



## *Innovation perspectives supporting trends and recovery - recommendations*

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(EUSAIR)*

*Innovative Actions in Sustainable Tourism  
EU Strategy for the Adriatic-Ionian Region  
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# INTRODUCTION

- Innovation in tourism has until recently been relatively neglected
- The very changes in the tourism business can generate positive practices that will lead to greater sustainability of the tourism offer
- **Innovations in tourism most often include:**
  - production innovations (new products and services),
  - process innovations (new ways of delivering tourist services),
  - logistical innovations (new ways of providing products/services to tourists), and
  - market innovations (new marketing methods or market behavior).
- J. Schumpeter: *“Innovation is the **practical implementation** of ideas that result in the introduction of **new goods or services or improvement in offering goods or services.**”*
- Oslo Manual: “innovation is a **new or significantly improved product or process** (or a combination thereof) that **differs significantly** from previous products or processes and is available to potential users (product) or available to companies (process) (OECD, 2018). Innovation must be able to **replicate at an acceptable cost**. Otherwise, it remains at the level of invention (patent and prototype) – in the EUSAIR - creativity not lacking, but “translation” of creative ideas into “production” often fails.”



# INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE EU AND WORLDWIDE

- The **European Union strongly supports innovation**, and in the previous financial period 2014-2020 the EU Research and Innovation Development Strategy had three objectives: open innovation, open science and an open world
- In the field of tourism, EU activities have primarily focused on **innovations that can influence the digital transformation of the tourism sector** in the EU
- This will continue also in the current financial period, 2021-2027 to be a priority given the coronavirus crisis, but even after recovery, **digital communication and digital solutions** are projected to remain key to maintaining business
- One of the most common products in this regard in the tourism sector relates to the creation of experiences through **augmented reality (AR) devices**

# Examples of innovations in sustainable tourism in the EU and worldwide (1)

- Future hotel Svart, Norway
- Special energy principles (produces more energy than it consumes - its energy needs will be 85% less than typical modern hotels)
- Opening in 2023
- On a wooden structure in the middle of the fjord, circular in shape, a view through large windows from all perspectives



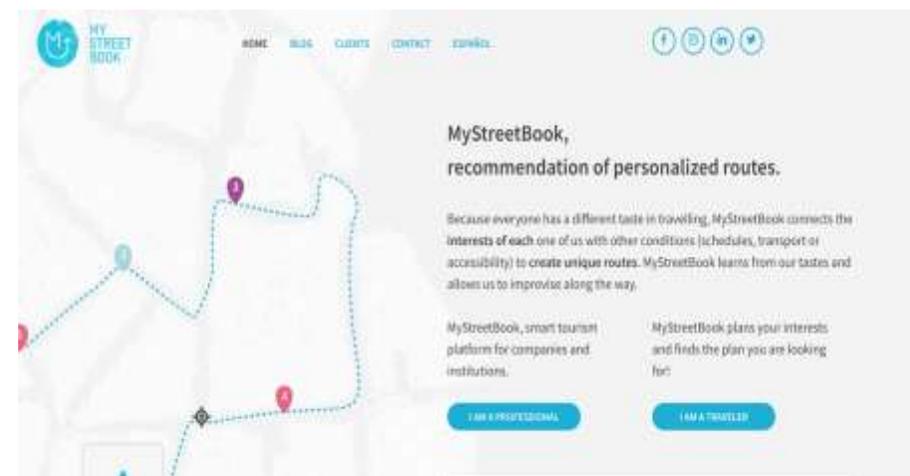
# Examples of innovations in sustainable tourism in the EU and worldwide (2)

- Faroe Islands
- A virtual tour of the island "through the eyes" of a local resident
- The tool allows remote touring - the tourist connects using a mobile phone, tablet or computer with a video camera carried by a local resident of the Faroe Islands and visits locations according to the wishes of tourists, even from a bird's eye view (from a helicopter)



# Examples of innovations in sustainable tourism in the EU and worldwide (3)

- MyStreetBook, Madrid
- Personalized solution for touring the city
- Connects the personal interests of tourists with external conditions (means of transport, accessibility, timetable, etc.)



# Examples of innovations in sustainable tourism in the EU and worldwide (4)

- Agile Interpretation - English Heritage
- QR codes that allow tourists to independently load interpretive messages using mobile phones, all with the aim of reducing physical contact



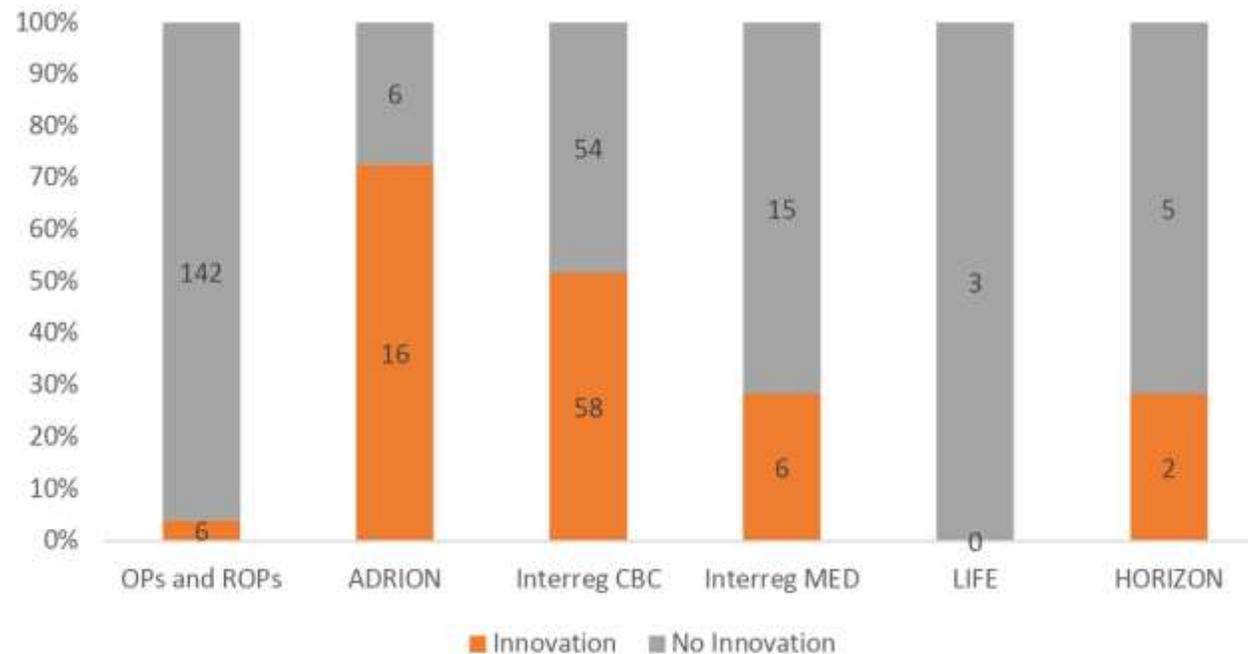
# INNOVATION IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN THE AIR

Pillar 4 Sustainable Tourism is focused on the development of sustainable and responsible tourism potential in the Adriatic-Ionian region **through innovative and quality tourism products and services.**

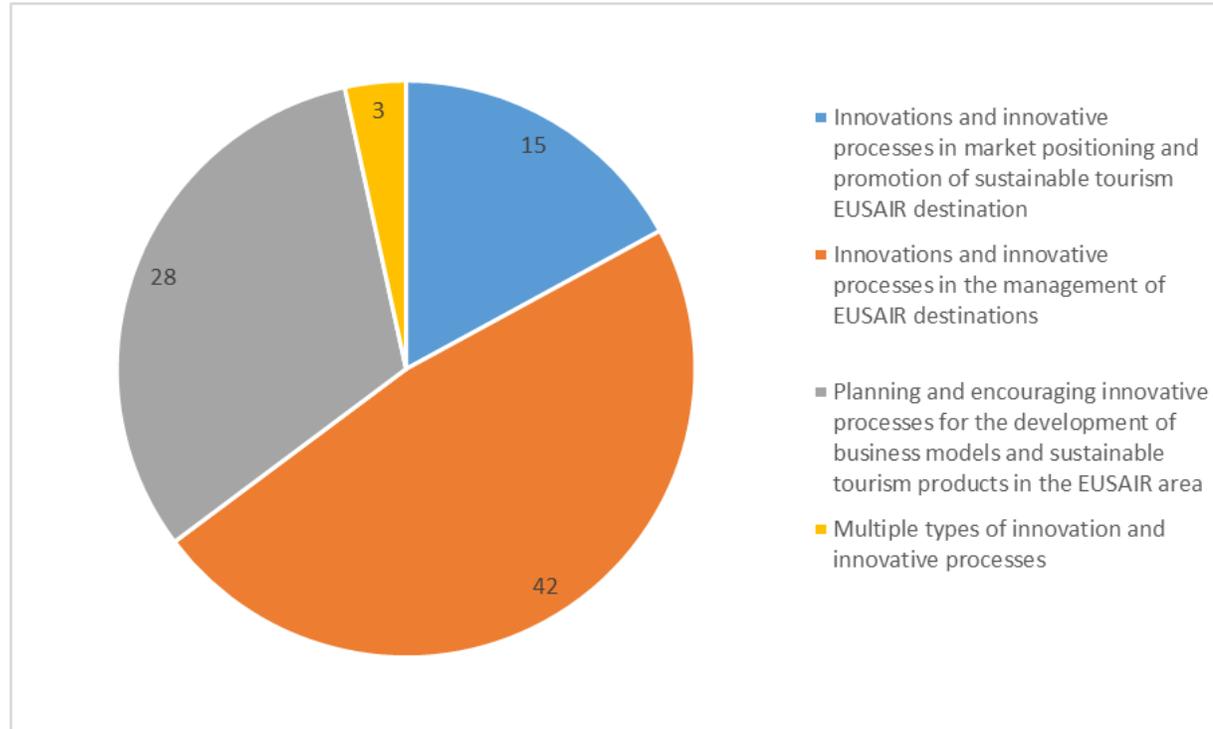
- Innovation and innovative processes in the EUSAIR destinations:
  - planning and stimulating the **content** of destinations - in the sustainable use, evaluation, presentation and interpretation of natural and cultural attractions,
  - the **infrastructural contents** of the destination - in accommodation, catering, traffic, informative contents, new technologies in application
  - supporting **activities** of destinations - in activities in destinations,
  - relations with the local community through **participatory and interactive models of cooperation.**
- Does innovation always have to be complicated?

# Key research findings

- 24 programs and 313 projects analysed
- Out of 313 analyzed projects related to sustainable tourism in the EUSAIR area, 88 projects introduce innovations



# Innovative mechanisms in sustainable tourism projects in the EUSAIR area



# Examples of innovation – SMART Heritage

- ADRION
- Objectives: to promote, valorise and protect cultural heritage in the AIR, to raise tourism attractiveness and reduce tourism seasonality in the project area
- The scope of the project is to generate a deeper awareness of the cultural heritage by applying and implementing multimedia ICT tools, as well as by creating unique tourism products that unify the Programme Area.
- Creation of the SMART HERITAGE cultural route – an innovative and unique cultural tourism product
- Digitalisation of cultural heritage: Safeguarding and promoting the less known cultural heritage assets that often remain hidden.



# Example of innovation – InMed-Tour

- CBC Interreg Italy – Greece
- “Innovative Medical Tourism Strategy” promotes an innovative and increasing kind of tourism - “health tourism”
- The so-called "medical" tourism represents an innovative touristic offer, because it gives the possibility for the patients’ relatives, to enjoy the area by considering the needs of patients and tourists.
- Creation of a modern e-Cluster, where medical information from both countries will be stored for the exchange of know-how and good practices.



# Example of innovation – INNOCULTOUR

- CBC Interreg Italy – Croatia
- Aim: to increase the visibility and immediate identification of 8 less-known cultural heritage sites.
- The activities are focused on active involvement of creative industries, local population and major stakeholders dedicated to the preservation of natural and cultural heritage
- Supports the integration of traditional cultural offer with ICT and improving the virtual accessibility of the natural and cultural destinations involved in the project



# Coronavirus crisis and entrepreneurial innovations in tourism



# Coronavirus, tourism and heritage – Changes and trends

- Market change / product change / consumption change
- Soft tourism: creative tourism, green tourism, experience tourism and long-distance tourism (without physical travel) – greater resilience
- Market: “staycation”
- Product: “well-being”
- Consumption: out of season (mass avoidance)
- How can entrepreneurs deal with the changes in tourism due to coronavirus?

# Market change – Example

- Tocati Festival, Italian Association of Traditional Games of Verona
- New markets – orientation to the domestic and not always classic tourist market
- Instead of tourists - games for socializing in isolation - proposing that in time of lockdown games are played at home, which can have
- a positive impact on reducing stress and anxiety while preserving and reviving authentic
- intangible cultural heritage
- Well-being for citizens + preservation and revitalization of intangible cultural heritage
- New audience development



# Product change – Example

- Numerous museums (e.g. Victoria and Albert Museum in London) - initiatives to collect exhibits related to the pandemic
- COVID-19 – focus of exhibitions
- The House of European History's project documents responses to the crisis - rainbow posters in European cities - solidarity



# Consumption change – Example

- Traveling "from home"
- Is it tourism? (remote tourism)
- "Solo" tours - specific interpretation



# Other entrepreneurial innovations in tourism (1)

- How can a change of perspective help?
- Tourism-related business innovation
  - A hotel owner decreases the price of a room rental when the booking is made later in the day since the probability of failure to rent a room increases
  - Such a strategy proved to be successful both in good and bad times and led to more than 90% occupancy
- Culture-related business innovation
  - Ticket fees for the show: artists give away (do not charge) for the show, but the audience pays for purchase of equipment, arranging the scene, tour, artist's pensions



# Other entrepreneurial innovations in tourism (2)

- How can a change of perspective help?
- Tourism-related business innovation
- Diffused hotel - use of the empty houses renovated with the funds of the post-earthquake of Friuli for tourist purposes
- Giancarlo Dall'Ara, tourism marketing professor; legally recognized in 1998
- Today - hotel accommodation facilities located in the smaller historic centres, characterised by the centralisation in a single building of the common services and the dislocation of the housing units in one or more separate buildings. The units are equipped with furniture, equipment and homogeneous services.



# Conclusions and recommendations



# Conclusions

- **Development of sustainable tourism faces many obstacles**
  - Inadequate knowledge and skills about the forms of sustainable tourism
  - Lack of innovative activities
  - Inadequate quality of tourism
  - Poor implementation of sustainable development policies and responsible tourism concepts
  - Low level of accessibility to attractions for visitors with special needs
  - These weaknesses are even greater with regard to current global threats, such as climate change, COVID-19 pandemic, and the seismically sensitive areas
- **There is still a low level of application of innovations in tourism**
  - Lack of knowledge about innovations and their role in sustainable tourism development (e.g. digital is not necessarily innovative)
  - Weak cooperation at all levels
  - Lack of effective incentives for innovation
  - Neither geographical distribution of innovative projects is cohesive nor is the distribution of funding (non-EU countries lagging behind)
- **COVID-19 positively affected innovations in sustainable tourism?**



# Recommendations

- Invest in the development of knowledge and education about innovations and innovative processes in sustainable tourism
- Develop and strengthen cooperation between entrepreneurs themselves
- Follow the web pages of regional development agencies in order to apply for projects related to your business
- Think about changing the perspective - use the COVID-19 pandemic to seek for the opportunities on the changed market
- Use innovations not to obtain funds but to make a change
- Think about simple solutions
- Sustainability is a key concept!



# Thank you!

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