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Competitiveness & sustainability in European tourism



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Welcome message

Tourism is a strategically important sector for the European economy and can play an important role in reaching the goals of the Growth and Jobs Strategy. It represents almost 11 % of the European Union's GDP, it provides around 12 % of the labour force and it offers further significant growth potential.

This dynamism of the tourism industry goes along with a lot of challenges. Europe must become more competitive and create more jobs. We must safeguard our social achievements and promote sustainability. We have to deal with challenges such as demography, climate change and globalisation.

To respond to all these challenges, the EU tourism policy is focused on promoting competitiveness and sustainability. Various Community policies and measures assist the tourism industry and European destinations in responding to challenges. Moreover the Commission has established a partnership approach with the Member States and all stakeholders involved which has been proven useful.

Creating synergies between tourism and related sectors is of high importance. In this context, the EU Research Framework Programmes offer a lot of examples of and opportunities for cross-cutting projects. By focusing on the subject, research projects encourage co-modality and synergies towards the achievement of improved competitiveness. By encouraging cross-cutting projects between transport, agriculture, environment, culture, IT research and tourism services in Europe, the overall objective is to propose new concepts guiding tourists through the stages of the whole travel itinerary and to support EU policies in improving tourism competitiveness, considering emerging needs and tourism demand by acting on main aspects affecting tourism market (e.g. inter-modality, information, ticketing, etc.).

The examples presented in this issue show us that partnership, cooperation and cross-cutting supporting actions are keys to success if we want to boost the competitiveness of the tourism industry and create more growth and jobs. Together we work closely to maintain Europe as the world's most attractive tourist destination.

Günter Verheugen
Vice-President of the European Commission
European Commissioner for Enterprise and Industry




Günter Verheugen

Frequent acronyms

CIP	competitiveness and innovation framework programme
DG	Directorate General
FP5/6/7	Fifth/Sixth/Seventh Framework Programme of the European Community for research, technological development and demonstration activities
ICT	information and communication technology
SME	small and medium-sized enterprise

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EU tourism policy

Tourism is one of the biggest and fastest expanding sectors of the European economy. When considered together with its related activities, tourism can be seen to impact on almost every other sector, from transport to construction and from culture to agriculture.

Every year, almost half a billion tourists — or half of the globe's tourist traffic — visit Europe, and 5 of the world's top 10 destinations are EU Member States. In its narrow definition (traditional travel and tourism providers — hotels, restaurants, cafés, travel agencies, car rentals, airlines, etc. — that supply goods and services directly to visitors), tourism currently contributes to 4 % of the EU's gross domestic product (GDP), varying from about 2 % in several new EU Member States to 12 % in Malta. When related sectors are taken into account, the contribution of tourism to GDP creation is much higher — tourism indirectly generates about 11 % of the EU's GDP and provides about 12 % of the labour force.

Tourism is particularly important when it comes to offering job opportunities to young people, who represent twice as much of the labour force in tourism than in the rest of the economy (see *Promoting young people's full participation in education, employment and society*, COM(2007)498 final of 5 September 2007). Employment growth in the tourism sector has been significantly higher than in the rest of the economy in recent years, making the sector a significant contributor to the Lisbon strategy's objective to create more and better jobs. The importance of tourism in the EU economy is likely to continue to increase the expected annual growth in tourism slightly above 3 % in the coming years (*Tourism Satellite Accounting Regional Reports, European Union 2007*, World Travel and Tourism Council, London, United Kingdom).

Besides growth and job creation, tourism plays an important role in the development of the vast majority of European regions. Tourism-related infrastructure contributes to local development and jobs are created or maintained even in areas in industrial or rural decline or undergoing urban regeneration.

Enhancing the competitiveness of Europe's tourism industry is crucial for achieving the renewed Lisbon strategy goals: to create growth and jobs and improve the welfare of European citizens. In this context, it is essential that the tourism sector successfully addresses a number of challenges, including population ageing, growing external competition, sustainability concerns and evolving demand patterns for specific forms of tourism.

Tourism involves a wide variety of stakeholders and policy measures at various levels. Therefore cooperation and dialogue among all those concerned represent an important key to success.

The contribution of tourism to employment and regional development, as well as to other important EU objectives such as sustainable development, enhancement of the natural and cultural heritage and the shaping of European identity has been recognised by all European institutions on numerous occasions.

Despite its limited competences with regard to tourism, the EU has for a long time supported



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the development of this activity through many direct and indirect measures. In 2006, the European Commission presented its communication, *A renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism* (COM(2006)134 final of 17 March 2006). This policy framework takes into account the past actions and experiences and presents a global approach covering all issues related to tourism. It outlines the European Commission's initiatives regarding the principal aspects of European policymaking and the ways partnerships among the concerned stakeholders should evolve. It aims to increase the awareness of the economic, social and environmental importance of the tourism industry and to improve its competitiveness.

This policy is complementary to national policies and seeks to improve the competitiveness of the European tourism industry and create more and better jobs through the sustainable growth of tourism in Europe and globally. It does not aim to replace national policies, but to provide added value at European level.

A great number of private and public stakeholders at international, European, national, regional and local level are involved in the development of tourism. Given the complexity of tourism, these stakeholders must develop partnerships if they want to be successful. The success of the renewed EU policy therefore depends on the active involvement of all tourism stakeholders.

One initial area for stakeholder partnerships is better regulation. The European Commission has launched an ambitious initiative to cut red tape, simplify rules and improve impact assessments. While no new regulation will be proposed unless it is absolutely

necessary, the European Commission is reviewing legislation, such as the consumer protection *acquis* or various transport-related regulations of particular interest to tourism. All tourism stakeholders, as well as national legislators, should actively participate in the effort to improve the regulatory environment.

At the same time, the European Commission is aiming to integrate tourism in all the related European Community (EC) policies. It also makes sure that there is adequate coordination between the various policy initiatives that may impact on tourism.

Each year, the initiatives that may affect tourism, included in the European Commission's work programme, are identified in order to make sure that their impact on the sector's competitiveness is taken into account at an early stage. This ensures that tourism is given adequate attention when preparing new legislative or non-legislative initiatives.

Another important aim of the renewed policy is to make sure that tourism benefits from the support of as many European financial instruments as possible. Indeed tourism receives support from the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Cohesion Fund (CF), the European Social Fund (ESF), the European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD), the European Fisheries Fund (EFF) as well as from programmes such as the Seventh Framework Programme (FP7), the 'Integrated lifelong learning programme' (LLP) and the 'Competitiveness and innovation framework programme' (CIP).

EU Member States, regions, local authorities and the industry at all levels should collaborate in order to ensure that tourism profits fully from these financial instruments and



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that it is taken into account in the planning of all related projects.

An important aim of the policy is to actively support the economic, environmental and social sustainability of European tourism since they are key factors for the competitiveness of destinations and the welfare of their populations, as well as for the creation of employment and for the preservation and enhancement of the natural and cultural attractions.

As a follow-up to the communication entitled *Basic orientations for the sustainability of European tourism* (COM(2003)716 final of 21 November 2003), the European Commission set up the Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) in order to encourage stakeholder synergies and to provide input into the work for the sustainability of European tourism.

The European Commission communication entitled an *Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism* (COM(2007)621 final of 19 October 2007) outlines the steps for promoting the sustainability and competitiveness of European tourism. By participating in the implementation of this agenda, tourism stakeholders will protect the assets and competitive advantages that make Europe the most attractive tourist destination for foreigners as well as for Europeans — its intrinsic diversity, its variety of landscapes, cultures, products and services.

Tourism stakeholders are called to accept their responsibilities at the levels where they mostly operate and are invited to embrace the opportunities that the challenge of sustainability offers as a potential driver for innovation and growth. They should share the same objectives, unite their efforts and act together, in a more visible and synergic way. The sustainable management of destinations, the integration of sustainability

concerns by businesses and the sustainability awareness by tourists form the framework of action in which sustainability principles have to be respected.

Moreover, the communication sends a message of commitment by the European Commission to the above-mentioned agenda process. It presents the framework for the implementation of supportive European policies and actions in the area of tourism and in all other policy areas which impact on tourism and on its sustainability. It follows a step-by-step approach providing tourism stakeholders with added value at European level.

Promoting the visibility of European tourism is yet another important goal of the renewed policy. This goal is to be achieved through common public and private sector efforts and will cover both commercial and political visibility.

An example of synergy and visibility enhancement is the organisation of European tourism forums. These forums bring together more than 300 leading representatives from the tourism industry, civil society, European institutions, national and regional authorities dealing with tourism, as well as from international organisations, to discuss the challenges of the sector focusing on specific themes of interest.

Furthermore, an effective tool in this regard is the European tourist destinations portal (www.visiteurope.com): a concrete way to provide European added value to national efforts, stimulate collaboration and promote the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs). It also represents an answer to the challenge of globalisation, which has opened up new opportunities with tourists from new markets (such as China, India and Russia) able to afford high-value vacations. Attracting them to Europe increases development potential for the industry.

Faced with the increasing competitiveness of the global tourism industry and in the aim of supporting European tourism, further initiatives have been adopted by the European Commission.

Thus, on 15 May 2008, a call for proposals was published under the 'Competitiveness and innovation framework programme' (CIP) for 'Networks for the competitiveness and sustainability of European





tourism' (ENT/CIP/08/B/N05S00). The call's final submission date for proposals was 31 July 2008. Its objective is to support initiatives from public and private bodies, or their existing networks, aiming to enhance the sustainability and competitiveness performances of the tourism industry's small and micro companies.

Furthermore, in 2006, the European Commission launched a pilot project called 'European destinations of excellence' (EDEN) — transformed into a preparatory action in December 2007. The project focuses on the specific characteristics of European destinations and offers particular support to those pursuing growth in tourism while ensuring social, cultural and environmental sustainability. Its implementation foresees the selection of one destination of excellence in each participating EU Member State or candidate country.

The idea of the project is to give visibility to the efforts of non-traditional destinations in pursuing sustainable tourism development. The core objectives are to draw attention to the value, diversity and shared characteristics of European tourist destinations and to create a platform for the exchange of good practices at European level. Moreover, the project aims at rewarding sustainable forms of tourism, helping decongestion, combating seasonality and rebalancing tourist flows towards non-traditional destinations.

In 2007, on the occasion of the '6th European tourism forum' (ETF) held in Portimão (Algarve), Portugal, the 10 best emerging rural destinations were awarded the EDEN prize. They were:

- Durbuy, Belgium;
- Clonakilty District, Ireland;
- Florina, Greece;

- Specchia, Italy;
- Troodos, Cyprus;
- Kuldīga, Latvia;
- Órség, Hungary;
- Nadur, Malta;
- Pielachtal, Austria;
- Sveti Martin na Muri, Croatia.

In 2008, a further 20 destinations received the title of 'excellence' for their efforts in combining tourism and local intangible heritage at the ETF's second edition of the EDEN awards held in Bordeaux, France. They were:

- Ath, Belgium;
- Belogradchik, Bulgaria;
- Viljandi, Estonia;
- Carlingford and the Cooley Peninsula, Ireland;
- Grevena, Greece;
- Sierra de las Nieves, Spain;
- the Wine Route of the Jura, France;
- Corinaldo, Italy;
- Agros, Cyprus;
- the Latgale Region, Latvia;
- Plateliai, Lithuania;
- Echternach, Luxembourg;
- Hortobágy, Hungary;
- Kerċem–Santa Lucia, Malta;
- the Styrian Volcano Land, Austria;
- Horezu, Romania;
- the Soča Valley, Slovenia;
- Wild Taiga, Finland;
- Đurđevac, Croatia;
- Edirne, Turkey.

About 22 EU Member States and candidate countries have already manifested an interest in the third edition of the EDEN awards, to be held in 2009 under the theme 'Tourism and protected areas'.

Franco Ianniello, Head of the Tourism Unit, Enterprise and Industry DG



Toureg: a platform to create and transmit tourism knowledge

As part of a 'Coordination and support actions' funding scheme of FP7, the Toureg project started in January 2008. The Regional Government of the Balearic Islands, Spain, is the coordinator of the project.



Coming from regions in Bulgaria, Greece, Spain, Portugal, Romania and Sweden the project partners may be grouped into three major classes:

- the Balearic Islands, Madeira and Crete as important sun and sand tourist destinations,
- Sweden as an area with major technological development in knowledge intensive areas such as IT and
- Bulgaria and Romania as recent EU Member States that are proving to be major tourist destinations thanks to their heritage and history.

Cooperation between research organisations and businesses will be the basis for the creation of the international cluster.

The strategic objective of Toureg is to establish a platform for developing a competitive tourist industry, based on the generation and application of knowledge revolving around a new international research-driven cluster in the tourist industry.

From this angle, the project's general objectives are to:

- adapt and strengthen the research and development (R & D) and innovation public policies, whether specific or related to the tourism sector;
- establish an itinerary for the generation and transfer of R & D and innovation knowledge in the tourist sector;
- promote, diversify and specialise in R & D and innovation activity in the tourist industry;
- facilitate the establishment of a platform for the generation of knowledge in the tourist industry.

All these objectives are aimed at promoting competitiveness in the tourism sector with the collaboration of public bodies, research institutions and enterprises.



Project start and end dates

1 January 2008 to 30 June 2010

Project duration

30 months

Project name

Competitiveness and knowledge in the tourist sector; improving the competitiveness and strategic position through the establishment of a platform for the generation and transmission of knowledge

Project acronym

Toureg

Project status

Ongoing

Project cost

EUR 1 078 968

EU funding

EUR 979 198

Programme

FP7

Specific programme — Theme

Capacities — Regions of knowledge

Project coordinator

Jaime Bagur Mora
Govern de les Illes Balears, Direcció
General de Investigació, Desenvolupament
Tecnològic e Innovació
Spain

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 86224 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 November 2007 to 31 October 2009

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Archaeological management policies

Project acronym

Archaeomap

Project status

Ongoing

Project cost

EUR 480 000

EU funding

EUR 480 000

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

Research for policy support

Project coordinator

Sebastiano Tusa
 Regione Siciliana Assessorato Regionale
 dei Beni Culturali ed Ambientali e della
 Pubblica Istruzione
 Italy

Contract type

Coordination action (CA)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 85372 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Archaeomap: mastering the art of archaeological management policies

The objective of the Archaeomap project is to call for balanced interrelated policies about an integrated coastal zone management focusing on 10 archaeological coastal pilot sites in the Mediterranean. Its aim is to protect environmental resources and biocultural diversity in support of socioeconomical development through cultural tourism.

Archaeomap proposes an interdisciplinary research agenda and capacity building with the aim of improving the relations of the Mediterranean people with their marine environment. Its targets are the ecological, social and economic dimensions of the loss of maritime culture and its reduction. It uses its network of pilot sites as vehicles for knowledge-sharing, research and monitoring, education and training, and participatory decision-making. Archaeomap wants to provide context-specific opportunities to combine scientific knowledge and governance modalities in an interdisciplinary methodology.

Archaeomap pilot sites can also serve as learning and demonstration sites in the framework of the United Nations (UN) 'Decade of education for sustainable development' (2005–14, DESD). In its international committee setting, Archaeomap will encourage an interdisciplinary methodology focusing on research in natural and social sciences, and demonstration and training activities involving questions of natural and cultural resource management. Archaeomap takes an active interest in sustainable development, putting the accent on conservation and the rational utilisation of coastal zone resources.

With the background of interdisciplinary and interculturality inherent to the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (Unesco) scientific coordin-



ation, the Archaeomap International Committee will encourage scientific research and the collection of information. It chooses however, never to ignore traditional knowledge of maritime resource management. The Archaeomap project will promote its large-scale marine pilot sites network in the Mediterranean encouraging its transboundary and serial nominations to the Unesco 'World heritage list'.



Concertour: successfully harmonising mobility and sustainable tourism

The tourism sector is a key driver of economic growth and employment and has a fundamental role in meeting the objectives of the Lisbon strategy: making the EU the most competitive and dynamic economy in the world.



The recent European Commission communication *A renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a stronger partnership for European Tourism* introduces the strategy to be pursued to better exploit growth and employment potentials of the tourism sector. It also refers to how the stakeholders can be involved in European Community (EC) actions.

Concertour is a 'Coordination and support action' project aiming at creating synergies between transport research and tourism services in Europe, improving competitiveness, encouraging co-modality, focusing on the

subject regardless of the involved DG programme. The overall objective is to propose new concepts guiding tourists through 'the stages of whole travel itinerary' and to support EU policies in improving tourism competitiveness, and to consider emerging needs and tourism demand by acting on main aspects affecting the tourism market (e.g. inter-modality, information, ticketing).

In the Concertour project, tourism market and transport supply are considered as an integrated environment, the assumption being that the local community is key to a successful tourism destination as they are guardians of the local resources and provide the service for paying guests. The project will identify policy-driven solutions to remove barriers, creating the conditions for value-added transport services provision (e.g. institutions/instruments facilitating coordination between governmental departments in the planning phase, tourism travel plans, pricing policies and technical standardisation).

The project focuses on transport as a lever/opportunity and not as a barrier to sustainable development and competitiveness, taking into consideration relevant key factors such as:

- improvement of socioeconomic benefits;
- attractiveness of sites;
- reduction of adverse environmental/social impacts;
- guarantee of fair/equal access to tourism for all.



Project start and end dates

1 January 2008 to 30 September 2009

Project duration

21 months

Project name

Concerted innovative approaches, strategies, solutions and services improving mobility and European tourism

Project acronym

Concertour

Project status

Ongoing

Project cost

EUR 652 199

EU funding

EUR 652 199

Programme

FP7

Specific programme — Theme

Cooperation — Transport

Project coordinator

Massimo Marciani
Fit Consulting SRL
Italy

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 85761 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 September 2006 to 31 August 2009

Project duration

36 months

Project name

Integrated e-services for advanced access to heritage in cultural tourist destinations

Project acronym

ISAAC

Project status

Ongoing

Project cost

EUR 2 080 707

EU funding

EUR 1 579 700

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

Information society technologies (IST)

Project coordinator

Krassimira Paskaleva
Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe GmbH
Germany

Contract type

Specific targeted research project (STREP)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 79351 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

ISAAC or how to link up virtual visits and cultural tourism

The main objective of the ISAAC project is to valorise the relationship between digital heritage and cultural tourism by developing a novel user-centric ICT environment. This would provide tourism e-services that meet the needs of tourists and citizens at European cultural destinations, facilitating virtual access and stimulating the learning experience of European cultural heritage assets before, during and after a real visit.

The planned e-services developed under the ISAAC project will support:

- the harmonisation of knowledge and practice in European cultural tourism destinations for the benefit of different categories of tourists and other users along the cultural tourism experience life cycle;
- the building of a multi-stakeholder community of private/public destination managers, IT providers, citizens and tourists, to experience and manage cultural heritage in urban tourist destinations.

The practical outcomes include:

- A European reference model to standardise representation, annotation, presentation and retrieval of digital content in cities' cultural heritage domains in the context of interpretative strategies, by improving access to current and future information.
- An ICT architecture offering tourists and other users customised e-services for retrieving and accessing complex multimedia information, using cutting-edge service-oriented data mining and multi-agent technology capable of customising information in the cultural tourism sector.
- An intelligent mapping system of cultural heritage for the preservation, interpretation and monitoring of urban tourism potential in three EU cities. This will include the development of a user-oriented



satisfaction monitoring system and a geographic information system (GIS)-based decision support tool in cultural tourism offers by cities.

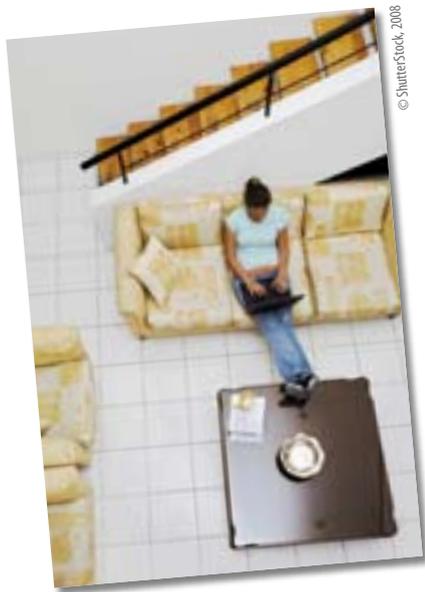
- An e-Governance framework to assess the implications of strengthening ICT in promoting local heritage assets to enhance the attractiveness and competitive advantages of cultural tourism destinations.
- A dissemination and exploitation of the project's vision and results to the wider research policy and cultural community and assurance of their long-term durability and effects on European cultural heritage destinations.



Musée du Louvre, Paris, France

eCHASE: sharing cultural information across Europe

Europe's digital cultural heritage content has tremendous exploitation potential in applications such as education, publishing, e-commerce, public access and tourism. Value is hugely amplified if the content can be aggregated, repurposed and distributed at a European level.



However, the current market for cultural heritage content is highly fragmented and typically constrained by national boundaries and language barriers. The diversity of con-

tent types, locations, languages, semantics, and existing services (if any) for commercial access makes aggregation and cross-border exploitation a major business and technical challenge.

In this context the eCHASE project has sought to demonstrate that public-private partnerships (PPPs) between content holders and commercial service providers can create new services and a sustainable business, based on access and exploitation of digital cultural heritage content at a European level.

In this perspective, the project focused on the sustainable business models and processes that have been evaluated and proven for a range of cultural heritage content holders and content users. eCHASE also had the ambition to demonstrate policies and processes for cultural heritage content holders to filter and make their content accessible according to the needs, prospects, rights and usage of different user groups at a European level.



Project start and end dates

1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Electronic cultural heritage made accessible for sustainable exploitation

Project acronym

eCHASE

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 2 000 000

Programme

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

Daniela Fina
Istituto Geografico de Agostini S.p.A.
Italy

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78346 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 April 2003 to 31 March 2006

Project duration

36 months

Project name

Integrating self supply into end use for sustainable tourism — target action C

Project acronym

Green hotel

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 3 690 005

EU funding

EUR 1 250 000

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

Energy, environment and sustainable development (EESD)

Project coordinator

Jose Manuel Melim Mondes
 Agência Regional da Energia e Ambiente
 da Região Autónoma da Madeira
 Portugal

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 70449 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

'Green hotel': where energy efficiency meets hotels

Tourism is a strategic sector and a very important economic activity on islands. It is also an activity that uses up large quantities of energy and water all the while producing important amounts of waste, a crucial problem for islands. Sustainable tourism is thus a key issue for an island's sustainable development.

The general objectives of the 'Green hotel' project were to:

- demonstrate the economic and social benefits of an energy mix and appropriated technologies for water supply, solid waste management and transport system;
- reduce the impact of tourism on energy and water demand;
- enable socioeconomic development of insular communities;
- increase public awareness of clean energy technologies.

Its specific objectives were to:

- develop and apply a new concept of sustainable community in a hotel resort owned by a community of 230 Madeira-born residents;
- install an innovative energy system, including integration of new and renewable energy sources (NRES) and the use of energy efficiency in buildings;
- integrate efficient water desalination and wastewater treatment, solid waste management and landscape study;
- elaborate a mobility plan;



- create a permanent exhibition site of innovative technologies for sustainable communities;
- develop a website with a virtual guided visit;
- elaborate a plan to replicate the concept of the sustainable communities.



Madeira, Portugal

REST: reducing CO₂ emissions in hotels

The central theme of the REST project was the integration of rational use of energy (RUE) and renewable energy sources (RES) in order to strengthen the effectiveness of the project and thereby its impact.

The objectives of the REST project were six-fold:

- encourage the hotel industry to look at its energy performance and take action;
- provide an interpretative service to relevant organisations about the recently liberalised energy markets;
- increase the industry actors' knowledge of the opportunities that exist for the use of renewable energy, including the supply of green electricity;
- increase the awareness of the possibility of zero carbon dioxide (CO₂) emission or low CO₂ emission hotels;
- boost hotel visitor rates through public relations activities relating to the REST project, including job creation;
- develop a network of energy-conscious/zero emission hotels within Europe.

REST was primarily designed to lower the CO₂ emissions of buildings within the hotel and guesthouse sector. The ultimate goal was to encourage such organisations to become carbon neutral in their performance. Buildings that had already incorporated extensive energy saving programmes were used as case studies to promote the replication of good practice. They were also used to describe sustainable tourism, looking at the likely cost and CO₂ savings, and also eco-tourism in the shape of possible increases in visitor numbers. This was intended to act as an awareness-raising exercise to members of the public and influence their future decision-making.

All participating actors received an energy audit of their site. Hotels contributed to the

cost of these audits. The audit was followed up with a tailored action plan which detailed all possible actions that could be undertaken in order for the site to become entirely carbon neutral.

Achievements:

- Each partner agency delivered 20 energy audits.
- Five of the hotels were to act upon the recommendations given.
- The annual energy bill of each participating hotel was to be reduced by up to 40 %.
- The annual CO₂ emissions of each participating hotel was to be reduced by up to 100 %.
- An advisory group was established at the beginning of the project.
- A 'green network' for participating hotels was established on the internet.
- The energy performance of participating hotels was evaluated and monitored.
- To disseminate findings, three newsletters were published during the project.
- Energy savings were expected to reach 250 000 kWh/year (this assumed an average of 50 letting bedrooms, with a floor area of 50 m² per bedroom, which equates to 500 kWh/m². This implied a total average energy consumption of 1 250 000 kWh/year. Savings average were predicted at 20 % which equates to 250 000 kWh/year).
- The promotion/marketing of the project's success at EU, national, regional and local levels, was taken over by each partner agency.



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Project start and end dates

1 February 2002 to 31 January 2004

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Renewable energy and sustainable tourism

Project acronym

REST

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 814 471

EU funding

EUR 379 393

Programme

Altener 2

Project coordinator

Paula Judd
Milton Keynes Energy Agency
United Kingdom

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 62772 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

5 July 2002 to 4 January 2004

Project duration

18 months

Project name

Remind event for tourists in Europe

Project acronym

@RETE

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 980 000

Programme

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

Daniele Meini
Buongiorno S.p.A.
Italy

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78262 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

@RETE: tailor-made tourist information

The @RETE demonstration project aimed at providing personalised tourist services for European citizens and businesses, leveraging, on the one hand, on unexploited high-quality public sector information (PSI) and, on the other, the needs of European enterprises and private citizens.

The business model consisted in aggregating the rich legacy of tourist contents provided by the public partner and delivering it as packaged services to satisfy both the information needs of the European citizen and the marketing needs of business enterprises to acquire or maintain the loyalty of their customer base.

Amongst other things, the innovative product was represented by a personalised travel package (PTP) that involved giving tour operators customised touristic content kits to sell to their clients. These contained selected tourist information about chosen locations (museum, art, exhibitions, etc.) and delivered them as specifically requested. The possibility to exploit a multi-channel platform (e-mail, SMS, voice portal) was another strong innovation of the project that aimed to simplify

and provide broader information in an easy and very accessible way to citizens and enterprises.



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iTACITUS: virtual reality to boost the cultural experience

iTACITUS aims to provide a bespoke experience for the individual cultural traveller, based upon a dispersed repository of cultural (e.g. historical, scientific and archaeological) resources, enabling both location-based and context-based interfaces paired with location-independent services.

The services provided will include audio-visual, mixed reality and virtual reality (VR) organisational components, and will be delivered in a flexible and timely fashion. The system is based on an advanced user interface on mobile devices supporting image recognition, voice interface and the capability of using any available hardware interface: WiFi, Bluetooth, universal mobile telecommunications system (UMTS)/general packet radio service (GPRS) and even infrared interfacing.

iTACITUS will provide a virtual context supporting knowledge conceptualisation, thus making the available cultural resources reusable and integrable into new conceptual contexts. With such instrumentation a user is able to locate — without direct access to search engines — and to find information that is likely to be useful in his present cultural context especially where mobility is fundamental.

iTACITUS suggests an active approach to cultural heritage narrowing the gap that exists between an expert researcher in the cultural field and a highly cultured and informed visitor. It allows for an active approach to integrating one's own real-time experience in cultural and scientific heritage by reusing available complex digital material to provide and integrate additional (and often complex) new information into an existing framework.



Forum romanum, Rome, Italy

The objectives of iTACITUS are two-fold:

- It will investigate new methods for representing cultural heritage virtually (but integrated into existing realities).
- It will allow the customisation of personalised walking and public transport tours in urban areas, archaeological sites and museums, providing a specialised interface for each, depending on the network available in each site.



Project start and end dates	1 September 2006 to 28 February 2009
Project duration	30 months
Project name	Intelligent tourism and cultural information through ubiquitous services
Project acronym	iTACITUS
Project status	Ongoing
Project cost	EUR 2 285 662
EU funding	EUR 1 350 000
Programme	FP6
Thematic area or activity	Information society technologies (IST)
Project coordinator	Rory Doyle BMT Ltd. United Kingdom
Contract type	Specific targeted research project (STREP)
<p>Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 80182 in the search window on the CORDIS website.</p> <p>http://cordis.europa.eu</p>	

Project start and end dates

1 August 2005 to 31 July 2007

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Mobile destination — management for SMEs

Project acronym

Aladdin

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 1 800 768

EU funding

EUR 1 299 199

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

SME activities

Project coordinator

Frank Schroeder
ISO Software Systeme GmbH
Germany

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 75610 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Aladdin: simplifying connectivity for SMEs at tourist destinations

European small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the tourism and travel industry areas are facing serious challenges from large international companies. Incoming tour operators, tourist offices, restaurants and museums are typically SMEs which need to provide different services for the same customer, the tourist, in a cost-efficient but attractive way.

Optimised tour transfer setups, tailored offerings, the handling of last-minute changes for hotel bookings are the key issues for incoming agencies. This is especially true with the upcoming trends of mixed individual/group travelling and highly volatile business processes (last-minute bookings and changes of hotels and flights) that will increase the process complexity and therefore the costs.

In addition, due to the rapid growth of mobile terminals (smart phones, pocket PCs) there will also be a substantial mobile marketplace for leisure services in the destination area. However, highly different types of devices make it almost unaffordable for service SMEs at destinations to participate in this new mobile marketplace.

Aladdin aimed at developing a mobile destination system that combined both the provisioning of a mobile incoming tour operator workspace and a mobile content and service management for destinations.

On the one hand, the Aladdin destination management system provides incoming tour operators with an optimised and cost-efficient mobile workspace that supports their business processes and allows SMEs to compete with larger incoming tour operators. On the other, it aims to allow SMEs at the destination to offer their services and content in an attractive and easily accessible way to the customers. Aladdin thereby considers different usage scenarios, having



in mind on the one side, an ageing society with a growing demand for safety and on the other, a young generation with a well-established mobile behaviour.



Ossate: a digital information service to improve accessibility for disabled tourists

The Ossate project aims were to implement a prototype multi-platform, multilingual, digital information service, providing national and regional content on accessible tourist venues, sites and accommodation, initially in two EU Member States: Greece and the United Kingdom.

The service was set up to allow information to be delivered via accessible 'Web accessibility initiative' (WAI)-compliant web portals and mobile phones, using smart phone technology (wireless application protocol [WAP], multimedia messaging service [MMS], location-based service [LBS], general packet radio service [GPRS]) and standard text messaging services. The prototype was demonstrated both as an independent service (freely available on the web) and as an integrated service which could be offered for use on third-party websites, in information kiosks, travel agents and tourist bureaus, or delivered direct to tourists on their mobile phones.



The service targeted primarily — but not exclusively — Europe's 45 million disabled citizens and their families. The project identified and employed a common set of protocols and standards to enable search and retrieval of standardised data on accessibility of the physical environment, facilities

and services offered by providers. Tourist organisations and individual providers are able to input their own data directly into the system. Procedures for verifying data against the physical/service provision at regional and national levels were proposed and tested in the field. The features give enhanced reliability of information and provide a model for the long-term sustainability of the service, encouraging an upward spiral of accessibility improvements at venues and sites.

Attention was paid to involving all European stakeholder groups in the refinement, testing and planning of an EU-wide deployment of the service. Additional focus was placed on branding, design and promotion of the service, so as to ensure its broad recognition and acceptance as a trusted, useful and reliable source of information for the tourism sector and its users throughout Europe.



Project start and end dates

1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006

Project duration

24 months

Project name

One-stop-shop for accessible tourism in Europe

Project acronym

Ossate

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 1 820 000

Programme

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

Ivor Ambrose
EWORX S.A.
Greece

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78364 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 March 2004 to 28 February 2006

Project duration

24 months

Project name

The Neanderthals transforming representational cultural heritage into digital media popular scientific content and developing a visual simulation engine for collaborative real-time exploration

Project acronym

TNT

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 4 448 000

EU funding

EUR 2 650 000

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

Information society technologies (IST)

Project coordinator

Steffen Kirchner
ART + COM AG
Germany

Contract type

Specific targeted research project (STREP)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 71387 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

TNT: tourism-related digital media applications promote cultural heritage

TNT was a combined research and technological development (RTD) and demonstration project, consisting of three strands — technology, service and application.

Technology-wise, TNT developed a visual simulation engine, called Visicore. It enables researchers in different locations to collectively explore and modify digital models of artefacts, sensor scans and other scientific data. Visicore also enables media companies to apply such technologies to commercial digital media applications.

Service-wise, TNT established the Neanderthal Species Professional Exploration Service (Nespos). Nespos has streamlined business processes in a range of European natural history museums and improved distributed collaborative working among European pre-historians.

Application-wise, TNT created the ARCH channel — a cross-media popular science channel for intelligent heritage and cultural tourism, whose goal is to transform (pre)-historic and other archaeology-related representational content into commercially viable and tourism-related digital media applications, accessible from a range of internet and mobile portals.

TNT showed how multiple forces can be combined to push the limits of research collaboration and media generation. While the Visicore simulation technologies are applicable universally, in TNT they were used to improve access to Europe's cultural heritage, to promote intelligent heritage and tourism applications and to open up new revenue streams. Visicore was used to digitise, vis-



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ualise, exchange and explore artefacts and objects from four European natural history museums specialising in the Neanderthal man. The content was then repackaged and enhanced with different content and services from other sources, to serve as a kernel and reference application for a homogeneous (sub)-channel within tourism- and archaeology-related business-to-consumer (B2C) portals. Finally, a role model was derived, detailing how representational cultural heritage content may be transformed into digital media applications.



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Altair: feasibility study assesses online ticketing for cross-border public transport

Altair assessed the feasibility of developing a multilingual application for online ticketing which provides cross-border public sector transport information to mobile travellers and tourists.

The project studied user needs and technological feasibility, examined cross-border legal and regulatory issues, examined a prototype and studied the reaction of users in three European cities. Following this phase, a business case was prepared to secure funding from the private sector for commercial exploitation of the system throughout Europe.



The innovative e-ticketing function, combined with a multilingual mobile platform for public sector travel information, created a unique solution to the problems of cross-border travel for tourism and business. The project developed a proposal for a common European standard to aid the integration of travel and transport information between public sector content providers and private sector technology suppliers and web publishers.

One of the objectives of the project was to register a web domain with the aim of setting up a multilingual portal providing access to public transport information for major European cities running the online ticketing system.



Project start and end dates

18 June 2004 to 17 June 2005

Project duration

12 months

Project name

Accessible location-aware travel information and resources

Project acronym

Altair

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 160 000

Programme

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

Anna Stridi
ATC Bologna
Italy

Contract type

Definition phase project

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78263 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 September 2002 to 31 August 2004

Project duration

24 months

Project name

E-organisational methodology and tools for intra-European sustainable tourism

Project acronym

Hi-Touch

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 572 000

EU funding

EUR 286 000

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

User-friendly information society (IST)

Project coordinator

Daniel Deconclois
Visiolab
France

Contract type

Cooperative research contracts (CRS)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 63604 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Hi-Touch: methods and tools for sustainable tourism

Tourism products are numerous and customers have a large variety of wishes and needs. The gap between the desires of a customer and the products proposed strongly depends on the extent of the sales assistant's experience. In addition, not all sales assistants are able to take into account customer psychology.

The aim of the Hi-Touch project was to develop software tools to be used by travel agency sales assistants for providing a tourist prospect with the best offer. As a matter of fact, large tourist operators had already set up internet pages or market places but they were mostly aimed at selling tickets. Complex, standard or customised packages were rarely to be found on the internet.

The general objective of the Hi-Touch project was to deliver a range of helpful tools, based on new ICT tools (XML, Java, Flash, ontological databases and semantic descriptors, a multilingual thesaurus, etc.) allowing a potential client to select efficiently and rapidly, a set of products matching their concrete wishes and expectations.

Furthermore, one of the main aims was to provide incoming tourism organisations and travel agencies tools able to develop appropriate responses — even complex — based on regional resources, thus selling their own products more efficiently and assessing the general trends of tourism demand.

The main industrial and economic objectives were to propose prototypes for:

- an interactive game process allowing a prospect to express his real desires and expectations with behavioural descriptors;
- a software engine able to create the relation between the profile of a prospect and a small set of regional products proposed by different actors;
- an electronic and multimedia book showing a list of selected products adapted to the profile of a prospect;
- a tool allowing receptive organisations to collect data from the regional information bases characterised by the above items and to feed a structured hierarchical database;
- a database of prospects' profiles for travel agencies aimed at designing new local tourism offers, adapted exactly to different types of requirements;
- a collaborative tourism platform based on semantic web technologies.

Hi-Touch was based on a tourist problem-solving approach, leading to operational and qualified services. However, it did not address all of them: the platform was open, allowing further modules to be implemented at a later stage (for example, geographic information systems [GIS], fully electronic sales).

Hi-Touch included seven end-user SMEs from the tourism sector in France, Italy, Norway, Spain and the United Kingdom which specified, tested and exploited the results provided by three research and technological development (RTD) performers in France and the United Kingdom. The project comprised the following work packages:

- refinement of specifications as to the goals and functionalities required in the tools and integrated platform;
- development of an interactive profiling tool for the characterisation and qualification of desires and expectations of tourists. This allowed an internet surfer to specify and refine their questions according to the answers already received;
- semantic database: multilingual thesaurus, inventory of tourism resources. Implementation of authoring tools on the semantic database;
- conception of the query process and distributed databases, resulted in query tools using metrics content structure, as well as the selection of a tool for managing the parallel processing of queries on semantic data bases;
- development of a multilingual thesaurus to be used for queries and delivering answers to prospects;
- development of a tool for basic product profiling and a tool for matching prospect desires with product profile;
- design of an interface for the presentation of answers and proposals to the prospect;
- integration of all the components into a collaborative tourism platform for direct use by tourism actors and internet users;
- preparation of validated e-learning material as well as manuals for executives and trainers;
- management of the project, preparation of a consortium agreement with exploitation and intellectual property rights (IPR) clauses.

M-GUIDE: multilingual tourist information using mobile technology

The M-GUIDE project aimed to develop and deploy an integrated system for the provision of location-based information services for cultural cities in two EU Member States: Athens, Greece and Turku, Finland. It built upon and extended public sector information (PSI).

The main core of information content that was deployed in the marketable project results consisted of tourist information on specific monuments and sights in downtown areas, neighbourhood information and public service hot spots (such as tourist information kiosks, exhibition centres and theatres). Information services were provided using GSM+/2.5 G existing mobile technology.

The cooperation of telecom operators and public sector bodies as content providers and of IT companies from three EU Member States with existing and proven experience in managing large-scale projects assured the successful implementation of the services proposed.



Turku castle, Finland



The Parthenon on the Acropolis in Athens, Greece

Project start and end dates

1 September 2002 to 29 February 2004

Project duration

18 months

Project name

Cultural location-based information services

Project acronym

M-GUIDE

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 800 000

Programme acronym

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

George Kouvas
Exodus SA
Greece

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78316 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

2 July 2001 to 1 January 2004

Project duration

30 months

Project name

Intelligent recommendation for tourist destination decision making

Project acronym

Dietorecs

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 1 577 686

EU funding

EUR 899 980

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

User-friendly information society (IST)

Project coordinator

Francesco Ricci
Istituto Trentino di Cultura
Italy

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 57153 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Dietorecs: tourist decision-making systems

The main objectives of the Dietorecs project were to develop and validate a recommendation system for destination decision-making and provide personalised recommendations based on user profiles and contextual information.

It complied with existing e-commerce and technological standards (component-based and multi-tier) and gave support for accessing heterogeneous data, from plain text to semi-structured (XML) and structured (RDBMS).

The system is interactive and conversational, adapting the dialogue process as it learns more about the user. The dialogue is driven by a tourist destination selection decision-making model.

Product aggregation for a given destination in the form of a travel plan can be used to support the user during travel (recall events, advise on traffic conditions, etc.) by means of their mobile phone.

The project generated innovative results in the area of case-based recommendation systems and tourist decision-modelling.

The project was subdivided into several phases. For the development of the decision model, the requirements (use cases and system features) were collected. Previous available knowledge on user behaviour, in the form of cases (human/human and human/computer interaction logs), were also analysed. This data enabled the development of a realistic model of the user decision process, including the modelling of destination.

Key technologies were chosen and for some, a quick evaluation was conducted (XML data management system). This material

and the decision model provided input for the design and development of the first prototype: a fully operational recommendation system to be integrated in two existing tourist portals (managed by two of the consortium partners).

The key components were:

- dialogue management based on the tourist decision model;
- similarity-based queries;
- filtering using a user model;
- user activity logging.

The project partners conducted rigorous statistical tests to determine the real significance of the improvements brought by each single technique. At this stage alternative approaches (for filtering, selecting, presentation), supported by the prototype, were run in parallel and evaluated with users.

The final recommendations proposed the implementation of a set of requirements not covered by the project, that is, the personalised presentation of a destination and travel plan tool. A wizard would enable the user to store information connected to the travel at a single entry point. This data would help service providers follow and support the user during their travels. Moreover, log data collected with the first prototype would be used for user profile learning and tuning the various filtering techniques implemented.



Picture: the sustainable management of cultural tourism

The aims of the Picture project were to develop a strategic urban governance framework for the sustainable management of cultural tourism within small and medium-sized European cities. This framework helped to establish, evaluate and benchmark integrated tourism policies at local level, with a view to maximising the benefits of tourism on the conservation and enhancement of built heritage diversity and urban quality of life.

To accomplish the above goal, the following scientific objectives were pursued:

- evaluate the dynamics of the effects of tourism at large, upon the social, environmental and economic wealth of European small and medium-sized cities, considering the built heritage diversity and urban quality of life characterising such environments;
- identify and benchmark innovative urban governance strategies for sustainable development of cultural tourism within small and medium-sized cities;
- provide local governments and decision-makers with tools to facilitate the assessment of the impact of tourism in a locality, with particular regard to built heritage issues and relevant quality of life parameters, in order to improve their strategies, plans and policies;
- capitalise and disseminate existing knowledge and good practices of sustainable



Verona, Italy

cultural tourism in Europe, focusing on the effects of the sector upon the conservation and enhancement of built heritage diversity and urban quality of life.



Aix-en-Provence, France

Project start and end dates

1 February 2004 to 31 January 2007

Project duration

36 months

Project name

Pro-active management of the impact of cultural tourism upon urban resources and economies

Project acronym

Picture

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 1 750 000

EU funding

EUR 1 500 000

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

Research for policy support

Project coordinator

Albert Dupagne
University of Liège
Belgium

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 75255 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

6 January 2004 to 5 January 2006

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Tourism, culture and the production of urban space: changing images, shifting meanings?

Project acronym

Ciutat

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 129 644

EU funding

EUR 129 644

Programme

FP6

Thematic area or activity

Marie Curie actions — Human resources and mobility

Project coordinator

Vicenctà Ortiz Giménez
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona
Spain

Contract type

Marie Curie actions — intra-European fellowships (EIF)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 73231 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Ciutat: the impact of major cultural events on cities

Major events are arguably a principal image builder of modern tourism. The Ciutat project aimed to analyse the effects of major cultural events on the image of and urban space within their European host cities.

As such, an analysis of the broad European context of the production and consumption of urban space for tourism and culture objectives on city image was undertaken, necessitating an intersectoral, multidisciplinary research approach.

The empirical objectives included an evaluation of the modification of urban place images over the life course of a specific cultural event (as a destination and as a place to live and work), as well as of the relative durability of longer-term image effects to be gained from hosting major cultural events.

A case study of the ambitious, global-scale 'Universal forum of cultures' (2004) event and its host city, Barcelona, Spain, was central to the project, and an innovative longitudinal approach (pre-, during and post-event) was used to examine the changing image for visitors and residents, particularly in the period since the 1992 Olympic Games were held in Barcelona to much international debate.

At the time, the EU had identified the location for the event — the Sant Adria inner city area — as suffering from severe economic and social crisis and in need of urgent

regeneration; therefore, the 2004 Forum had the potential to make or break the area.

Assessment was made as to whether the Forum event had had any impact on the severity of the problems. The perspectives of policy-makers were also taken into account by analysing the context and implications of policy decisions to stage major cultural events in European cities and the social and cultural implications of doing so.

In the closing stage, relevant lessons were drawn from a transnational perspective for other European cities on how to maximise the potential of major cultural events for image enhancement and the promotion of social cohesion.



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Forum building, Barcelona, Spain

Fortimedia: military sites and cultural heritage

Over 3 000 military sites were built in Europe between the 16th and the 19th centuries. They now constitute an unexploited cultural resource with particular relevance for the development of tourism.

In this context, the Fortimedia project aimed at:

- promoting the development of European historic culture by putting high-quality content online, thus stimulating tourism via the spread of practical information;
- supporting better maintenance of this heritage by creating an exchange platform, which provides historic monument restorers and enhancers with broad access to current services and techniques in this area.

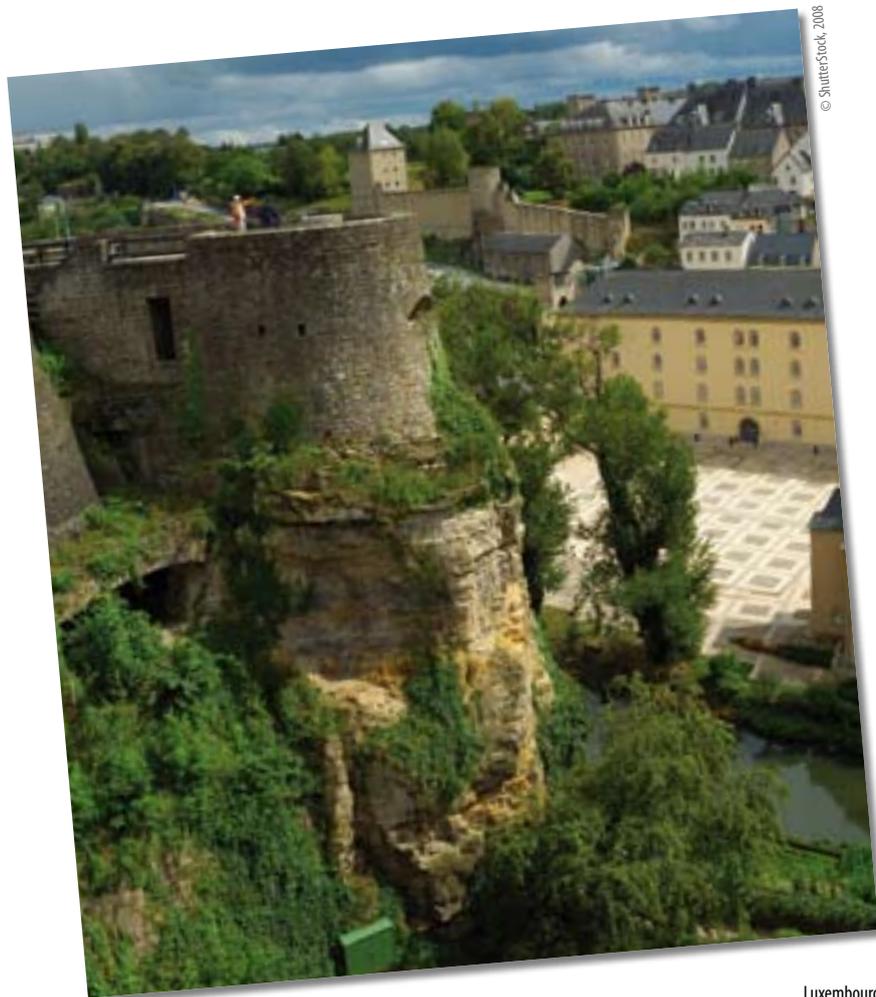


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The sites' enhancements were expected to increase the number of visits and feed the tourism development process. Fortimedia was developed as a free platform hosting educational and tourist information, which provides citizens with concrete answers to their questions about military heritage. Fortimedia made use of quality multimedia tools, and furthermore, the content is scientific, accurate and specifically adapted,

thanks to leisure and learning technologies (monuments in 3D).

Fortimedia Pro was intended as a professional platform for technical, economic and scientific exchange, addressing both site owners and economic actors in heritage restoration, upkeep and enhancement.



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Luxembourg

Project start and end dates

1 January 2004 to 31 December 2005

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Military heritage — a European heritage

Project acronym

Fortimedia

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 1 140 000

Programme acronym

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 2: Enhancing content production in a multilingual and multicultural environment

Project coordinator

Isabel Barrios do Inacio
Quelin S.A.
France

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78303 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 February 2002 to 31 January 2004

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Capitals providing integrated travel and tourism services

Project acronym

Capitals ITTS

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 4 972 307

EU funding

EUR 2 474 997

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

User-friendly information society (IST)

Project coordinator

Pierre Schmitz
Ministère de la Région de Bruxelles-Capitale
Belgium

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 61144 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Capitals ITTS: travel and tourism information services

The Capitals ITTS project developed, provided and demonstrated integrated travel and tourism services (ITTS) for users in five EU Member State capitals (Berlin, Brussels, Madrid, Paris and Rome), already having developed their mobility service platforms.

The information services were developed and finally provided by one single information/content provider via a business-to-business (B2B) model to local users (e.g. service providers and/or special agencies). These users offered the service together with their own specific content and information services based on local requirements and developments.

The implementation and demonstration consisted in consulting a comprehensive web portal providing:

- tourist, cultural and mobility information and the opportunity for reservations;
- coach management, including routing and parking availability information;
- itinerary and proximity information for travellers arriving at the sites of the capital cities;
- traffic information e.g. about congested roads.

The dissemination media had the same standardised friendly and easy-to-use user interface in order to provide information via the internet, innovative (text to speech) call centres, info kiosks with HTML user interfaces, mobile information via GSM phones using wireless application protocol (WAP).

Tourists, bus drivers and citizens were able to receive tourist, cultural and mobility information which were processed and provided according to common formats (e.g. HMI) within the five capital cities (during Capitals ITTS) and which could in future be further exploited in European cities outside the project.

The project aimed at:

- integrating tourism and transport information, allowing authorities to manage tourist coaches in a way compatible with their mobility policy and to improve the city information services for travellers and actors of the tourism value chain (e.g. tour operators and coach drivers);
- specifying and implementing a common service using a common ITTS interface language to exchange information related to travel and tourism;
- using only common portable devices such as WAP phones, PDAs and the web at the user side. General packet radio service (GPRS) testing was also carried out.

Location-based information services were offered to the end-users (e.g. travel agencies, tour operators, transport carriers and

travellers/citizens in general) within the five capital city sites, with a different extent and depth (in technological development) depending on the user and service requirements. Two user group workshops — one to identify the needs, respectively service requirements, and a second to have a feedback on the developments being implemented — were also held.

Service specifications determined the system requirements necessary to support the services and satisfy the user needs defined. The European added value was in the development of the common ITTS interface language to exchange information related to travel and tourism between sites and between actors (content providers) and in human-machine interface standards for such applications.

In the on-site demonstrations/field trials, the five capital cities demonstrated the ITTS services to be implemented, including coach management with route guidance and parking availability information and traffic, tourism and proximity information. Also tested were services on wireless technology platforms (GPRS).

One project website was created, offering information on the project and links to five similar (same look and feel) city websites.

In addition, locally managed city-specific content was offered, as well as mobility services provided via links to the central navigation server. At least two similar WAP sites (Brussels and Rome) were hosted by local telecom operators.

An evaluation following a commonly set-up evaluation framework allowed an assessment of the effectiveness and acceptance of the services. A cross-site assessment provided statements on the transferability of results. Finally, the project raised awareness of its results through dissemination by a project website, two user-group workshops, newsletters, the 'ITS show case 2003' and exploitation by developing business cases for the service operation beyond the project.

The project results were based on user requirements and specifications which led to the service developments and local implementations. The demonstration was accompanied by a common validation (in field trials) allowing real cross-site and transferable evaluation results and exploitation (business plans) work at the end of the project period.

Eurotravel: location-based travel information services

The main aim of the Eurotravel project was to boost the commercial exploitation of dynamic, cross-border public sector multimedia information (weather, traffic conditions, local events, etc.).

This was achieved through the integration of up-to-date information delivery with advanced, user-friendly, location-based travel information services, meeting users' demands (citizens, tourists/visitors, farmers, SMEs, commuters, etc.) for multimodal (voice/graphics) and ubiquitous information access.

The Eurotravel services implemented a one-stop-shop mobile regional service access for the public, business and visitors.

Eurotravel provided traveller and tourist services such as:

- information about regional services and attractions;
- dynamic warning for dangerous road segments;
- weather information;
- warnings of animal and railroad crossings;
- traffic/accident management services such as 'spot' traffic management for isolated congestion locations (e.g. near major tourist resort areas, work zones, and major accidents);



- operations and maintenance services (vehicle tracking and advances dispatch, particularly for snow removal operations, etc.).



Project start and end dates

1 January 2005 to 31 December 2006

Project duration

24 months

Project name

Boosting the exploitation of dynamic public content through rural traveller location-based services

Project acronym

Eurotravel

Project status

Completed

EU funding

EUR 1 100 000

Programme

Econtent

Subprogramme

Action Line 1: Improving access to and expanding the use of public sector information

Project coordinator

Jostein Fondenes
Sogn og Fjordance County Governor
Fylkesmannen i Sogn og Fjordane
Norway

Contract type

Demonstration contracts (DEM)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 78301 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 April 2002 to 30 September 2004

Project duration

30 months

Project name

Multimedia geo-information for e-communities in rural areas with eco-tourism

Project acronym

REGEO

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 3 250 501

EU funding

EUR 2 054 097

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

User-friendly information society (IST)

Project coordinator

Iris Frech
Albert-Ludwigs-Universität Freiburg
Germany

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 61832 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

REGEO: geo-multimedia content management system for rural areas

REGEO wanted to develop a geo-multimedia data content management system (CMS) for rural regions. It provided a link between existing regional geo-multimedia data sources to establish a regional e-community. Based on the virtual regional geo-multimedia database, different customised applications with focus on eco-tourism, including the aspects of nature and national parks were developed.

To keep the system open, interfaces to other e-platforms and access to online and offline systems were supported. The system provided simple geographic information system (GIS) functionalities to make use of spatial data content. In addition, it used advanced technologies for presentation and data assessment.

A regional geo-multimedia CMS served different user groups: administration, public and private enterprises or institutions, as well as single customers, such as visitors. A strong evaluation and exploitation process was provided.

REGEO defined on the one hand, a geodata-based tourist information system including different offline and online media, and on the other, a system that could be used regionally as a geodata pool.

The basis for this system was a virtual geo-multimedia database that would organise distributed information and be flexible enough to serve other tasks than tourism as well. This concept served several levels of users: administrations having their planning tasks, visitors wanting to have an information system and enterprises that are interested in e-commerce.

Tourists were able to have an optimised visual presentation of the region and what it offers (all information geo-referenced for optimised orientation) through different media (online and offline). Local administrations were able to get publicity for their region's tourism sector, as well as regionally organised geo-multimedia data through REGEO's virtual database for their own use. Regional SMEs had the possibility to present themselves and their products through this system.

REGEO found financing possibilities for such a system and provided a business plan, publicity material and workshops for dissemination.

Four different regions in four different countries were selected for the project: national parks in the Czech Republic and Austria, a landscape park in Poland and a nature park in Germany. The concept of this project could therefore be tested in different

countries with different infrastructures and regional specifications. Nevertheless, in all regions, the development of eco-tourism is a common major task.

The work was divided into work packages (WP):

- WP 1 provided strict project management.
- WP 2 analysed the user situation and the user requirements in each region. Based on the results of work package 2 and the system design outlined in the proposal.
- WP 3 adjusted the system architecture definition, to take into account the specifications of each region. The system design focused on a fast geo-multimedia data assessment, a network for a regional virtual geo-multimedia data pool, customised applications in the field of eco-tourism, an advanced presentation and visualisation, as well as interfaces for online and offline systems.
- WP 4 developed and implemented the aforementioned system by integrating real data for tests. Missing geodata was processed based on fast methods using GPS, satellite data and aerial photographs.
- WP 5 provided prototypes to be tested in two phases, a limited test phase for prototype 1 in one region and a comprehensive test phase for prototype 2 in all regions. For the final test phase, an extended evaluation with selected user groups was provided.
- WP 6 was responsible for the dissemination and exploitation of the developed concept and the results. In WP 6, intensive publicity work was carried out and interest groups were contacted. The exploitation was developed in the form of a product definition, business plan and financial concepts.

Sprite: sustainable tourism development in rural regions

Sprite analysed the potential for better integrated tourism in Europe's lagging rural regions and assessed how tourism's linkages with local/regional resources, activities, products and communities may be developed. It created a unifying conceptual framework for analysing integrated tourism, surveying tourists, businesses, communities and institutional structures.

In 12 study regions, Sprite produced detailed resource/activity audits and tourism value chains; and developed and introduced decision support for integrated tourism.

The links between tourism and local resource and activity structures in their economic, social and cultural dimensions were analysed. A study was also carried out on the integrative processes involved, examining the concept of localities as commodities as well as the impact and benefits of integrated tourism.

The project's conclusions yielded valuable data and analysis for practitioners and produced recommendations for more effective and sustainable integrated tourism development.



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Project start and end dates

1 February 2001 to 30 June 2004

Project duration

41 months

Project name

Supporting and promoting integrated tourism in Europe's lagging rural regions

Project acronym

Sprite

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 2 266 135

EU funding

EUR 1 881 840

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

Quality of life and management of living resources

Project coordinator

Keith Lewis
University College of Wales Aberystwyth
United Kingdom

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 54720 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Project start and end dates

1 October 2000 to 31 May 2004

Project duration

44 months

Project name

Opportunities for and barriers to tourism-led integrated rural development in rural regions of selected Member States

Project acronym

Optour

Project status

Completed

Project cost

EUR 1 200 430

EU funding

EUR 1 200 430

Programme

FP5

Thematic programme

Quality of life and management of living resources

Project coordinator

Gillian Slater
Bournemouth University
United Kingdom

Contract type

Cost-sharing contracts (CSC)

Please access the fact sheet of the project in the CORDIS projects database by entering its identification number 54705 in the search window on the CORDIS website.

<http://cordis.europa.eu>

Optour: rural tourism's opportunities and barriers

The focus of this research was to determine the opportunities for, and barriers to advocating tourism as an agent of rural diversification and development in a range of EU Member States. It determined the role, attitudes and perceptions of visitor groups, entrepreneurs and institutions to the development of rural tourism in two EU Member States.

The objectives of the project were to:

- Bridge the information gap by undertaking an integrated review of a range of approaches to the development of rural tourism in selected EU Member States.
- Identify perceived opportunities and actual barriers to the development of rural tourism.
- Based upon an analysis of these findings, to formulate approaches which enable tourism developments to be integrated into general regional development strategies focusing in particular upon the situation of the candidate countries.

The research strategy recognised:

- The socioeconomic differences between EU Member States and candidate countries. In so doing it differentiated between EU Member States that are established generators of outbound tourists and those which are emerging as generators of outbound tourists.
- That within the EU, there have been/are a variety of strategies adopted by institutions to encourage/facilitate/guide the development of rural tourism.
- That one valid analysis of the main players in the tourism development process is the recognition of the tourists with their perceptions and demands, the enterprises (typically, in a market economy, SMEs), and the institutions which provide varying styles and levels of facilitation and guidance.

Therefore, the research evaluated:

- The motivations, perceptions and images of the rural tourism offer of three EU Member States by potential visitors from four (two established two emerging) EU generating countries and those of the domestic population.
- The opportunities and barriers (fiscal, environmental, social, institutional) experienced by tourism entrepreneurs in all the participating countries in establishing their businesses.
- The strategies proposed by appropriate institutions and agencies (governmental and non-governmental) for facilitating rural tourism development in each country.
- The response of tourism entrepreneurs and their associations to the perceptions and demands of potential visitors from EU Member States and from their own country.
- How EU tourism entrepreneurs reacted to both their own countries' rural tourism development strategies and to those strategies advanced in differing EU Member States.
- The response of EU Member States' institutions to the analysis by their own countries' entrepreneurs of existing strategies and their response to the strategies advanced in differing EU Member States.



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Enterprise and Industry DG tourism website

<http://ec.europa.eu/enterprise/services/tourism>

The website aims to disseminate information on EU tourism policies, actions and initiatives promoting growth and development, with a view to strengthening the competitiveness of EU tourism enterprises. It offers an up-to-date coverage of EU tourism policies as well as news, speeches, electronic publications and essential information on events, EU business statistics and benchmarking. It also hosts open consultations and forums.



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