Wildlife Finland has created a viable model of implementing principles for sustainable nature tourism. The same principles have been adapted for use with Finnish World Heritage sites in order to ensure maintenance of the sites' natural and cultural values. Parks & Wildlife Finland and the association of World Heritage sites in Finland have signed a memorandum of understanding, as well as more detailed cooperation agreements to implement these principles.

The principles are intended to guide sustainable tourism operations in all national parks, nature sites and historical sites managed by Parks & Wildlife Finland, as well as all seven UNESCO World Heritage sites in the country. Each principle is followed by more detailed objectives to assist with practical implementation of the principles.



© Metsähallitus/Jukka-Pekka Ronkainen



© Metsähallitus/Marjo Kämärinen

## France

### Cultural Encounters Centres

Centres Culturelles de Recontres (CCR) was established 45 years ago at the initiative of Jacques Duhamel, Minister for Cultural Affairs, and Jacques Rigaud, his Director of Cabinet. Both men were convinced that the use of art and culture in relation to exceptional historical monuments might protect them from the ravages of time. By 1972, six emblematic places had been associated with artistic projects apropos their preservation and value. The cultural facilities associated with these sites have provided a template for cultural facilities and developed into a national label. Today, France has 24 labelled CCRs. Half of the sites are categorised as religious heritage (abbeys, priories, monasteries) and the other half are military, civil or economic (castles, mills, factories). These facilities house permanent and temporary exhibitions, organise symposia and artists' residencies, and coordinate international partnerships.



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## Greece

### Paths of Culture

By selecting a series of walks and with careful signposting and communication, the Paths of Culture project makes abandoned paths accessible and attractive. This promotes hiking tourism, thus stimulating the local economy and offering visitors the opportunity to discover local products and the natural beauty of Greece in a healthy and eco-friendly way. The carefully selected routes are signposted in Greek and English, with information about the distance of trails and estimated walk duration. The Ancient Theatre of Epidauros is a prominent monument on one of the trails. Being excellently preserved and functional, it hosts a significant part of the Athens & Epidauros Annual Festivals' artistic programme.

The paths provide visitors with an opportunity to discover a beautiful landscape and explore Greece's timeless theatrical heritage.



© Elliniki-Etairia-Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage



© Elliniki-Etairia-Society for the Environment and Cultural Heritage

## Iceland

### Thingvellir National Park

Thingvellir is one of the oldest tourist attractions in Iceland, receiving more than 1 million visitors annually. It has been marketed by the tourism industry as an integral part of the Golden Circle in the south of Iceland. At Thingvellir, the Althing general assembly was established around 930 and continued to convene there until 1798, thus making it a significant location for the politico-historical record of Iceland. Major events in the history of Iceland have taken place at Thingvellir and all Icelanders hold the place in high esteem.



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In the last few decades, research has made it clear that Thingvellir is a natural wonder on an international scale, with the geological history and the biosystem of Lake Thingvallavatn forming a unique magnificent entity. Thingvellir became a national park in 1930 and a World Heritage site in 2004, inscribed on the basis of its cultural values. While visitor numbers and carrying capacity have been issues in the past, a revised management plan for Thingvellir aims to address these challenges and sustainably manage visitors to the park.

## Ireland

### The Tin Church

The Tin Church, Laragh, Co Monaghan, is a new cultural and tourism experience developed as a consequence of the community conservation project to restore St Peter's Tin Church. This unique building, rated as nationally important in the National Inventory of Architectural Heritage, was in a derelict state until the people in the village coordinated themselves to save it. Champions within the community promoted the idea of conserving the Tin Church, which resulted in forming a heritage group, the Laragh Heritage Group (LHG).

LHG works within its community at all times, leading and taking leads from community members, and their meetings are open and accessible to all. The local authority and Department of Culture, Heritage and the Gaeltacht, as well as other stakeholders, work with the community through LHG to support their ideas and initiatives. There is a conservation plan for the Tin Church, developed by a conservation architect in conjunction with the local community. This community effort to learn about this cultural asset resulted in a transformative effect on the entire village, bringing new people to Laragh that specialised in heritage, and visitors through the various new events and festivals centred on the building. The community has established a 3 km walk around the village that includes various historical buildings including the Tin Church, food and beverage offerings, and seasonal thematic displays, such as linen production in the summer.



© Shirley Clerklin



## Clonmacnoise Monastic Site

Founded by St Ciarán, Clonmacnoise is an early 6<sup>th</sup> century Christian site on the banks of the River Shannon in Co Offaly. The earliest stone-and-mortar buildings date from around 800 AD but the earliest buildings were made of oak. Clonmacnoise developed into a great seat of learning, attracting students from all over Europe. At its peak, around the 10th and 11th centuries, it is said that over 2000 people lived there. Clonmacnoise is situated in a unique landscape, encompassing eskers, boglands, callows, a river and a small limestone area similar to the Burren. All of these areas are under the care of various government agencies.

The site attracts education groups of all levels, those interested in art, history enthusiasts, and many pilgrimage and contemplative tours. Clonmacnoise is also situated alongside a Special Area of Conservation, which was established to protect, amongst other things, rare birds such as the corncrake. The local community have benefited down the ages through employment at the site, for example as stone masons, guides/information officers, archaeologists, architects and conservationists. The site itself is used now and again for community events (local people are admitted free of charge) and by community groups such as Birdwatch Ireland. The site also provides relevant work experience opportunities for local students attending nearby secondary schools and third-level institutions. Consultation takes place between statutory and non-statutory bodies and the wider community in relation to the future management of this national monument.



© National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht



© National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht





## Brú na Bóinne World Heritage site

Brú na Bóinne is the name given to a complex of ancient monuments lying about 8 km inland from Drogheda on the east coast of Ireland in Co Meath. It is one of the world's most important archaeological landscapes, dominated by the spectacular 5 000-year-old prehistoric passage tombs of Newgrange, Knowth and Dowth. In recognition of the international importance of these monuments, and the many other archaeological features in the area, UNESCO has designated the Brú na Bóinne area a World Heritage site.

Sustainability pervades all aspects of management from recycling and encouraging wildlife, to protecting the site's Outstanding Universal Value. Staff working at Brú na Bóinne all live locally and present the monuments in their care to visitors with pride and insight. All access to the monuments is via the Brú na Bóinne visitor centre, which is situated on the opposite side of the river from the monuments. Visitors are shuttled by bus from the centre to the monuments. Numbers are strictly limited in order to protect the sites.

OPW staff on site are part of the Boyne Valley network of tourist attractions, which aims to keep visitors in the Boyne Valley for as long a time as possible; the tourist information point at the centre advises visitors of other local points of interest. The visitor centre is used for local events and exhibitions with a focus on the local community. Various seasonal events are held throughout the year at the site where locals gain complementary admission.

© National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht



© National Monuments Service, Department of Culture, Heritage, and the Gaeltacht

## Italy

### Romea Strata

Romea Strata, closely intertwined with the network of European ancient medieval paths (<http://www.romeastrata.it>), is the rediscovery of an ancient pilgrimage route walked over the centuries by many people who headed towards important places of faith (e.g. the tombs of St Peter and St Paul). The path, which covers five Italian regions (Friuli Venezia Giulia, Trentino-Alto Adige/Südtirol, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna and Tuscany) and covering a total of 1 300 km, is divided into nine sections, whose names recall the territories and ancient routes: Romea Allemagna, Romea Aquileiense, Romea Flavia, Romea Brennero, Romea Annia, Romea Vicetia, Romea Postumia, Romea Porciliana and Romea Nonantolana.

The path is enriched by significant spiritual places ('spiritual lungs') along the way and by many culturally relevant places, including at least 11 UNESCO World Heritage sites located on the route or in close proximity to it.

The stakeholders involved are religious organisations, local and regional authorities, private associations, NGOs, schools and universities, museums and tour operators. Local communities have been involved since the outset, through the organisation of work groups that meet three times a year to coordinate the various activities along the path. They all consider sustainability one of its essential elements. It has a low environmental impact, since pilgrims mainly walk or go by bike and, at the same time, a very positive economic impact, especially for the smallest businesses located along the way that do not normally benefit from a significant tourist flow. Moreover, the religious and cultural sites located along the itinerary are further enhanced and promoted.

## Lithuania

### Antaliepte Innovator's Valley

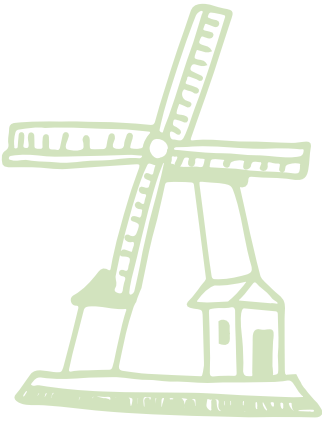
The Innovator's Valley was established in the former Antaliepte Discalced Carmelite Monastery in a rural area in 2012 by an NGO entitled The National Institute for Social Integration. This 18th century building, which is listed on the National Cultural Heritage Properties List, is a place to promote culture, creativity, social integration and social business. Its infrastructure is surrounded by nature and a beautiful landscape with workspaces to rent. Organisations and individuals are invited to work here (space and tools are provided) and to enjoy the local tourism. Accommodation, kayaking, bicycle tours, educational activities with traditional woodcrafts, honeybees, theatrical excursions, fishing and horseback riding. All of these services are given in collaboration with Antaliepte's community and local craftsmen. The heritage tourism project is based on local community, which is the key actor in promoting the place as the tourism destination and the valley as a hub for possibilities.



## Netherlands

### Kinderdijk mill network

The Kinderdijk-Elshout mill network is a UNESCO World Heritage site, registered as an outstanding man-made landscape that bears powerful testimony to human ingenuity and fortitude. For almost a millennium it has drained and protected an area through the development and application of hydraulic technology. The landscape with 19 windmills is an international symbol for the Netherlands.



Between 2012 and 2016, the Kinderdijk World Heritage Foundation implemented a necessary reform of its financial management and visitor experience through changes in its strategic planning, governance and transport infrastructure. The expenses of approximately EUR 1 million each year were used to ensure conservation and maintenance of the mills and landscape but were unsustainable with revenues of approximately EUR 700 000 per year from subsidies and visitor contributions. Local inhabitants are consulted by the foundation and the site plays a large role in the local community. It is an integral part of the local landscape and spiritual heritage.

## Poland

### Malbork Castle

Construction works first began on Malbork Castle in 1280, the largest castle complex in the world, which consists of three castle buildings – the High Castle, the Middle Castle and the Low Castle, or the bailey. Between 1280 and 1457 the castle served as headquarters of the Teutonic Order, and from 1457 until 1772 it was a residence for Polish royalty. It is a historical site of great importance, and an exceptional element of both local and European architectural heritage.

The castle has been under renovation with efforts focusing on conserving the façade of the castle and the interior elements, such as wooden flooring and ceramic tiles, wooden joinery on door and windows, and renovating the roof. Attention has also been given to conserving the stained glass windows. These works enabled an expanded access to the castle and visits to the complex following the renovation work increased by over 10%.



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© K.Sorokin/Shutterstock



## The Koziółek Matolek European Tale Centre in Pacanów

The Koziółek Matolek European Tale Centre is a facility to organise and promote literature and books for young readers. The centre is named after Matolek the Silly Goat – an iconic Polish fairy-tale character created by Kornel Makuszyński that is recognised by children and young adults, as well as the older part of Polish society. The aim of the centre is to refer to various European legends and stories, recognisable by youth and adults from around Europe, and to reach a wider audience, both national and international. This project included the construction of the main building of the museum, a bookstore, a shop and a cafeteria, as well as the exterior construction of the garden, a smithy and an amphitheatre. The project encourages cultural dialogue and the inclusion of children in the cultural life of the region. The project has also revitalised the surrounding area.



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## Portugal



## The Romanesque Route

The Romanesque Route (RR) is a supra-municipal project that aims to encourage the sustainable development of the territory of the Sousa, Douro and Tâmega valleys in the north of Portugal. It involves several public and private partners, and fosters responsible and inclusive tourism. The RR currently comprises 58 patrimonial assets, including 25 national monuments and 22 monuments / properties of public interest, distributed throughout 12 counties. Based on an exceptional heritage, it focuses on attracting and enhancing cultural and landscape tourism, through nature, gastronomy and wine, religious tourism, etc. The tangible cultural heritage is situated in a context of protection and promotion of cultural heritage, placing it at the service of local communities and visitors. At the same time, the

intangible components of RR have produced important impacts and benefits: the production of scientific knowledge; the collection and disclosure of intangible assets; tourist information, promotion and signage; environmental and patrimonial education; cultural dynamism involving the local population and intangible heritage; the dynamisation of the tourist product through several partnerships with public and private entities. RR contributes to the growing regional and national affirmation of this territory as a key tourist destination, resulting in a growing number of visitors and promoting the economic growth of the region, with direct and indirect effects on the creation of wealth and employment.



© Rota do Românico/Portugal



© Rota do Românico/Portugal



## Spain

### Ávila Smart Heritage City

Smart Heritage City (SHCity) addresses the innovative challenge of creating a unique open source tool to manage historic urban centres and facilitate work for competent authorities in decision-making. The SHCity solution integrates data collected by sensor networks deployed in the urban area, in order to control and respond to the elements of risk that affect buildings and their surrounding environment, the management of energy consumption, and the control and management of the flow of visitors. The aim is to extend the concept of Smart City to Smart Heritage City by adapting the monitoring scale, progressing from a building to an urban set.

The project, for which Ávila is the pilot city, is realised in the installation of a network of 230 sensors and devices that control a score of environmental or structural parameters in real time, as well as others related to security, energy consumption and the flow of visitors. This network will be placed throughout 26 areas of the historic complex.

The data collected by the sensors will be added to those derived from other existing systems, generating an information flow of more than 1 000 pieces of data per hour. This will facilitate the work of managers, improving diagnosis and decision-making, through a more accurate knowledge of the buildings and their surroundings. The preview of the data can be done on an urban 3D model. SHCity also develops an application for tourists, which takes advantage of the information captured by the monitoring systems and provides a more informative approach, aimed at making visitors and society in general aware of the importance of adequately preserving the heritage.



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## Easter in Seville

Seville, the capital of Andalusia, has one of the largest old towns in Europe and the city's historic centre is one of the most important in Spain. Easter is an important event on the city's calendar with significant tourism activity during the week before Easter. In 2014, hotel occupancy during Holy Week was 85%, 35% higher than normal. The week is busy, with scheduled events incorporating 60 local fraternities into various processions and devotions. The lead up to Holy Week is also significant as a full year of preparation is undertaken throughout the local economy for providing the various clothes, images, jewellery and embroidered items, among other things, that must be made and prepared.



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## The Heritage Intervention Plan of El Hierro Island

Tourism in the Canary Islands is concentrated in the eastern island of the archipelago. El Hierro is the smallest Island of the Canaries and the Heritage Intervention Plan of El Hierro seeks to highlight the cultural heritage of its landscape and enhance the knowledge of the island in order to help with conservation.

The project will create the Great Museum of El Hierro, which will be a museum project based at several locations. The different thematic areas of the Great Museum will be archaeology, anthropology, ethnography, geology, volcanology and art. The project will improve the in-depth knowledge of the history and life of El Hierro Island.



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Sweden

Apps for mobile units: Visir Uplandia

The app Visir Uplandia is a digital project whereby a place-based app allows visitors and tourists to the historic site to explore a 3D environment, learn and experience the architecture of the site, and to interact in the daily life of days gone by. Characters are based on historical persons who tell stories from a personal perspective. Historical experts at Uppsala University have reconstructed the architecture and culture of the past. In total five different apps based on one digital platform are planned and financed within the project, but the platform also allows other sites to join. The first app was launched in June 2017 and lets the users explore a detailed 3D reconstruction of the old town of Uppsala in the year 1509. Other historical places to be 'apped' are, for example, the old harbour of Öregrund, Vik Castle and the ironwork of Lövstabruk.

The application was developed after prototyping it with a smaller project on Old Uppsala, which focused on graves from the Viking era. The app was successful, particularly among school children, and it is hoped that the new app continues to be received so successfully. The app was developed by two historians and is free to use; visitors are continually encouraged to download and make use of this resource when visiting the area.



© App Visir Uplandia



© App Visir Uplandia



## Prisma Västra Götaland

The region of Västra Götaland has developed a digital platform for cooperation, Prisma Västra Götaland. It focuses on strengthening the industrial heritage and social development of the region. Prisma is run by Västarvet, the regional natural and cultural heritage administration, and aims to engage everyone in industrial heritage. Municipalities and local organisations take an active part in the project.

Part of the work is to develop industrial heritage tourism. This forms part of the European Development Project CHRISTA (Interreg Europe), which aims to develop sustainable natural and cultural heritage tourism. Efforts are made to strengthen industrial historical sites and their management structures so as to offer relevant products to be promoted by local and regional tourist boards and local small-scale tourism companies (hostels, guides, etc.). These sites are run by working museums, non-profit associations and municipalities. Courses are also offered to managers to improve their knowledge of marketing, packaging, storytelling, hosting, etc. It is intended to provide digital information on all the relevant priority destinations with the West Sweden Tourist Board's criteria for international marketing. With the digital tool, people, places and industries are connected to a map of industrial heritage sites and tips on events in the region. It is an open website where everyone is welcome to share their stories, films, pictures and tips on places to visit.

### UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit - in practise

The area of Bergslagen has a long history of mining and processing minerals. Over the last decades, the old primary industry has been extensively dismantled, resulting in high unemployment and depopulation.

The Swedish National Heritage Board, in collaboration with the visitor industry, carried out a project from 2014 to 2016, which focused on cultural heritage as a resource for mining communities. By using UNESCO's toolkit for sustainable tourism, strategies for sustainable tourism and guidance based on practical experience were developed, growing the cultural heritage tourism in the region and giving a boost to local and regional ambassadors. Local and regional actors launched a long-term strategy for sustainable tourism with a focus on progressive work and taking a strategic and systematic approach to challenges. Today there is a greater understanding within different sectors at local, regional and national levels of how cultural heritage and tourism can reinforce each other, and how this impacts sustainability.



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## APPENDIX II: SUSTAINABLE CULTURAL TOURISM OMC WORKING GROUP MEMBERS

### Appointed representatives

Country	Title	First name	Surname
<b>Austria AT</b>	Ms	Helga	Bauer
<b>Belgium BE</b>	Mr	Hans	van der Linden
<b>Bulgaria BG</b>	Ms	Ekaterina	Djournalieva
<b>Czechia CZ</b>	Ms	Yvona	Havel
<b>Czechia CZ</b>	Ms	Jaromíra	Mizerová
<b>Czechia CZ</b>	Mr	Zdenek	Příhoda
<b>Germany DE</b>	Ms	Juliane	Thümmel
<b>Germany DE</b>	Mr	Phillipp	Holzheid
<b>Spain ES</b>	Mr	Felipe	Formariz
<b>Spain ES</b>	Ms	Blanca	Pérez-Sauquillo
<b>Spain ES</b>	Mr	Christian	Perazzone
<b>Spain ES</b>	Ms	Pilar	Barraca de Ramos
<b>Estonia EE</b>	Ms	Ruth	Laidvee
<b>Finland FI</b>	Ms	Heli	Talvitie
<b>Finland FI</b>	Mr	Eero	Koski
<b>France FR</b>	Mr	Nicolas	Monquaut
<b>Greece GR</b>	Ms	Anna	Vourliotaki
<b>Greece GR</b>	Ms	Angeliki	Vasileiou
<b>Croatia HR</b>	Ms	Tajana	Plese
<b>Croatia HR</b>	Ms	Martina	Ivanus
<b>Croatia HR</b>	Mr	Damir	Čibarić
<b>Hungary HU</b>	Mr	Tibor	Gönczi
<b>Ireland IE CHAIR</b>	Ms	Shirley	Clerkin
<b>Iceland IS</b>	Ms	Margret	Hallgrimsdottir
<b>Iceland IS</b>	Ms	Audur Ran	Thorgeirsdottir
<b>Italy IT</b>	Mr	Ivano	Rossi
<b>Lithuania LT</b>	Ms	Rugilė	Puodziuniene
<b>Malta MT</b>	Ms	Francelle	Caruana
<b>Malta MT</b>	Mr	Russell	Muscat
<b>Netherlands NL</b>	Ms	Katie	Schreiber

Country	Title	First name	Surname
<b>Netherlands NL</b>	Mr	Pieter	Roos
<b>Netherlands NL</b>	Ms	Muriel	van der Klei
<b>Poland PL</b>	Mr	Marek	Gózdź
<b>Portugal PT</b>	Ms	Lúcia	Brito
<b>Romania RO</b>	Ms	Andreea	Ursuleasa
<b>Romania RO</b>	Mr	Dan	Matei
<b>Romania RO</b>	Mr	Bogan	Şandric
<b>Slovakia SK</b>	Ms	Zuzana	Ondrejková
<b>Slovenia SI</b>	Mr	Gojko	Zupan
<b>Slovenia SI</b>	Ms	Sonja	Kralj Bervar
<b>Sweden SE</b>	Ms	Christina	Nylén
<b>Sweden SE</b>	Ms	Erika	Nilsson

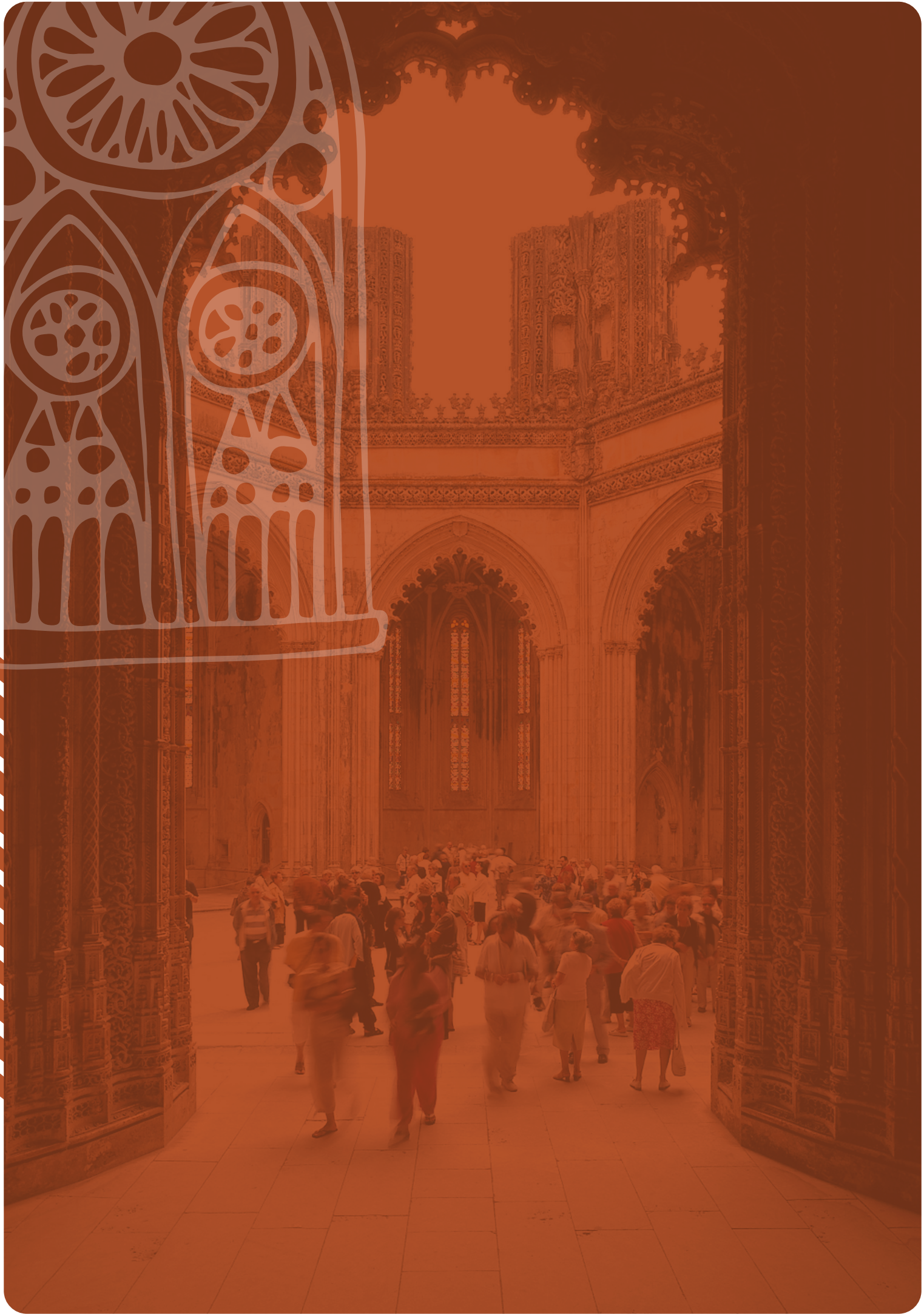
Directorate General for Education, Youth Sport and Culture: Ms Anne Grady, Principal Officer



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