



Policy Report 1

Policy Briefs # 1–6

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Purpose and scope of the deliverable

This document is created as deliverable D5.5 Policy Report 1. It contains a series of Policy Briefs that present the main findings and practical outcomes of the EU-funded research project SPOT (for the years 2020-2022). The document aims to inform all stakeholder groups involved in the development of cultural tourism in Europe about what was implemented during the transnational study (in which 15 countries are involved) in the SPOT project. At the same time, several policy-related recommendations are shared. The individual Policy Briefs include also other results that could be useful in the stakeholder profession.

Document history

Version	Date	Description
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Content

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1. SPOT Policy Briefs # 1–6

This chapter contains the individual Policy Briefs that were created following the research in the individual Workpackages of the SPOT project. It means Workpackage 1: Documentation and Data Collection; Workpackage 2: Policies, strategies and practices and Workpackage 3: Creation of an Innovation Tool (SPOT-IT).

FIGURE 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EUROPEANISATION AND CULTURAL TOURISM

3. List of Case Studies and Countries

CASE STUDIES

- Epigonef in Greece
- Beth Shalom Valley in Israel
- Buchu Zangaphane and Sakhahlamba in South Africa
- Libliko in Lithuania
- Kinderhook in New York
- Maia in Finland
- Galatzeis in Greece
- United Kingdom
- Cyclades in Greece
- San Remy in Basque Country, Spain
- Provincetown in Massachusetts, USA
- Lebanon in Poland
- Galatzeis in Greece
- Nitra in Slovakia

The innovative concept of SPOT-IT

The tool is designed to empower its user and allows several sources of flexibility including the choice of data layers to be used (Figure 2). The operators of the tool may decide which layers to use and propose and upload additional data layers that suit better to their area.

FIGURE 2: AN EXAMPLE OF A CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOOL: ANNUAL VISITORS' PREDICTION.

Its main components are:

- The suitability of the area
- Its visitors' profile
- Economic sustainability
- Social media analysis
- Environmental impact

2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Our recommendations are focused mainly on Galatzeis since other areas of cultural tourism are already well developed.

- A re-branding of the Borders area as a destination for cultural tourism and not just for outdoor pursuits would have a positive effect, especially to encourage year-round tourism.
- A better transport network linking Galatzeis station with the Abbeys, as previously existed would build on the network of paths and cycle paths already established in the area to develop green and sustainable tourism.
- In Galatzeis, more information is needed about the kinds of visitors brought in by the Great Tapestry of Scotland and how this might connect to other visitor attractions and activities in the area. We have offered a survey at three time points in 2022 to address this.
- More connection and information about the different visitor attractions within Galatzeis would help to keep visitors lingering for longer and exploring the town as well as bringing trade to the various cafes and craft shops that have opened in the area. We would suggest a cultural trail to link these attractions which could have both a paper and digital format using the good WiFi connections available in the town. Information should be advertised at the transport hub as well as local eateries, hotels and seen closed down.

such as around textiles might help to link the local University, Great Tapestry of Scotland and some of the local craft businesses if the local charity shops that offer local craft textiles, it might help factory into a textile museum.

Project Identity

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PolicyBRIEF

SPOT

February 2022 | Policy Brief # 2

Understanding of Cultural tourism: views of tourists, residents, and entrepreneurs

For European, national and regional stakeholders

Author: WR team

Introduction

This policy brief is addressed to various stakeholder groups at the same time. It advocates better cooperation between stakeholders from different policy areas, different scale levels and different actors, also referred to as multi-sector governance, multi-level governance and multi-actor governance. Any simplification through a single stakeholder approach would do the complexity of cultural tourism short. Thinking in terms of least proven is thus being exchanged for thinking in terms of collaborative structures.

Research and policy-making for cultural tourism usually imply a focus on tourists as consumers and entrepreneurs as producers of cultural tourism. This approach is a result of the traditional definition of cultural tourism. A strict separation of the two target groups is often used in research (also in interviews and surveys) and policy. Recently there is also an increasing focus on residents. With the growing attention for sustainable cultural tourism, the awareness of local entrepreneurs and local residents has grown.

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Figure 1. The SPOT Policy Briefs # 1–6 collage





Cultural tourism and Europeanisation

For European policymakers: Improving EU policy

Author: WR team

Introduction

The various forms of cultural tourism in Europe are important drivers of growth, jobs, and economic development of European regions and urban areas. They also contribute, to the understanding of other peoples' identities and values by driving intercultural understanding and social development in Europe through discovering various types of cultural heritage. However, although cultural tourism by its nature invites cross-border, regional, and local cooperation, its full innovation potential in this respect is not yet fully explored and exploited. The level of development of cultural tourism between certain regions and sites, including those between the neighbouring countries in Europe, is still unbalanced.

In research on Europeanisation, cultural tourism is often attributed a key role. However, little evidence has been reported on the mutual relationship between two widely used concepts: **cultural tourism and Europeanisation**. We focus here on the importance of landscape and spatial identity.¹

¹ Marcel Pleijte, Theano S. Terkenli, Małgorzata Pstrocka-Rak, Giovanna Rech, Milada Šťastná, Tijn Rümke and Bas Pedrolí, 2022 (in prep.). Cultural Tourism and Europeanization – A Landscape Perspective



Cultural tourism can enhance Europeanisation and Europeanisation can foster cultural tourism. To strengthen the link between cultural tourism and Europeanisation into European policy the relationship between these concepts can be understood from the concept of landscape and its values.

1. Evidence and Analysis

A suitable **definition of Cultural Tourism** in this context is:

*the integrated management of cultural heritage and tourism activities in conjunction with the local community creating social, environmental and economic benefits for all stakeholders, to achieve tangible and intangible cultural heritage conservation and sustainable tourism development.*²

Europeanisation is often recognised as a discursive concept in political top-down harmonisation strategies (vertical Europeanisation), but on the other hand also as an expression of a spontaneous ‘unity in diversity’ paradigm between regions (horizontal Europeanisation).



Photo: unity in diversity

Europeanisation within the context of cultural tourism is here understood either as:

- a policy framework to harmonise strategies for regional development, accessibility and promotion (vertical Europeanisation), or as
- emerging autonomous similarities creating place-based identities grounded in similarities in culture: habits, beliefs, views (horizontal Europeanisation).

Regional development can be linked to spatial planning: accessibility and connectivity, mobility, rural development, and intercultural linking. Place identity refers to thematic routes, developing European clusters, supporting local identity, marketing, and the emerging of creative tourism. Culture deals with people’s habits, beliefs, views. Generally, **cultural tourism fosters Europeanisation through emphasizing distinctive cultural values** – often featuring characteristic landscapes – that are typical for Europe.

Europeanisation can be a responsible strategy for promoting both cultural diversity and European identity as reflected in the landscape.

Because of its strong and characteristic identity, the landscape has a crucial role as a mediation platform in representing the huge diversity of European cultural tourism destinations, as schematically illustrated in FIGURE 1.

² STC OMC, 2018. Sustainable Cultural Tourism Open Method of Coordination working group, 2018 in Matteuci, X. and J.S. Hung von Zumbusch, 2020. D 2.1 Theoretical framework of cultural tourism in urban and regional destinations. Technical report. July 2020. Smart CultTour.

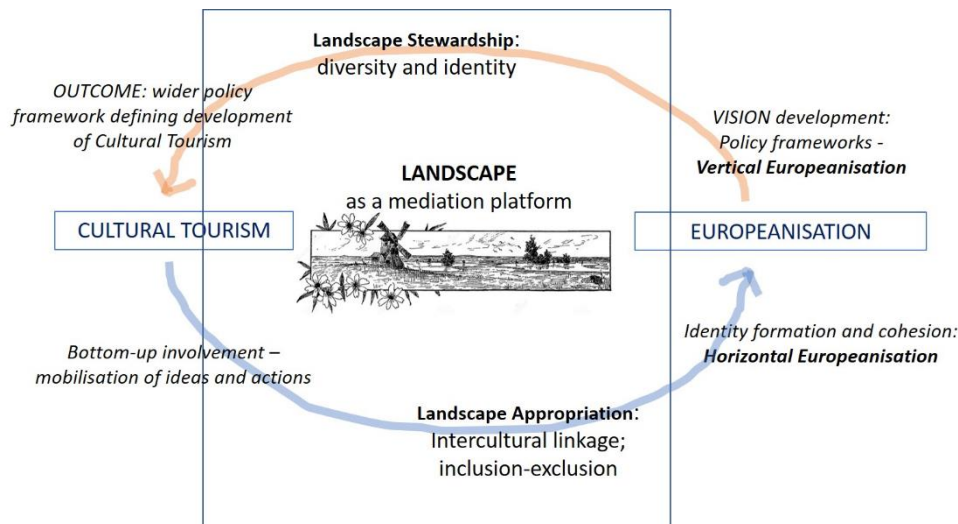


FIGURE 1: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EUROPEANISATION AND CULTURAL TOURISM

- **Cultural diversity** – and the variegated mosaic of landscapes reflecting this diversity – is one of the major assets of the European continent, not least in terms of cultural tourism. We argue that Europeanisation – especially horizontal Europeanisation – is of great importance to fostering cultural tourism. This applies both to domestic tourism and to long-distance tourism. However, the general emphasis in European policy-making on vertical Europeanisation (economic and legislative harmonisation) and accepting globalisation’s effects are often harmful to the protection, management and planning of the precious European landscapes – in rural as well as in urban areas.
- **Cultural differences** both between and within European countries have by no means disappeared, and this can be recognised in the diversity of cultural landscapes. Ethnic minorities represent a wide variety of cultural attitudes and behaviours. In addition to cultural Europeanisation, there are also numerous examples of cultural fragmentation. This might – at a different spatial scale – be translated into opportunities for local identity formation. This may also lead to the individualisation of cultural tourism, where everyone decides for themselves what culture means and what value is assigned to it. Niches and personal canons would therefore emerge. This would greatly increase diversity and, in time, also promote a stronger sense of horizontal Europeanisation. Such niches, small minorities and regional and local varieties emerge as valuable resources that should be preserved and developed in the context of European cultural diversity.
- However, cultural tourism also contributes to the levelling out of differences between Europeans, franchising **unique cultural heritage**, while at the same time promoting differentiation and thus contributing to horizontal Europeanisation. We conclude that cultural tourism and Europeanisation should be associated with an emancipation process to the same degree that they are recognised as forms of democratisation and cultural resource management.

- **Cultural tourism** is an important economic sector and an essential element for creating local, regional, national and European identities, and overcoming the remnants of mistrust between European nations. It also fosters the personal development of its participants – both tourists and their hosts – especially if tourists are actively involved in planning, creating and implementing their trips. The concrete experience of individuals with regional geography, history, culture and art is crucial for the sustainable management of the cultural values of Europe. It can thus be concluded that cultural tourism may definitely enhance Europeanisation in the sense of a shared European identity, recalling the slogan ‘unity in diversity’.

Whether Europeanisation fosters cultural tourism depends on the purpose: many different forms of Europeanisation can be identified, but only those that take the ‘unity in diversity’ paradigm serious, especially when implemented at local and regional levels, safeguard a sustainable development of cultural tourism.

2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Using the notion of the landscape for broadening the concepts of cultural tourism and Europeanisation leads to the following **findings**:

- Europeanisation can foster cultural tourism by taking due care of cultural values.
- Cultural tourism can enhance horizontal Europeanisation.
- Europe’s landscape diversity is a key asset for cultural tourism.
- Reorientation of cultural tourism is needed to prevent the degradation of Europe’s landscapes.
- Cultural tourism may help bridge the divide between Europe’s core and periphery.

The following **recommendations** can be formulated from the above signals and analysis:

- Focus more on horizontal Europeanisation and less on vertical Europeanisation.
- Create policies to promote individual cultural tourism. It increases diversity, prevents exclusion and encourages horizontal Europeanisation.
- Approach cultural tourism and Europeanisation as a process of emancipation and recognize them as forms of democratization and management of cultural resources.
- Involve tourists actively in planning, creating and doing their trips.
- Implement cultural tourism at local and regional levels and align this with European regional development policy. Identify EU financial support for the development of cultural tourism (multi-level financing or co-financing).



Project Identity

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Understanding of Cultural tourism: views of tourists, residents, and entrepreneurs

For European, national and regional stakeholders

Author: WR team

Introduction

This policy brief is addressed to various stakeholder groups at the same time. It advocates better cooperation between stakeholders from different policy areas, different scale levels and different actors, also referred to as multi-sector governance, multi-level governance and multi-actor governance. Any simplification through a single stakeholder approach would do the complexity of cultural tourism short. Thinking in terms of target groups is thus being exchanged for thinking in terms of collaborative structures.

Research and policy-making for cultural tourism usually imply a focus on tourists as consumers and entrepreneurs as producers of cultural tourism. This approach is a result of the traditional **definition of cultural tourism**. A strict separation of the two target groups is often used in research (also in interviews and surveys) and policy. Recently there is also an increasing focus on residents. With the growing attention for sustainable cultural tourism, the awareness of local entrepreneurs and local residents has grown.

The experiences of these target groups are still too little used in policy and those experiences and views, which may differ among target groups, are not compared with each other.

Policies for cultural tourism could be strengthened by involving the experiences of these latter groups more strongly.

1. Evidence and Analysis

Surveys¹ were held among tourists, local residents and entrepreneurs in case study areas in fifteen different countries (Figure 1).

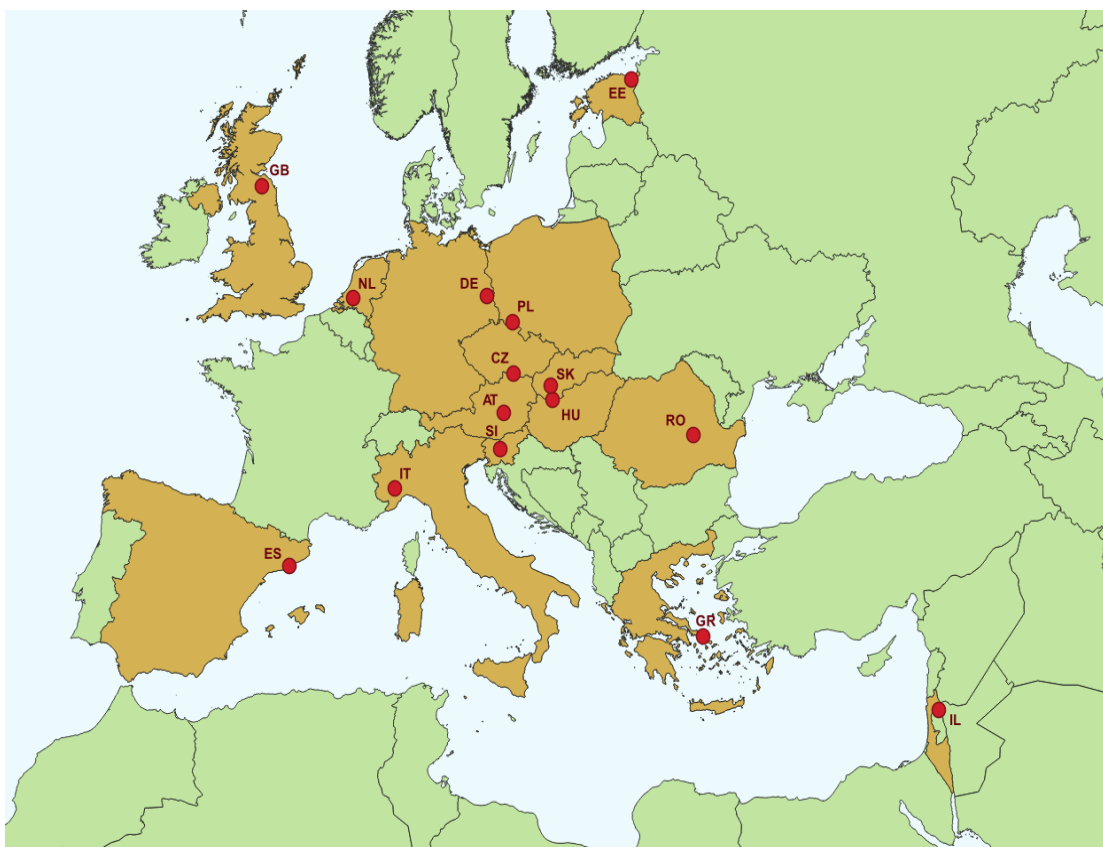


FIGURE 1: MAP WITH PARTICIPATING COUNTRIES (HIGHLIGHTED IN ORANGE) AND THE POINT LOCATIONS OF THE CASE STUDIES WITH THEIR ACCOMPANYING CODES. CASE STUDIES CONSISTING OF MULTIPLE SUB REGIONS ARE REPRESENTED BY ONE POINT.

It is interesting to see that in most areas the majority of tourists are nationals, while in others tourists are mainly from abroad (Table 1). Fact is, of course, that COVID-19 restrictions had a major influence on this, but it remains an important factor in the development of tourism in an area: what is the origin of the tourists?²

¹ Most of the surveys were held in the months of July 2020 to October 2020. For some countries there were no possibilities to do the surveys in this period and they have collected the data in 2021. The surveys were conducted during a period when COVID was severe or less severe in various countries. The pandemic has influenced the results by a different composition of the tourists as a target group. There were now no tourists from other continents who would normally be target groups for some destinations. The period in which the surveys were conducted among tourists also influenced the results. Outside the summer holidays you will find other types of tourists. Also entrepreneurs and residents may also have been influenced by the Corona circumstances when completing the surveys.

² For almost all of the case studies 75% or more of the tourists that were surveyed come from the country in which the case study is located. In three cases, Barcelona (Spain), Kinderdijk (The Netherlands) and Ljubljana (Slovenia) 50% or more of the tourists were foreign. The large proportion of nationals is a consequence of the COVID-19 measures worldwide, that prevented and discouraged travelling abroad.



TABLE 1: ORIGIN OF THE SURVEYED TOURISTS PER CASE STUDY: EITHER NATIONAL (COMING FROM THE COUNTRY IN WHICH THE CASE STUDY IS LOCATED) OR FOREIGN.

Case study	National (%)	Foreign (%)	Case study	National (%)	Foreign (%)
AT	96	4	IL	93	7
CZ	100	0	IT	83	17
DE	97	3	NL	49	51
EE	91	9	PL	92	8
ES	9	91	RO	98	2
GR	75	25	SI	26	74
HU	98	2	SK	87	13

From our surveys of the views and experiences of tourists, residents and entrepreneurs, the following findings can be presented:

- According to **tourists, residents, and entrepreneurs** **transport infrastructure** are important with a lot of potential for improvement.
- Both **tourists and entrepreneurs** often feel there is not enough **information and communication** provided towards tourists. See also the world cloud presented in Figure 2, showing tourists’ views on missing facilities in the Austrian case study area.



FIGURE 2: TOURISTS’ VIEWS ON MISSING FACILITIES (COPYRIGHT: WORDCLOUD/AUSTRIA UNI GRAZ).

- Most **residents** see the **economic benefits** of cultural tourism. They can profit from an increased job offer, or by selling products and services. Improving facilities for tourism can also improve the quality of life for residents. However, with increasing tourist numbers, residents should not be forgotten as they will have a different perspective on tourism than other stakeholders such as entrepreneurs.



- On the whole, **tourists** do definitely appear interested in **visiting cultural attractions and sites**. Local traditions/culture is an important motivator of travelling to a certain destination and most visitors need to get a taste of local culture and traditions.
- Tourists** are generally less satisfied with the **number and diversity of cultural attractions** than tourism entrepreneurs, who feel quite positive.
- Entrepreneurs** often feel that cultural tourism is not well developed in the case study areas concerned. However, in the urban study areas, both tourists and entrepreneurs appear more satisfied with the cultural offer, and entrepreneurs are more positive about the state of development.
- Residents** are more inclined to feel that tourist numbers are **(very) high** in their area than entrepreneurs, this is even the case for residents of areas that are seen as under-touristed. This is visible in Figure 3, where the majority of surveyed residents feel that tourist numbers are (very) high, whereas an even larger majority of tourism entrepreneurs agree (strongly) that tourist numbers should be higher in the area. However, in general, most residents (except in mass-tourism areas) do feel that the impact of an increase in cultural tourism could be (very) positive. Also, **entrepreneurs** see value in the increase of cultural tourism, and see an important role for the Residents' view on the number of tourists is also demonstrated per case study in Figure 3 . This is not always related to whether an area is viewed as over- or under- touristed. How residents perceive the number of tourists must of course be a very important point in the development of tourism in areas, as the perceived number of visitors can be very different from the reality.

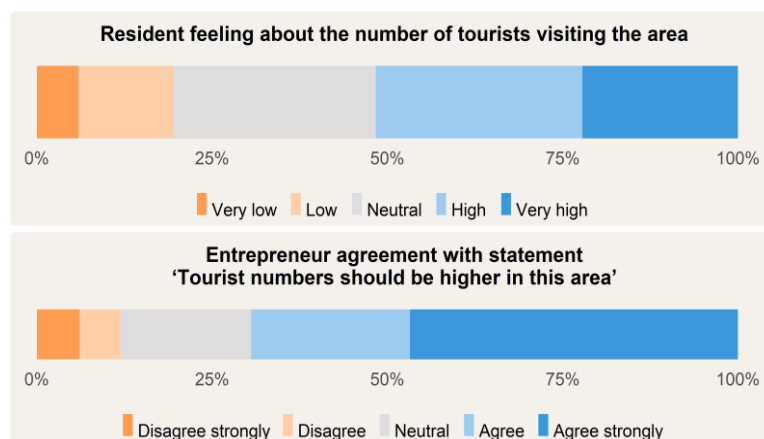


FIGURE 3: RESIDENTS' FEELING ABOUT THE NUMBER OF TOURISTS VISITING THE AREA (TOP) AND AGREEMENT OF TOURISM ENTREPRENEURS WITH THE STATEMENT 'TOURIST NUMBERS SHOULD BE HIGHER IN THE AREA' (BOTTOM).

Residents' view on the number of tourists is also demonstrated per the case study in Figure 4³. This is not always related to whether an area is viewed as over- or under- touristed. How residents perceive the number of tourists must of course be a very important point in the development of tourism in areas, as the perceived number of visitors can be very different from the reality.

³ In seven out of fourteen case studies the categories 'high' and 'very high' are over 50%, meaning that in those case studies the number of tourists is seen as high. In two case studies (Israel and Slovakia) almost 50% of the respondents feels the tourist numbers are low. From the seven case studies where residents feel tourist numbers are high or very high, only two are viewed as over-touristed: Barcelona (Spain) and Kinderdijk (The Netherlands). Four (Southern Moravia, Czechia; Piedmont Landscape, Italy; Valley of Palaces and Gardens, Poland; Buzău Carpathians and Subcarpathians, Romania) are categorized as under-touristed, which does not seem to correspond with how residents feel about tourist numbers.

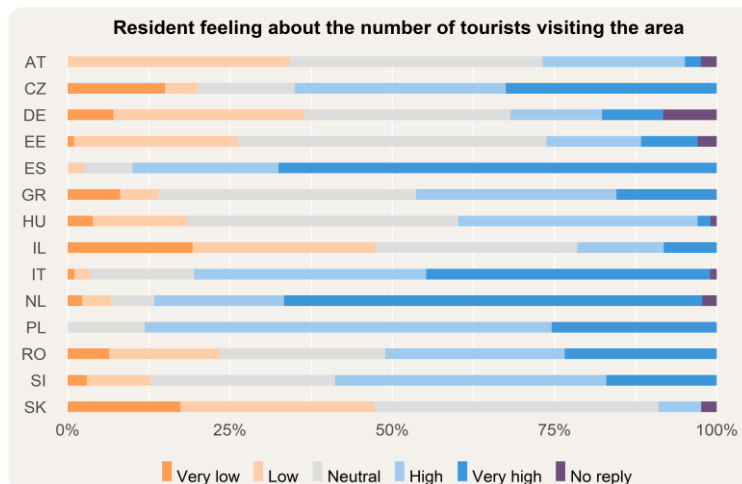


FIGURE 4: RESIDENTS' FEELING ABOUT THE NUMBER OF TOURISTS VISITING THE AREA, FOR FOURTEEN CASE STUDIES.

2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

The following recommendations can be formulated from the above signals and analysis:

- **Focus on the development of transport infrastructure** by using the potential for improving the experience of tourists, residents and entrepreneurs alike.
- **Provide more information and better communication to tourists** and ask tourists and entrepreneurs in which way information is best communicated and offered.
- **Increase focus on and involve local residents** in the development of cultural tourism, even if their opinion about the growth of cultural tourism differs from that of entrepreneurs.
- **Increase the digital offer of information** (such as a digital preview of a site or building) about cultural attractions, sites, and even local traditions and culture. **Monitor** if and how the offered information leads to more tourists and if tourists share their information and experiences with other potential tourists.
- **Show tourism entrepreneurs**, who feel quite positive about the number and diversity of cultural attractions, **that tourists are generally less satisfied**. **Investigate** what kind of attractions tourists are missing and encourage and support entrepreneurs to continuously develop new tourist attractions.
- **Organize meetings among local entrepreneurs**, to investigate how cultural tourism can be improved.
- **To promote cultural tourism**, make a distinction between urban and rural areas and between central and peripheral areas. EU policies to promote cultural attractions in rural areas and peripheral areas would be very helpful.
- EU policies should **differentiate between promoting cultural tourism in over-touristed and in under-touristed areas** in cases of regional development: **Create networks** for residents and entrepreneurs in under-touristed areas to promote further development of cultural tourism. Create networks for residents and entrepreneurs in over-touristed areas to enable the discussion on how cultural tourism can grow without negative impacts for residents.



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Cultural Tourism from Local Stakeholder's Perspective

For European policymakers: Improving EU policy

Author: UNIABDN team

Introduction

The SPOT Horizon 2020 project organized a **series of stakeholder roundtables in the 15 countries** that formed part of the project. Altogether 167 stakeholders were consulted. The numbers and types of stakeholders varied between countries, but they focused mainly upon local stakeholders most closely involved with the case studies being investigated. A list is provided at the end. The meetings, carried out during 2021, were constrained by the Coronavirus lockdown regulations in different countries, so some were carried out face to face and others online. The results were summarized in a stakeholder report that can be found on the SPOT website (<http://www.spotprojecth2020.eu/>).

Cultural tourism has been identified fairly recently as a source of income for many regions and is defined in many different ways. The relationship between the issues identified at an EU level may differ from what is seen at a national level and can be different again to how it is viewed from the “bottom-up” by local stakeholders and residents. This policy brief **summarizes the points raised by different stakeholders at a local level and suggests policy directions to deal with their queries**. It is aimed at EU level policymakers and national level policymakers since while there might be flows of policy directives downwards, it is not always clear how results are communicated upwards. This is what the Policy Brief aims to do.



1. Evidence and Analysis

Many stakeholders pointed out that there was a **lack of connection** between national-level policies, which might emphasize the importance of cultural tourism, and local experiences for stakeholders and residents. Many stakeholders were not aware of national policies or did not see any benefits locally. Proclamations are often made about cultural tourism at a national level that was not born out locally.

There was a **lack of join up** between cultural policies and tourism policies. Often these were situated in different ministries at a national level and not connected in practice. Therefore, economic issues connected with tourism were not connected to cultural issues connected with museums and local history.

In some cases, cultural tourism was seen as **part of a nation-building strategy** directed at domestic audiences to create awareness of national culture more than attract visitors. An example would be the opening of the Museum of Slovenian separation from Yugoslavia in Ljubljana, where a Museum of Slovenian history already exists. This is to further a nationalist agenda.

In other cases, the **more international orientation neglects local issues**. This was the case in Scotland where the VisitScotland tourist agency closed all the local offices in favour of a high level, generic promotion of the Scottish image of long-haired cows, mountains, etc. Local stakeholders on the Borders, far from the Highlands, felt that their offerings were lost.

In places that were weak economically, such as Eastern Europe, there was **great dependence on EU programmes and policies** tended to follow EU guidance. In other places it was more autonomous, reflecting more regional or national issues. However, national funds did not always follow EU funding requirements resulting in a confusing multitude of terminology and funding sources that did not always connect with one another.

A strong finding was that local stakeholders felt that **cultural tourism policies should more reflect local residents and stakeholders' interests** and that local people should be more engaged in the creation of cultural tourism experiences offered. This was important because often the cultural offerings rely on the input of volunteers and the production of intangible as well as tangible cultural heritage. Where this was recognized, for example in the case of the Italian Literary Park, the recognition of cultural heritage was transformational, with people attracted back to the area as a result.

In the Netherlands, **social media was used to engage local communities** and in other cases, local organizations were able to take on this role. However, in most cases, there were no mechanisms for engaging local communities and giving them ownership of cultural offerings.

Many stakeholders noted that the importance of cultural tourism was that it **offered a quality product**, in contrast to mass tourism. It was felt to be important to maintain the quality and distinctiveness of cultural tourism offerings.

Cultural activities such as dance, music, food etc. were seen to offer a **cultural bridge** to help bring together different ethnic and national communities, for example in a cross-border setting (Estonia and Hungary were examples),

Local stakeholders saw it as important to **promote a shared vision of their area**, in which they would have input. This was particularly important because many of the case studies were set in peripheral or former industrial areas where residents did not see themselves as a centre of "culture" until now.

Whilst some stakeholders were keen on promoting a **Green Agenda** through developing cycle routes and sustainable strategies (Spain, Slovakia) other areas felt that the Green Agenda was just a constraint on what they could do economically (Greece, Estonia).

The coronavirus pandemic resulted in various transformations at a local level, including stimulation of national tourism, appreciation of nature and culture at a local level, increased attention to hygiene and health. However, it also resulted in labour shortages and tourism businesses going bankrupt.

The report classifies innovation types according to:

Incremental Innovation - expanding horizons to introduce new client groups or services – storytelling to link local places and history, providing bicycles or e-bikes, improved signage and information.

Radical Innovation - a new development for example a forest becomes a venue for learning traditional woodworking crafts, exploration of historical trade routes between countries, attempts to develop out-of-season tourism, development of themed experiences to encourage longer stays.

Transformational Innovation - innovation made possible by external events or a new political or regulatory regime - for example, re-branding a de-industrialized area as a new attraction, developing new technologies of communication such as games and digital tours, linking to European Cultural Routes.

2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

There is a need for **connections to be made between policies on culture and policies on tourism** at a national and regional level. These two fields should support each other with clear connections made between them.

There is a need for policies to reflect a **shared vision at all levels**, which should include local stakeholders as well as national and regional ones. Vehicles for managing this should be set up so that there is a genuine voice for local as well as national leaders. The role of local stakeholders in managing quality and intangible as well as tangible cultural heritage needs to be recognized.

There needs to be attention paid to the **mechanisms through which local stakeholders can be represented** and their voices heard. This could be through Business Associations, cultural associations, community associations etc. What form this takes would differ according to local circumstances.

National and regional policies need to align with EU policies, especially in the administration of funding. However, there needs to be flexibility to allow local stakeholders to develop their distinctive offerings.

Mechanisms for engaging local businesses and residents should be explored. One possibility is through volunteering, another through the use of social media, special pricing for locals etc. so that local people feel they have ownership over cultural offerings.

The Green Agenda needs to be promoted in such a way that it connects with local priorities and is seen as advancing the interests of local stakeholders rather than working against them.

Cultural activities that can act as a bridge between different ethnic and national communities could be stimulated through festivals, events etc. associated with cultural tourism. In this way, cultural tourism can help to educate local communities about their own cultural offerings as well as attract visitors.

There needs to be **local training and education to promote work in the cultural industries** and increase employment opportunities, especially in the wake of the pandemic.

Elsewhere we describe examples of good practices and guidelines by which to judge them.

3. List of Case Studies and Countries

CASE STUDIES



Southern Moravia in Czechia

Represents a de-industrialised area along with gastronomy, viticulture, folklore, architectural heritage and distinctive landscape.



Beith Sh'ean Valley in Israel

The Land of Heritage and Springs.



Buzău Carpathians and Subcarpathians in Romania

A unique blend of scenic natural landscapes, rich cultural heritage and traditional habits and lifestyle.



Leichhardt Landscape in Germany

Welcome to the Leichardt Landscape: Ludwig Leichardt was a German explorer and naturalist, famous for his exploration of the nature of northern and central Australia.



Komárom-Komarno twin cities (Hungary and Slovakia)

Culture and heritage across the border, beside at Danube river.



Kinderdijk in Netherlands

From protection against water to protection against tourists. How a UNESCO heritage status leads to mass tourism.



Ida-Virumaa in Estonia

Crossing borders in Ida-Virumaa.



„Steirische Eisenstrasse” in Austria

A region built of ore, steel and coal.



United Kingdom

Media tourism in Scotland.



Cyclades in Greece

Global tourism destination, symbol of Greek landscape.



Art Nouveau in Barcelona, Spain

Breaking tradition to embracing cultural tourism.



Piedmont landscape in Italy

Reading the Piedmont landscape of Langhe-Roero and Monferrato and its cultural identity.



Lower Silesia in Poland

Multicultural heritage in mountainous landscape.



Ljubljana in Slovenia

Cultural, art, experience and festival capital of the Slovenia!



Nitra in Slovakia

The mother of all Slovak cities.



Project Identity

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Doune

For local policymakers

Author: UNIABDN team

Introduction

Doune castle attracts large numbers of visitors, who create congestion problems for the small, picturesque village of Doune rather than bringing economic advantage. The University of Aberdeen through the EU-funded SPOT cultural tourism project carried out surveys of residents, businesses and visitors during 2021, talked to key stakeholders and fed back the results of the research for public consultation. Now in 2022, a Knowledge Exchange project will be carried out in order to develop the impact of the research. The research took into account the current situation of cultural tourism, and below we suggest a number of improvements based on the findings.

Doune Castle, adjacent to **Doune village**, attracts large numbers of tourists due to its popularity as a setting for popular films. In 2019 these numbered around 153,000 per year. The use of Doune castle for the film “*Monty Python and the Holy Grail*” some thirty years ago and more recently for the “*Outlander*” TV series have helped to rapidly increase the number of visitors, especially international ones.

However, the village of Doune itself has only just over 2000 residents and limited facilities for visitors in terms of restaurants, cafes and overnight accommodation. The large numbers of visitors arrive mainly by car, coach or minibus and clog up the narrow local roads. The limited car parking next to the castle means that visitors



park in residential areas and many houses nearby display a “No Parking” sign. **Parking was identified as one of the main nuisances** in our survey in 2021.

The village of Doune and its surroundings does not necessarily benefit from this large number of tourists because visitors tend to drive to the castle and then away again without visiting the village. **Historic Environment Scotland (HES)** as curators of the castle have been slow to recognize this, but have recently liaised more actively with the local community and created a network of footpaths around the castle, including one linking the castle with the town. These footpaths are much used and much appreciated by local people and visitors alike. More recently HES have erected information boards along the footpaths to increase their attraction to locals and outsiders.

The **COVID-19 pandemic** led to a massive reduction in visitors and the various lockdowns resulted in some of the few hotels, guest houses and restaurants closing, sometimes permanently. There is one sit in café, a takeaway café and locals point to the many historic attractions of the village that might be interesting to visitors. The Visitor Centre, staffed by volunteers also hosts a heritage centre with information of interest to cultural tourists. There are also other shops that would benefit from more visitors, but the area lacks a coherent business vision and working Business Association.

There is a vibrant and active **Community Council**, an engaged group of citizens, as well as a Development Trust through which action can be channelled and which provide a contact point for any developments. Residents have a strong sense of place identity and are passionate about their village.

1. Evidence and Analysis

At present HES are in the process of signposting the various footpaths and providing visitor information boards. However, the **main path is not wheelchair/pram accessible** and only two Boards had been erected to date.

There are plans **to open a car park** in the village on a piece of derelict land, although this would not provide the coach parking that would bring higher visitor numbers and there would need to be a safe connection between this area and the village for people leaving their cars.

The people of Doune are keen to retain the quiet residential character of the village, even if they would appreciate more economic benefits from visitors. It is important **to keep the quality of the tourist offering high**.

The **poor Wi-Fi** connections in the village inhibit the use of digital communications and information spread.

The people of Doune would like to see **more connections between the castle, the village and surrounding areas** including Kilmadock Cemetery, Deanston distillery and the village

There is an active Community Council and Kilmadock Development Trust and a community development officer has been appointed at the end of 2021.

A public toilet has been built but at the time of writing had not yet opened.

Traffic and Transport policies are decided elsewhere in the region and are outside of the control of the local community. Doune lies on the intersection of the highways between Callendar, Stirling and Dunblane which results in a lot of through traffic further congesting the streets. Public transport has been cut back with only occasional busses so that most visitors have to resort to road transport, as do locals.

At the level of the Scottish government as well as the EU, **green, sustainable tourism is being encouraged**. This means providing opportunities for walking and cycling in ways that harmonise with the natural environment.

2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

There need to be **better connections** made between Doune Castle and Doune village. The footpath and signage are good first steps but there needs to be a clearer trail leading visitors from the castle into the village and past the local shops and eateries. Likewise, there needs to be more connection for visitors between Doune Castle and the surrounding areas such as Deanston. The media tourism that brings people to the castle could thereby be expanded to include other kinds of cultural tourism.

We are proposing that in addition to the notice boards, there could be a digital trail with QR codes outside local businesses and on significant buildings. The information would be linked to the Community Council website and therefore could be regularly updated. They could be situated in such a way as to promote local businesses. For those without digital connections, a heritage trail leaflet would also be produced and made available at the Visitor Centre or local restaurants and hotels. This would draw upon local knowledge to engage the community with visitors.



FIGURE 1: AERIAL FOOTAGE OF DOUNE CASTLE IN PERTHSHIRE, SCOTLAND.

Author: Dr Stephanie Garrison



The **traffic and transport policies** need to be reconsidered to provide access to Doune by car, minibus and coach but also on foot or by bike. The public transport network needs to take into account the connectivity of the different areas around Doune. The needs of disabled visitors and those with child carriers should be taken into account. The car park needs to be developed but also footpaths from the car park through the town. Ideas about a bypass or banning heavy vehicles from the main High Street have been considered in the past and should perhaps be revisited. A bike path is being constructed and improved, which will bring more sustainable “green” tourism to the town and will connect with regional cycle paths. Plans should ensure that this connects with the village and its businesses.

More **accommodation and eating options** should be provided, including ones that are open in the evening. This could be facilitated with the help of a more active Business Association.

In order to ensure that any expansion is in keeping with the **unique historic atmosphere of the village**, local residents need to be consulted and any plans made should ensure that their quality of life is preserved. This may mean rationing coach and car parking to ensure that this small and picturesque village with its many footpaths and walkways is not overwhelmed by visitors and by traffic and that the quality of the offering remains high.

Cultural tourism can provide **off-season tourism** as well as **summer visitors**, so opening hours in winter could also be considered along with a package of offerings in the winter months.

The **COVID pandemic measures** for booking visits to the castle has helped to better calibrate the number of visitors arriving at one time. HES are considering continuing this policy in future and this might help to relieve congestion.

The provision of **better Wi-Fi facilities** would be a priority for both residents and visitors. BT Openreach and the Scottish Government offer attractive opportunities for rural areas to develop this. This would enable more digitization of tourism to better control tourist and information flows as well as benefit local business.



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The Scottish Borders

For local policymakers

Author: UNIABDN team

Introduction

Abbotsford House and the surrounding areas on the Scottish Borders were subjects of a case study for the EU-funded SPOT cultural tourism project. In the region, we included Melrose, Galashiels and the Abbotsford house and grounds. A survey of businesses and visitors was carried out in 2021 when COVID restrictions were allowed, and interviews were conducted with key stakeholders. These activities took place during the COVID-19 pandemic and lockdowns were intermittent, which certainly affected the findings.

Abbotsford House was the home of Sir Walter Scott and has been a visitor attraction since he built it in the early 19th century. The house and extensive grounds around it have been open to the public since his death. In 2013 it was taken over by the Abbotsford Trust and reorganized on a more commercially viable basis. They built the visitor centre, bookshop and permanent exhibition. They have also been improving the gardens. The Abbotsford Trust runs on a model of embracing the local community with a permanent staff of 30 and 250 volunteers.



Nearby Melrose is home to a famous ruined Abbey, **Melrose Abbey**, and a well-known **Rugby Sevens tournament**. It has recently opened the Trimontium Roman museum. It is a village with picturesque architecture and many small shops and restaurants as well as several hotels. It has long been geared up to attract and exploit cultural tourism.

Closer to Abbotsford is the town of **Galashiels**, the largest town in the Borders and is a considerable contrast to Melrose. Once an important textile centre, it has suffered from the closure of these industries and the relocation of businesses to out of town retail parks. These retail parks attract regional shoppers to Galashiels but have led to the closure of businesses in the town centre leaving many empty premises and a feeling of decline. In 2021 a new building opened in the centre of Galashiels, the Great Tapestry of Scotland, which hopes to attract visitors to the area combined with partial pedestrianisation of the town centre. However, as the Gallery opened in 2021, it has not attracted the numbers of visitors that had been hoped. Nevertheless, there is evidence of the growth of new small, cultural businesses and eateries around the city centre. The opening of a railway station to connect the borders in 2015 was intended as a way of revitalizing the region.

1. Evidence and Analysis

The **Abbotsford Trust** has been very proactive in developing activities in the area and throughout Scotland for which the 250th Anniversary of Sir Walter Scott's death proved an impetus. It has hosted festivals such as the Borders Book Festival and a heritage Christmas event, among others. The grounds are open to local people and the well-maintained walks and paths around the River Tweed are much appreciated with 70,000 visitors in 2020. Local people are offered discounts to visit the house and there is a school programme to engage children. The outreach and engagement activities have led us to describe this as an example of cultural tourism good practice. Being an independent Trust, the Abbotsford Trust are keen to raise their profile and are required to raise income, which has been heavily impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The town of **Melrose** has many attractions and is well developed as a rural centre for cultural tourism. Whilst it has suffered setbacks under COVID conditions, there was no evidence of premises being closed and in fact, the new museum at Trimontium has been opened.

The town of **Galashiels** is not yet established as a cultural tourism destination, but this could change as visits to the Great Tapestry of Scotland pick up in future, as is hoped. A new railway station opened in 2015 has enabled easy connections to Edinburgh and further afield along with a transport hub and bus station next to it. However, a bus that used to connect the different Abbeys in the area has been discontinued under COVID conditions. There is a bus that takes people to Abbotsford house, although most people travel with private cars.

There are many attractions in the town and heritage associations that are not well highlighted. For example, the statue of a local sweet seller suggesting a well-known Scottish children's rhyme is memorialized in the city centre but is difficult to find. The old mills are mostly derelict and empty. At the time of our visit all the hotels had closed, most of them permanently, so there was no place in the town to stay. A branch of Herriot Watt University has opened a campus there and brings students as well as cultural connections with textiles to the town, although these connections are not well exploited.

The Borders has a problem with branding. The tourist agency VisitScotland reorganization means that local visitor centres were closed down and tourism is advertised for the whole of Scotland. Businesses and others pointed out that the Scottish Borders is a problematical image as being "in-between" different places with no distinctive identity. The advertising mainly targets walking, fishing and outdoor pursuits rather than cultural tourism. In addition, there is a pessimistic mindset in the area of Galashiels termed "Aye been" meaning things have always been like that and there is no need to change.



2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Our recommendations are focused mainly on Galashiels since other areas of cultural tourism are already well developed.

1. A **re-branding** of the Borders area as a destination for cultural tourism and not just for outdoor pursuits would have a positive effect, especially to encourage year-round tourism.
2. A **better transport** network linking Galashiels station with the Abbeys, as previously existed would build on the network of paths and cycle paths already established in the area to develop green and sustainable tourism.
3. In Galashiels, **more information is needed** about the kinds of visitors brought in by the Great Tapestry of Scotland and how this might connect to other visitor attractions and activities in the area. We have offered a survey at three-time points in 2022 to address this.
4. **More connection and information about the different visitor attractions within Galashiels** would help to keep visitors lingering for longer and exploring the town as well as bringing trade to the various cafes and craft shops that have opened in the area. We would suggest a cultural trail to link these attractions which could have both a leaflet and digital format using the good Wi-Fi connections available in the town. Information should be advertised at the transport hub as well as local eateries, hotels and businesses since the Visitor Centre has been closed down.
5. **Creating thematic cultural themes** such as around textiles might help to link the local University, the weaving tradition of the town, the Great Tapestry of Scotland and some of the local craft businesses such as the woollen shop and some of the local charity shops that offer local craft textiles. It might in the longer-term help to convert an empty factory into a textile museum.



FIGURE 1: ABBOTSFORD HOUSE. Author: Dr Stephanie Garrison



Horizon 2020

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SPOT-IT: your smart assistant in the development of cultural tourism objects and infrastructures

For European, national and local policymakers

Author: BIU team

Introduction

This is the first issue in a series of Policy Briefs that present the main findings and practical outcomes of an EU-funded research project SPOT (2020-2022). We inform all groups of stakeholders involved in the development of cultural tourism in Europe about what we have found out during our multi-national study implemented in 15 countries and share with you several policy-related recommendations and other results that might be useful in your professional work.



1. SPOT-IT in questions and answers

What is SPOT-IT?

SPOT-IT is a GIS-based innovative tool for the planners, organizers and developers of cultural tourism objects and infrastructures. The tool was developed mainly by the group of researchers and designers from Bar-Ilan University (Israel) and incorporates inputs from all 15 European and non-European teams that contributed with empirical data from their case studies and tested the tool with their local and regional stakeholders.

Who and why needs SPOT-IT?

SPOT-IT is needed for entrepreneurs, local authorities, local residents, and others who wish to receive extensive and diversified information (visually and geo-references represented) regarding visiting, promoting, and initiating new projects of cultural tourism in a given area.

It is needed since this information is currently not compiled, organized, presented and processed in a manageable manner that allows for decision-making for the development of cultural tourism (CT) sites and infrastructure.

While numerous stakeholders can benefit from it, the best use can be made by: **(1) Potential entrepreneurs/investors; (2) Local and national authorities; (3) Local community.**

What is the new and unique functionality of the tool?

The tool is new for its **conceptualization**, in particular:

- (1) The **suitability analysis** component allows the user to define the desired criteria for initiating, developing, and visiting cultural tourism sites, based on the location's peculiar attributes.
- (2) It's **visitors' prediction algorithm** that allows the user to receive an estimate of the economic performance of new initiatives in cultural tourism.
- (3) It's data layers that are based on **machine learning tools** operated on users generated content in social media.

What are the main components of SPOT-IT?

The logical block scheme of the SPOT-IT tool can be found in Figure 1. The **main analytical components** of the tool are:

- the suitability analysis component
- visitors' prediction algorithm
- three social media-based layers
- public participation platform that allows the local community to actively participate in the process of cultural tourism development
- numerous data layers that represent data on micro-climate, infrastructure, zoning, and potential conflicts.



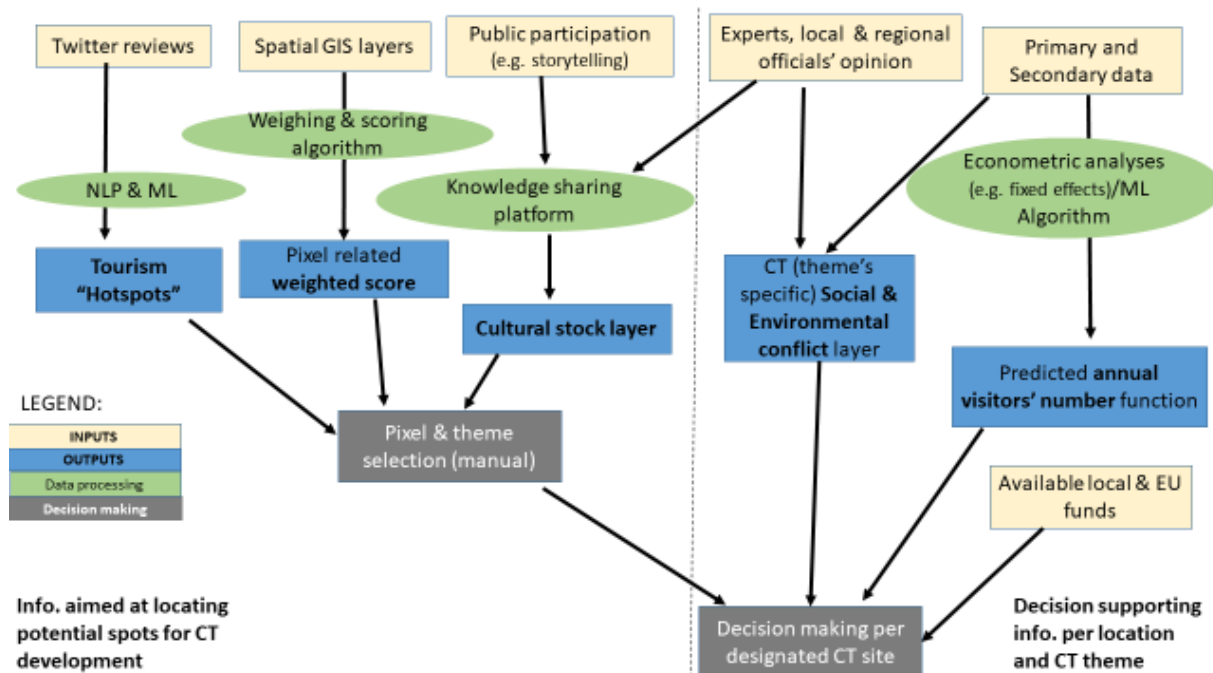


FIGURE 1: LOGICAL BLOCK SCHEME OF THE SPOT-IT TOOL.

2. SPOT-IT technology and further details

The importance of the data to the operation of the innovative tool (IT)

The general idea of the tool is the **creation of an innovative GIS-based website that provides a decision support mechanism for the development of cultural tourism (CT) sites and infrastructure**. SPOT-IT is needed for entrepreneurs, local authorities, local residents, and others who wish to receive extensive and diversified information (visually and geo-references represented) regarding visiting, promoting, and initiating new projects of cultural tourism in a given area. It is needed since this information is currently not compiled, organized, presented and processed in a manageable manner that allows for decision-making for the development of CT sites and infrastructure.

The **multiple data layers, their integration, and spatial representation** stand at the heart of the tool. The more accurate and diversified the data the better-informed decisions can be made. Effective decision-making requires information on various aspects of regional development that have a spatial context.

Based on the literature and expert’s opinions, it was decided which data variables are relevant to the development and strengthening of CT, and how to integrate the desired social, economic and environmental data. This is a challenging process given the heterogeneity of the case studies. Some case studies consist of one municipality while others include several municipalities, also, some case studies are purely rural, while others are hybrid with urban/rural mixture. In some countries, relevant data is not easily obtained. While some of the data exist (and could be accessed) others need to be created especially for the innovative tool. Another obstacle that underlies the creation of the tool is that while social, economic and environmental data exist in all case study regions, they may be collected at different scales and different time frames which require GIS skills for the integration of the data.

The innovative concept of SPOT-IT

The tool is designed to endow power to its user and allows several sources of flexibility including the choice of data layers to be used (Figure 2). The operators of the tool may decide which layers to use and propose and upload additional data layers that suit better to their area.

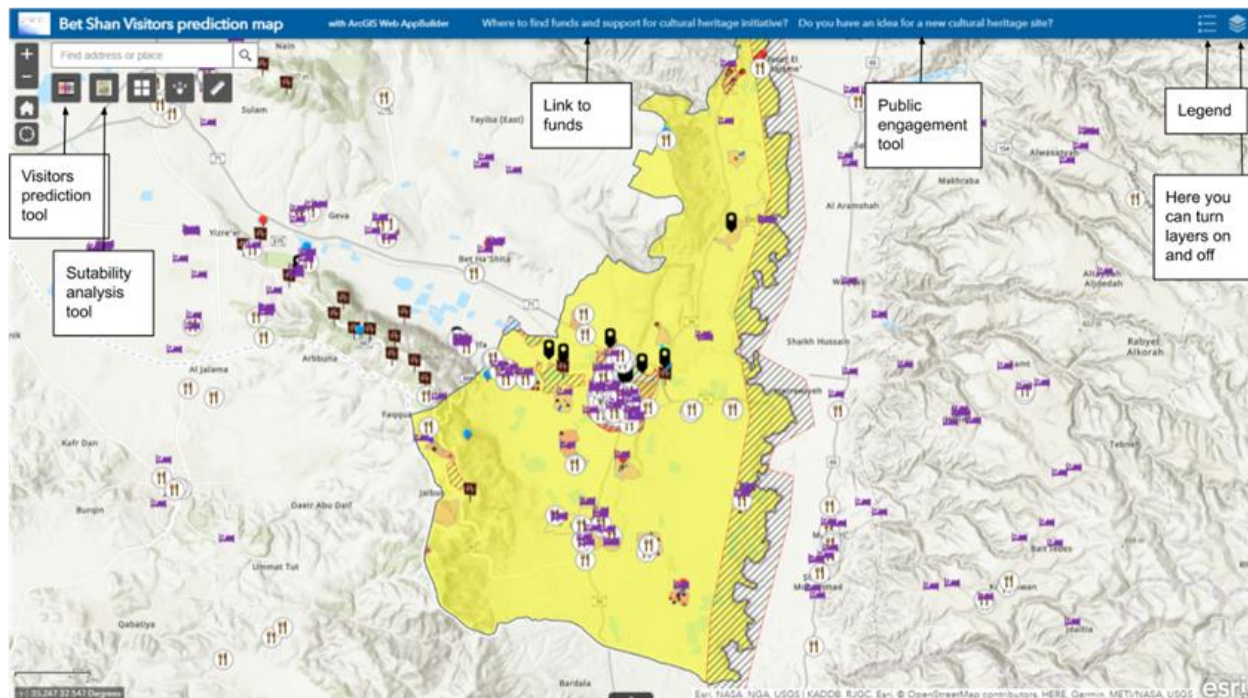


FIGURE 2: AN EXAMPLE OF A CONTRIBUTION OF THE TOOL: ANNUAL VISITORS' PREDICTION.

Its main components are divided into **5 major categories** in line with the imperative data:

- The **suitability analysis component** (see above)
- Its **visitors' prediction algorithm** (see above)
- **Economic sustainability**: core, secondary and specific data
- **Social media-based layers**: core, secondary and specific data
- **Environmental sustainability**: core, secondary and specific data

The innovative tool needs to handle all groups of data sustainability issues, secondary and specific data. Yet, the tool, as well as our interest, cannot spread over an enormous quantity of variables. Therefore, each partner decides on the variables that are important to their case study and assigned them into one of the categories.

Altogether, while numerous stakeholders can benefit from it, the best use can be made by: **(1) Potential entrepreneurs/investors; (2) Local and national authorities; (3) Local communities.**

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