



Expert Group Meeting

Final Report

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism:

Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories. Bilbao 21-22 March 2024



Background

Tourism is a major socio-economic force that has allowed to improve economies and quality of life in many cities around the world. Nevertheless, and particularly over the last decades, in some cases. Increasing number of tourism activities has started to have considerable environmental, social and cultural impacts.

In the framework of this discussion, UN-Habitat with the support of the Government of Basque Country, and in collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) organized the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: tools for promoting good practices in cities and regions in the city of Bilbao, Basque Country, 21-22 of March 2024.

Experts from UN agencies, as well as representatives of national, regional, and local governments, academy, private sector, and civil society, gathered for two days to debate how cities could better benefit from tourism activities without compromising sustainability goals, as well as how tourism could be shaped in order to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities.

The presentations and debates of the meeting were organized according to the following structure:



Institutional Opening

Introductory Session

Session 1. Current Challenges of Tourism in Urban and Territorial Space

Session 2. From Policies to Practices - Addressing challenges of Tourism related to Urban and Territorial Space (Environment/ Economy/ Society/ Culture)

Session 3. From Policies to Practices - Addressing challenges of Tourism related to Urban and Territorial Space (Innovation/ Governance/Monitoring)

Session 4. Looking forward: Tourism and Territorial/ Urban Sustainable Development

Institutional Closing Remarks

This document constitutes the final report that summarizes the discussion at the EGM. The final report follows the structure proposed for the EGM debates. In each session, references to the resources indicated by the participants have been included. Additionally, some key figures and boxes included in presentations during those sessions, have been included as part of the report.

The content of this report does not imply the expression of any opinions whatsoever on the part of UN Habitat or UN Tourism and aims to reflect the discussion held during the EGM.

Institutional Opening

The official opening of the event was led by Beatriz Jordao, Head of the UN-Habitat Office in Spain, and Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist on behalf of Sandra Carvão, Head of the Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness Department at UN Tourism, who, in addition to thanking the Basque Government for its support in organizing the event, left some reflections on the points that would be addressed in the coming days. On his side, Ignacio de La Puerta, Director of Territorial Planning and Urban Agenda, Basque Government, took the floor briefly to thank the experts for their attendance at the meeting.

Key messages

The growing relevance of tourism and its increasing importance for the urban agendas of cities and territories. The significant growth and impact of the tourism sector in cities and territories globally has made its relevance in the urban agendas ever clearer. At the same time, the more strategic and transversal approach that has characterized policies development in recent years, particularly in the case of urban agendas, has reaffirmed the opportunity for the integration of sectors such as tourism in urban and territorial governance.

The collaboration between tourism and urban policies as well as those with spatial development plans must be further promoted. In this sense, the joint work of UN-Habitat and UN Tourism is key to move forward a common global of better understanding the challenges and opportunities that arise from both perspectives and action. The Sectorial Territorial Plan for Tourist Resources of the Basque Country, currently being elaborated, is a good example not only of how these sectors can work on a coordinated manner to guarantee the comprehensive sustainability of the territory, but also of the potential that emerges for strengthening of territorial and urban systems through tourism activity and the alignment in the planning and implementation of both.



Strengthening the coordination and the mechanisms to measure and monitor tourism at the local level is crucial for evidence-based data driven policies, maximizing the benefits of the sector and minimizing its negative impacts. The relevance of having adequate policies, governance and instruments to measure and monitor tourism activity and impacts – positive and negative – in the urban and territorial spaces is essential for the sustainability of the sector. This includes ever more including, among others, indicators on the economic, social and environmental impact of tourism, as well as the sentiment of local communities towards tourism - an activity linked to the territory and based on human interaction. This is crucial to ensure the sector contributes to the sustainable development of cities and territories and the wellbeing of local communities. The recently approved Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism[2] as well as the ongoing UN Tourism International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories[3] provide the stage for this effect.

is understood. Subsequently, Juan Requejo (Arenal Consulting Group) presented the theoretical foundations that have defined the (ongoing) development of The Sectorial Territorial Plan for Tourist Resources of the Basque Country, and the first findings in the early development phase of this innovative planning instrument.

Key messages

Changing the way in which tourism is narrated, perceived and discussed. In the last 10 years several “developments” and “excesses” have shattered the ‘image’ of tourism as a ‘clean sector’. Issues like carbon impact, plastic waste, “overtourism”, exclusion and displacement of residents have arisen connected or as a result of tourism. This has led to a major focus on how to mitigate negative impacts. Understanding and amending excesses is critical, but it is also crucial to focus on the potential of tourism to create better destinations. It means that we should be focusing and exploring possibilities for creating better places for all: residents and tourists.

Introductory Session

The introductory session consisted of two key presentations. On the one hand, Ko Koens (Professor of the New Urban Tourism at Inholland University of Applied Sciences) marked the debate by questioning the way in which the relationship between tourism and urban space

The need to focus more and more on balancing tourism flows to make the sector sustainable. Tourism has become an integral part of urban societies. According to UN Tourism data as of January 2024, international tourism recovered 88% of pre-pandemic levels by end of 2023 [4] and there is a clear trend of increasing



Extracted from the presentation of Ko Koens Inholland University of Applied Sciences

² <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-statistics/measuring-sustainability-tourism>

³ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/unwto-international-network-of-sustainable-tourism-observatories>

⁴ UNWTO World Tourism Barometer and Statistical Annex, January 2024

tourist numbers both, in consolidated tourist destinations as well as in less visited destinations. Managing increasing tourism flows and congestion is essential to sustainably plan for and manage cities and territories.

From an individual-based to role-based perspective. People adopt different roles while experiencing cities. Sometimes even local residents act as “tourists” in their own city. There are also people who experience the city just for few hours. The friction among tourists and local residents in cities are mainly located in few hot spots. Understanding the roles that people assume while experiencing the cities could better help to find solutions that work for all, for “permanent” residents, and for tourists, understood as a temporary residents.

From a place-based to flow-based perspective. There are several interesting opportunities for changing the approach to tourism in its relation with space. One of them is the possibility of switching from a place-based perspective to a flow-based approach of tourism activity in cities.

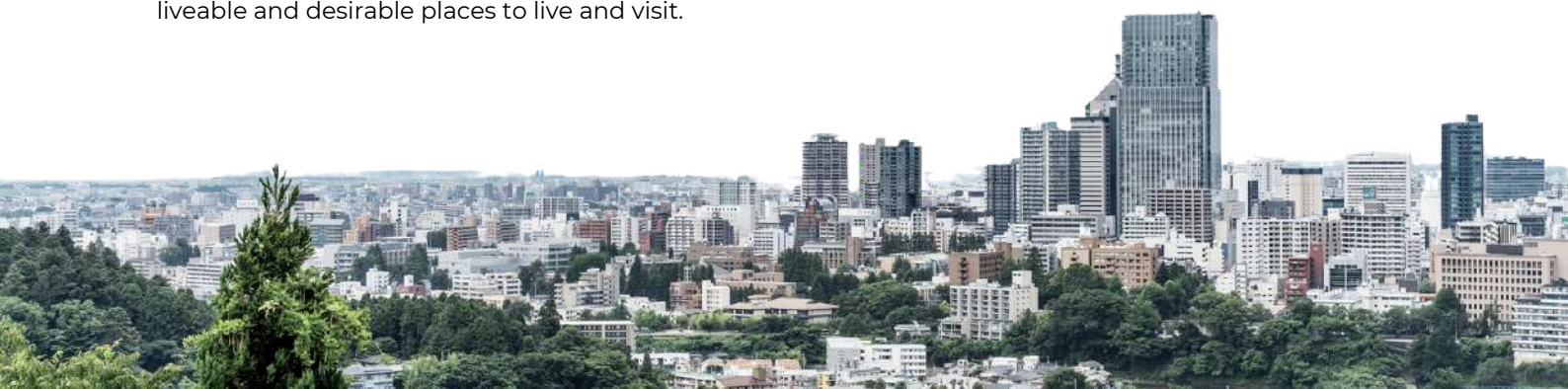
Cities faced important challenges before tourism development. Challenges in cities, like poverty, inequality, pollution, climate crisis, economic decline, among others were already present in today’s highly visited cities before tourism emerged. In many cases, tourism added new challenges, but in the other hand it has contributed to overcome some of these preexisting urban challenges. Therefore, fostering the development of sustainable tourism in cities must be seen as means to overcome certain pressing challenges of cities, which are not necessarily derived from tourism.

Tourism and urban development must go hand in hand. In many cities and territories, tourism has developed without a specific territorial planning, sometimes as a low-regulated activity from the territorial point of view. This has led to challenges such as poor working conditions or space-time concentration of the tourism activity, which in turn creates a negative impact on the territory. Thus, the alignment between tourism development and urban planning is crucial to ensure cities are liveable and desirable places to live and visit.

In most cases, the institutions in charge of tourism planning and management in cities face challenges that are out of their mandates. Tourism is a sector that has a cross-cutting impact on various areas within cities like urban planning, infrastructure, mobility, culture, protection of the natural environment, landscape, employment, waste management, etc. which depend on different institutions across cities. This often leads tourism institutions to be limited to focus on promotional issues, with reduced ability to intervene in these areas. Thus, holistic governance approaches in tourism, taking into account all the different players within cities are needed to maximize the positive impacts of tourism while minimizing the negative ones.

Mutual understanding between those responsible for tourism and urban and territorial planning must be strengthened. One important finding derived from the ongoing development of the Sectorial Territorial Plan for Tourist Resources of the Basque Country is the identification of differences and contradictions among those involved in the process, that reflects in many ways confronted views and positions among stakeholders: these include the right to use of the territory vs right to profit from the territory; housing vs short term rental accommodation vs second residencies; tourist area vs tourist destination. A **tourist area** is a concept linked to the territory, its resources and the rest of territorial components, while the **tourist destination** is a concept linked to the market and its segment structure.

When doing the balance between benefits and drawbacks of tourism, in not all the cases the balance tends to the benefits side. It means that policies should not be oriented always on an unlimited promotion of the activity, as the benefits should not be given for granted. The following preconditions and guarantees apply for tourism to be “desirable” for a territory, among others: a) Creation of stable and quality employment; b) Generation of income with multiplier effects; c) Positive balance between public income and expenditure; d) Cultural interaction between residents and visitors.



BOX 1: Interaction between Territorial Planning and Tourism

What challenges does tourism face to which territorial planning can contribute?

- 1 Optimization of the opportunities offered by the territory
- 2 Ensuring the quality of the stay
- 3 Prevention of loss of social and economic profitability
- 4 Prevention of saturation situations in public spaces
- 5 Avoid the degradation of spaces due to pollution from the sector overall
- 6 Ensure optimal conditions of mobility and access
- 7 Supra-local planning of tourist space in destinations

What challenges does territorial planning have that are of a tourism nature?

- 1 Maintenance of the referential and symbolic function of relational spaces
- 2 Preservation of residential function
- 3 Preservation of natural and cultural resources
- 4 Tourism reuse of farmhouses and regulation of agrotourism
- 5 Regulation of facilities for recreational and tourism activities on non-developable land
- 6 Organization of urban spaces subject to seasonal pressure
- 7 Sizing of territorial networks for peak demand situations

Extracted from the presentation of Juan Requejo, Arenal Consulting Group



Relevant resources shared during the session

- 01 *UN Tourism, New Business Models in the Accommodation Industry – Benchmarking of Rules and Regulations in the Short-term Rental Market*
- 02 *UN Tourism, ‘Overtourism’? – Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions*
- 03 *UN Tourism, ‘Overtourism’? - Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions, Volume 2: Case Studies*

Session one. Current Challenges of Tourism in Urban and Territorial Space

The first session was developed with the objective of reviewing the main challenges that cities and territories are facing with regard to the rapid increase of tourism, from a comprehensive sustainability approach, and considering its fundamental pillars. Under the moderation of Claudio Milano, (Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona), relevant experts from global institutions presented their approaches: Jane Stacey (Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities), Svitlana Mikhalyeva (Coordinator One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, UNEP); Marta Llobet (Learning and Advocacy Officer UCGL); Fergus Maclaren, (President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee), and Denise Bax (Head of Communication, Creative Cities, UNESCO).

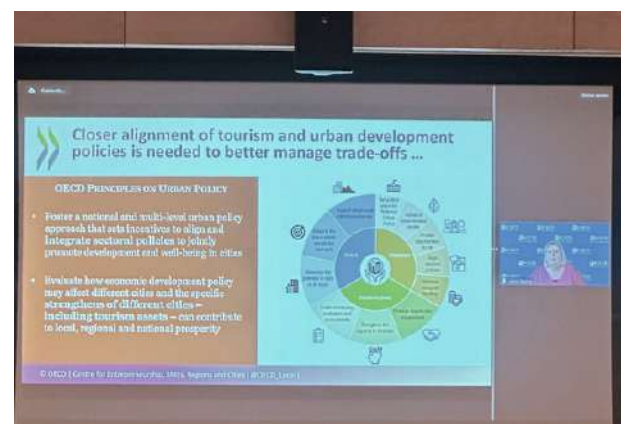
Key messages

Talking about sustainable tourism could be perceived as a contradiction. The analysis of the challenges that cities and territories face in relation to tourism cannot leave aside the innumerable interconnections, relationships and dependencies between the various global crises. Seen from an economic point of view, tourism is intertwined with many other economic activities and thus its sustainability will also depend and impact determined collective commitment towards decarbonization.

It is critical to minimise the negative impacts and maximise the positive impacts that tourism brings to cities. For this, it is necessary to promote the social return of tourism investment. That means promoting an increase in the quality of life in cities – for residents and tourists considered as temporary residents – also through the benefits arising from tourism activity.

Tourism's role as a driver of socio-economic prosperity and development was highlighted when it was hit hard by COVID-19 pandemic. Tackling multiple crises has raised awareness of the need to build tourism resilience and shift to more balanced and sustainable models of tourism development in cities of all sizes.

Integrated, agile and flexible governance systems for tourism, with forward-looking and collaborative approaches are required as well as diversified, resilient, and sustainable tourism destinations, with tailored planning and management systems. Some additional measures could include: addressing supply-side fragilities to enable tourism SMEs to succeed, adapt and benefit from the green and digital transitions; Improving conditions to promote a skilled and inclusive workforce; and Strengthening data, insights and indicators to measure and monitor tourism's impact and resilience.



BOX 2: Maximizing Benefits of Tourism

- 1 Tourism diversification – and tourism as part of a diversified economy
- 2 Attractiveness of places and preservation of the environment
- 3 Diverse employment opportunities, including beyond the tourism sector
- 4 Benefits for cities, regions and rural areas
- 5 Opportunities for micro and small businesses
- 6 Promotion of natural and cultural assets
- 7 Support for transport infrastructure
- 8 Interactions with local residents

Extracted from the presentation of Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

Tourism in cities can be directly affected by environmental pollution, including solid waste management issues and the loss of biodiversity, since the attractiveness of tourism destinations is based among others, in key factors associated to environment, and their loss can affect the entire economic value chain of the sector. The approach to solid waste management, pollution and loss of biodiversity must be done not only from a position of environmental responsibility and impact on climate change, but also from the perspective of the sustainability of the tourism activity itself.

Cities can achieve impactful results on preserving urban and natural environments by enacting single-use plastic bans or work on sectoral level around voluntary elimination of use of single-use plastics; by enhancing waste collection, management, and recycling systems; and by promoting reuse and circularity to significantly reduce plastic pollution. All these measures should be promoted across the tourism value chain.

Without culture there is no sustainable development and thus, no sustainable tourism. Culture is a fundamental component of tourism. Therefore, the debate on sustainable tourism is a unique opportunity to understand and promote a paradigm shift in relation to the pillars that underpin sustainability: culture as a cross-cutting element acquires an indivisible relevance from environmental, economic, and social aspects.

A rights-approach implies new ways of creating and sharing the city and perhaps indicates the need for new entry points to better understand the processes that configure the tourism space, the residents, and the tourists. The Rome Charter^[5] points out the need to enrich the possibilities of citizens to create, discover, share, protect and enjoy culture in cities; or more broadly, the postulates derived from the right to the city, which among other aspects, refers to the right to enjoy culture, public space, mobility, and the services in the broad sense provided by cities.

Culture should guide the city model in which tourism is developed. The reflection on culture and space must play a fundamental role in spatial planning processes. A shared vision of the values that define the culture of a city can guide the way in which the tourism sector is planned, especially in its implications for urban space. Public and citizen participation in planning processes is also a key element that clearly supports the building of this shared vision.

Promoting the interaction between residents and visitors can help reduce friction and advance sustainable tourism. Establishing meeting spaces for active participation in cultural life would benefit the integration of tourists and local communities. Reinvesting economic gains from tourism in a sustainable cultural ecosystem could also lead to increased social interactions in cities.

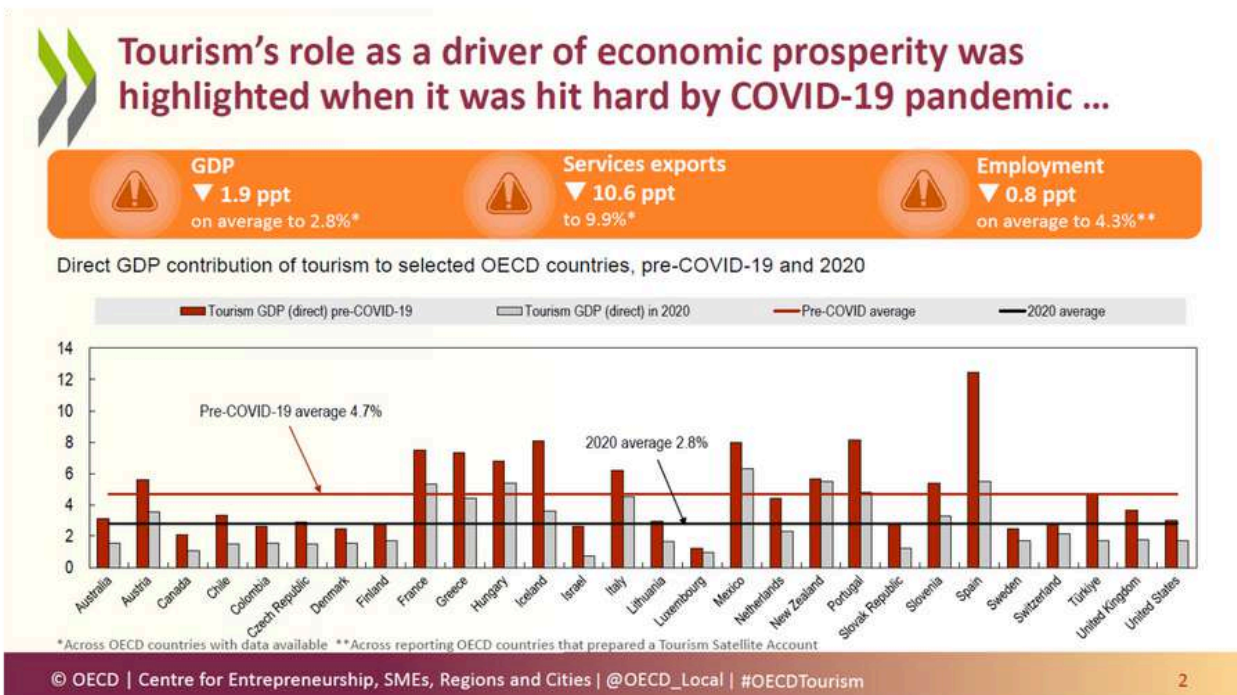
⁵ https://agenda21culture.net/sites/default/files/2020_rc_eng_0.pdf

Climate change is and will deeply change tourism destinations and dynamics.

Addressing natural disasters, conflicts and pandemic impacts, and increasing destination sustainability and resiliency capacity are urgent factors to be addressed. The inclusion of the tourism perspective in Climate Change Action Plans of cities and territories could play a significant role in terms of climate adaptation, but also in terms of tourism destinations adaptation. There are also opportunities arising from the transition to low-carbon and climate change-adapted technologies and behaviours. Changes of narratives, long-term perspectives and new mind-sets are crucial to identify these opportunities.

Promoting change in the profile and/or the behaviour of tourists is also often linked to their “perception” of the destination, which in turn is related to the type of promotion that is made of the destinations.

It is necessary for cities to be thought, envisioned and built also from that imaginary, because the city built today will be the city that tomorrow's tourists will visit. This implies a kind of paradox that is difficult to solve: the increase in the quality of life in cities becomes, to a large extent, a driving element for tourism as well; and that the massive and rapid increase in tourism could lead to a decrease in residents' quality of life, especially in certain hot spots.



Extracted from the presentation of Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities

It is necessary to raise awareness among all the stakeholders that integrate the tourism value chain including tourists on the impact that the tourism activity - and the behaviour of visitors - has on the environmental, social, economic and cultural spheres of the destinations. However, although raising awareness through information campaigns is a necessary instrument, it is also important that governments at adequate level formulate and implement policies and regulations that ensure the necessary behavioural change among stakeholders, in order to promote the common good. Monitoring and data should play a key role in informing decision-makers about which options are in the best interest.



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Relevant resources shared during the session

- 01 *The 2020 Rome Charter*
- 02 *Culture 21: Actions*
- 03 *One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme*
- 04 *The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism*
- 05 *ICOMOS International Cultural Heritage Tourism Charter*
- 06 *Global Tourism Plastics Initiative*
- 07 *Global Roadmap for Food Waste Reduction in the Tourism Sector*
- 08 *Visitor Management Assessment & Strategy Tool*
- 09 *UNESCO Creative Cities Network*

Session two. From Policies to Practice. Addressing challenges of Tourism related to Urban and Territorial Space. Environment/Economy/Society/Culture

The second session was focused on innovative initiatives that cities and territories from various contexts have been implementing to address the challenges outlined in the introduction and in the first session. Under the moderation of Begoña Guzmán, Head of Culture for Social Transformation, UN Etxea, experiences were

shared from Jaume Mata (Head of Sustainable Tourism, Visit Valencia), Donna Karen (Executive Vice President, Research & Insights, NYC & Company), Simone Venturini, (Councillor, Municipality of Venice), Jelmer Peter, (Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam), and Iñigo García, (General Director of Tourism, Provincial Council of Guipuzkoa).

Key messages

Cities have shown resilience through their transformative capacity to cope with major crises. The global tourism landscape has gone through significant changes over the last years from the congestion suffered by some destinations to the complete halt of the tourism activity due to the COVID 19 pandemic crisis, and the current gradual return to pre-pandemic figures. Within this context, urban destinations have been key in this recovery, and are currently well positioned to lead the way towards advancing sustainable tourism.

The influence of local governments in defining public tourism policies has been notable in recent years. By being closer to citizens, local governments have been better positioned to try to find adequate balance between the need to maximize the socio-economic impact of the tourism activity while maintaining a system of public services that is useful and operational for residents, but also for visitors, as well as to preserve the differentiating values that make each city particularly attractive as a tourist destination.

There is a clear consensus that tourism represents an opportunity for the preservation of the natural, built, and intangible heritage of cities, towns, and destinations. However, the use of built and natural heritage spaces beyond their carrying capacity frequently puts the preservation of these very same spaces at risk. Likewise, excessive commercialization and “folklorization” of intangible cultural heritage practices, including the decontextualization of these practices for tourism purposes, can pose a risk of misrepresentation.

Tourism policies must recognize the fundamental role that local communities play in the creation of particular and differentiated environments, that is, attractive tourist destinations, as well as promote associated cultural value chains in order to promote a wider distribution of the benefits derived from the tourism activity, improve the relationship between residents and visitors, and promote more environmentally, socially and culturally sustainable practices.



Se reconoce la importancia de invertir en equipamientos culturales para promover la identidad y competitividad de una ciudad, mejorar la calidad de vida y fomentar la diversificación del turismo. Estas inversiones también atraen talento humano y generan eventos académicos y empresariales.



Extracted from the presentation of Iñigo García, General Director of Tourism, Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa

Alignment of tourism policies to other relevant city policies, particularly those directly related to the Sustainable Goals is key to address sustainability challenges. Valencia, for instance, has adopted the city's 2030 Sustainability Strategy and the city's 2030 Urban Strategy as a backbone for drafting the tourism 2030 Strategy. Actions embedded in the Tourism Strategy respond to the general shared vision of the city, and gain support from constituting leverage to impulse bigger objectives.

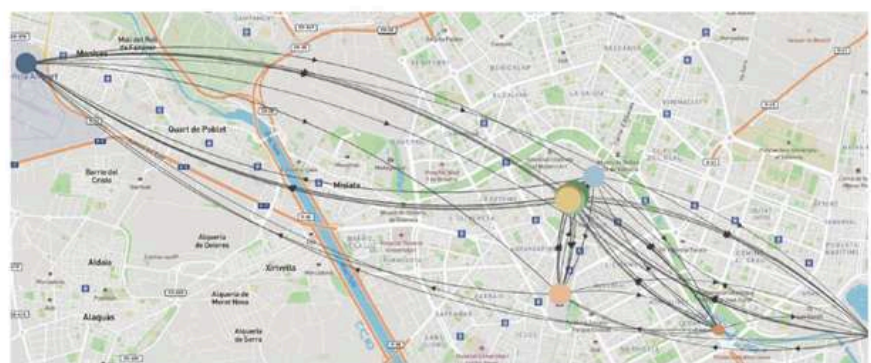
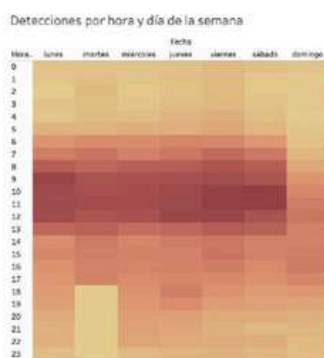
The use and importance of data is consolidating as an essential resource in making effective decisions, including the formulation of a shared vision. Starting from existing tools at the European level (European System of Tourism Indicators), the city of Valencia created its own reliable system of indicators, which has allowed effective measures to be taken, such as reducing water consumption in the city's tourist facilities.

The implementation of measures aimed at reducing the carbon footprint is seen as an opportunity to boost the tourism sector. In Valencia, for example, projects aimed at decarbonizing the city's main exhibition centre have led to an increase in its use. Event organizers that report on the ecological impact of carrying out their activities have shown more interest in moving their events to low-carbon venues.

Thinking and acting sustainably for the future of tourism implies diverse approaches from involved stakeholders making it part of policies and regulations - where city government and the public sector have a critical and unique role; making it part of business activity in the city – where private sector, investment and the social sector are at the forefront; making it part of the visitor experience - where destination marketing and management industry and visitors awareness raising , culture and heritage play a key role; and encouraging a way of living and visiting the city that normalizes sustainability.

Measures that cities around the world are taking to improve the quality of life of their citizens have also improved the experience of tourists. Similarly, interventions in the city aimed at improving mitigation and adaptation to climate change can make sites attractive for visitors, as is the case of the new open park built on the Governors Island, in New York. This logic also applies to areas of social intervention: the case of relevant social facilities, with striking architecture, built in the slums of Medellín are a paradigmatic case of tourist attraction as second intention.

There are some proved managing measures that can be addressed by cities. The trend towards the liberalization of economic activities in the city from the 90's - through the limitation



Tourism flowcharts

or minimization of zoning plans - has been reducing the capacity of local governments to influence policies that can improve the impacts derived from tourism growth. Nevertheless, cities are finding ways to put measures in place. Venice, as many others, has banned the construction of new hotels in the historic centre, as well as the opening of new bars and restaurants; and has defined strict codes on the type of shops that are allowed in certain streets of the city, promoting and incentivising local and traditional shops, as well as small traditional workshops.

The implementation of real-time monitoring systems of tourist flows and activities has proven to be an adequate tool to manage areas of high tourist concentration. Some measures such as those being taken by the city of Venice, including the reservation system to enter the city, are designed to better contribute to the control and management of flows, rather than having a fee collection purpose.

Investing in cultural infrastructure and promoting the city's icons enriches the city's culture and the quality of life promoting competitiveness in tourism and its diversification, while improving the quality of life of residents, attracting human talent, promoting the city as location of academic and business events, and increasing the impact on the urban economy.

Creating new poles of attraction for the dispersal of tourism can be an appropriate tool to diversify tourism options, decongest saturated destinations and sites within destinations, promote economic development in

destinations, promote economic development in less known areas and preserve cities' culture and environment.

Cities need to work on restoring balance between tourists and residents, between hospitality and habitability. From a sustainability approach, tourism policies and sector's relevant stakeholders need to be aware and consider local needs. The reinvestment of the benefits obtained through tourism – and particularly tourism taxes – in projects, initiatives and spaces not necessarily linked to tourism can constitute a tool to address both the negative impacts generated by the tourism activity, and to change the perception of the local population regarding the sector.

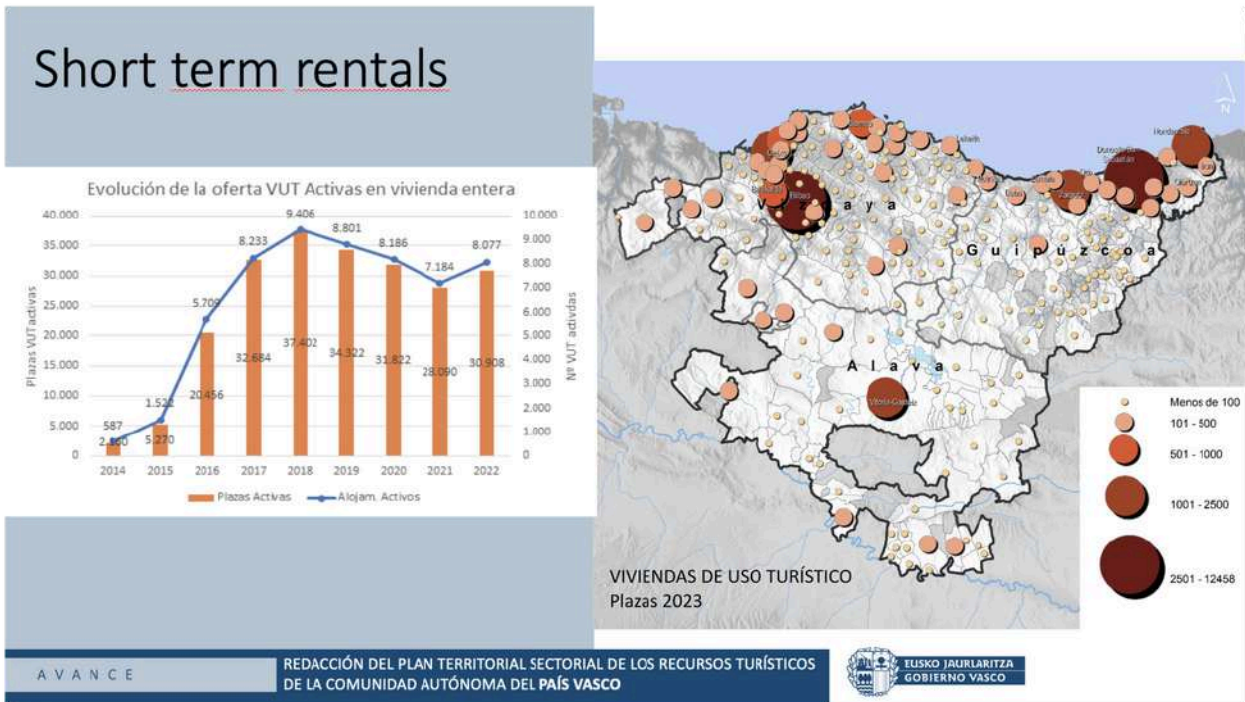
Tourism growth is affecting the very identity features of tourist destinations. Today, in many European cities, there is a growing replacement of traditional local businesses with global franchises or stores that respond to the preferences of the "global consumer", giving rise to an urban space unified, without local colour. This is one of the reasons why many cities are implementing measures that can define the kind of commerce allowed in certain tourist areas – and in some cases like Venice, Amsterdam and others – banning certain typologies of businesses. Another example of the delicate balance between the opportunities and risks linked to the exponential growth and concentration in time and space of tourism demand and activities is what Amsterdam has branded as the "UNESCO Paradox", which is expressed in the following sequence:



Extracted from the presentation of Jelmer Peter, Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam

Several cities have been developing mechanisms to regulate and manage the rapid increase in the activity of Short-term Rentals (STR). The disproportionate development of this type of tourist accommodation has proven to have a very significant impact on the transformation of certain areas of cities, as well as on the increase in the cost of housing at large. Although there is a certain consensus on the need to regulate this activity more decisively, local and regional governments have been limited of legal frameworks that hinder its regulation at local.

Innovative regulatory solutions, as well as changes in legislation must be a priority when trying to regulate STR. A key element must be the strengthening of control mechanisms over this type of accommodation, since in a large part of the cities, the majority of STRs are not registered as such, and therefore, outside the implementation of any measure of control or regulation, and eventually even out of tourism taxation system.



Extracted from the presentation of Juan Requejo, Arenal Consulting Group

Box 3: Short-term rentals (STR)

Challenges

- 1 It alters the use of thousands of houses built and planned to serve the residential function of cities.
- 2 Low generation of employment per overnight stay.
- 3 Concentration of real estate profit, with little multiplier effect.
- 4 Problems of coexistence between the way of life of residents and tourists
- 5 Changes in the orientation of businesses on streets with an intense presence of STRs.
- 6 Contribution of the saturation of public space
- 7 Low relationship between public spending and income.

Benefits

- 1 Increases the population demanding and consuming various services.
- 2 It responds to the demand for a specific type of group accommodation.
- 3 It allows people with a lower average daily spending budget to travel.
- 4 It helps activate the rehabilitation of obsolete buildings
- 5 In the accommodation modality with a resident host, a good situation for coexistence and cultural exchange.

Extracted from presentation of Juan Requejo, Arenal Consulting Group

Addressed resources during the session.

- 01 *European Tourism Indicators System for sustainable destination management*
- 02 *Study on risks and vulnerabilities of tourism to climate change (Valencia)*
- 03 *Vision on Tourism in Amsterdam 2035*
- 04 *UN Tourism, New Business Models in the Accommodation Industry – Benchmarking of Rules and Regulations in the Short-term Rental Market*

Session three. From Policies to Practice. Addressing challenges of Tourism related to Urban and Territorial Space. Innovation/Governance/Monitoring.

The third session was focused on the review of tourism monitoring mechanisms and different governance models from several perspectives and government levels. Under the moderation of Ana Goytia Prat, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, University of Deusto, findings and proposals from several areas, at European level, with Barbara Poggio (EU Projects Officer, Municipality of Genoa) and Ricardo Barranco, title (Scientific Officer, EU-JRC); at global level, with Sandra Carvão, (Director, Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness, UN Tourism) from the academy, with Claudio Milano, (Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona) and from national, regional and local governments, with Nashwa Talaat, Advisor to the Minister for Sustainable Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egypt), Catarina Santos Cunha, (Vice-President of Porto and North Tourism Association and City Councilor for the Department of Tourism and Internationalization at the Municipality of Porto) and Xavier Font, (Head of Technical Office of Tourism, Provincial Council of Barcelona)

Key messages

The European Urban Agenda Partnership on Sustainable Tourism[6] is an example in the search for new forms of multilevel governance that have been defined as necessary to address the complexity of the challenges that affect urban areas in relation to tourism and sustainability.

Through this soft governance proposal, the Partnership focuses on the specific issues related to tourism in cities as a crucial component of a sustainable development of the urban economies. Following the UN Tourism definition on sustainable tourism (tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities[7]) the partnership aims to use a method of collaborative, “co-creation” process, followed by a “co-implementation” phase, as described in the EU Transition Pathway for Tourism.

One interesting approach currently in place for monitoring the sustainability of tourism is the EU Tourism Dashboard an online knowledge tool developed by the European Commission, aimed at promoting and monitoring the green and digital transitions and socio-economic resilience factors of the European tourism ecosystem. The dashboard offers visualisations of tourism-relevant data and indicators collected from available and reliable sources relating to the tourism ecosystem, to enable profiling and monitoring of the progress of EU countries towards EU policy objectives. The indicators of the EU Tourism Dashboard are organised under the green, digital, and socio-economic policy pillars.

⁶ <https://www.urbanagenda.urban-initiative.eu/partnerships/sustainable-tourism>

⁷ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development>

Green, digital, and socio-economic policy pillars. In addition, the dashboard offers a set of basic tourism descriptors to provide further context on the characteristics of tourism destinations in terms of demand, supply and tourism offer. The dashboard targets decision-makers and tourism operators as the primary audience to steer policies and strategies in the tourism ecosystem.

More and better data is needed to understand and manage a sector based on multiple interactions within a territory. It is crucial that policies and decisions are based on data that takes into account the spatial dimension and the different kinds of impacts of tourism on the territory. On the other side, the nature of the challenges and interventions varies widely according to typology of cities and destinations. Thus, a challenge in one typology of destination may represent an opportunity in another. In this regard, there is a need to collect good information and data to accurately characterize locations and support policies.

From marketing to management. The type of challenges faced by destinations, related to sustainability and very particularly those derived from unbalanced influx of tourism, make it increasingly necessary to anticipate destination planning and management to destination promotion. In this sense, transversality in planning with other sectors and city stakeholders, including urban and territorial planning, constitutes an inflexion point.

From a holistic approach, several combined strategies should be part of the cities' agenda to advance sustainable tourism. Promote spatial and time-based dispersion of visitors within and outside the city, stimulating new itineraries and attractions and enhancing visitors' segmentation. Review and adapt regulation, ensuring that local communities benefit from tourism and accelerating proposed improvements and investments in city's infrastructure and facilities that benefit both residents and visitors.

Quantifying and measuring urban tourism is relevant from several perspectives. As tourism plays a significant role in the development of cities and impacts on the local and global economy, society, cultural and environment, it requires good quality, comparable, and transparent data. Comparing city-regions data around the world will enable benchmarking, knowledge sharing, collaborative learning and the estimation of the sector's global impact. On the other hand, players in the tourism supply chain require market insights to optimize their products and services, while public authorities need reliable information to ensure the sustainable development of the sector. Finally, as tourism is highly interconnected with many other sectors and domains in cities, such as housing, mobility, infrastructure development, and fiscal policies, such data is also relevant to many stakeholders outside the tourism sector.





Box 4: UN Tourism Recommendations on Urban Tourism

- 1 **Global Agendas:** *Tourism should be part of the urban policies and strategies to achieve the implementation of the New Urban Agenda and the specifically Goal 11 on 'Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable.*
- 2 **Sustainable Practices:** *Urban tourism should promote sustainable practices for a more efficient use of resources and a reduction of emissions and waste within the framework of the circular economy.*
- 3 **Smart Destinations:** *Cities should implement the concept of smart urban tourism destinations by integrating fully the following pillars in their policies and strategies: governance, innovation, technology, accessibility and sustainability in the three areas – social, economic and environmental.*
- 4 **Big Data and Technology:** *Cities should maximize the use of big data and technology to better plan, measure and manage urban tourism and promote evidence-based decision making on key issues such as infrastructure, carrying capacity, housing, transport and mobility, management of natural and cultural resources and community engagement in tourism.*
- 5 **Accessibility:** *cities should promote universally accessible urban tourism in line with the UN Tourism Recommendations on Accessible Tourism for All.*
- 6 **Integration of Local Communities:** *Cities should enhance the full integration of local communities in tourism planning and management and in the tourism value chain, ensuring that tourism benefits translate into community-based wealth creation, decent jobs and social inclusion, particularly for women, youth and less favoured groups.*
- 7 **Foster Urban Regeneration:** *Cities should promote the contribution of tourism in the creation of cities as spaces that foster urban regeneration, cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, innovation and the generation and exchange of knowledge.*
- 8 **Tourists / Temporary Residents:** *Cities should consider tourists as 'temporary residents' and ensure that tourism policy promotes the engagement of visitors and residents in a holistic and fully integrated manner.*
- 9 **Long-term planning and management:** *the sustainability of urban tourism will only be successful if a comprehensive and long-term planning strategy is adopted based on a multi-action and multi-stakeholder participatory approach.*
- 10 **Innovative products and experiences:** *cities should develop innovative tourism products and experiences and the use of technology to diversify tourism flows in time and space, promote longer stays and attract visitor segments that better contribute to their long-term vision and strategy.*
- 11 **Sustainable Tourism Observatories:** *Cities should advance the measurement and monitoring of urban tourism in order to ensure sustainable development of destinations in a relevant and timely manner. In this regard, the UN Tourism Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories can be a model to consider.*

Extracted from the presentation of Sandra Carvao. Director, Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness, UN Tourism

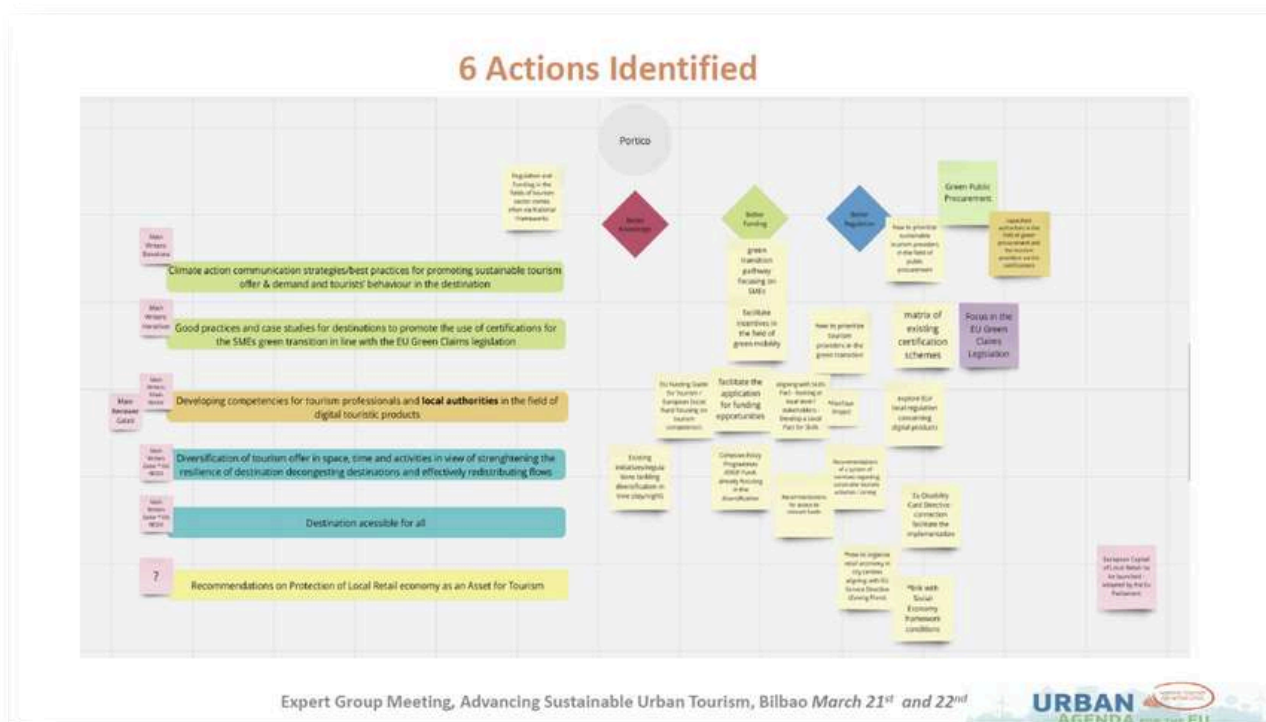
Governments increasingly take a holistic approach to the three pillars of sustainability in designing public policies. In the case of Egypt, for example, the definition of sectoral sustainability strategies in tourism has included not only environmental and economic factors but has also made it possible to integrate social factors, such as gender equality.

In the case of Porto the tourism strategy was built based on three approaches. 1) Qualify to generate value, basically by enhancing tourism experiences in the city through close and collaborative work with operators and partners to raise the standards of hospitality and service for tourists, improving the perceived quality of the city's tourism; 2) Diversify to grow, and perceive the city as a whole - from the centre to the neighbourhoods, and thus promoting the decentralisation of tourism flows to relieve pressure on high-demand areas: by redefining narratives and tourist circuits; and by diversifying audiences and opportunities; and 3) Preserve the future, to ensure the sustainable growth of Porto as a destination: it is crucial to develop measures and programmes that safeguard the current and future interests of the city, its residents, its heritage and the environment.

The approach to tourism governance, policies and systems must be done from a systemic way. Tourism is not an addition of actors. The relationship between these actors throws a different result than an addition. All parties contribute and are essential in the value chain, and if to create a sustainable destination, the

system and all its components must also be oriented towards sustainability. Through soft governance mechanisms, such as contract-programmes, the Barcelona Provincial Council has managed to promote the implementation of policies defined by the Provincial Council regarding the sustainability of the tourism sector at municipal and regional levels of the province.

The fragmentation of certification systems, frameworks and methodologies to measure and monitor sustainability in tourism hinders the implementation and communication efforts. Although certification systems, particularly those based on data and evidence, can indicate a path towards recognition of the progress that different actors achieve towards sustainability, the fragmentation of certification systems that currently exists constitutes a handicap for both, bidders and consumers, who do not know how to value them appropriately. It also may give rise to undesirable practices of “Greenwashing” and dubious social responsibility, jeopardizing tools efficacy as well as real progress recognition. For this reason, the creation and strengthening of observatories and monitoring systems based on an agreed measurement framework at national and local level (countries, cities and regions) is essential. The recently approved Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism by the United Nations Statistical Commission provides this scope at public level while the ongoing UN Tourism initiative on ESG in Tourism aims to provide this framework for the private sector. [8]



Extracted from the presentation of Barbara Poggio, EU Projects Officer at Municipality of Genoa

Quantifying the carrying capacity of a destination is still one of the main challenges.

This topic is particularly relevant in that tourism saturation - objectively characterized and measured - constitutes a phenomenon concentrated in time and space. Defining the carrying capacity of a destination, measure and monitor it is key to address not only the definition of tourism policies and their implications in terms of other public policies, but also in terms of informing urban and territorial planning and the way in which these policies and decisions are communicated to stakeholders and residents. **Including considerations related to the perception of tourism by residents in tourist spaces should be part of the monitoring mechanisms.**



Extracted from the presentation of Xavier Font, Head of Technical Office of Tourism, Provincial Council of Barcelona



Addressed resources during the session.

- 01 *European Urban Agenda Partnership on Sustainable Tourism*
- 02 *EU Tourism Dashboard*
- 03 *UN Tourism, Quantifying tourism in city destinations – Towards a better understanding of urban tourism*
- 04 *UN Tourism, Recommendations on Urban Tourism*
- 05 *The Glasgow Declaration on Climate Action in Tourism*
- 06 *UN Tourism, Recommendations on accessible Tourism*
- 07 *UN Tourism International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories*
- 08 *UN Tourism Data Dashboard*

Session four. Looking Forward: Tourism and Territorial/ Urban Sustainable Development

The fourth session served as a concluding session, with a future perspective, and emphasizing the idea of tourism as driver of sustainable development in cities and territories, as well as sustainable urbanization as an opportunity for tourism successful development. Under the moderation of Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism, findings and proposals from several institutions were presented, at the local level, with Xabier Ochandiano (Councillor for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism and Employment, Municipality of Bilbao) and Petra Stušek (President, City Destination Alliance and Managing Director of the Ljubljana Tourism), at the global level, with Javier Torner (Leader Inclusive Communities Urban Regeneration Programme, UN-Habitat), Ivor Ambrose (Managing Director, European Network for Accessible Tourism) and Tim Fairhurst (General Director European Tourism Association - ETOA); and with Bernadett Papp, (Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute) from the academy sector.

Key messages

Urban regeneration processes, particularly those including a strong cultural component,

have the potential to develop tourism activity in cities and generate positive impacts on the urban economy. In the case of Bilbao, as in many other cities, the process of physical and socio-economic deterioration produced in the city by the decline of the industrial activity that took place in the last quarter of the 20th century, was positively reversed by a set of policies that had as one of the main elements the promotion of tourism. In a period of less than 30 years, tourism went from a non-existent activity in the city to contributing more than 7% to the local GDP.

Cities and territories have been struggling with profound challenges and transformations during the last decades such as spatial inequalities, climate action, digital transformation, urban health, culture heritage preservation, and conflict and migration. Increasing the capacity of cities and territories to address these challenges greatly determines the possibilities of creating destinations in which tourism can develop to its full potential in a sustainable manner. For instance, it is not possible to have inclusive tourism in a city that is not inclusive itself.

BOX 6. Inclusive cities and inclusive destinations

Inclusive City

Inclusive City “a city that promotes growth with equity. (...) A place where everyone, regardless of their economic means, gender, race, ethnicity or religion, is enabled and empowered to fully participate in the social, economic and political opportunities that cities have to offer.”

(UN-Habitat, 2004)

Inclusive Destination

Inclusive tourism destination: “a destination that promotes equal opportunities for all, enhancing the capacity and opportunities of vulnerable groups for becoming involved in tourism activity, contributing through work and services to the success of the destination and thus gaining access to greater wellbeing and better quality of life.”

(UN Tourism, 2018)

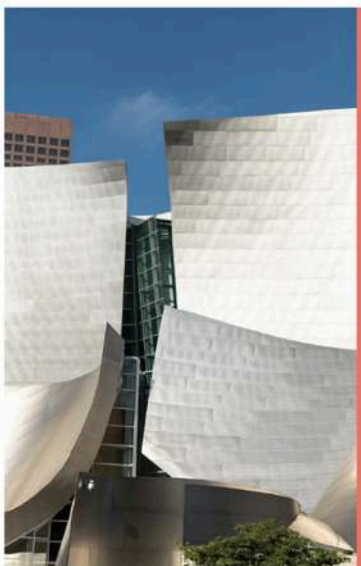
Including a tourism lens in the process of defining urban and territorial plans can strength the positive interactions of tourism and places prevent negative impacts of the activity and create the base, inputs, and guidance for developing tourism sectorial policies and programmes in a much targeted and better-informed manner. Particularly in recent years, spatial planning processes have become ideal areas to promote public participation. Therefore, including the tourism sector in the planning processes also allows for the involvement of local communities or organized residents' groups in the planning of the tourism sector of cities.

Unbalanced tourism in specific areas of some cities, is leading to dynamics similar to urban gentrification processes insofar as they lead to the expulsion of local residents and commerce, particularly the most vulnerable. However, unlike gentrification processes, their impact on spatial upgrading and deep transformations of areas is much more limited. This is due, in part, to the difficulty of public administrations in capturing the added value generated by these urban dynamics derived from tourism development.

Urban transformation policies can have a significant impact not only on the quality of life of residents, but also on the tourists who

visit the city. In the case of Ljubljana, the Slovenian capital, the pedestrianization of the entire historic centre, with a strict prohibition of the passage of motorized vehicles - a practice that has been implemented in many cities as part of urban environmental policies - has generated the largest surface of continuous pedestrian traffic in urban centres in Europe. And it has also significantly increased the flow of tourists in the city, not only in the traditionally attractive streets, but throughout the centre. Likewise, Ljubljana has been implementing the concept of "regenerative culture" in various sectoral spheres of the city, making efforts to involve tourists in environmental policies through awareness.

Including considerations related to the perception of tourism by residents in tourist spaces should be part of the monitoring mechanisms. The well-being, well-informing and well-satisfaction of the local population are of utmost importance. Decisions related to tourism must be made from a multi-sectorial approach, involving all relevant stakeholders and be based on periodical surveys and studies to measure the residents sentiment towards tourism. This practice should be part of the monitoring strategy in cities, and allow local authorities not only to better addequate tourism policies and programmes, but also inform planning processes in areas highly impacted by tourism.



We need to initiate/accelerate system-wide changes so that tourism policy instruments and policy goals are better aligned with the wider ambitions of sustainable urban development.

Improving accessibility in tourist destinations not only represents an opportunity to increase and diversify demand, but also represents an opportunity to improve the quality of life of local residents. Making places, environments, venues and services suitable for the widest range of customers is to do so also for residents, ensuring an inclusive experience for all, leaving no-one behind.

Policy definition needs to know what success looks like, having clarity about obstacles and interests. Metrics, comparability and transparency are key for enabling long-term planning, beyond current political mandates. Tourism's integration to holistic strategy, good practice sharing mechanisms, and enabling and fostering an environment for better stakeholders' participation are some pre-conditions to succeed. Tourism should be an engine for sustainable development opportunities, including, channelling revenue for green investment.

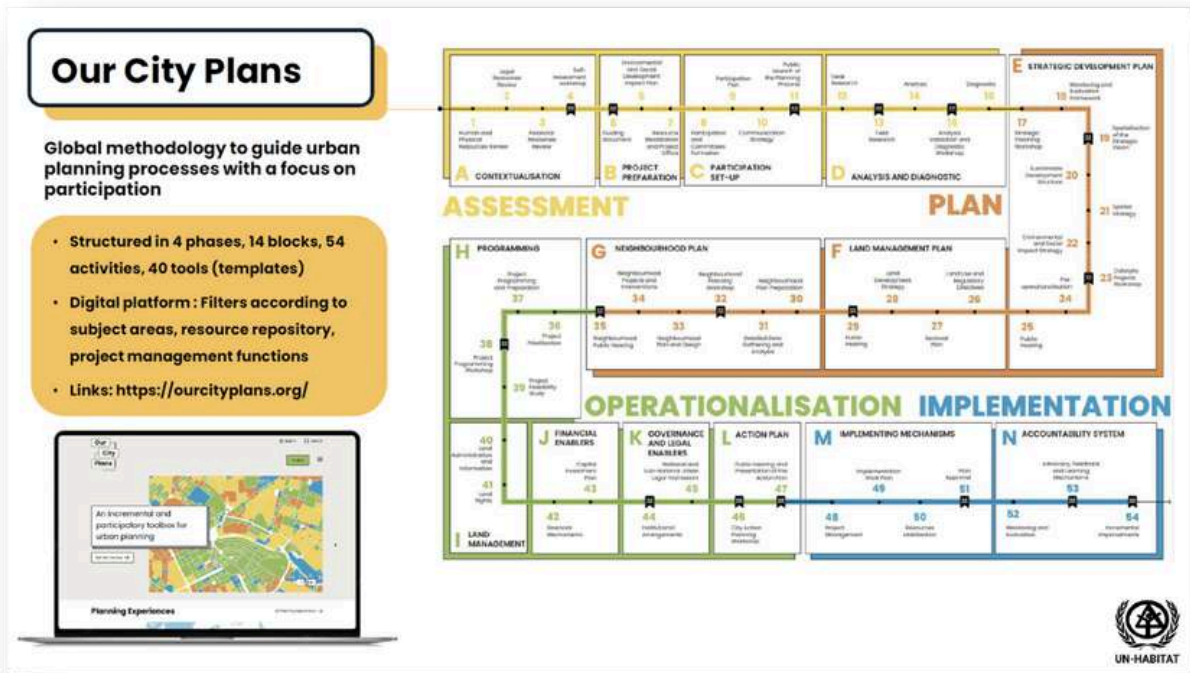
Tourism should be a positive force for achieving sustainable development in cities

and territories and should be perceived as such. Strategic urban and tourism development have sometimes failed to effectively cross paths and create positive synergies. Tourism is an integral part of urban life which makes it a cross-cutting policy. It is necessary to rethink the place tourism occupies in urban and regional governance systems. To this end, it is critical to initiate and accelerate system-wide changes to better align tourism policy instruments and goals with the broader ambitions of sustainable urban development.

It is key to identify the most important areas where some phenomena derived from an unbalanced tourism activity are having a greater impact on the life of cities and their residents – like access to housing due to the increasing growth of short-term rentals accommodation services - and to jointly intervene on these specific points. Perhaps these areas of interaction are a way to generate an agenda of action among different sectors of city government, while minimizing the room for conflict between residents and visitors, reducing the negative perception of tourism among local communities.



Extracted from the presentation of Petra Stusek, President, City Destination Alliance and Managing Director of the Ljubljana Tourism



Extracted from the presentation of Javier Torner, Leader Inclusive Communities Urban Regeneration Programme, UN-Habitat

Addressed resources during the session.

- 01 *Our City Plans: An incremental and participatory toolbox for urban planning*
- 02 *UN Tourism Recommendations on Accessible Tourism*
- 03 *San Marino Action Agenda for Accessible Tourism for All*
- 04 *UN Tourism, New Business Models in the Accommodation Industry – Benchmarking of Rules and Regulations in the Short-term Rental Market*





Next Steps

This EGM was a first step in an expected long-term collaboration between UN-Habitat and UN Tourism on matters related to sustainable cities and tourism.

The conclusions and key messages extracted from the EGM are expected to serve as the basis of a forthcoming publication that will provide guidance and recommendations for cities and relevant stakeholders regarding how to better collaborate, and to how more

effectively conduct planning and policy definition process that promotes synergies among different sectors and stakeholders for more sustainable tourism and sustainable cities and territories.

Additionally, the conclusions of the EGM will be presented in a co-organized side event during the next World Urban Forum, that will be taking place in Cairo, next 4-8 November (side event to be confirmed).

List of Participants Experts in the meeting

Name	Position, Institution
Ana Goytia Prat	Senior Lecturer and Researcher. University of Deusto
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Beatriz Jordao	Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat
Begoña Guzmán	Head of Culture for Social Transformation. UN Etxea
Bernadett Papp	Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute

Name	Position, Institution
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Claudio Milano	Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona
Cora Doppenberg	Programme Manager, Amsterdam City
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Fergus Maclaren	President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee
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Y TRANSPORTES

UN HABITAT
FOR A BETTER URBAN FUTURE



In collaboration with

UN Tourism





Expert Group Meeting

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories

Annexes

01. Annex I. EGM Concept Note
02. Annex II. EGM Programme
03. Annex III. Guidelines for Participants
04. Annex IV. EGM Biographies



Expert Group Meeting

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories

ANNEX 1

Concept Note



Expert Group Meeting

Concept Note

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism:

Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories. Bilbao 21-22 March 2024



Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories.

Introduction

Tourism is major socio-economic force that have allowed to improve economies and quality of life in many cities around the world. Nevertheless, and particularly over the last decades, in some cases increasing of tourism activities have started to have considerable environmental, social and cultural impacts.

In the framework of this discussion, the UN-Habitat with the support of the Government of Basque Country, and in collaboration with the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) will organize an Expert Group Meeting (EGM) ***Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: tools for promoting good practices in cities and regions*** in the city of Bilbao, Basque Country, on 21-22 of March 2024.

Experts from UN agencies, as well as representatives of national, regional, and local governments, academy, private sector and civil society, will gather for two days to debate how cities could better benefit from tourism activities without compromising sustainability goals, as well as how tourism could be shaped in order to build inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and communities.

Background: current trends in tourism at the global level

Tourism is one of fastest growing economic sectors in recent decades. According to [UNWTO](#), the number of international tourists increased from 901 million in 2009 to 1.5 billion in 2019, that is, an increase of 63,9% in just 10 years. Although the Covid-19 pandemic had a huge impact on the tourism sector (406.9 million international arrivals in 2020, less than a third of the previous year), the sector has been recovering – more slowly than other sectors - and for 2022 it had already increased to 962.8 MM.

It is estimated that tourism accounted directly for 4% of global GDP and 7% of global exports (28% of service exports) in 2019 pre pandemic (UNWTO)¹. This economic activity translates into important benefits for local communities According to ILO estimates, over 230 million workers or approximately 7.2 per cent of the global workforce are employed in tourism industries around the world (ILO²). The contribution of tourism to the economy of countries varies significantly from one region to another and between countries. In some low- and middle-income countries, tourism constitutes one of the main sources of income and jobs, with the weight being particularly high in some small island states, such as the Maldives and Palau, among others (UNWTO).

But beyond the obvious opportunity that tourism represents as a source of income for economies, its accelerated growth, as well as some changes in the configuration of its

¹ <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-statistics/sdg-indicators> and <https://www.unwto.org/tourism-data/unwto-tourism-dashboard>

² <https://ilostat.ilo.org/how-data-can-bolster-decent-work-in-the-tourism-sector/>

characteristics, has in many cases been increasing the challenges that cities and citizens face, particularly in those cases where the activity is highly seasonal and where the proportion of visitors in relation to local the population is unbalanced.

Tourism and the Global Agendas

The global Agendas approved in recent years, particularly the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2015) and the New Urban Agenda (2016), have identified tourism as one of the enhancing elements of sustainable development. Tourism has the potential to contribute, directly or indirectly, to all of the SDGs. In particular, it has been included as targets in Goals 8, 12 and 14 on inclusive and sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production (SCP) and the sustainable use of oceans and marine resources, respectively.

Giving access to decent work opportunities in the tourism sector, society – particularly youth and women – can benefit from increased skills and professional development. The sector’s contribution to job creation is recognized in Target 8.9 “By 2030, devise and implement policies to promote sustainable tourism that creates jobs and promotes local culture and products”.

A tourism sector that adopts sustainable consumption and production (SCP) practices can play a significant role in accelerating the global shift towards sustainability. To do so, as set in Target 12.b of Goal 12, it is imperative to “Develop and implement tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for sustainable tourism which creates jobs, promotes local culture and products”. The Sustainable Tourism Programme (STP)³ of the 10-Year Framework of Programmes on Sustainable Consumption and Production Patterns (10YFP) aims at developing such SCP practices, including resource efficient initiatives that result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.

Coastal and maritime tourism, tourism’s biggest segments, particularly for Small Island Developing States’ (SIDS), rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management in order to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, in line with Target 14.7: “by 2030 increase the economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs from the sustainable use of marine resources, including through sustainable management of fisheries, aquaculture and tourism”.

For cities, a city that is not good for its citizens would not be attractive to tourists. Sustainable tourism has the potential to advance urban infrastructure and universal accessibility, promote the regeneration of decaying areas and promote and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Greater investment in green infrastructure (more efficient transport facilities, reduction of air pollution, conservation of heritage sites and open spaces, etc.) should lead to smarter, greener cities from which not only residents but also tourists can benefit. An increased empowerment and engaging of residents in tourism development should lead to a more inclusive development urban tourism model.

³ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development/one-planet>

Box: New Urban Agenda

*“60. We commit ourselves to sustaining and supporting urban economies to transition progressively to higher productivity through high-value-added sectors, by promoting diversification, technological, upgrading, research and innovation, including the creation of quality, decent and productive jobs, including through the promotion of cultural and creative industries, **sustainable tourism**, performing arts and heritage conservation activities, among others.”*

Defining Sustainable Urban Tourism

Sustainable Tourism is defined by the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and UN World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) as “tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities”.⁴

On the other hand, UNWTO defines **Urban Tourism** as "a type of tourism activity which takes place in an urban space with its inherent attributes characterized by non-agricultural based economy such as administration, manufacturing, trade and services and by being nodal points of transport. Urban/city destinations offer a broad and heterogeneous range of cultural, architectural, technological, social and natural experiences and products for leisure and business".⁵

Challenges on achieving Sustainable Urban Tourism

Achieving **Sustainable Urban Tourism** involves addressing various challenges that can hinder its implementation and the contribution of tourism to the SDGs and the New Urban Agenda. Some of the main challenges include:

→ **Environmental impact** - While many cities are trying to make a big effort to become increasingly green and environmentally friendly, tourism often leads to degradation of spaces through increased pollution, an increasing of greenhouse emissions, water consumption and waste generation.

The environmental impact of tourism is also related to the eventual overuse of natural areas and protected spaces that are particularly vulnerable to anthropogenic activity, which, paradoxically, often are poles of attraction and exploitation of tourist activity.

Addressing the environmental impacts of tourism requires a concerted effort from governments, businesses, tourists, and local communities. Sustainable tourism practices, such as promoting sustainable accommodations, responsible tour operations, waste reduction, and community engagement, can help minimize negative effects and ensure that tourism contributes positively to local economies, preserves natural environments and ensures a good quality of life to inhabitants of cities for future generations.

⁴ <https://www.unwto.org/sustainable-development>

⁵ <https://www.unwto.org/urban-tourism>

Popular tourist destinations can face issues of overcrowding, resulting in strain on local infrastructure, natural resources, social fabrics and cultural sites. To address the negative impacts of exceeding the carrying capacity of tourist destinations, cities have the opportunity to implement sustainable tourism management strategies. These may include limiting tourist numbers, diversifying attractions to spread visitors across different areas, promoting responsible tourism practices, and involving local communities in decision-making processes related to tourism development. In other words, managing visitor flows and developing sustainable tourism models that distribute tourists more evenly is crucial.⁶

→ **Cultural Impact** - Tourism can impact local cultures and traditional ways of life, leading to the commodification of culture or cultural appropriation. Preserving and respecting local cultures, traditions, and heritage while promoting tourism can be a delicate balance to achieve.

Culture and identity can be allied concepts when it comes to addressing social challenges, since it provides a feeling of belonging, connection, and shared values among city's inhabitants. Culture often emphasizes the importance of community and collective action. Cultural traditions and practices can also serve as a platform for social and political activism. When people feel connected to these shared values, they are more likely to collaborate to address common challenges, and they are more likely to recognize and fight against social injustices that affect their community.

On the other hand, an unsustainable development of the tourism sector can lead to the commodification of local culture and cities' traditions. Businesses may prioritize catering to tourist preferences over preserving authentic cultural practices, leading to a loss of cultural identity and heritage. In this sense, tourism can transform the character of urban areas, shifting from local communities to catering to tourist demands. This can lead to a loss of authenticity and a decline in the distinct identity of the city.

In a similar way to what was mentioned above, a special point of the impact of tourism on culture has to do with material and intangible heritage, which, due to its attractive power on tourist activity, can be particularly affected.

→ **Socioeconomic Impact** - Tourism can exacerbate socioeconomic inequalities by concentrating wealth and employment opportunities in certain areas or population groups, leaving others areas and groups marginalized. Ensuring that local communities are engaged and benefit from tourism, promoting fair wages, and providing sustainable livelihoods are challenges that need to be addressed.

One of the main challenges that increased in the past years is the emergence of new business models in the tourism sector, specifically those related to short term rental accommodation services can contribute to the promotion of gentrification. This phenomenon strongly impacts urban areas and often follows economic development and increased tourism. As short-term rentals attract more tourists and visitors to a neighbourhood, local businesses catering to tourists may thrive, leading to further development in the area and a shift in the use of housing.

⁶ See UNWTO Recommendations on Urban Tourism <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284422012> and Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284419999>

However, this development may not always benefit the long-time residents, who could face rising costs and potential displacement.

As short-term rentals increase, the neighbourhood's character may shift from a residential community to a transient one. This can lead to a decline in social cohesion and community ties, as fewer long-term residents live in the area. Additionally, some visitors may not be as invested in the local community's well-being as permanent residents. When property owners convert their homes into short-term rentals, it reduces the number of available rental units for local residents. This scarcity can push rental prices higher and make it more challenging to find affordable housing in the area. This process may also have undesirable effects on the local economy. As the profile of the inhabitant of some urban areas changes due to the increase in tourists, the prices of products in local stores tend to increase, and even local businesses may be forced to move from the place, giving space to businesses focused on tourism, with the capacity to assume higher rents.

→ **The role of governance for a sustainable urban tourism** - Achieving sustainable urban tourism calls for collaboration and cooperation among various stakeholders, including governments, local communities, tourism operators, NGOs, residents and tourists themselves. Balancing competing interests and involving all stakeholders in decision-making processes is necessary to ensure urban tourism sustainability.

Particularly, encouraging tourists to make sustainable choices and adopt responsible behaviour can be challenging. Educating and raising awareness among tourists about the importance of sustainable urban tourism practices and their role in minimizing negative impacts is an ongoing process.

Addressing all these challenges requires a holistic approach involving effective policy frameworks, regulation, public-private partnerships, community involvement, education, and technological innovations to support sustainable tourism practices.

The Basque experience

From a social perspective, the economic dimension of culture and its relationship with the territory must be considered. Within the framework of a globalized society, the cultural industry has been consolidating as a relevant economic activity. And, to a different extent, the cultural industry can find its potential for development in the spatial environment in which it is part of. Cities like Bilbao, for example, have succeeded in embedding the "industrial territory" as a house brand, generating important economic dynamics linked to tourism. Similarly, the Basque Country in general, and Donostia in particular, have been making local gastronomy an essential axis of their tourist offer.

Tourism is also a leading economic activity in the Basque Country, which according to country objectives, must contribute effectively to reducing inequality and promoting peaceful and inclusive societies, as stated in the World Charter for Sustainable Tourism +20, signed at the World Summit of Sustainable Tourism of Euskadi in 2015. However, like in many other parts of the world, this activity is immersed in a moment of deep change and continuous dynamism, in which new forms of temporary accommodation and new service platforms are being

incorporated favoured by the Internet, generating globalized competition and a new customer profile.

In 2019, the Basque Government established the Euskadi Tourism Code of Ethics, which guides the development of sustainable tourism policies in the region. This code highlights the importance of promoting full and balanced participation of local communities, recognizing that tourism in Euskadi cannot be dissociated from Basque society as a whole. Furthermore, current management policies emphasize the need to preserve current resources for future generations and ensure the protection and integrity of our valuable common heritage, both tangible and intangible.

On the other hand, the Tourism Law in the Basque Country (2016), establishes that territorial planning of tourist resources must be carried out through a Sectoral Territorial Plan. In this sense, in September 2023, the definition of the Territorial Sectoral Plan for Tourism Resources of Euskadi began. This ongoing Plan must define the tourist territorial development model, regulating the following aspects:

- Protection of tourist resources.
- Environmental evaluation criteria and sustainability ratios of tourism activity.
- Measures aimed at improving territorial, socio-economic and cultural aspects.
- Guidelines for quantifying tourism infrastructure for territorial and urban planning.
- Required support facilities.
- Required measures to prevent saturation situations.

The Sectoral Territorial Plan will have a participatory process in which all the actors involved - both from the "tourism" perspective and from the "territorial" perspective - will be able to take part. It should be not only a tool for inventory and organization of the territorial resources, and the regulation of their use and tourism development, but will also allow the articulation between resources and the territory to facilitate their consumption through different tourist products and that of the territory itself as a scenario for the articulation of consumption and tourist activities.

The Sectoral Territorial Plan is therefore proposed as an innovative tool not only to guarantee greater sustainability of tourism activity in the territory of Euskadi, but also as a multi-level and multi-sector governance instrument to address the complexity that characterizes the sector.

Measuring the sustainability of tourism in cities

Destinations must engage in a comprehensive process of evidence-based decision-making to optimize tourism development. This involves establishing clear baselines, conducting regular and timely measurements or monitoring, and setting agreed-upon targets. Such a process ensures that the assessment of tourism's impact is not limited to economic factors alone, but also includes social and environmental considerations. Such insights can be used to steer tourism planning and management towards the long-term ambitions outlined in the Paris Agreement, the New Urban Agenda, and the UNSDGs.

Since the early 1990s, UNWTO has played a key role in the development and implementation of indicators for the monitoring and measurement of the sustainable development of tourism

destinations. The guidebook "Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations" published in 2004 is considered a seminal work that places the use of indicators in the focal point emphasizing their importance in sustainable tourism planning and management. This landmark study was used as the basis for various indicator systems and toolkits as discussed below.

At the global level, with the support of the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), the International Labour Organization and other parties, UNWTO is leading the development of a Statistical Framework for Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism (SF-MST). The SF-MST provides an integrated framework describing the main concepts, definitions and data organization structures to support the production and organization of internationally comparable data on the impacts and dependencies of tourism on the economy, society and the environment, at both national and sub-national levels. The SF-MST provides an agreed approach to building harmonized data at the sub-national level to support the analysis of tourism activity and its sustainability at all scales. As such, it supports comparability of the data between destinations, between national and subnational level, and of tourism with other sectors.

Another global initiative is the UNWTO International Network of Sustainable Tourism Observatories (INSTO), which recognizes destinations committed to base their sustainable development on evidence and a participatory and transparent approach. INSTO was created in 2004 with the aim to provide support with the monitoring and evaluation of the tourism sector's performance and impacts, with particular attention to sustainability. The initiative provides stakeholders with the tools necessary to optimize information management procedures, thereby contributing towards the development and deployment of sustainable tourism policies and strategies. The initiative highlights the crucial role observatories play in sustainable destination development and the monitoring and reporting of the sector's contribution to wider societal goals.

On the other side, during the last years measuring holistic sustainability performance in urban areas has been reinforced from the UN System. In 2022, The United Nations Statistical Commission has endorsed the implementation of the global urban monitoring framework (UMF) as part of the harmonised United Nations system-wide strategy for monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the New Urban Agenda (NUA).

The UMF will serve as a monitoring tool for UN-Habitat programmes and those implemented by other partner organisations to help track their performance at the city, national, regional or global levels and link many of these programmes to the SDGs and the NUA. It will also act as a potential tool for guiding Voluntary Local Reviews (VLRs) and the preparation of urban data for the common country assessments with the UN country teams.

The UMF indicators' framework is designed on a matrix with five domains and four city objectives. The domains are society, economy, culture, environment and governance and implementation, while the objectives are safe and peaceful, resilience, inclusive and sustainable.

Through this structure, cities and regions are able to track and report on their performance, assess themselves against similar cities or regions, identify their weak domains and objectives

as well as gaps that can be addressed through policy actions, and forge their way towards better performance.

EGM Objectives and outcomes

Main objectives of the EGM presentations and debates will be:

- Identify current challenges for sustainable urban tourism.
- Understand the state of urban tourism globally, in Europe, Spain and Basque Region, including ongoing initiatives such as policies, plans etc.
- Explore how innovative approaches could contribute to promoting sustainable tourism in urban contexts.
- Explore avenues to integrate a sustainable urban tourism approach in urban policies, plans and others.

As a result of the EGM a report with key findings will be elaborated; Likewise, conclusions derived from the EGM will serve to prepare the debates and events on sustainable tourism held within the framework of the WUF in November 2024 in Cairo, Egypt. Pending of future funding, a publication on sustainable tourism in cities and regions will be elaborated, with recommendations to local governments to improve the sustainability of tourism related policies, and practices in urban areas. The publication will build on existing UN-Habitat and UN Tourism normative work on the subject and the EGM results. Furthermore, this publication aims to take stock of initiatives, projects, case studies etc. from different contexts globally.

Background publications

UNWTO - Experiences from Pilot Studies in Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism – A Synopsis for Policy Makers.

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/abs/10.18111/unwtoecd.2020.1.g51w645001604528>

UNWTO - Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations A Guidebook

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284407262>

UNWTO - Recommendations on Urban Tourism.

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284422012>

UNWTO - City Tourism and Culture - El turismo urbano y la cultura

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284407798>

UNWTO/WTCF - City Tourism Performance Research

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284419616>

UNWTO - Global survey on the perception of residents towards city tourism: impact and measures

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284421107>

UNWTO. AIUla Framework for Inclusive Community Development through Tourism

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284422159>

UNWTO - Sustainable Cruise Tourism Development Strategies – Tackling the Challenges in Itinerary Design in South- East Asia

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284417292>

UNWTO - Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals – Journey to 2030

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284419401>

UNWTO - Measuring the Sustainability of Tourism – Learning from Pilots

<https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/book/10.18111/9789284424061>



Expert Group Meeting

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories

ANNEX 2

Programme



Expert Group Meeting

Programme

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism:

Developing tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories. Bilbao 21-22 March 2024



Programme

Bilbao, 21-22 March 2024

DAY 1: THURSDAY, 21 MARCH	
TIME	ACTIVITIES
09:00 – 09:15	Arrival of participants
INSTITUTIONAL OPENING	
09:15 – 09:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat • Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism
INTRODUCTION TO EGM	
09:30 – 09:40	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat
09:40 – 10:00	<i>Keynote presentation</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ko Koens, Professor of New Urban Tourism, Inholland University of Applied Sciences
10:00 – 10:20	<i>Keynote presentation: Sectoral Territorial Plan of Touristic Resources</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Juan Requejo, Arenal Consulting Group
10:20 – 10:30	<i>Questions and Comments</i>
10:30 – 10:35	<i>Photo Group</i>
10:35 – 11:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
SESSION 1: CURRENT CHALLENGES OF TOURISM IN URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE	
11:00 – 11:10	<i>Introduction to the section (moderator):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claudio Milano, Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona.
11:10 – 12:10	<i>Presentations (10 min. each)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (virtual) • Svitlana Mikhalyeva, Coordinator One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, UNEP • Marta Llobet, Learning and advocacy officer, United Cities and Local Government, Committee on Culture • Fergus Maclaren, President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee • Denise Bax, Head of Communication, Cities and Events Unit - Culture Sector, UNESCO (virtual)

12:10 – 13:20	Open Debate
13:20 – 13:30	Wrap up – session closing
13:30 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
SESSION 2: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICES - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF TOURISM RELATED TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE (environment/economy/society/culture)	
14:30 – 14:40	<i>Introduction to the section (moderator):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Begoña Guzmán, Head of Culture for Social Transformation. UN Etxea
14:40 – 15:40	<i>Presentations (10 min. each)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jaume Mata, Head of Sustainable Tourism, Visit Valencia • Donna J. Keren, Executive Vice President, Research & Insights, NYC & Company (virtual) • Simone Venturini, Advisor, Municipality of Venice • Iñigo García Villanueva, General Director of Tourism, Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa • Cora Doppenberg / Jelmer Peter, Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam
15:40 – 16:50	Open Debate
16:50 – 17:00	Wrap up – session closing.
18:30 – 19.30	<i>Bilbao City Guided Tour</i>

DAY 2: FRIDAY, 22 MARCH	
09:00 – 09:10	Recap Day 1
SESSION 3: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICES - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF TOURISM RELATED TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE (innovation / governance / monitoring)	
09:10 – 09:20	<i>Introduction to the section (moderator):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ana Goytia Prat, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, University of Deusto
09:20 – 10:40	<i>Presentations (10 min. each)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barbara Poggio, EU Projects Officer at Municipality of Genoa • Ricardo Barranco, Scientific Officer, UE Join Research Centre – JRC (virtual) • Claudio Milano, Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona • Sandra Carvao, Chief, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism • Nashwa Talaat, Advisor to the Minister for Sustainable Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egypt Government (virtual) • Catarina Santos Cunha, Vice-President of Porto and North Tourism Association and City Councilor for the Department of Tourism and Internationalization at the Municipality of Porto. • Xavier Font, Head of Technical Office of Tourism, Provincial Council of Barcelona (virtual)
10:40 – 11:20	Open Debate
11:20 – 11:30	Wrap up – session closing.
11:30 – 12:00	<i>Coffee Break</i>
SESSION 4 LOOKING FORWARD: TOURISM AND TERRITORIAL / URBAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	
12:00 – 12:10	<i>Introduction to the section (moderator):</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism
12:10 – 13:10	<i>Presentations (10 min. each)</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Xabier Ochandiano, Councillor for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism and Employment, Municipality of Bilbao • Javier Torner, Leader Inclusive Communities Urban Regeneration Programme, UN-Habitat • Ivor Ambrose, Managing Director, European Network for Accessible Tourism (virtual) • Petra Stusek, President, City Destination Alliance • Tim Fairhurst, General Director European Tourism Association - ETOA • Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute

13:10 – 14:00	Open Debate
14:20 – 14:10	Wrap up – session closing.
NEXT STEPS	
14:10 – 14:20	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat
INSTITUTIONAL CLOSING	
14:20 – 14:30	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat • Sandra Carvao, Chief, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism
14:30 – 15:30	<i>Lunch</i>



Expert Group Meeting

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories

ANNEX 3

Guidelines for Participants



Expert Group Meeting

Guidelines

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism:

Developing tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories. Bilbao 21-22 March 2024



Guidelines

UN-Habitat Office in Spain with the collaboration of UN Tourism and the support of the Basque Government, have organized the Expert Group Meeting (EGM) “Achieving Sustainable Urban Tourism: Developing tools for promoting good practices in cities” that will take place in the Itsasmuseum in the city of Bilbao, Basque Country, Spain, on 21st and 22nd March 2024.

EGM Objectives, outputs and outcomes

Main objectives of the EGM presentations and debates will be:

- 01 Understand the state of urban tourism globally, in Europe, Spain and Basque Region, including ongoing initiatives as policies, plans etc.
- 02 Identify current challenges for sustainable urban tourism
- 03 Explore how innovative approaches could contribute to addressing tourism unsustainable practices in urban contexts.
- 04 Explore avenues to integrate sustainable urban tourism approach in urban policies, plans, and others.

As a result of the EGM a report with key findings will be elaborated; Likewise, conclusions derived from the EGM will serve to prepare the debates and events on sustainable tourism held within the framework of the WUF in November 2024 in Cairo, Egypt.

Pending of future funding, a publication on sustainable tourism in cities and regions will be elaborated, with recommendations to local governments to improve the sustainability of tourism related policies, and practices in urban areas.

The publication will build on existing UN-Habitat and UN Tourism normative work on the subject and the EGM results. Furthermore, this publication aims to take stock of initiatives, projects, case studies etc. from different contexts globally.

Structure of the Event

The event will be structured as follow

Institutional Opening

Introduction

Session 1. Current Challenges of Tourism in Urban and Territorial Space

Session 2. From Policies to Practices - addressing challenges of tourism related to urban and territorial space (environment/economy/society/culture)

Session 3. From Policies to Practices - addressing challenges of tourism related to urban and territorial space (innovation / governance / monitoring).

Session 4. Looking forward: Tourism and Territorial/ Urban Sustainable Development

Next steps

Closing

Description of thematic sessions

Sessions 1 to 4 are organized in format of debate. The idea is to maximize the time allocated to the discussions. The sessions will start with a 10-minute framework presentation by the session facilitator. There will be 6-7 presentations (PPT can be made) of 10 minutes each per speaker. Case studies, good practices and theoretical reflections will be presented. We will try to be rigorous in the use of time, and we kindly ask for your understanding in this regard. After this initial set of reflections, facilitator will open the debate to all the participants in the event, whether in person or online, for 1 hour approx. Interventions in the debate shall be limited to a maximum of three minutes. To close the session, the facilitator will summarize (10min) the main points of the discussion. They should highlight key lessons, principles, policy approaches, and actionable ideas emerging from the discussion, which, following this event, will be integrated in the EGM Report. Please be aware that sessions will be recorded, just for internal reporting ends. If you have any concern regarding this topic, please let us know.

Connection Details

All the sessions will be hybrid. On-line connection will be available through Zoom platform. Connection details are as follows: <https://euskalstream.es/wp/sustainable-urban-tourism/>

Please be aware that time reflected in the Programme are scheduled in Central Europe Time Zone (CET - UTC+01:00). If you need to install a zoom desktop in your PC, this is the link.

<https://zoom.us/download>

Presentations

Duration: 10 minutes per presentation.

Format: Delivering a digital presentation (e.g., PowerPoint, Keynote, Google Slides) is recommended and files should be shared with the EGM organizational team no later than Tuesday - 19th March 2024.

Details: The presentations will provide the overall framework for discussion on the topic of the session, assembling central concepts and important lessons learned from national and municipal efforts, research, civic initiatives, and international discourse. Case studies could be included to provide concrete illustration of discussed issue from a specific national, regional or city context. It is recommended to focus on the key learnings and challenges in the process and to provide rich graphic material (when relevant)

Interpretation English-Spanish- English

The meeting will be mainly held in English, although there will be live interpretation English-Spanish and Spanish-English through Zoom. It will stream real-time language interpretation to participants' smartphones and/or computers, so everyone can join and participate in either English or Spanish when needed.

Documentation

All documents of the EGM will be available at the following [link](#). Documents are being updated regularly.

Detailed Programme

Day 1. Thursday, 21 March

TIME	ACTIVITIES
9.00 - 9.15	Arrival of participants
INSTITUTIONAL OPENING	
09.15 - 09.30	<i>(Beatriz Jordao welcomes the meeting and gives the floor to speakers /5 min intervention each).</i> Beatriz Jordao , Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat Lorena Villar , Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism
Introduction to EGM	
09.30 - 9.40	<i>(Beatriz Jordao explains the dynamic of the EGM and practical points. After that, introduces the keynote speakers, including name and title, and if existing, title of the presentation)</i> Beatriz Jordao , Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat
09.40 - 10.00	Keynote presentation (20 min) Ko Koens , Professor of New Urban Tourism, Inholland University of Applied Sciences
10.00 - 10.20	Keynote presentation (20 min) Juan Requejo , Arenal Consulting Group - Sectoral Territorial Plan of Touristic Resources
10.20 - 10.30	Questions and Comments
10.30 - 10.35	Photo Group
10.35 - 11.00	Coffe Break
SESSION 1: CURRENT CHALLENGES OF TOURISM IN URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE	
Introduction The first session, with a diagnostic approach, is proposed with the objective of determining what are the benefits and externalities generated by tourism and the causes that have led to tourism in cities being perceived by some actors as a negative factor to urban sustainability, understood from a comprehensive approach in its three pillars.	

	<p>Key questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What are the main global tourism trends and what challenges and opportunities arise from these trends? -What is the map of positive and negative interactions that can be established between tourism and sustainability in cities and territories? What are the most significant elements of this relationship? -How is the community being integrated in the planning and management of tourism in cities and what can be done to improve such engagement? -How has the exponential growth of tourism in recent years as well as the impact of the pandemic changed the vision of cities and territories regarding the sector (ex. Quality vs quantity, people centered tourism strategy, including resilience in the tourism strategy, etc)? What policies and indicators of success are being used? What has changed and what are the trends? -How is tourism impacting the lives of the residents in cities and territories? what are the main challenges and opportunities? - What is the impact of tourism on the culture of cities and territories?
11.00 - 11.10	<p>Introduction to the section (moderator):</p> <p><i>The moderator makes a brief introduction to the subject (8 minutes) and explains the purpose and dynamic of the session. After that, she/he gives the floor to the first speaker, presenting each one before each presentation (only name and title of the presenter)</i></p> <p>Claudio Milano, Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona.</p>
11.10 - 12.10	<p>Presentations (10 min. each) <i>Each speaker will present for a maximum of 10 minutes, he/she will be free to choose the topic he/she wants to address, as long as it relates to the general topic of the session; Suggested topics for each presenter are indicated in brackets.</i></p> <p>Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities (virtual) (Relation between tourism as economic sector and urban economies)</p> <p>Svitlana Mikhalyeva, Coordinator One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, UNEP (Impact of tourism in the environment, particularly in relation to cities)</p> <p>Marta Llobet, Learning and advocacy officer, United Cities and Local Government, Committee on Culture (Approach from local governments on both urban tourism as opportunity and challenge, and the tools that local governments have for addressing challenges derived from urban tourism)</p> <p>Fergus Maclaren, President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee (Relation between urban tourism and heritage preservation)</p> <p>Denise Bax, Head of Communication, Cities and Events Unit - Culture Sector, UNESCO (virtual) (Impact of tourism in the culture of cities and impact of culture in the tourism sector)</p>
12.10 - 13.20	<p>Open Debate.</p> <p>After presentations, the moderator will open the floor for an open debate. All participants, both in the room and connected online, are invited to intervene. Interventions could be referred to the presentations or could elaborate new points referred to the topic of the session. Each intervention may not exceed 3 minutes. Comments and questions from the online chat are read by the facilitator two times during the debate. The open debate will last 1 hour.</p>
13.20 - 13.30	<p>Wrap up - session closing</p> <p><i>The moderator wraps-up the main points addressed during the sessions and closes it. (10 min).</i></p>
13.30 - 14.30	<p>Lunch</p>

SESSION 2: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICES - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF TOURISM RELATED TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE (environment/economy/society/culture)

Introduction:

The second session is proposed with the objective of showcasing innovative approaches and proposals to overcome tourism challenges, particularly on the issues referred to integrated sustainability: environment, economy, social and cultural challenges. The main focus will be in examples and experiences coming from cities and regions.

Key questions

-What innovative solutions from the environmental dimension have been implemented in cities and territories with high tourist demand? How to reduce the environmental impact of tourism? How to protect fragile spaces that are tourist attractions?

-What innovative solutions from the social dimension have been implemented in cities and territories with high tourist demand? How to improve the relationship with resident populations?

-What innovative solutions from the economic dimension have been implemented in cities and territories with high tourist demand? How to guarantee that the benefits of tourism reach all residents of a region or city with high tourism demand?

- How can culture be promoted as a pole of attraction for tourism and at the same time protect that culture from the impact of mass tourism?

-How better balance heritage preservation and tourism?

14.30 - 14.40	<p>Introduction to the section (moderator):</p> <p><i>The moderator makes a brief introduction to the subject (8 minutes) and explains the purpose and dynamic of the session. After that, she/he gives the floor to the first speaker, presenting each one before each presentation (only name and title of the presenter)</i></p> <p>Begoña Guzmán, Head of Culture for Social Transformation. UN Etxea</p>
14.40 - 15.40	<p><i>Presentations (10 min each). Each speaker will present for a maximum of 10 minutes, he/she will be free to choose the topic he/she wants to address, as long as it relates to the general topic of the session; Suggested topics for each presenter are indicated in brackets.</i></p> <p>Jaume Mata, Head of Sustainable Tourism, Visit Valencia (Showcase Valencia´s initiatives for addressing environmental sustainability issues related to tourism)</p> <p>Donna J. Keren, Executive Vice President, Research & Insights, NYC & Company (virtual) (Presenting measures adopted by NY City to reduce the impact of tourism in the city)</p> <p>Simone Venturini, Advisor, Municipality of Venice (Presenting measures adopted by Venice to reduce the impact of tourism in the city)</p> <p>Iñigo García Villanueva, General Director of Tourism, Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa (Presenting measures adopted by Gipuzkoa to reduce the impact of tourism in the Province)</p> <p>Cora Doppenberg / Jelmer Peter, Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam (Presenting measures adopted by Amsterdam to reduce the negative impacts of tourism in the city)</p>
15.40 - 16.50	<p>Open Debate</p> <p><i>After presentations, the moderator will open the floor for an open debate. All participants, both in the room and connected online, are invited to intervene. Interventions could be referred to the presentations or could elaborate new points referred to the topic of the session. Each intervention may not exceed 3 minutes. Comments and questions from the online chat are read by the facilitator two times during the debate. The open debate will last 1 hour.</i></p>

16.50 - 17.00	<p>Wrap up – session closing.</p> <p><i>The moderator wraps-up the main points addressed during the sessions and closes it. (10 min).</i></p>
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Day 2. Friday, 22 March

9.00 - 9.10	<p>Recap day 1</p> <p><i>The facilitator will summary key elements addressed during the first day of the EGM, and explain the structure of the debates in the day 2.</i></p> <p>Gonzalo Lacurcia, UN-Habitat Spain</p>
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SESSION 3: FROM POLICIES TO PRACTICES - ADDRESSING CHALLENGES OF TOURISM RELATED TO URBAN AND TERRITORIAL SPACE (INNOVATION / GOVERNANCE / MONITORING)

Introduction:

The third session is proposed with the objective of showcasing the role of innovation, governance and monitoring of tourism – and associated topics – in addressing and promoting sustainability. The main focus will be in examples and experiences coming from cities and regions, but also research and normative work coming from global institutions and international stakeholders

Key questions:

- What innovative solutions have been implemented in terms of governance of the tourism sector? How to implement transversal and multi-level policies and programs in the tourism sector?
- What tools can help carry out comprehensive monitoring of tourism activity? What monitoring framework experiences are being implemented in cities and territories or at a global level?
- What can be the role of technology in promoting sustainable tourism practices?
- How can a city destination measure residents' sentiment with regard of tourism? How important is this measurement to guarantee the sustainability of tourism in cities and territories?

9.10 - 9.20	<p>Introduction to the section (moderator):</p> <p><i>The moderator makes a brief introduction to the subject (8 minutes) and explains the purpose and dynamic of the session. After that, he/she gives the floor to the first speaker, presenting each one before each presentation (only name and title of the presenter)</i></p> <p>Ana Goytia Prat, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, University of Deusto</p>
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9.20 - 10.40	<p><i>Presentations (10 min. each). Each speaker will present for a maximum of 10 minutes, he/she will be free to choose the topic he/she wants to address, as long as it relates to the general topic of the session; Suggested topics for each presenter are indicated in brackets.</i></p> <p>Barbara Poggio, EU Projects Officer at Municipality of Genoa (Innovation in governance: the EU Urban Agenda Partnership in Tourism)</p> <p>Ricardo Barranco, Scientific Officer, UE Join Research Centre – JRC (virtual) (JRC recent research related to sustainable tourism, monitoring of sustainable tourism at European Level)</p>
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9.20 - 10.40	<p>Claudio Milano, Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona (recent findings related to innovation, governance and monitoring of Tourism at the global level)</p> <p>Sandra Carvao, Chief, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism (recent findings related to innovation, governance and monitoring of Tourism at the global level)</p> <p>Nashwa Talaat, Advisor to the Minister for Sustainable Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egypt Government (virtual) (Presenting measures adopted by Egypt to balance sustainable tourism and heritage)</p> <p>Catarina Santos Cunha, Vice-President of Porto and North Tourism Association and City Councilor for the Department of Tourism and Internationalization at the Municipality of Porto (multilevel governance of sustainable tourism)</p> <p>Xavier Font, Head of Technical Office of Tourism, Provincial Council of Barcelona (virtual) (innovation in sustainable tourism in the province of Barcelona)</p>
10.40 - 11.20	<p>Open Debate</p> <p><i>After presentations, the moderator will open the floor for an open debate. All participants, both in the room and connected online, are invited to intervene. Interventions could be referred to the presentations or could elaborate new points referred to the topic of the session. Each intervention may not exceed 3 minutes. Comments and questions from the online chat are read by the facilitator two times during the debate. The open debate will last 1 hour.</i></p>
11.20 - 11.30	<p>Wrap up – session closing.</p> <p><i>The moderator wraps-up the main points addressed during the sessions and closes it. (10 min).</i></p>
11.30 - 12.00	Coffe Break
SESSION 4 LOOKING FORWARD: TOURISM AND TERRITORIAL / URBAN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT	
<p>Introduction:</p> <p>The fourth session is proposed with the objective of debating on the potential of tourism as a vehicle for achieving global goals, particularly at the local level: SDGs and the New Urban Agenda, and what kind of measures and initiatives could be recommended to avoid negative impacts of tourism development in pursuit of sustainable and resilient urban tourism.</p> <p>Key questions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -What key elements must be taken into account to consolidate tourism as a tool for the sustainable development of cities and regions? -What measures should cities and regions where tourism is growing promote to ensure sustainable development? -How to improve aspects related to tourism in cities and territories to make it more accessible and inclusive? -How to promote long-term consensus around tourism? -How specific SDGs are being addressed from tourism perspective? (particularly SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth; SDG 9: Industry, innovation, and infrastructure; SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities; SDG 12: Responsible consumption and production; SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals) 	
12.00 - 12.10	<p>Introduction to the session:</p> <p>The moderator makes a brief introduction to the subject (8 minutes) and explains the purpose and dynamic of the session. After that, he/she gives the floor to the first speaker, presenting each one before each presentation (only name and title of the presenter)</p> <p>Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism</p>

12.10 - 13.10	<p><i>Presentations (10 min. each). Each speaker will present for a maximum of 10 minutes, he/she will be free to choose the topic he/she wants to address, as long as it relates to the general topic of the session; Suggested topics for each presenter are indicated in brackets.</i></p> <p>Xabier Ochandiano, Councillor for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism and Employment, Municipality of Bilbao (The urban regeneration of Bilbao and its impact in tourism and city sustainable development)</p> <p>Javier Torner, Leader Inclusive Communities Urban Regeneration Programme, UN-Habitat (The cultural industry and the tourism as vectors for inclusive and sustainable urban development)</p> <p>Petra Stusek, President, City Destination Alliance (City DNA)</p> <p>Ivor Ambrose, Managing Director, European Network for Accessible Tourism (virtual) (The role of accessibility in developing sustainable tourism in cities and regions)</p> <p>Tim Fairhurst, General Director European Tourism Association - ETOA (Sustainable tourism in cities and regions and the private sector: in-between restrictions and laissez faire)</p> <p>Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute (the future of sustainable tourism in cities and regions)</p>
13.10 - 14.00	<p>Open Debate</p> <p><i>After presentations, the moderator will open the floor for an open debate. All participants, both in the room and connected online, are invited to intervene. Interventions could be referred to the presentations or could elaborate new points referred to the topic of the session. Each intervention may not exceed 3 minutes. Comments and questions from the online chat are read by the facilitator two times during the debate. The open debate will last 1 hour.</i></p>
14.00 - 14.10	<p>Wrap up – session closing.</p> <p><i>The moderator wraps-up the main points addressed during the sessions and closes it. (10 min).</i></p>
NEXTS STEPS	
14.10 - 14.20	<p>Facilitator will present the next steps to be taken and the follow up of the conclusions derived from the EGM</p> <p>Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat</p>
14.20 - 14.30	<p>Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat</p> <p>Sandra Carvao, Chief, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism</p> <p>(3 min. Intervention each)</p>
14.30 - 15.30	Lunch



Expert Group Meeting

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism: Tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories

ANNEX 4

Biographies



Expert Group Meeting

Biographies

Advancing Sustainable Urban Tourism:

Developing tools for promoting good practices in cities and territories. Bilbao 21-22 March 2024





Ignacio de La Puerta, Director of Territorial Planning and Urban Agenda, Basque Government

Ignacio De La Puerta holds a Degree in Architecture from the Escuela de Arquitectura de Madrid. Throughout his career, he has balanced his role as an independent professional with various leadership positions in public administration. He serves as Director of Territorial Planning and Urban Agenda. In this position, he works in land planning, and is responsible for the processing of urban planning instruments, both in the jurisdiction of his competence as well as those that elaborate land planning determinations. Notably, he served as the Director of the Urban Planning Area and the Office of the General Plan for the City of Eibar from 1994 to 2007. Subsequently, he assumed the role of Director of Housing, Innovation, and Control for the Basque Government from 2009 to 2013. Following these roles, Mr. De La Puerta became the Director of Territorial Planning, Urban Planning, and Urban Regeneration.



Beatriz Jordao, Head of Spain Office, UN-Habitat

Ana Beatriz Jordao holds a Degree in Architecture from the Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro and a Master's degree in Architecture and Urbanism from Universidad de Sevilla as well as a Master's in Architectural Restoration from Universidad Politécnica de Madrid. Ana Beatriz is the Head of Office at UN-Habitat in Spain. Ms. Jordao has a vast experience in infrastructure programs, as well as projects with comprehensive approaches to urban resilience and integral improvement of vulnerable communities. Previously, she worked at the Spanish Agency of International Cooperation for Development (AECID), as urban specialist at the Financial Cooperation Department, and at the Multilateral Cooperation Department. Until that time, Ms. Jordao worked as project manager at the Spanish Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, as well as in the Spanish Ministry of Economy and Finance.



Sandra Carvao, Chief, Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness, UN Tourism

Sandra Carvão holds a degree in Law and Economics from the Instituto de Ciências Sociais e Políticas/Universidade Técnica de Lisboa and a post-graduate degree in Marketing from the Universidad Complutense de Madrid. She has been Head of the Market Intelligence and Competitiveness Department of the World Tourism Organization (UN Tourism) since June 2018. Previously, she had been Head of Communications and Publications for 8 years being responsible for UNWTO's strategic positioning. Before assuming the role mentioned, Sandra was Deputy Head in the Tourism Services Market Trends, Competitiveness and Trade Department between 2007 and 2010. During this time, Sandra coordinated the Tourism Resilience Committee created by UN Turismo to address the impacts of the 2008-2009 global financial crisis on tourism. Prior to joining the organization in 2003, Sandra held the position of market manager at the Portuguese National Tourism Office in Lisbon.



Lorena Villar, Senior Project Specialist, UN Tourism

Lorena Villar is a tourism industry professional with over 20 years of experience in the public and private sectors. She joined UN Tourism in 2021 as a Senior Project Specialist in the Market Intelligence, Policies and Competitiveness Department to work in the areas of urban tourism development and destination management. Before that, she was the Marketing and Trade Relations Manager at the Tourist Board of Spain in Miami, USA for 13 years. She started her professional career back in 2003 at the tourism division of one of the leading consulting firms of Spain, Cegos España. She holds a Degree in Tourism Management by Balearic Islands University, Spain and a Masters Degree in Marketing for Tourism Destinations & Enterprises by the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, Spain. She is also a University Expert on Sustainable Tourism for International Development by the George Washington University, USA. In 2017, she won the Innovation and Entrepreneurship Award by the IEBS Business School Barcelona for her startup project: "Be Ambassador: Peer to peer travel planning by a friend you don't know yet".



Ko Koens, Professor of New Urban Tourism, Inholland University of Applied Sciences

Ko Koens holds a PhD in Responsible Tourism from Leeds Beckett University. Currently, he plays a crucial role as a co-leader in the University of Breda's involvement in the H2020 project "SmartCulTour." His research focus encompasses sustainable urban tourism, slum tourism, urban hospitality, visitor pressure, small businesses, and local economic development. Mr. Ko Koens has contributed significantly to sustainable urban tourism development as an expert at the Centre of Expertise Leisure Tourism and Hospitality (CELTH). Notably, he co-authored the UNWTO publication "Overtourism? - Understanding and Managing Urban Tourism Growth beyond Perceptions" and served as a co-editor for books such as "Slum Tourism: Poverty, Power and Ethics" and "Tourism and Geographies of Inequality: The New Global Slumming Phenomenon."



Juan Requejo, Arenal Consulting Group

Juan Requejo, is a planning consultant, economist, and geographer, that has overseen the development of over 50 plans across diverse sectors such as territorial and local development, tourism, agriculture, energy, land use planning, urban planning, industry, and environment. Presently, he is leading the drafting team for the Territorial Sectorial Plan for Tourism Resources in the Basque Country. With a focus on sub-regional land management, he has successfully directed fourteen plans and is currently engaged in projects for Rioja Alavesa, Serranía de Ronda, and Sierra de Cádiz. Juan Requejo has played a key role in shaping regional tourism strategies for Andalucía and Navarre, and his expertise extends to directing twelve strategic plans for cities of tourist significance, including Seville, Santiago de Compostela, Segovia, and Cáceres, as part of UNESCO's planning for World Heritage Cities.



Claudio Milano, Ramón y Cajal Research Fellow, University of Barcelona.

Claudio Milano holds a degree in Tourism Management and a master's degree in Social and Cultural Anthropology. Milano has 15 years of professional experience and is currently a Researcher at the Department of Social Anthropology - Ramon y Cajal - University of Barcelona. He has worked in international consultancy in tourism development, strategic planning and socio-cultural evaluation at international level in entities such as FAS Fundação Autónoma Solidária, Universidade Federal do Piauí, Federazione di Organismi di Volontariato Internazionale, Barcelona Centre for International Affairs, IED Barcelona, Inholland University of Applied Sciences, Universitat de Barcelona, Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona and Escuela de Turismo y Hostelería. He has been a keynote speaker at events, seminars and conferences organized by Governmental Institutions such as the European Commission and City Councils in England, Ireland, Portugal, Spain, Holland, Ecuador, Chile, Colombia, Costa Rica, Nepal and Sri Lanka.



Jane Stacey, Head of Tourism, OECD Centre for Entrepreneurship, SMEs, Regions and Cities.

Jane Stacey holds a Master's degree in Tourism Management and more than 20 years of experience in the sector. Stacey is the Head of the Tourism Unit, is responsible for the OECD Tourism Committee, the Working Party on Tourism Statistics and the Global Forum on Tourism Statistics - Knowledge and Policy. The OECD's tourism work helps members and partners to develop integrated policies to address key challenges and undertake tourism reforms based on in-depth policy analysis (e.g. sustainability, digital transformation, competitiveness, quality jobs and skills, green transition and innovation, sharing economy, travel facilitation), improve measurement and analysis of tourism services (e.g. tourism satellite account, competitiveness indicators, tourism trade in value added, tourism impacts at sub-national level) as well as enhance international co-operation within the countries. Among other things, Jane is currently leading projects on tourism policy responses to support the sustainable and resilient recovery of the sector after the COVID-19 pandemic.



Svitlana Mikhalyeva, Coordinator One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, UNEP

Svitlana Mikhalyeva holds a Master's degree in Public Affairs and Diplomacy from Science Po Toulouse as well as a Master's degree in International Cooperation, Humanitarian Action and Development Policies from the Université Paris 1 Panthéon - Sorbonne. With 15 years of extensive experience, she currently serves as a Partnership Coordinator at the 10YFP Secretariat within the Industry and Economy Division of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). Over the past five years, Svitlana has been a pivotal expert in UN Tourism and UNEP, contributing as an External Expert in Circularity & Sustainable Consumption and Production, a Coordination Specialist in the Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit of the Economy Division, the Coordinator of the One Planet Sustainable Tourism Programme, and a Coordinator Specialist in Sustainable Consumption and Production Unit within the Economy Division. Her professional journey spans across notable entities such as the Midi-Pyrenees Region, Prefecture de Nièvre, UNESCO, and the French Industry Chamber of Commerce



Marta Llobet, Learning and advocacy officer, United Cities and Local Government, Committee on Culture

Marta Llobet is as a learning and advocacy officer at the Technical Secretariat of the Committee on Culture of United Cities and Local Governments (UCLG) since 2017. She works on the Committee's advocacy mission at local and global levels to promote and make visible the relationship between local cultural policies and sustainable development, and to push for a stand-alone culture goal in the UN 2030 Agenda, in collaboration with international networks. She works closely with cities committed to culture as a pillar of sustainable development in peer learning and capacity building programmes. Currently, Marta Llobet is interested in the role of culture in addressing major global and local challenges such as gender equality, climate change, sustainable mobility and tourism, among others.



Fergus Maclaren, President, ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Committee

Fergus Maclaren holds a bachelor's degree in history and a master's degree in Environmental Design. Maclaren is a sustainable tourism and cultural heritage resources management specialist focusing on community development and the conservation and use of natural and protected areas. He is experienced in a broad range of Canadian and international tourism resource management and community development aspects including cultural and historic site destination management and marketing, site branding, training, risk and gap analyses, environmental scans, performance indicators development, site research and needs assessment, communications plans, multi-stakeholder participation, program design and evaluation. He also serves in an Expert capacity for UNESCO, UNWTO, the Organization of World Heritage Cities (OWHC), the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), the World Monuments Fund (WMF), and the Heritage and Cultural Society for Africa (HACSA).



Denise Bax, Head of Communication, Cities and Events Unit - Culture Sector, UNESCO

Denise Bax, is the Chief of Communication, Cities and Events Unit within the Culture Sector of UNESCO, where she heads the coordination of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network (UCCN) and the UNESCO Cities Platform (UCP). Over 20 years of experience at UNESCO, she has been involved in the promotion of culture and creativity through strengthening the international visibility of various cultural and creative programmes including the UCCN. Furthermore, her engagement and comprehensive outreach with various stakeholders of the 2005 Convention on the Protection and Promotion of the Diversity of Cultural Expressions, and beyond, has supported the development and expansion of the Convention. Ms Bax has developed international cultural cooperation and development programmes and has managed a series of culture-driven initiatives in both the public and private sectors, notably towards the implementation of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and now the 2030 Agenda.



Begoña Guzmán, Head of Culture for Social Transformation at UN Etxea

Begoña Guzmán holds a degree in History specialized in cultural heritage management, along with postgraduate studies in intercultural education, social mediation, gender and cultural management. Since 2020 she has been responsible for culture at ONU Etxea, where she has participated in various projects related to culture and the 2030 Agenda, cultural diversity, cultural rights, artistic and cultural education, and tangible and intangible heritage. Her work places special emphasis on involving young people as agents of transformation. With more than 20 years of experience in the heritage and sustainable development sector, Begoña Guzmán has worked in various organizations, such as the Basque Association of Industrial Heritage and Public Works, the Gernika Peace Museum Foundation, BBVA Bank, the UNESCO Regional Office for Culture for Latin America and the Caribbean, UN EXTEA, the EDE Foundation and the Santa María la Real Foundation for Historical Heritage.



Jaume Mata, Head of Sustainable Tourism, Visit Valencia

Jaume Mata holds a degree in Economics and Business Administration from the University of Valencia an International Postgraduate Degree in Management and Administration of Tourism Companies and Organizations at the Polytechnic University of Valencia. He obtained a Master's degree (MSc) in Tourism Management from the University of Surrey (UK). Since 2016 he has been the head of sustainable tourism at Visit Valencia, which has been recognized in the Premis Alimara in 2023. Maura has been a Collaborating Professor of the Master's Degree in Strategy and Sustainable Management of Tourism Destinations at the Universidad Oberta de Catalunya and Trainer in the Integral System of Tourism Quality in Destinations SICTED in Turismo Valencia. In 1997, he became part of the Visit Valencia Foundation, initially serving as the Head Officer for Promotion, Marketing, and Communication.



Donna J. Keren, Executive Vice President, Research & Insights, NYC & Company

Donna Keren holds undergraduate and graduate degrees in Anthropology from the University of Washington and New York University, respectively. Keren is Executive Vice President and Director of NYC & Company's Research Unit. Donna was also an adjunct associate professor at Columbia University's School of International & Public Affairs (SIPA) from January 2010 to June 2011. Donna has over 20 years of research experience and served as Vice President of Social Trends and New Markets at Strategic Surveys, an independent research firm specializing in qualitative and quantitative perspectives, from January 1999 to December 2002. Donna began her career as an Assistant Professor of Anthropology and Latin American Studies at Temple University in Philadelphia from September 1991 to July 1999. And, she works with Shadawn Smith, Vice President of External Affairs and Community Engagement, Richard Lovatt, Chief Financial Officer, and Robert Beckham, Senior Vice President of Membership Development and Services.



Simone Venturini, Advisor, Municipality of Venice

Simone Venturini holds a degree in jurisprudence. In 2010 he became councilor of Venice and held the position of group leader. He was re-elected in 2015 and served as councilor for Social Cohesion, Labor, Infrastructures and Economic Development. During the 2015 - 2020 term, his role covered different positions in local and national commissions, addressing social issues, labor matters and anti-human trafficking concerns. In 2020, he expanded his responsibilities to include Tourism and Residency Policies. During the Covid-19 pandemic, he acted a crucial role in emergency management, focusing on health and social aspects. As Councilor for Tourism and Economic Development, he collaborated with institutions, researchers and entrepreneurs to rejuvenate the city as well as tourism in a sustainable basis. In addition, he became President of the Venice Destination Management Organization. He actively contributed to the formulation of a programmatic document, the Decalogue, aimed at revitalizing Florence and Venice in collaboration with the Municipal Administration of Florence.



Iñigo García Villanueva, General Director of Tourism, Provincial Council of Gipuzkoa

Iñigo García Villanueva holds a degree in Building Engineering from the European University of Madrid and a degree in Technical Architecture from the Polytechnic School of the Basque Country. His extensive professional career spans several sectors, and he currently holds the position of Tourism Director of the Provincial Council of Guipuzcoa. From 2008 and 2019, García worked as a project manager, overseeing construction management, contracting, coordination activities with subcontractors and leading teams. His responsibilities included time planning, cost control and budgeting. From 2019 to 2023, he assumed the position of Managing Director of San Sebastian Shops, a public-private partnership platform for urban retail in Donostia-San Sebastian. In this capacity, he facilitated cooperation between the public and private sectors to promote citywide retail policies.



Nashwa Talaat, Advisor to the Minister for Sustainable Tourism, Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities, Egypt Government

Nashwa Talaat holds a Bachelor's degree in Tourism from Helwan Cairo University and a Master's and PhD in Tourism and Travel Services Marketing. With over 25 years of professional expertise, she currently holds the position of Advisor to the Minister for Sustainable Tourism at the Ministry of Tourism and Antiquities. Talaat's extensive career includes serving as an Advisor to the Executive Director of Green Tourism at the Egyptian Ministry of Tourism. She has also contributed to academia as a lecturer and professor in tourism studies at Sadat City University. Additionally, Talaat has demonstrated leadership as the Dean and Board Member of the Alalson Institute for nearly 9 years.



Cora Doppenberg, Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam

Cora Doppenberg is a qualified professional with a distinguished career in public administration. She earned her master's degree in law from the prestigious Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam, showcasing her commitment to academic excellence. With an extensive 18 years of professional experience, Cora currently serves as the Project Manager for Realization Projects at the Amsterdam City Hall. In this capacity, she plays a pivotal role in overseeing and executing various projects that contribute to the development and improvement of the city's infrastructure. Prior to her current role, Cora Doppenberg held the position of Media Manager for Land and Development at the Municipality of Amsterdam, where she demonstrated her skills in managing communication strategies and media relations for crucial municipal projects. Cora's dedication to public service is further highlighted by her six years as a Project Manager and Director Advisor within the same department of the Municipality of Amsterdam.



Jelmer Peter, Programme Manager, Municipality of Amsterdam

Jelmer Peter, holds a Bachelor's degree in European Studies and a Master's degree in Heritage and Memory Studies. Accumulating a wealth of experience over the past decade across diverse organizations, he has been a valuable contributor to the municipality of Amsterdam for the last four years. In this duration, Jelmer Peter initially served as an advisor and has currently ascended to the role of program manager, showcasing his dedication and expertise. In his earlier career, Jelmer Peter played a pivotal role as the Commissioner for External Studies at the European Studies Association, contributing significantly to the organization's external outreach and academic initiatives. Furthermore, his professional journey includes a position as a Policy Advisor at the University of Amsterdam, where he actively engaged in shaping internationalization strategies and policies, underscoring his commitment to fostering a globally connected academic environment.



Jon Asúa, Responsible for the Territorial Planning Service of the Basque Government

Jon Asúa holds a degree in architecture and is currently the Responsible for the Territorial Planning Service of the Basque Government. He has been the architect of the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve Service since 2008. Specialized in land and urban planning and management of rural areas, he has collaborated in the drafting of various plans and projects related to sustainable development, conservation of natural and cultural heritage and sustainable mobility. He was a member of the technical management for the adhesion of the Urdaibai Biosphere Reserve to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism and is currently the person responsible for its implementation in this area.



Ana Goytia Prat, Senior Lecturer and Researcher, University of Deusto

Goytia Prat holds a degree in Urban Sociology, a Master's in Leisure and a PhD in Philosophy and Educational Sciences, Leisure and Human Potential. Currently she is the Research and Postgraduate Coordinator of the Department of Tourism as well as the Director of Research and Consulting Projects at the Institute of Leisure Studies. Goytia has been Professor at the Institute of Leisure Studies of the University of Deusto-Bilbao since 1991 and Professor at the Department of Tourism of the same University since 1997. She collaborates, as a visiting lecturer, in training programs offered in different faculties of the University of Deusto and in several Spanish and foreign Universities of the EU. Her areas of knowledge are focus on Psychosociology of leisure and tourism; Leisure-Tourism and lifestyles: segmentation and demand analysis; Leisure-Tourism experience; Psychosocial impacts of tourism; Tourism and satisfaction of tourism demand; Tourism and sustainable development; and Policies and strategic planning for tourism development.



Barbara Poggio, EU Projects Officer at Municipality of Genoa

After her degree in 2002 in Politic Sciences at the University of Genoa with a specialization on Development Economics, and a Master in Economic, Political and Social Cooperation Development, in 2003 Barbara began to work in the International Relations Office of the Municipality of Genoa dealing with the development of Bilateral relations of the City of Genoa, the participation of the City in European networks as Eurocities, supporting EX -com terms of the city (2003-2012) organizing its Annual Conference in Genoa in 2011 and working on EU Projects. Since 2015 she is EU Policy Officer at International Relations Officer focusing on the redaction and management of EU Projects, such as MEDA, ENPI CBCMed, EUROP AID, and lately INTERREG MED, IURC and URBACT where the City of Genoa leded 2 projects; Interactive Cities and Tourism Friendly Cities, ended in August 2022, the first action planning networks focused on the theme of Sustainable Tourism. In 2022 she worked on the candidacy to be coordinator of the new URBAN AGENDA Partnership on Sustainable Tourism, winning together with the city of Galati.



Ricardo Barranco, Scientific Officer. UE Join Research Centre - JRC

Ricardo Barroso holds a Master's degree in Environmental Engineering from the Universidade do Algarve, and a Master's degree in Geographic Information Systems, Environmental Engineering and Urban Planning from Wageningen University & Research. Currently, he is Scientific Officer and Data Scientist GIS Expert at the JRC of the European Commission and his main functions are Senior Spatial Data Scientist & GIS expert, Communication and Policy support, Web Scraping and Data Collection, Development & Calculation of indicators and writing of peer-review articles and Policy/Technical EC Reports. Previously, Ricardo Barranco worked as Organizer and Tutor of the Course "Introduction to Geograpic Information systems (GIS)" at Universidade do Algarve as well as GIS Analyst for Iren S.p.A. He has collaborated in different entities such as Geographical Information Systems International Group and iWays as Gis Analyst and Web Developer and Technical and Design Consultant.



Catarina Santos Cunha, Vice-President of Porto and North Tourism Association and City Councilor for the Department of Tourism and Internationalization at the Municipality of Porto.

Catarina Santos Cunha holds a degree in Marketing Management from IPAM, Marketing Business School, and a specialization in Services Marketing from the same institution. She is also currently President of Marketing Council of Porto and North of Portugal Tourism Association, member of the strategic council of Porto and North of Portugal Tourism Association, executive Member of the Great Wine Capitals – GWC, and member of the Culture Observatory of SEDES - Association for Economic and Social Development. Collaborated on the preparation of the sustainability program for Portuguese textiles for the Portuguese XXII Government. Worked as the International Project Director for Portugal Fashion, a project of the ANJE. In this field, she also developed various projects, such as international showrooms and brand presentations in partnership with the international delegations of AICEP. Catarina Santos Cunha was also responsible for Portuguese projects at the CNI – as well as the founder of Sustainable Fashion Business conference, which brought some of the biggest personalities in fashion sustainability to Lisbon Green Capital 2020”.



Xavier Font, Head of Technical Office of Tourism, Provincial Council of Barcelona

Xavier Font holds a Master's degree in Business and Non-Profit Management, complemented by a PhD in Geography. With over 25 years of expertise in the public management of tourism, he specializes in territorial and tourism planning. Xavier Font has also made significant contributions in communication, teaching, and knowledge transfer. Currently, he holds the position of Head of the Technical Office of Tourism at the Diputació de Barcelona, overseeing the management of territorial tourism projects and public management of tourism. Throughout his career, Xavier Font has played key roles in various organizations, including the City Council of Rubí, the Diputació de Barcelona, the Catalan Basketball Federation, and the University of Barcelona.



Xabier Ochandiano, Councillor for Economic Development, Trade, Tourism and Employment, Municipality of Bilbao

Xabier Otxandiano Martinez holds a degree in Business Administration and Management from UPV-EHU. Currently serving as the Councilor of Economic Development, Commerce, and Employment at the Bilbao City Council, he brings a wealth of experience to his role. Xabier's professional journey includes a decade-long tenure at the Municipal Agency for Employment, later renamed Bilbao Ekintza, where he oversaw areas of Employment, Commerce, and Tourism. He also contributed significantly to the international sector, managing the Directorate of Employment and Innovation for the Basque Government until 2013. From January 2013 to June 2015, Xabier Otxandiano Martinez served as the head of the Directorate of Employment and Innovation for the Basque Government. In June 2015, he assumed the role of Councilor for Economic Development, Trade, and Employment, leading impactful international events in Bilbao. In 2019, he was reappointed Councilor for the same area.



Javier Torner, Leader, Inclusive Communities Urban Regeneration Programme, UN-Habitat

Javier Torner holds a Bachelor's Degree in architecture and three Master's Degrees in Urban Planning, Business administration and International Development Cooperation from different universities. Since 2014, Torner has served as an Urban Development Specialist and Program Management Officer at UN-Habitat HQ in Nairobi. In his role, he contributes to the implementation of various urban programs and projects across countries such as Mexico, Colombia, Cuba, Haiti, the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, South Africa, Ghana, Ivory Coast, Guinea Conakry, Guinea Bissau, Comoros, São Tomé and Príncipe, Mozambique, Rwanda, Kenya, and the Commonwealth of Independent States. With over 10 years of prior experience in the private sector, public administration, and academia in Spain, USA, and Germany, Mr. Torner focuses on innovation in urban planning and smart cities. Additionally, he collaborates on creating plans and projects to support governments for urban regeneration, and enhance service provision. Since January 2020, he has also taken on the role of Coordinator for the UN-Habitat Urban Laboratory in Mexico.



Petra Stusek, President, City Destination Alliance

Petra Stušek holds a Bachelor's degree from the Faculty of Arts in Ljubljana and a Master's Degree in business administration and marketing from the School of Economics & Business, University of Ljubljana. Ms. Petra Stušek serves as the Managing Director of Ljubljana Tourism and holds the position of President of the Board at European Cities Marketing. Before assuming her current roles, she oversaw communications for foreign and domestic public relations at Ljubljana Tourism, where she joined in 2002, reporting directly to the CEO. Under her leadership, her team has garnered prestigious awards, including the WTTC Tourism for Tomorrow 2015 award for the world's most sustainable destination, the ETIS and Accessible Tourism Joint Award 2016, and the WTM Responsible Tourism Award 2017, among others. Ms. Stušek has been involved in tourism since high school and was an active member of the National PR organization, leading the central communication section for PR experts and organizing debates with communication specialists.



Ivor Ambrose, Managing Director, European Network for Accessible Tourism

Ivor Ambrose is an independent consultant specialising in disability and user experience related to building and environmental design, ICTs, assistive technologies and tourism services. After several years in research and higher education he worked as an expert at the European Commission. His research and policy work is centred on accessibility and inclusion of persons with disabilities and older persons. In 2008 he co-founded the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT), bringing together European tourism businesses, professionals and organisations in the tourism industry, accessibility experts and disability advocacy groups. He is Senior Expert on Accessibility of the Built Environment at the "AccessibleEU Resource Centre", an initiative of the European Commission supporting implementation of accessibility policies and regulations in the European Union.



Tim Fairhurst, General Director, European Tourism Association - ETOA

Tim Fairhurst is a seasoned professional with a postgraduate degree in law from the University of London. With an extensive 25 years of experience in the tourism industry, he currently serves as the Secretary General of ETOA - European Tourism Association AISBL. Prior to his current role, Mr. Fairhurst spent 15 years at ETOA, where he held key positions such as Head of Strategy and Policy, as well as Director of Policy. During this time, he played a pivotal role in shaping and implementing strategic initiatives within the organization. Before joining ETOA, Tim Fairhurst contributed significantly to EF Educational Tours, where he served as the Director of Regional Offices and Product Development for a decade. His expertise and leadership were instrumental in the company's growth and success during his tenure.



Jorge Traver, Region Representative, European Tourism Association - ETOA

Jorge Traver holds two Bachelor's degrees, in Law and in Literary Theory and Comparative Literature, a Master's degree in Literary Studies and a PhD in Literary Studies. He currently serves ETOA as Country Representative in Spain and works as Product Manager at Avoris Corporación Empresarial. With more than 20 years of experience in the tourism sector, he has worked in entities such as EF Tours, PANGEA - The Travel Store, Actúa Experiencias Únicas, Onda Cero, ETOA, and Ávoris Corporación Empresarial. Jorge Traver has extensive experience in team management as well as in the management, development and optimization of negotiation processes and purchase of services in countries around the world.



Bernadett Papp, Senior Researcher, European Tourism Futures Institute

Bernadett is currently a PhD candidate in urban studies at the University of Glasgow, Scotland. As a researcher at the European Tourism Futures Institute, Bernadett focuses mostly on urban tourism development and related challenges. She is also involved in education as a lecturer and module coordinator in the tourism management bachelor and master programs of NHL Stenden University of Applied Sciences (Leeuwarden, The Netherlands). Bernadett is active in the field of scenario planning and strategic foresight. She is responsible for an elective course in scenario planning in the MSc Strategic Event and Tourism Management program at Skema Business School in Nice, France. In the past years Bernadett worked with various multilateral organizations and worked as a project specialist in the Tourism Market Intelligence and Competitiveness department of the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in Madrid, Spain. She serves as a member of the UNWTO QUEST Advisory Board.



Gonzalo Lacurcia Abraira, Expert, UN-Habitat Spain.

Gonzalo Lacurcia holds a Degree in Architecture from the Central University of Venezuela and an MSc in Urbanism from the Technological University of Delft (Netherlands). Mr. Lacurcia is an expert in strategic planning issues related to urban areas, urban and territorial planning, and housing. For more than 20 years, Mr. Lacurcia has held various positions in the public sphere and has developed projects with the private sector and with the third sector. Since 2016, Mr. Lacurcia has worked as a senior consultant at the UN-Habitat, first as part of the Urban Planning and Design LAB and later in the Division of Housing and Neighborhood Improvement (both at headquarters in Central Nairobi, Kenya), joining the UN-Habitat Office in Spain in 2018. Mr. Lacurcia has collaborated in urban planning and housing projects in various countries, including Venezuela, Afghanistan, Ecuador and Spain.

EUSKO JAURLARITZA



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