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CEN TOUR

Circular Economy in Tourism

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Region

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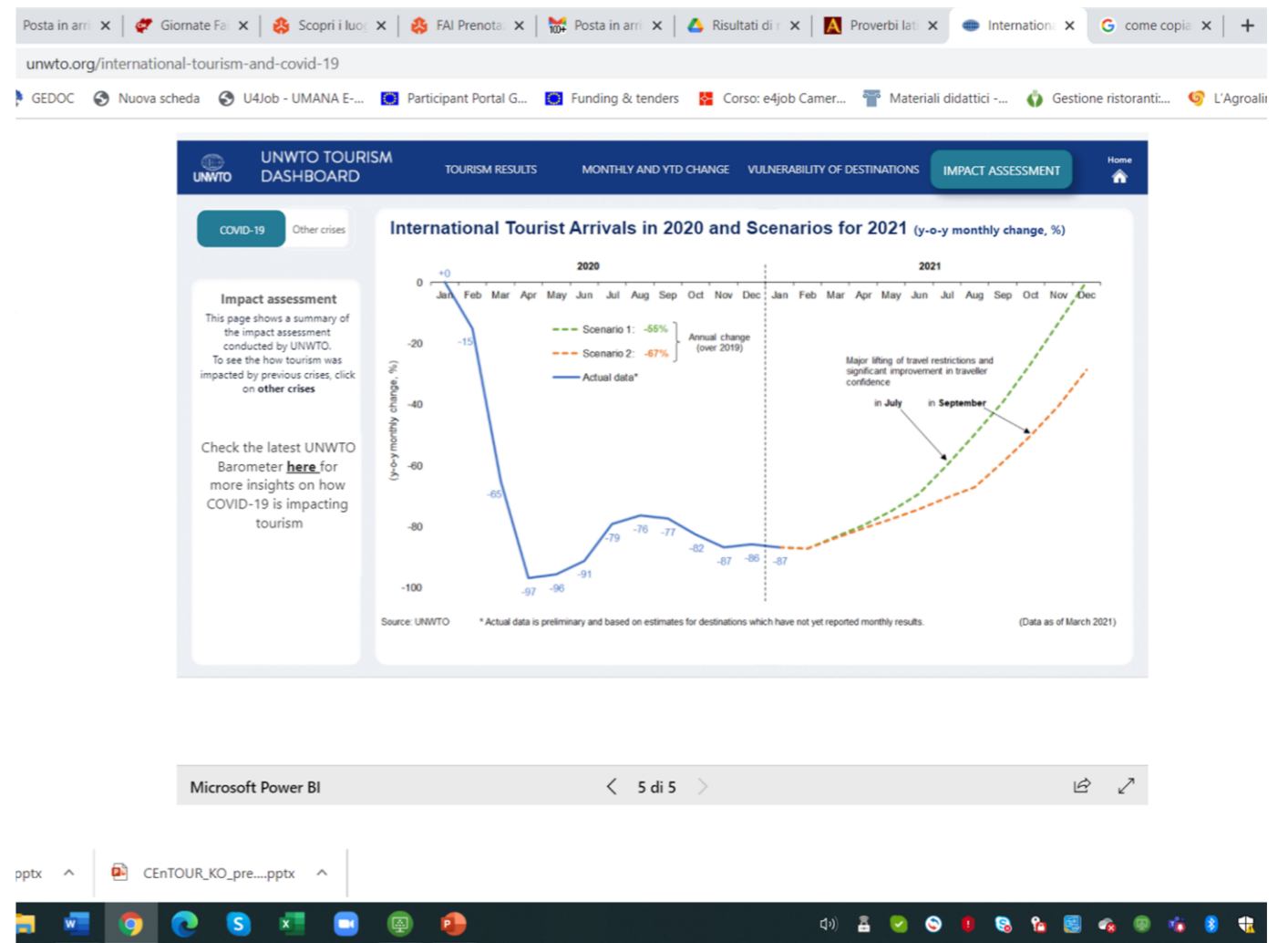
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1. Introduction

Covid-19

- the pandemic was more than a health crisis; It has affected us as individuals, as families, communities and societies. It has had an impact on every generation, including on those not yet born;
- it is a socio-economic crisis, a humanitarian crisis, a security crisis, and a human rights crisis.

Covid -19 and tourism



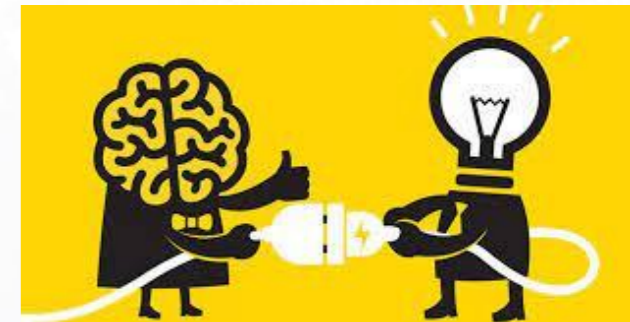
2. Objectives of the project

The project deals with the introduction of **Circular Economy** principles in the SMEs of the tourism sector, with the aim to spread a more sustainable model of development, in terms of **knowledge transfer, innovation and certifications**:

knowledge transfer through: developing a **framework for capacity building**, creating a **supporting structure for SMEs**; delivering a **training interactive programme** (online sessions, face to face sessions, study visit, webinars and online conferences) with the help of EC facilitators;

Innovation through: **direct technical support activities for incubation, acceleration and scaling up** of tourism SMEs. 68 companies in 5 countries will be selected for implement pilot tests, they will be financially supported to cover travel costs, sustainable and green investments. The project aims at taking at least 10% of SMEs to obtain certification (EMAS or Ecolabel), while 20% of them will go through the feasibility study for certifications.;

Creation of network of Institutions that can collaborate on CE support schemes for SMEs in the tourism sector and promoting the exchange of practices and results at EU level



3. Partners- working together is our mantra

CEnTOUR involves 10 partners from Italy, Spain, Belgium, Moldova, Republic of North Macedonia, Greece, Cyprus,

Nr	Name	Acronym	Role(s)	Typology
1	Camera di Commercio Industria Artigianato e Agricoltura delle Marche (Italy)	CCIAAM	Coordinator	Chamber of Commerce, Business Support Organisation
2	Università Politecnica delle Marche (Italy)	UNIVPM	Partner	Training and Education, Research (Circular Economy, Marketing, Business Support)
3	Chamber of Commerce of Cantabria (Spain)	COCIN	Partner	Training and Education, Research (Business Support), Business Support Organisation
4	Ecores Sprl (Belgium)	ECORES		Business Support Consultancy (Circular Economy, Design Thinking)

3. Partners- working together is our mantra

5	Organizatia Pentru Dezvoltarea Sectorului Intreprinderilor Mici Si Mijlocii (Moldova)	ODIMM	Partner	Public Business Support Organisation
6	Business and Innovation Centre (North Macedonia)	BICT	Partner	Business Support Organisation
7	Emoporiko Kai Viomichaniko Epimelitirio Xanthis (Greece)	CCIX	Partner	Chamber of Commerce, Business Support Organisation
8	Centre for Social Innovation	CSI	Partner	Sme, Consultancy and Business Support, Research
9	Forum delle Camere di Commercio dell'Adriatico Ionio	FAIC	Partner	Non profit network at EU level
10	Progetto Arcadia (Italy)	PA	Partner	Sme, Consultancy and Business Support

4. Methodology

Our strategy

- ❑ We address the aspect of the **motivational lever**, fundamental in involving micro enterprise in projects with high impacts: Advantages of Circular Business Models, success cases, support of CE Facilitators;
- ❑ We employ a **transition system perspective**: we also work at the system (tourism, regional, ...) level. This approach helps SMEs to develop marketing and promotional capabilities leveraging on the sustainability factor.
- ❑ We foster **communities of practice**: It is a community of people which interacts with each other for their pursuit of a common goal.
- ❑ We foster **cross-sector collaboration**: often required to implement circular strategies or practices (to close loops. SMEs often lack the network, contacts and time required to establish such cross- sector relations
- ❑ We use **Success Case Method (SCM)**: designed to confront and leverage which things are working and which are not.



4. Methodology - support programme

DIRECT WORK WITH SMEs

The **support programme** is based on 4 main steps, to assure an effective management and a results-oriented approach :

1. **Structure** that will support activities in a sustainable and efficient way through the identification and training of one **CE Facilitators** for each country, that will support SMEs, especially micro ones, in participating in project activities.
2. **Training** and capacity building for SMEs based mainly on exchanges of best practices and Success Cases Methodology;
3. **Assessment** of SMEs needs in terms of CE strategies and of cross-sectoral potential within each focus- country/region;
4. **Establishment of the Communities of Practice** based on cross-sectoral collaboration for each country/focus-region for the development of practical strategies (including preparation for the **ecolabel certification** for selected SMEs) + 1 at international level.



4. Methodology - strategic focus areas

INNOVATION STRATEGIES - 3 focus areas:

1. Waste management business models in the areas of Food Waste and Packaging



2. Plastic-free solutions and rethinking packaging



3. Collaborative consumption



MARKETING STRATEGIES - 2 objectives:

4. Improving competitiveness of **traditional mature tourist markets**, improving destination attractiveness



5. Qualify some **Focus-regions** through emerging niche markets as **highly CE oriented and innovative**.



4. Methodology - SMEs

68 SMEs from 5 countries

“Focus-regions” a context of special interest for tourism-related issues

- ❖ Marche Region, (Italy): 18
- ❖ Cantabria, (Spain): 14
- ❖ Polog Tetovo, (North Macedonia): 12
- ❖ 4 Orhei District (Moldova): 12
- ❖ 5 Xanthi Region (Greece):12

These regions have been selected for the following reasons:

- there are **proximity** relations with partners, enhancing the effectiveness of project activities;
- they represent areas with **strong potentialities for the tourism sector**;
- they represent a **blend** of areas with **different features**, in terms of market maturity (established or emerging); type of public (mass or niche); seasonality.

SMEs are:

- Hotels and similar accommodation; Holiday and other short-stay accommodation; Camping grounds, recreational vehicle parks and trailer parks; Travel agency, tour operator reservation service and related activities.

- Small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) as defined in the EU recommendation 2003/361



4. Methodology Inspiring SMEs - Facilitators

8 Circular Economy Facilitators *are being trained*

- They will represent the link and main support for SMEs staff, assuring that information exchanges between the partnership and SMEs are smooth and effective and that SMEs receive all required support to implement actions with ease of access.
- Each CE facilitator will be the reference point for the SMEs of the partner country



4. Methodology

Support to SMEs - amounts

- The amount of financial support **per individual SME** :
 - N. 18 Italy 5.500
 - N. 14 Spain 5.500
 - N. 12 Moldova 4.100
 - N. 12 N. Macedonia 3.000
 - N. 12 Greece 4.100
- **Minimum number of tourism SMEs to be supported : 68**



4. Methodology :Support to SMEs- activities

We build a strategic project for SMEs' competitiveness : HOW?

online training sessions



F2F training session



study visit + fair (the number of SMEs and criteria to select them will be defined during the project)



Local brainstorming sessions



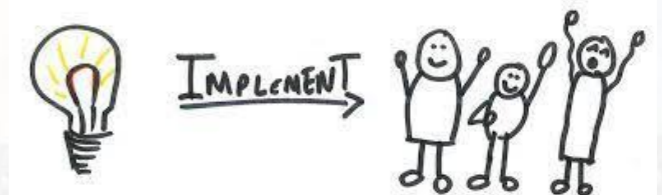
community of practice engagement



coaching of SMEs at local level



pilot tests implementation as per individual strategies (certification compliance, supply chain agreements, adaptation of processes and products)



4. Methodology - Support to SMEs: results

- Among the 68 beneficiary companies, the project aims at taking:
 - at least **10% of SMEs to obtain certifications (EMAS or ECOLABEL)**
 - **20% of SMEs will go through the feasibility study for certifications**
 - SMEs will have to register an overall improvement on sustainability through circular economy solutions, in particular at least **10% reduction of food waste and non- recyclable/non-recycled not reused resources**, in particular plastic and packaging material



4. Methodology - Support to SMEs: selection criteria

Award criteria:

1. previous experience on learning and/or adapting activities, to be demonstrated with a list of previous project/activities;
2. potential to achieve the best results in line with the project's specific objectives (e.g.capacity of international communication and relation; dedicated staff of R&D/sustainability; growth mindset; commercial channels)
3. additional score for 1. SMEs settled in the 5 Focus- regions*: Marche Region, (IT); Cantabria, (ES); Polog Tetovo, (MK); 4 Orhei District (MD) 5 Xanthi Region (EL); 2. Staff with English (level B1)



5. Critical risks

Risk	Mitigation
Adapt model to different national contexts	Role of Coordinator + Steering Committee + OP / CEF
Lack of cooperation from SMEs (interest, motivation, financial resources, emergencies, issues on implementation)	Role of Coordinator + Steering Committee + OP / CEF Reserve list
Covid-related risks: F2F meetings	Distance meetings Online facilitation tools (MIRO)
Time for WP1 strict	Adapting existing resources
Call for Interest: process and requirement	Cooperation from all partners and strong leadership from Task Leader (ask for support as necessary)
Study visit and fair not yet identified	Contribution from all partners to identify a case study and (or more local) suitable event (fair) that can be linked
Period for Capacity Building partly overlaps with tourism high seasons	Start planning it early on
Covid-related risks: F2F meetings	Distance meetings Online facilitation tools (MIRO)
Covid-related risks: travel costs might increase	Distance meetings

6. Conclusion

"Work together to build a tourism sector that works for everyone, where **sustainability and innovation are part of everything we do"**

"Tourism can be **a force for good in our world, playing a part in protecting our planet and its biodiversity, and celebrating what makes us human: from discovering new places and cultures to connecting with new people and experiences."**



6. Conclusion

In line with the Communication on Tourism (COM (2010)352) these are our plus points :

- ❖ Link between the tourism sector's **competitiveness** and its **sustainability**, as the quality of tourist destinations is strongly influenced by their natural and cultural environment and by their integration into a local community.
- ❖ The adaptation of European tourism companies towards more sustainable, low-carbon and resource-efficient business models provides a competitive advantage by creating important **cost savings** and improving the **quality of the tourism offer**.
- ❖ CE can create **new jobs and opportunities**.
 - ❖ Moreover, CE can address the growing consumer demand for a **more eco-friendly tourism experience**.





***Best regards
from
CENTOUR'S
STAFF***

