

PICTURE



**Pro-active management
of the Impact of Cultural Tourism
upon Urban Resources and Economies**

Deliverable n° **D6**

Deliverable title **Urban Governance of
Cultural Tourism in Europe**

Local authorities perspectives

Summary

Task n° **2.1**

Task Leader: **ITAS**

Task partners: **ITAM-ARCCHIP, EICR, OWHC, SYR, CAUE, EH**

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Introduction

Since the early 1990s, towns and cities in Europe have shown an increased interest in developing cultural tourism development as a means of reviving waning urban centres and bringing life to declining local communities and economies. Decentralisation has significantly favoured the process by allowing urban governments to promote local tourism in view of the specifics of their communities and the demands of the tourists and residents alike. Developing integrated urban approaches and strategies towards sustainable cultural tourism that preserve local heritage and quality of life requires an effective integration between the urban activities and the actors concerned. Coordinating the efforts, however, poses a major challenge to urban managers and decision-makers. Understanding the needs and requirements of integrated cultural tourism by the urban authorities and stakeholders is a vital necessity.

The aim of the present report is to identify the key areas and issues that urban governments of small and medium-sized towns and cities in Europe have to address to promote governance of cultural tourism in their communities. The recommendations are based on existing state-of-the-art research and policy approaches and the results of a recently conducted pan-European Survey. The role of the local governments is particularly underlined in regard to their leadership and uniting capacities in the local communities, in both decision-making and policies. The need of promoting cultural tourism in European cities in view of the user needs is advanced with respect to policy integration, local advantages and urban competitiveness. The concerns and demands and of the local residents are given an equal priority. A preliminary Urban Governance Framework of Cultural Tourism is designed to support following PICTURE activities and promote a discussion among the practitioners' regarding its merits and feasibility.

The study is part of the PICTURE¹ European project and is conducted by a research team from the Institute of Technology Assessment and Systems Analysis of the Karlsruhe Research Centre in Germany led by Krassimira Paskaleva-Shapira² in partnership with Edith Besson, Brigitte Hoffmann and Sylke Wintzer. Other project partners contributed as well.

The present commentary is a summary of the detailed 'Urban Governance of Cultural Tourism in Europe: Local authorities' perspectives' Report. It is aimed for dissemination among the city partners from the project's Reference Group to seek their comments and feedback on the study results and the proposed actions.

¹ PICTURE is a multi-disciplinary research initiative between academics, cities, and tourism and heritage organizations in Europe seeking to elaborate innovative policy and action-driven management solutions to urban decision-makers to promote cultural tourism as a means of preserving cultural heritage, boosting the local economies, and increasing the quality of life in their communities. The main aim of PICTURE is to develop a strategic urban governance framework for the sustainable management of cultural tourism within small and medium-sized European cities. This framework will help establish, evaluate and benchmark integrated tourism policies at the local level with a view to maximising the benefits of tourism for the conservation and enhancement of the built heritage diversity and urban quality of life (<http://www.lema.ulg.ac.be/research/picture>).

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1. Understanding urban governance of cultural tourism in European cities and towns: The PICTURE survey study

Modern-day research and policies emphasize the importance of integrated urban management and policies for the effective delivery of sustainable cultural tourism in European cities. Among other factors, Good Urban Governance is recognised as a key enabler and promoter of the process.

To identify effective collaborative management styles that can benefit European small and medium-sized cities in the sustainable management of cultural tourism in their communities, an “Urban Governance of Cultural Tourism” survey study was conducted in 2004. One of the central objectives was to identify the key trends and developments in the sector along with the specific needs of the local authorities for improving their practice in cultural tourism management with regard to these action areas:

- Integrated planning
- Sustainable management
- Policy development and implementation
- Government steering
- Stakeholder involvement in decision-making
- Partnership strategies and implementation

Cities with known cultural tourism activities and potentials were of primary interest. A variety of other cities were included as well, some of cultural heritage importance, others – with industrial or service-based economies. From the 112 cities involved, 41 participated in the study.

2. Learning urban governance of cultural tourism in Europe: Key concepts and terminology

In a complex urban world, Governing is an interactive process between the parties involved. Several generic concepts form the framework of Urban Governance of Cultural Tourism.

Governance: The bringing together of various actors to achieve shared purposes and benefits in certain areas of development.

Sustainable Development: In building the City of the 21st Century, leading is the concept of Sustainable Development which links environmental stewardship, economic development, and social prosperity of the urban communities for the benefit of present and future generations.

Urban Cultural Tourism: An important form of Urban Tourism, which can be understood as the movement of persons to cultural attractions away from their place of residents with the intention of gathering new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs

(demand side). From the supply side, cultural tourism is the industry of cultural assets and products, some formally constructed by tourism suppliers (heritage centres, theatre halls, galleries, and museums along with the performing, visual and producing arts) or they may be implicit in the place (architecture, natural landscapes, local values, traditions, lifestyles, and markets).

Urban Coalitions: A key way to tackle the challenges of Urban Governance for Cultural Tourism and create conditions for collective action is to form Coalitions of public and private partners to deal with problems in the cities (“loose” forms of collaboration).

Government Steering: Coalition where government plays a pivotal role is often referred to as Government Steering.

Public-Private Partnerships: Innovative and effective tools for implementing collective action of actors from both sectors (“tight” forms of collaboration).

Local Agenda 21 is a global Action Plan for Sustainable Development in the 21st century and can be defined as the process of developing local principles and policies for sustainable development and building the community partnerships to implement them.

3. Governance of urban cultural tourism: Requirements and needs of local authorities

The PICTURE Governance study has revealed that cultural tourism is a growing industry in many European cities. However, small and medium-size localities generally lack the financial and strategic resources to implement Good Urban Governance for Sustainable Cultural Tourism. Missing is a cohesive guidance on how to practically manage the sector that can potentially create an array of positive impacts in the economy as well as on a range of other sectors and assets, such as local heritage and urban quality of life. A number of trends and elements are of critical importance to the local authorities here:

- From an economic perspective, the dynamics of the sector is still insufficiently known; many urban communities lack the necessary data to support the development of long-term strategies of cultural tourism. To enhance decision-making in the sector, local authorities should improve their knowledge and information capacities regarding the role of cultural tourism in their urban and regional economies. Dedicated tourism bodies can be promoted to boost the sector development and diversity while private organisations can be attracted to run infrastructure and skill-intensive activities such as event tourism or leisure and recreation.
- Sustainability, image and authenticity of the cultural products are often unaccounted for in cultural tourism policies and plans. Given the significance of the sector on the quality of life in the smaller urban communities, more needs to be done by local authorities to

reconcile short-term economic goals with long-term social and environmental urban pursuits. Sustainability has to be placed high on the agenda of all stakeholders and particularly of businesses and tourism boards where the concept is yet of marginal interest.

- Urban management of cultural tourism is usually in the hands of many different actors, from both within and outside the cities. In smaller localities, often relying extensively on cultural and heritage tourism for their economies, tourism commissions and boards established by the local authorities usually manage the sector; in cities where event/leisure or recreation tourism is of primary focus, private companies are mainly in the lead. Local or regional tourism councils and agencies (public or private) play a role too, especially in the overall sector development and profiling. They are often involved in multi-actor consultations and are generally supportive to urban governance. However, private organisations rarely participate in cultural tourism policy-making and particularly its early stages when the problems are defined and the actions planned. On the other hand, public bodies generally lack the strategic tools for sustainable management of the sector, such as integrated impact assessment, which is a considerable obstacle to progress. Moreover, the managing organisations are often unaware of their potential roles in urban governance and the merits of the process. Given the diversity and complexity of the sector, acquiring new knowledge of governance, innovative management and impact assessment by the stakeholders concerned appears critical to the success. The needs of the community and tourists should be given an equal importance particularly in the practice of the private providers.
- Integrated management of urban cultural tourism requires introducing governance styles and systems that involve local authorities, the tourism sector, local associations and the residents. Achieving these objectives requires vertical (among scales and levels of management) and horizontal (among the local actors) integration of the activities in the domains of cultural services, transport, accommodation, and urban planning.
- Integrated management of cultural tourism should involve community and tourist representatives. To promote knowledgeable and engaged actors in cultural tourism, cities should introduce educational and learning programmes that encourage responsible travellers and engaged citizens. More visual forms of information provision should be offered. Training programs for tourism personnel and quality control schemes should become part of the every day management practices. Impact assessment and innovative policy tools for the integrated management of the sector are necessary to synchronise priority targets and actions among the stakeholders involved.

- In managing cultural tourism sites, the priorities of the various actors are often divergent, and sometimes conflicting. To overcome the potential problems, their main objectives and implementation schemes must be better coordinated and goal-oriented. Infrastructure and quality of space and living considerations should be integrated in the site management schemes.
- Integrated urban management and policies are key to the effective delivery and implementation of sustainable cultural tourism in European cities. Urban governance is an important enabler and promoter of the process. It can be achieved through partnerships and alliances between local authorities and other cultural tourism actors. Bringing together the various urban actors to achieve sustainable cultural tourism in small and medium-sized European cities requires a governance framework.
- Government is by far the main promoter and enabler of governance of urban cultural tourism. Local authorities can play a critical role in identifying the players and the leaders to make collaborations and partnerships work. Though tourism industry appears better placed to secure the investment, local government's role remains essential in ensuring collaboration, openness, and distribution of the benefits among the members of the community. The urban authorities also employ the necessary capacities to steer and direct the activities, coordinate the actions, and improve urban tourism policies in view of strategic local development and planning goals. It maintains the position to promote policy agenda which embraces sustainability and governance principles and involves the citizens and civil society. It too can facilitate integration of local development objectives with long-term strategic interests of the community.
- Yet, local authorities steering capacities needs a substantial boost. Particularly, in increasing their role in cultural tourism management, impact assessment, learning from 'best practices' and monitoring sectoral development. Needed is also the involvement of the actors at all stages of decision making. Particularly, in defining the key issues and the policy options. This could create confidence and satisfaction among the local community and particularly in the private sector, which to-day shows a degree of dissatisfaction with the existing establishments.
- In partnership development, critical to maximising the benefits of local collaboration is the sharing of the resources and capacities of the actors. This should become a common practice in cultural tourism of European towns. Working out the roles and the responsibilities of the actors in the management of the sector will support the process. Commitment and leadership will secure a successful implementation.
- In small cities, where authorities have usually strong influence and power, tourism industry is less fragmented and diverse, and community groups are more influential, strengthening the role of the public administrations in uniting the stakeholders for the

establishment of a long-term development framework, in which collaboration is a cornerstone to success, appears an ultimate necessity of sustainable cultural tourism.

- Along with the physical improvement of the cultural attractions, marketing and basic site preservation, local policies of cultural tourism must also embrace elements that support overall community interests and citizens' quality of life. In this, local governments need to further encourage community leaders and the public to participate in the process and have a say in the decision-making. Political leadership and stakeholder motivation for collaboration is essential to the success of the process.
- Small and mid-sized cities often lack the skills and/or resources to administer regional cooperation. Failures to attract tourism towns in such organisations deprive them from the benefits of networking which can increase their capacity and enhance their policy-making. Setting up a regional wide organization can facilitate cooperation between the local authorities in working for the benefit of the larger tourism region. This could involve not just establishing an institution, but also defining the strategies, policies and governance mechanisms at the regional level. The organization can include a broad range of institutional forms, regulatory strategies and governance projects – including, for instance, the establishment of inter-municipal agencies, councils, administrative districts or planning bodies and a variety of inter-governmental and inter-organizational strategies to enhance cooperation and coordination among government agencies as well as between public and private institutions and actors.
- Stakeholder participation and collaboration can thus be seen as both an improvement and a challenge to traditional forms of decision-making in urban cultural tourism. Innovative governance styles need to be established to promote a more inclusive management of the sector which supports diverse and far-reaching community goals.
- As this study has highlighted, the importance of collaboration in promoting governance for cultural heritage in cities is vast. In addition to public-private partnerships, networks and coalitions can also be formed and sustained to create benefits for the sector and the localities. Establishing a strategic policy framework for collaboration by the local authorities for engaging with the actors and within the entire tourism region is necessary to facilitate the process. In cultural terms, issues relevant to politics and culture, government traditions, and openness to innovation by public authorities and tourism stakeholders should be additional concern.

4. Urban governance of cultural tourism: Setting up an integrated framework for effective management

The PICTURE Governance study has allowed outlining a preliminary Urban Governance Framework of Cultural Tourism linking together cultural tourism with local

heritage and culture, urban spatial development, subsidiarity, and sustainability. The figure below presents the main areas of concern and the potential benefits and advantages for the sector, the urban community and the local society. The framework is open for a discussion among PICTURE partners and the urban cultural tourism community.

Figure 1: Urban Governance of Cultural Tourism Framework: Preliminary draft

