



IMproving Sustainable Development Policies and Practices to access, diversify and foster Cultural TOURism in European regions and areas

Newsletter No. 1

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About IMPACTOUR

Cultural tourism (CT) is considered a factor of economic growth and a bridge between different cultures in the development of European regions. However, the impacts of the different types of CT are not yet estimated. Another issue concerns whether cross-border strategies used to reach sustainable development are adequate.

The EU-funded IMPACTOUR project is connecting CT stakeholders and researchers, envisaging new approaches and methods that will support European CT, reinforce a feeling of belonging, value minority cultures and promote Europeanisation. (continued on page 2).

The project will elaborate on an advanced and adaptable methodology to estimate the impact of CT on EU regional economic growth. It will combine data analytics algorithms with machine learning and AI approaches to improve policies and actions on CT. IMPACTOUR proposes to bring together CT-related stakeholders and researchers to achieve new approaches taking advantage of the large amounts of information that confront policy-makers. By identifying and comparing quantitative/qualitative pan-European information on CT forms and promotion, and by providing quantifiable evidence of CT strategies and their effect on European regions' development and Europeanisation, IMPACTOUR will deliver an innovative methodology and tool (combining data analytics algorithms with artificial intelligence and machine learning strategies) providing CT stakeholders with strategic guidance so that policies and practices on CT can be improved.

IMPACTOUR will encompass a sustainable ecosystem by engaging Cultural Tourism stakeholders and following a participatory approach. IMPACTOUR tools and methods will lead to reinforcing the commitment with European CT, increasing citizens' sense of belonging, valuing minority cultures, and strengthening of European identity. IMPACTOUR Methodology will be completed and tested with data coming from 15 Data Information Pilots and the IMPACTOUR tool will be validated in 5 Validation Pilots, with distinct characteristics spread around Europe.

The project has received € 2.971.250 funding from the European Commission EU Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation Programme. Twelve project partners from nine EU Member States are working on the project. The project runs from January 2020 to December 2022.

Coordinator: [Uninova - Instituto de Desenvolvimento de Novas Tecnologias](#), Portugal

Partners:

- [Fundacion Tecnalia Research & Innovation](#), Spain
- [Technologiko Panepistimio Kyprou](#), Cyprus
- [Cultur Viaes Patrimonio SL](#), Spain
- [Institute of Baltic Studies](#), Estonia
- [Consorzio Materahub Industrie Culturali e Creative](#), Italy
- [European Network for Accessible Tourism ASBL](#), Belgium
- [Agence de Cooperation Interregionale - Reseau Chemins de Saint-Jacques de Compostelle](#), France
- [Associacao de Municipios da Regiao Autonoma dos Acores](#), Portugal
- [Ettevotluse Arendamise Sihtasutus](#), Estonia
- [TRANSROMANICA - The Romanesque Routes of European Heritage E.V.](#), Germany
- [Europa Nostra](#), Netherlands

Photo: Paysage Auch chemin d'Arles @ ACIR Compostelle. JJ Gelbart.



1ST Transnational Project Meeting: “Kick-off” meeting

The 1st Transnational and Kick-off meeting of the IMPACTOUR project took place in Lisbon on the 28-29 January 2020.

Host institution: UNINOVA-INSTITUTO DE DESENVOLVIMENTO DE NOVAS TECNOLOGIAS



Photos of the project team at the Kick-off meeting in Lisbon (IMPACTOUR)

Over the two days of the meeting all the partners presented and discussed the work programme, ensuring a smooth start to the 3-year project. Unbeknownst to us all, our meeting at the end of January was to be the last face-to-face meeting so far, due to the COVID-19 pandemic which took hold in Europe in the following months. For all of us, the Coronavirus has upturned our daily lives and our working routines but the project continues, albeit with a necessary contract amendment to allow an additional 6-months to adapt the workplan to the new situation.

Online working and the first IMPACTOUR Webinar

Facing the “new reality”, the project partners have been working remotely and almost entirely online since March. Moreover, in the first stages of the research, the partners have started to grapple with the wide range of questions and issues that COVID-19 has brought with it, in particular, the impacts of travel restrictions, social distancing and health measures on tourism and, indeed, the economic downturn that our societies are now experiencing.



The First IMPACTOUR Webinar was held online via Zoom, on 4th June 2020.

The two-hour meeting enabled the project team to engage with managers of the 15 IMPACTOUR “Pilot Sites” around Europe, who will perform a vital role in the research and development work.

A video recording of the slide presentations is publicly available on YouTube at: <https://youtu.be/CfIIfS1GU54>

Guest Article

Prof. Miljenko Jurkovic, University of Zagreb, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences

IMPACTOUR Advisory Board Member



The recent struggle with the corona pandemic has shown the vulnerability of tourism as part of local economies, and the crucial need for strengthening the policies. But, EU has so many agendas considering cultural tourism and cultural heritage, not realizing the impossibility of global regularization, due to different policies and different traditions of member countries. Legislations in all EU countries are different among themselves, when dealing with cultural heritage, which complicates the issue of balanced development of cultural tourism. There is no doubt in my mind that cultural heritage is one of the most important economic assets, so its intelligent management is crucial for its longevity and stability, which, in turn benefits all: policymakers and end-users alike. So, in other words, the starting point of every intelligent management is the cultural asset itself, the care, the conservation, the integration into local communities.

Each European country has different praxis in conservation of cultural heritage, the levels of inclusiveness of local communities in protection and consuming the heritage and the levels of understanding and self-identification among communities vary as well. Nevertheless, what is common to all is the need for optimized management of a cultural heritage asset from the point of view of its integration into society. Simply put, economic benefit should never come before the original function of the cultural heritage and overload the system in the way that neither the users, nor the stakeholders, nor the general public (and tourists among them) can enjoy them. I am stating this with cases of Venice and Dubrovnik (on a smaller scale) in mind. We always need to maintain the balance between the original function of cultural heritage (or at least one that supplements it, not devastates it) and its economic potential as the point of interest for tourism. To make the policymakers understand it is the utmost challenge for the project IMPACTOUR. That is why the need of a database of best practices, the need to investigate new and innovative policies, the need for new management tools, the use of digital technologies that the project will develop.

In my field of expertise as an art-historian, I have always advocated preservation of cultural heritage as the first and foremost duty. However, the preservation of the monument itself is not enough, as cultural heritage exists within and cannot be extracted from its social surroundings. That is why developing strategies for sustainable and balanced development of cultural tourism, which is one of the main goals of IMPACTOUR project, will contribute both to promotion of cultural tourism on a European scale, and to the cultural heritage preservation itself.



IMPACTOUR Partner profiles

In this Newsletter and the next 5 editions, we will profile one or more of our partners, providing an insight into their activities and their connection to IMPACTOUR. Here we present UNINOVA and EUROPA NOSTRA.

IMPACTOUR Coordinator: UNINOVA - Instituto de Desenvolvimento de Novas Tecnologias, Portugal

The UNINOVA Research Institute is a multidisciplinary, independent, and non-profit research institute employing around 180 persons, located in the metropolitan area of Lisbon. It was funded in 1986 by the NOVA School of Science and Technology of the University NOVA de Lisboa (FCT NOVA - www.fct.unl.pt), a group of industrial associations, a financial holding, and up to 30 companies. It is an active partner of Madan Parque (www.madanparque.pt), a business facilitator and accelerator, incubating Micro and SME's through several layers of support to entrepreneurial activity.

The main aim of UNINOVA is to pursue excellence in scientific research, technical development, advanced training and education. By working closely with industry and universities, technological innovations are transferred into profitable business concepts and, existing products further developed to match new industrial requirements. Due to its tight connection with the University and Madan Parque, UNINOVA has, since its foundation, hosted and supported the development several PhD theses, as well as the creation of several successful spin-offs.



UNINOVA hosts two Research Units. The Centre of Excellence in Microelectronics Optoelectronics and Process (CEMAP) is specially equipped for Research & Development, service providing and training activities in five main areas: microelectronic and optoelectronic devices' conception/production technologies and processes; tribologic and optic coatings; system project and conception; material and device characterization; and also device simulation/modelling. The Centre of Technology and Systems (CTS) aims to develop theoretical and applied research and encourages technology transfer mostly supported by spin offs and deep involvement in international R&D projects. The scientific results are expected to contribute to improve the graduate training in the academia and contribute to the internationalization.

Heritage research domain falls under the scope of CTS/UNINOVA, whose areas of expertise can be divided into Electronic and Embedded Systems, Energy and Industrial Systems, and Computer Engineering Systems.

CTS/UNINOVA has 39 integrated members, 36 associated members and 50 PhD students. It has a ratio of more than 230 publications per year and has been involved in more than 170 projects since 2010. CTS/UNINOVA project portfolio involves 43% of European projects, 38% of National projects and 19% of industry related services.

CTS/UNINOVA has been developing innovative digital solutions for heritage related areas for the past 20 years. CTS/UNINOVA strongly believes that taking care of our ancestors' inheritance is an important legacy for future generations. IMPACTOUR project is CTS/UNINOVA's newest challenge aiming to strengthen heritage's role as a sustainable driving force in the growth and economic development. Assembling an impressive set of world-wide experts, aggregating beyond state-of-the-art ICT tools with heritage stakeholder's engagement and reaching for new levels in Cultural Tourism development is a challenge that CTS/UNINOVA is proud to be part of.

IMPACTOUR Partner: EUROPA NOSTRA, Netherlands



Who and what is Europa Nostra?! The clue is the name – ‘Our Europe’: Europe is nothing without its people, and its people define what it means to be European. Jean Monnet said the ‘European Project’, 70 years old this year, was founded as much on cultural identity as regulation of coal and steel. Europa Nostra was founded in 1963 and is still THE European Voice of Civil Society committed to Cultural Heritage. It can truly speak for ‘Our Europe’ in having 244 member organisations in 37 countries, 115 associate organisations and over 1,000 individual members. Most people

know us by the European Heritage Awards, the leading cultural heritage ‘Power of Example’, which since 2002 have been run on behalf of the European Commission, currently through Creative Europe.



‘Our Europe’ is about collaboration. In 2005, Europa Nostra co-ordinated the landmark report ‘Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe’ by the European Heritage Alliance. It revealed the critical inter-dependency of culture, environment, economy and society, but in only 6% of cases do all sectors collaborate, limiting progress on sustainability. Europa Nostra has since made great strides in embedding cultural heritage in all political and environmental agendas, including being a founder member of the global Climate Heritage Network, and currently making representations on the European Green Deal. Inter-dependency is making best use of all available finance and resources, so the 7 Most Endangered programme is run in collaboration with the European Investment Bank Institute, channelling expertise into promoting sustainable solutions for the most problematic cultural sites of European significance – a

mission which chimes with the main bank’s emphasis on being Europe’s Climate Bank.

Europa Nostra’s Power of Example extends beyond the awards as we advocate principles through a diversity of projects and partnerships. 2018 European Year of Cultural Heritage was a defining year, culminating in the Berlin European Heritage Summit and Declaration, and on Europe Day 2020, the European Heritage Alliance Manifesto. This is our latest collaboration with Europeana and one of our commitments to European digital cultural heritage. IMPACTOUR sees us again working with the UNESCO Chair of Digital Cultural Heritage at Cyprus University of Technology, with whom we have contributed to the European Commission’s Expert Group on Digitisation. COVID-19 has raised the stakes for IMPACTOUR, which for us began as a means of supporting better data-based management of over-visited and marginalised attractions, but now must address the challenge of an emerging ‘new normal’.

IMPACTOUR - Partners



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