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TOURAL Living Labs Infographic

The TOURAL Mission

The **TOURAL Project** aims to promote sustainable development in **rural and remote areas** through the establishment of **niche tourism sectors:**

- **Underwater Cultural & Nature Heritage Tourism**
- **Cultural & Creative Tourism**
- **Cultural Science Tourism**
- **Silver Tourism**

The TOURAL Living Labs

Living Labs **(LLs)** are **participatory workshops** through which diverse stakeholders collaborate to develop solutions that reflect the real needs and opportunities of the local communities.

Methodology

The TOURAL Living Labs process included online and onsite tools to facilitate stakeholders' engagement and knowledge exchange though a **three-step** approach:

- **Defining the problem:** identifying the current needs to support the sustainable development of the four niche tourism sectors in the TOURAL Pilot Sites.
- **Envisioning the future:** picturing the desirable future of the Living Labs participants for their Pilot Sites and describing what it might look like.
- **Backcasting the future:** looking back from the future scenario, identifying and assessing changes, actions and actors for that future to come true.

In total, **257 stakeholders** from **Policy, Industry, Academia and Civil Society** were involved in the entire Living Labs process across the six TOURAL pilot sites.

- **136** stakeholders participated in the onsite LLs
- **204** stakeholders completed the online questionnaire
- **83** stakeholders were involved in both

The TOURAL Pilot Sites

Adriatic-Ionian Macro-region



Šimuni-Island of Pag



Teramo Province



North Sporades

Black Sea Basin



Nessebar



Danube Delta-Tulcea



Kutsurub

The Toural Living Labs Timeline

START

1/1/2024
Launch of the TOURAL Project

June 2024-January 2025
Preparation of the TOURAL LLs

February 2025-May 2025
Implementation of the TOURAL LLs across the six Pilot Sites

2026
- Testing and co-validation of the LLs key findings & scenarios
- Development of business models & services across the 6 Pilot Sites
- Elaboration of a roadmap for the replication of TOURAL outputs

FINISH

31/12/2026
End of the TOURAL Project

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TOURAL Living Labs' Key Findings

TOURAL Tourism Verticals in Focus

Underwater Cultural & Nature Heritage Tourism:

- North Sporades
- Simuni-Island of Pag
- Nessebar
- Danube Delta-Tulcea
- Kutsurub

Silver Tourism:

- North Sporades
- Teramo Province
- Šimuni-Island of Pag
- Nessebar
- Danube Delta-Tulcea

Cultural & Creative Tourism:

- North Sporades
- Nessebar
- Danube Delta-Tulcea
- Kutsurub

Cultural Science Tourism:

- Teramo Province
- Nessebar
- Kutsurub

Most Identified Challenges

- Lack of tourist facilities and infrastracture
- Shortage of skilled workforce to meet the market needs in the niche tourism sectors
- Lack of a well-organised communication strategy for the regions' heritage

Most Identified Priorities

- Extension of the tourist season / year-round tourism
- Improvement of accessibility and transport connections
- Development of cooperation networks between private & public stakeholders in tourism
- Development of skills relevant to the tourism sector through training

Most Identified Solutions

- Integration of the local community and traditions into the tourism industry for better promotion of local natural & cultural resources
- Tailor-made tourism packages to attract diverse tourists, such as artists, scientists & silver tourists
- Development of tourist learning experiences through engaging activities with locals and the use of digital tools (e.g. mobile apps)

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

CULTURAL PRESERVATION

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TOURAL Living Labs' Co-designed Scenarios

Desired Future

The Pilot Sites as:

• Slow-living regions with modern, eco-friendly transport connections and fully developed tourist facilities and infrastructure

• Alternative tourism destinations focusing on culture and nature, with active local community involvement and strict respect for cultural and natural heritage

• Off-season tourism destinations with strong platforms for multi-stakeholder cooperation and a well-trained workforce

Main Changes Needed

Adoption of a long-term UCCST tourism strategy, including measures to:

• improve tourist facilities and transport infrastructure

• ensure the protection of local tangible and intangible cultural heritage, and natural heritage

• facilitate collaboration between various stakeholders

• raise awareness of the regions' heritage among the local communities and visitors

• ensure locals' participation in decision-making processes

• develop a skilled tourism workforce

Main Actors Needed

• National, Regional and Local Authorities, such as Ministries and Municipalities

• Hotels, Pensions and Guesthouses

• Restaurants and Catering Services

• Tour Guides and Transport Companies, Tour Operators and Travel Agencies

• Tourism Enterprises, Local Businesses

• Tourism Associations

• Universities, Research Centres and Training Institutions

• Local Communitis, Local Action Groups (LAGs) and Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs)

• Cultural Associations, Creative/Artistic Groups

Main Actions Needed

• Enhancement of transport connections through the conduction of studies and the preparation of spatial plans

• Provision of funding packages to optimise tourist facilities and transport infrastructure (e.g. by installing wheelchair ramps) to ensure accessibility

• Provision of funding packages to local businesses so that they can continue operating in the off-season

• Establishment of local associations to ensure the local communities' participation in decision-making processes

• Reinforcement of tourism associations to improve the representation of all tourism professionals

• Provision of integrated tourism packages through collaboration between various tourism stakeholders to ensure a holistic visitor experience

• Creation of tailored communication campaigns, including the use of AI-based promotion tools

• Provision of incentives for highly qualified locals to stay in the regions and work in UCCST tourism sectors

• Organisation of training programmes to upskill and reskill employers and employees

• Elaboration of training and workshop programmes, with a special focus on children and young people, on the importance of the regions' cultural and natural heritage

GENDER MAINSTREAMING

CULTURAL PRESERVATION

Organised and implemented by the following TOURAL Partners

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