

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



IMPACTOUR Team Members at the Global World Café, Matera, Italy, November 2021

Newsletter No. 4

About IMPACTOUR

The IMPACTOUR project started on 1st January 2020. With a grant of M€2.9 from the European Commission, it will create an innovative and easy-to-use methodology and tool to measure and assess the impact of Cultural Tourism.

IMPACTOUR brings together multi-disciplinary teams from the fields of data science and engineering, cultural heritage, tourism management and accessibility to devise a new, data-driven approach to managing cultural destinations.


The project aims to strengthen the role of Cultural Tourism as a driving force in the growth and economic development of sustainable European regions.

Contents

IMPACTOUR Regional and Global World Cafés	3
Regional World Cafés. 7 Hybrid Events, Summer 2021	3
Global World Café – November 2021, Matera, Italy	4
Exploring the Key Success Factors for Managing Cultural Tourism Destinations	6
Project Outputs Available for Downloading	7
New IMPACTOUR Pilot Sites	8
Introducing Palmi, Calabria, Italy. IMPACTOUR Pilot Site	8
IMPACTOUR Partner profiles	9
Cyprus University of Technology and UNESCO Chair on Digital Cultural Heritage (DCH)	9
Join the IMPACTOUR Community	11
“Smart Cultural Tourism Destinations” Group on LinkedIn	11
IMPACTOUR Brochures	11
IMPACTOUR – Partners	12

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IMPACTOUR Regional and Global World Cafés

As part of the IMPACTOUR work programme in the second half of 2021, representatives of the [IMPACTOUR Pilot Sites](#) were engaged in “World Café” meetings, where project themes and ideas were explored in a structured format together with the IMPACTOUR Partners. Due to Covid-19 travel restrictions the meetings were held as “hybrid” events, both online and face-to-face, also involving those participants who could not travel.

The [World Café methodology](#) is a meeting format designed for large groups who seek to explore particular questions and arrive at conclusions through dialogue.

Regional World Cafés. 7 Hybrid Events, Summer 2021



With the objective of connecting the maximum number of people and stakeholders in a local level, Regional World Cafés (RWCs) were held from July to September in 7 groups: Spain, Portugal – Azores, Italy, France, Germany, Estonia and Cyprus. The IMPACTOUR partners and representatives of pilot destinations were grouped in geographical and national/regional languages to facilitate travel and common understanding. At the end of the sessions, a joint discussion took place where the group results were shared, drawing conclusions from across Europe.

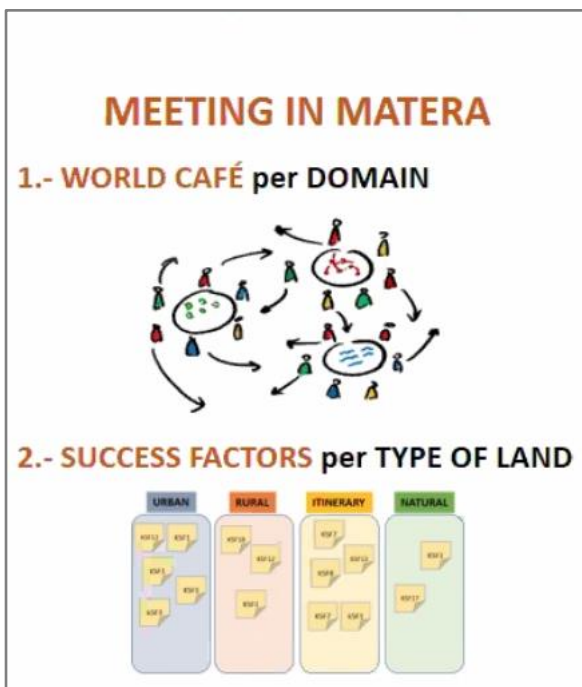
The Regional World Cafés aimed to reinforce stakeholders’ understanding and commitment to the project objectives, as well as launching the ‘Community of Experiences’ interactive web platform until the Global event. By asking questions about their work and challenges, the IMPACTOUR Community strengthened ties and learnt more about the stakeholders involved at destinations. Moreover, giving the opportunity to express themselves about Cultural Tourism issues, the inputs have helped the consortium to identify their needs in relation to Cultural Tourism, and the direct and indirect impacts experienced during the difficult period of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The roundtables contributed qualitative information needed to build the IMPACTOUR tool, as well as further Key Success Factors (KSF) and Cultural Tourism Strategies. The impacts of Cultural Tourism on their territory were described according to the four main data domains: economic, social, environmental and cultural.

The information gathered from each RCW was gathered and analysed, cross-referencing the qualitative data from survey data from the pilot sites, to be included in the final Comparative Assessment Report, following the Global World Café.

Héctor M. Aliaga de Miguel. [Fundación Santa María la Real del Patrimonio Histórico](#)

Global World Café – November 2021, Matera, Italy



The Global World Café, took place in November 2021 in the Italian UNESCO listed city of Matera, again using the hybrid format. The aim of this World Café was to increase the number of participants and to anticipate possible evolutions of the pandemic, share experiences of the pilot sites and promote synergy among the consortium participants. It also gave the opportunity to discover one of the destinations involved in the IMPACTOUR project.

The World Café was organised in five roundtables, each facilitated by representatives of the IMPACTOUR partnership. Groups were asked to discuss several topics relative to the 5 general domains: social, cultural, environmental, economic. The objective of the tables was to identify strategies to tackle challenges, to share good practices and to define keywords.

A final round of discussions examined the most relevant indicators and Cultural Tourism strategies for IMPACTOUR at this stage.



The **Social Table** was explored destination management strategies to enhance accessibility and inclusion and to avoid over-tourism. **Co-creation of the accessible and inclusive cultural tourism offer** was seen as key, as the involvement of all stakeholders representing the institutions, the citizens and the tourism suppliers can make everyone aware of the positive impact of a universally designed development plan. Participants highlighted some **typical problems and examples of successful strategies**, explaining how **a lack of coordination between different levels of decision makers can make plans and funding less effective**, and how even a great involvement of

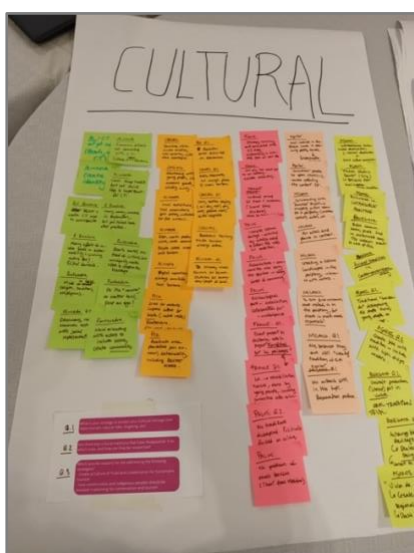
the civil society cannot be enough when the institutions do not constantly support an initiative. On the positive side, in Portugal, **a national strategy and budget for improving accessibility in tourism can help to nurture private and public CT initiatives and, thereby, local development.**

Strategies to avoid or reduce over-tourism were discussed intensively, with pilot sites sharing their ideas and experiences on how to encourage wider dispersal of tourists away from crowded venues. Specifically, **packages that include different places near to the main cultural attractions** encourage visitors to add new cultural experiences to trips. **Tour operators** can also play a role in reducing crowding by **organising overnight stays in a wider range of locations.**

The debate in the **Cultural Table** was centred around **the need to protect cultural tourism from mass tourism, natural risks and to revalue local traditions that are at risk of disappearing.**

The most important output and strategy that came out of the roundtable is the great need to support a culture of **trust** between citizens, tourism suppliers and policy makers to realise that tourism is not against **traditions**, and a sustainable way can be found between telling local stories, preserving the environment and making profit, also by transparent budgeting and promoting and supporting the involvement local **volunteers**.

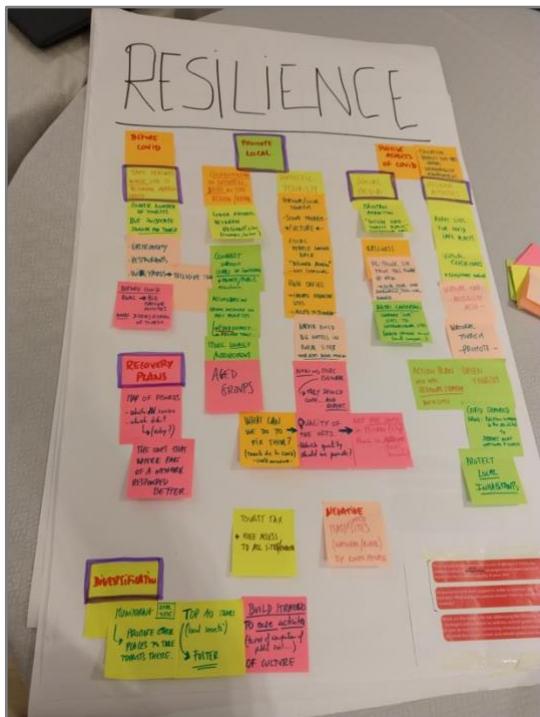
The **Environmental Table** was centred over the **questions whether pilots measured the environmental impact of cultural tourism** and how they were **lacking information on environmental actions** that could leverage sustainable cultural tourism. All participants agreed that it is not easy to monitor the environmental data for tourism purposes, and it can be difficult to cooperate to share data generated by those departments who measure, for example pollution. Solutions and good practices could be **mobility labs** and **close cooperation with different actors to understand the consequences of the tourism growth** in certain areas before putting dispersion policies into action.



The discussion around the **Economic Table** focussed on **strategies to enhance the economic opportunities of cultural tourism development in the pilot destinations.** The way in which the destinations collect economic data was also taken into consideration. The so called “data-harvesting” is beginning to be deployed in some of the destinations thanks to start-up hubs or with the help of university departments. While the process of data gathering can be long and time-consuming, new technologies like mobile positioning based in smart phone data could ease the work. After this complex and motivational process, many of the results from the comparative analysis of pilots, combining quantitative and qualitative data, will be summarised in a public Benchmarking report.

Héctor M. Aliaga de Miguel. [Fundación Santa María la Real del Patrimonio Histórico](#)
Emiliano Deferrari. [European Network for Accessible Tourism asbl.](#)

Exploring the Key Success Factors for Managing Cultural Tourism Destinations



Determining the success of Cultural Tourism (CT) strategies and the possibility of their replicability in all types of sites across Europe requires an in-depth understanding of the effectiveness of certain key actions carried out by cultural tourism and heritage managers.

To explore these actions and strategies, IMPACTOUR has developed a list of **Key Success Factors (KSF)** and analysed their replicability conditions. We consider Key Success Factors to be those factors that are designed to help CT and heritage managers select the best approach for their site, prioritize resources and generate a positive and balanced CT impact in the territory, considering its social, economic, cultural and environmental dimensions. The different “context characteristics” of a site are also mapped, since these will help to define the replicability conditions that affect the likelihood of a KSF to achieve the positive impacts towards a more sustainable CT.

This analytical model has been developed, based on theoretical inputs and by working closely with the IMPACTOUR community. This constructive dialogue was developed in two phases: Initially questionnaires were shared and completed by Pilot Sites and, in a second phase (after a desk analysis), a session was organized within the Global World Café sessions held in Matera in November 2021. In this session, Pilots’ representatives discussed, modified and validated the Key Success Factors that had been previously identified. Overall, the approach provided Pilot Sites with a common understanding of the KSFs, and their role in the context of sustainable CT strategies.

The aim of these KSFs is to enable a more resilient approach to the sustainability of CT. One of the upcoming tasks in the project will be based on this work and will investigate how to define the successful IMPACTOUR Strategies.

Mikel Zubiaga De La Cal. [TECNALIA](#)

Project Outputs Available for Downloading

Following the successful outcome of the European Commission's project review meeting, held on 23 September 2021, the following Public Deliverables are now available from the IMPACTOUR Website Results Page: <https://www.impactour.eu/pages/impactour-results>

Deliverable title and download link	Deliverable description
<u>D1.1 Report on cultural tourism leading to sustainable economic and social development</u>	Linking cultural tourism with the increase in economic competitiveness and social welfare of regions and countries.
<u>D1.3 Identification of tools for Cultural Tourism impact assessment</u>	Analysis of non-traditional sources of social and economic data (incl. big data) and their potential for impact assessments in the field of cultural tourism.
<u>D2.1 List of criteria and indicators to carry out the comparative assessment</u>	First version of the identified criteria and searching indicators to select a good case in each type of cultural tourism type.
<u>D3.2 Stakeholders engagement plan</u>	This deliverable describes how stakeholders will be involved in data collection phases.
<u>D3.3 Data collection methodology</u>	This deliverable describes how the data collection will happen.
<u>D7.2 Dissemination and Exploitation Plan (DEP)</u>	This "working document" is produced to plan dissemination of project aims, activities and results during the project's implementation. Also describes exploitation plans, considering consortium as a whole, stakeholders' involvement, field tests – validation, relation to other research activities, publication identification, methodology, benefits vs risks, standardisation, possible joint ventures and licensing agreement.
<u>D7.4 1st Report on communication and visibility actions</u>	Visual identity, website, communication material (flyer/postcard/pop-up poster) and social media developed in the project.

Visit our [website](https://www.impactour.eu/pages/articles) for more IMPACTOUR articles on the management of Cultural Tourism and Heritage destinations and sites: <https://www.impactour.eu/pages/articles>

New IMPACTOUR Pilot Sites

The IMPACTOUR project collaborates with over 20 Pilot Sites around Europe. These cultural tourism destinations are collecting data on visitor flows, cultural assets, infrastructure provisions, economic and social indicators, helping to define, build and eventually test the new IMPACTOUR tools for destination management.

Their voluntary contribution is highly valued and appreciated, as they bring 'real-world' issues to the heart of the project's work. This enhances the relevance of our analysis and helps to foster the co-creation of innovative, yet practical, planning and management tools.

Additional Pilot Sites are joining the project to share their knowledge, experience and ideas for the future. By widening the collaboration network, we increase the scope of IMPACTOUR as cultural tourism sites tackle the huge challenges, not least, brought by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Visit the recent additions to our Pilot Sites' network on the IMPACTOUR website to learn more.

:

- [Aldeia dos Biscoitos, Portugal](#)
- [Cascais, Portugal](#)
- [Comune di Palmi, Calabria - Italy](#)
- [Fajã dos Cubres, Portugal](#)

Below, we feature one of the new IMPACTOUR pilot destinations: Palmi, Italy.

Introducing Palmi, Calabria, Italy. IMPACTOUR Pilot Site

Palmi is located at the southern end of Tyrrhenian Calabria, facing the incomparable naturalistic scenery offered by the nearby Aeolian Islands, the Strait of Messina, and the view of Etna, at the foot of Mount Sant'Elia. Palmi is set halfway up the coast between low sandy beaches and high and rocky cliffs bathed by a clear blue sea, sometimes outlined by original purple veins and it is precisely for this reason that its coastal stretch is called **Costa Viola**.



Photo: Copyright ph. Daniele Ligato

The Varia of Palmi festival honours the Virgin Mary, protector of the city. It includes the largest Italian shoulder-carried machine without wheels. The event takes place on the last Sunday of August every 2,3 or 4 years. In 2013, it was declared as **an intangible heritage of humanity**. Palmi hosts a historical public library dedicated to "Leonida Repaci", a citizen of Palmi and founder of the famous national contest of literature "Premio Viareggio".

The Municipality of Palmi is dedicated to improving the sustainable cultural tourism,

together with the development of civic sense, through the participation of active citizens.

Visit the IMPACTOUR Pilot site: [Palmi, Italy](#)

IMPACTOUR Partner profile

In this Newsletter we profile one of our project partners, providing an insight into their activities and their connection to IMPACTOUR.

Cyprus University of Technology and UNESCO Chair on Digital Cultural Heritage (DCH)



Cyprus University of Technology (CUT) was established by law in 2004 and enrolled its first students in 2007. With its orientation towards applied research, the University aspires to establish for itself a role in support of the state and society in their efforts to confront problems, which cover all areas of science and technology. CUT's involvement in research has been recognised by the fact that within the last four years, projects with more than 30M Euro have been funded.

CUT is an advanced University equipped with the most modern infrastructures and technological equipment which makes it possible to be the strongest, on the island, in research with specialised units directed by distinguished professionals. In the IMPACTOUR project CUT is involved with one Laboratory, the Digital Heritage Research Laboratory (DHRLab), established in 2013, directed by Dr. Marinos Ioannides. It is responsible for the digital and holistic documentation of Cultural Heritage Objects as well as all the issues related to the EU and Cyprus Policy on DCH. Moreover, the Lab is very active in 3D Reconstruction, HBIM and Cultural Tourism with a special focus on semantics and symbolic representation. Within the last nine years of its existence the staff of the DHRLab managed to coordinate four EU projects and take part in another nineteen EU FP7 and H2020 projects with a total budget for the DHRLab of 8,6 million Euro.

UNESCO Chair on Digital Heritage

The main scope of this unique Chair is to extend the successful work of the Digital Heritage Research Lab www.digitalheritagelab.eu and address a full range of novel research and innovative developments such as:

- a) the e-documentation and analysis of cultural heritage data for both tangible and intangible heritage
- b) technical areas, including 2D and 3D virtual environments (tangible and intangible), archives and collections management systems, web and museum based interactive applications and language technologies
- c) non-technical areas, including testing, economic and social impact evaluation in support of the development of the cultural heritage sector and its opportunities in tourism, entertainment and education.



The Research and Development activities of CUT include:

Digitization of any kind of cultural heritage assets and sites through the use of 2D and 3D laser scanning, UAV aerial images, satellite images and GIS to identify and document the site in detail. See the mixed images of two scans of the Church of Panagia Asinou, on left.

Modelling and Archiving of all digitized objects

using standard metadata and semantics. Most of our collections are harvested in the EU digital Library Europeana.

Diagnosis of current conditions of sites using non-destructive investigation methods such as ground penetrating radar, multispectral cameras, thermal cameras, time lapse cameras, spectroradiometers and photogrammetry.

Monitoring cultural heritage site using low environmental impact techniques such as UAVs, sensors, cameras, spectroradiometers and other field surveying methods.

Conservation policies to enhance sustainability using GIS, remote-sensing and Earth Observation techniques.

CUT's role in the IMPACTOUR project is to contribute to an advanced and adaptable methodology to estimate the impact of CT, especially in our pilot destination (Kyperounta Village in Cyprus) but also in other EU regions. We will combine data analytics algorithms with machine learning and AI approaches to improve policies and actions on CT on the site as also to integrate and validate the IMPACTOUR Tool in real scenarios.

View of the village of Kyperounta, Pilot Site connected with CUT, Cyprus



Join the IMPACTOUR Community

The IMPACTOUR Community is a growing online forum of 200 cultural tourism professionals, data scientists, tourism managers and policy makers, educators and NGOs who share and learn from each other on themes related to **managing cultural tourism destinations**.

Register with the IMPACTOUR “Open Social” Community to join the conversation with team members from the project Partners and Pilot Sites. You can join thematic discussion groups, send and receive posts and even create new Groups on subjects that interest you.

Sign up here: <https://www.impactour.eu/user/register>

“Smart Cultural Tourism Destinations” Group on LinkedIn



IMPACTOUR has started a new **LinkedIn Group: Smart Cultural Tourism Destinations**, where CT professionals, scientists and interested individuals and organisations can meet online and share information and ideas in the field of cultural tourism.

Our particular focus, in keeping with the IMPACTOUR objectives, is to explore how we might improve cultural tourism destination management through the collection and use of data and analytical techniques, with the aim of achieving sustainable sites that support local communities and enhance the visitors’ experience and understanding.

LinkedIn members - Join over 140 members and get involved in the group!

Visit: <https://www.linkedin.com/groups/9053513/>

IMPACTOUR Brochures

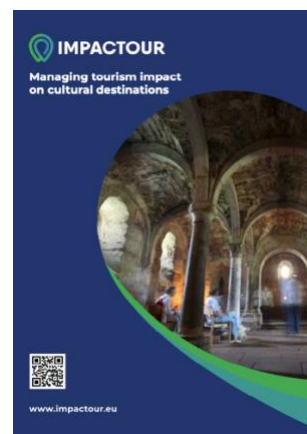
Download the brochures in PDF format from these links:



[IMPACTOUR Brochure no.1 \(A4 size, 2 pages\)](#)



[IMPACTOUR Brochure no. 2 \(A5 size, 6 pages\)](#)



IMPACTOUR – Partners



<https://www.impactour.eu/>

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