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CULTURAL HERITAGE VALORISATION FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

ABSTRACT

Major tourism attractions are emerging as internationally acclaimed hubs of visits that both detract from visits to other cultural sites and the non-sustainability of these most-visited sites. As visitors are provided with authentic cultural heritage, the offer of specific experiences rooted in local history and the preserved cultural legacy of communities adds to a deeper touristic experience. The paper discusses the aims to improve policies that enable small and medium-sized towns and regions to valorise their cultural heritage through innovative assessments and knowledge sharing assisted by interaction with local public and private stakeholders.

KEYWORDS: INTERREG Europe, Local Flavours project, Authentic tourism, Experience Economy, Cultural heritage

1. INTRODUCTION

Authentic tourism based on local cultural flavours (Local Flavours, LF hereafter) project was initiated by the Institute of Advanced Studies (iASK) that is seated in Kőszeg at the Hungarian-Austrian border, a small historic town with exceptional yet under-utilized cultural heritage. It is a multidisciplinary research organization that also implements the KRAFT Programme (“Creative City – Sustainable Region”) an innovative, regional development concept, funded by the Hungarian government, integrating soft and hard factors and utilizing synergies of interdependencies among rural and urban development. This methodology is also exploited and advanced in the framework of the Local Flavours project.

As a starting point, LF partners agree that to empower and support the described locations, it is necessary to develop and implement strategies and management tools tailor-made to local circumstances and ambitions; establish and engage a flexible and creative workforce with state-of-the-art digital and interpersonal skills; promote and intensify cooperation between heritage management institutions, private and business stakeholders; and increase individual and mutual visibility by better leveraging targeted locations. To reach

these key strategic aims, relevant policies and local/regional institutional, administrative and financing frameworks should be improved. To facilitate this process, Phase 1 of Local Flavours focuses on the Interregional Learning Process that will result in specific Action Plans, elaborated in the framework of the project. Knowledge exchange actions of Phase 1 are focused on the collection of good practices in the 3 key themes of LF: (1) New evaluation methods of local authentic tourism potentials; (2) Public-private cooperation in the cultural product, service and destination development; (3) Vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms.

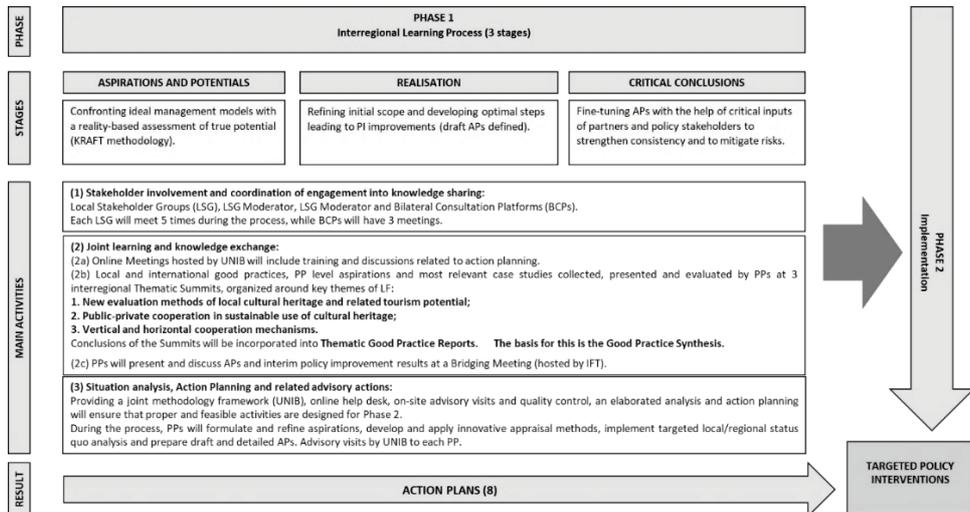
From a global perspective, we can conclude that cultural heritage portfolios are also upgraded, demanding more systematic and eco-conscious management, region-specific instruments and actions. Most importantly for Local Flavours, authentic tourism is attaining importance, where people, communities, their everyday habits and lifestyles become the attraction themselves, in addition to built heritage and nature. This form of living cultural heritage cannot be found in big showcase tourist destinations. The global tendencies and challenges of our everyday lives could also be addressed by touristic products and services, as the presentation of Good Practices will show in the following.

In the first part of the paper, we introduce the project itself. After that, we provide an overview of the significance of tourism, cultural tourism in the European Union. Describing the Experience Economy we demonstrate how 'authenti-seeking' [Yeoman, Brass & McMahon-Beattie 2007] has become a major phenomenon, and what are the seven principles of authenticity. In the next part, reviewing what makes regions units of social-economic space, we describe the KRAFT Methodology applied in the project. Later Good Practices (GPs) are introduced in connection to the three key themes of the project (two of them are discussed in detail according to the seven principles of authenticity). Lastly, we conclude what kind of benefits arise when combining the Heritage- and Experience Economy, and what are the potential success factors.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The overall objective of the Local Flavours project is to improve policy instruments (PIs) supporting the sustainable exploitation of the cultural heritage of small and medium-sized towns with potentially attractive portfolios, that are unable to fully exploit their cultural legacies due to less-advantaged locations. This is achieved by developing and applying an analytical methodology that translates quantitative and qualitative factors of tangible and intangible cultural assets into appropriate strategic recommendations for policy-making (Figure 1). This is done to influence and develop authentic tourism products and services based on the interaction of locals and tourists, and to build new mechanisms for cooperation

among host populations and private cultural and tourism actors, enhancing active relations between stakeholders.



Source: *Local Flavours (LF) project [2019]*

Figure 1: The Structure of Local Flavours Project

Local Flavours has 3 specific objectives as follows:

- create and implement methods to explore, classify and evaluate the local portfolio and exploitation potential of cultural heritage, including tangible and intangible assets, facilities, authentic traditions and lifestyles, and niche advantages, potentially contributing to the creation of attractive authentic tourism destinations that provide tourists experiences with living, contemporary culture while empowering local inhabitants;
- improve and enhance policy instruments, participatory planning and strategy making processes, based on public-private cooperation and intensified stakeholder involvement, applying optimum solutions for the exploitation of local cultural potential based on innovative interactions between hosts and tourists;
- identify and empower vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms either within regions (harmonizing development strategies with major destinations; representation of local interests at higher levels through a network of policy-making institutions and good governance initiatives) and between regions (transnational exchange of information; identifying and applying relevant good practices).

The project has eight partner organizations from seven countries¹.

As a result of the cooperation of the international partnership, 8 Action Plans will be produced as main outcomes, targeting various policy instruments (ERDF Operational Programmes, development and marketing strategies) supporting the addressed locations in their pursuit to become more integrated and integral players in regional tourism, based on their recognized and properly used authentic cultural assets.

3. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

There is no doubt that tourism is a highly significant economic sector both globally and locally that provides real prospects for enduring and inclusive economic growth. The tourism sector generates foreign exchange, drives regional development, directly supports numerous types of jobs and businesses, and underpins many local communities. According to a recent analysis of OECD tourism is still a key sector within a growing services economy [OECD 2020]. On average, the sector directly contributes 4.5% of GDP and 6.9% of employment in OECD countries and has been heavily expanded in the last decades.

The European Union has also recognized the importance of tourism in the economy, therefore the European Commission (EC) has started to work on several initiatives to diversify and improve the range of tourism products and services in several areas such as sustainable tourism, accessible tourism and cultural tourism. The importance of culture, as part of the European tourism experiences and as an element that can enhance the profile of a tourist destination, has also been a key focal point in recent EC initiatives. Europe is a key cultural tourism destination thanks to its incomparable cultural heritage, including museums, theatres, archaeological sites, historical cities, industrial sites as well as music and gastronomy. Recent estimates show that cultural tourism accounts for 40% of European tourism, i.e. 4 out of 10 tourists choose their destination based on its cultural offering. As Girard & Nijkamp [2009] argues, in recent decades tourism has become a source of competition among destination regions and has also prompted many new (public and private) initiatives to make those regions more attractive to visitors. Modern tourism policy therefore must be based on a strategic

¹ Project partner organisations are the followings:

Institute of Advanced Studies, HU (Lead Partner)

Harghita County Council, RO (Project Partner)

Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch, NL (Project Partner)

Waterford City and County Council, IRL (Project Partner)

Savonlinna Development Services Ltd., FI (Project Partner)

Municipality of Vittorio Veneto, IT (Project Partner)

Riga Planning Region, LV 8 - PP Institute for Tourism, HR (Project Partner)

Department of Cultural Heritage, University of Bologna, IT (Advisory Partner)

blend of demand-, and supply-side initiatives for the development of touristic regions, and creating the appropriate tourist facilities (both tangible and intangible) is a major challenge to policy-making bodies, especially in the context of newly emerging sustainable local development issues.

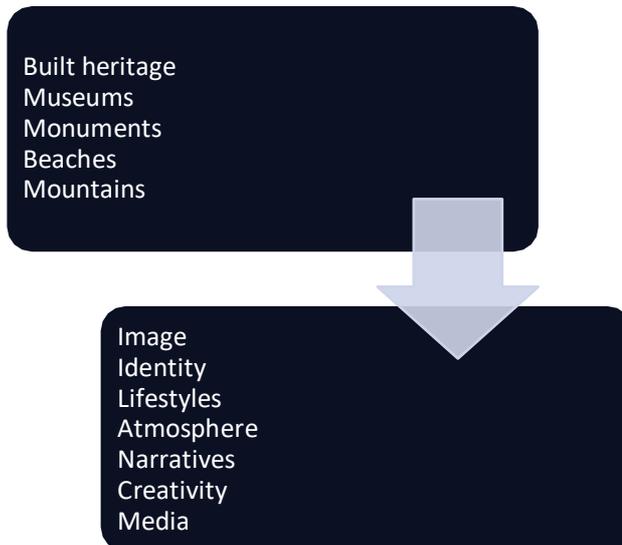
Despite all these favourable trends, major tourist attractions that have emerged as internationally acclaimed hubs of visits and services led to the obscurity of other cultural sites and to the non-sustainability of most-visited destinations. At the same time, tourists are upvaluing authentic cultural heritage offering specific experiences rooted in local history and the preserved cultural legacy of communities, adding unique flavours and excitement to their adventure. But why is it important nowadays? What caused these frequent changes from a theoretical point of view?

In recent decades there has been a perceptible shift in the production and consumption of tourism experiences from cultural to creative aspects. However, it is still true, that the former plays a key role in the tourism industry nowadays: the wide variety of cultural tourism activities, their interdependence, the strong ties between such activities and other economic branches, the population's increasing leisure time, the changes in the tourists' interest, the increasing life expectancy and numbers of the third age people have made cultural tourism still being on board [Valeriu & Istoc 2007]. Despite these facts, as recent literature (e.g. Richards 2009; Solima & Minguzzi 2014) points out, creative industries and creative tourism have emerged as new ways of both understanding and experiencing tourism activities, and intangible tourism resources have become more and more important, instead of tangible ones.

The growing importance of the creative sector has been a result of – paraphrasing Pine and Gilmore [1998] – the Experience Economy, where competition formerly based on producing goods or services has been replaced by competition to produce experiences. In their point of view, goods and services can be easily copied, which drives prices down and reduces profitability. On the contrary, experiences are unique and they are produced for and directly involve individual consumers. Experiences themselves may also become subject to replication and therefore could easily lose their value. The increasing importance of experiences as part of the tourism product has been also proved by growing deployment of intangible cultural resources in the tourism product: increasingly recent years, tourism more and more depends on intangible elements such as the image or atmosphere of places (see Figure 2).

These shifts have led to changes both in the consumption and the production side of cultural tourism as well [see Richards & Raymond 2000; Richards 2009]. On the former side, tourists (or visitors) recently tend to engage more actively

with the culture and creativity of places and turn to products that enable them to be not just mere observers of culture.



Source: Richards [2009]

Figure 2: The Shift from Tangible to Intangible Resources in Tourism

Concerning the Experience Economy, the phenomenon of ‘authenticity’ has been identified as a future key trend. The term ‘authenti-seeking’ introduced by Brass [2006] means that consumers are searching for authenticity in a range of products, services and experiences or looking for it within themselves.

Yeoman et al. [2007] underline the importance of authenticity; referring to the book ‘Authenticity: Brands, fakes, spin and the lust for real life’ of David Boyle [2004] they introduce the seven principles of authenticity:

- Ethical (founded on the principles of community, sustainability and ethical consumption);
- Natural (tourism products which are quintessentially associated with the destination or region);
- Honest (the tourist industry shouldn’t promise something which can’t be delivered or produced);
- Simple (should be simple to understand in which the visitor can see the benefits);
- Beautiful (a magnificent view which creates a sense of place, or the feeling that experience cannot be copied as it belongs there and only there);

- Rooted (has some sense of past which is rooted in the destination or community);
- Human (an experience that is something that is living and people-focused).

In sum, creative tourism offers alternatives for tourists to develop their creative potential through active participation in different learning experiences (instead of “general” reproduction of culture) that enhances self-development through authenticity. Leaving space for consumers to be creative avoids the usual and fixed perceptions of experiences while emphasizing intangible resources reduces production costs and increases flexibility for the destination. Although the importance of creativity in the tourism industry has been recognized by many destinations, creative tourism must be actively created through the interaction between tourists and the places visited. One of the key elements in defining creative tourism is that the experiences developed should be characteristic of the place in which they happen [cited in Richards 2009: 84]. To develop such experiences, communities need to use a wide variety of creative (both inherited or created) assets to provide experiences for tourists. The crucial point here is to develop a specific reason for tourists to engage in creative activities in destination territories.

Following the definition of Butler [1993: 29], sustainable tourism could be defined as a form of *“tourism, which is developed and maintained in an area (community, environment) in a manner and scale, where it remains viable during an indefinite period, and does not degrade or alter the human or physical environment in which it exists to such a degree that it prohibits the successful development and wellbeing of other activities and processes”*. Joining this definition, our point of view is quite similar to what Butler argues, but it is also worth mentioning that tourism basically must be inserted in an existing economy and should be complementary to it. What we mean by this, is that tourism sustainability is just a single-sector approach of the whole discourse - it is linked to other systems (water, energy, transportation, culture, etc.) as well, and has to function without the expense of these.

4. THE APPLICATION OF THE KRAFT METHODOLOGY IN THE PROJECT

One of the main barriers against harmonized development is the uneven distribution of wealth. Not by coincidence, the cohesion policy of the European Union is dedicated to promote and support the ‘overall harmonious development’ of its Member States and regions. It must be stated, that regions with specific structures often represent an inner core-periphery system, where the importance

of cities, larger settlements is high, the neighbourhood often depends on the economic viability and growth of core areas (like urban-rural linkages).

Due to the continuous changes in the World's economy and persistent differences among wealth inside national economies, the importance of smaller-scale assessments is ascending to evaluate the state of various territories. Regional development, as a strategic management process, begins with the assessment of territories/ regions, which are often conceptualized as units of social-economic space characterized by a production structure of all ownership forms, population, employment concentration as well as governmental institutions [Agnew 2000, 2001 and Haukkala et al. 1999 as cited in Palekiene et al. 2015]. To do this assessment, we construct categories that help us identify, classify, and categorize regions. These categories are not mutually exclusive: how we define something has much to do with what we are looking for or why do we want to look for it. We could look at a very small "snapshot" of an area, or look at quite large territorial expanses, and both are considered regions – this leads the question of regional assessment to the phenomenon of "Worlds within Worlds". The KRAFT Methodology provides a system that could be used for analysing this "Worlds within Worlds" emphasizing the importance of local values, resources and institutions which make places "unique".

"The Creative City – Sustainable Region" (KRAFT) is a concept that perceives effective regional cooperation among economic and social actors as the measure of successful investment and development. (Miszlivetz&Márkus 2013, Miszlivetz eds. 2015) It is rooted in the conviction that the key to successful development initiatives and projects is the effective cooperation between the socio-economic stakeholders of the relevant region. The concept takes into consideration individual (company, city, university etc.) and community interests in the region.

During Phase 1 Partners, with the help of the methodology, assess their true inherent potential linked to their tangible and intangible assets resulting in their ideal management models for the exploitation of sustainable local cultural heritage. This activity leads to the development of the Status Quo Reports which are the basis of the Action Plans (final deliverables of the project).

5. DATA AND METHOD

As mentioned before, the main source of interregional knowledge exchange is the collection and discussion of GPs. All partners take the responsibility to share such GPs which have the potential to be transferred to other territories (transferability criterion of the INTERREG programmes). Originally the project - as it has been already mentioned - was dedicated to collect good practices concerning 3 key themes of LF:

- New evaluation methods of local authentic tourism potentials;
- Public-private cooperation in cultural product, service and destination development;
- Vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms.

However, since the programme (and consequently the project implementation) has been affected to a high extent by COVID-19, a new key topic has been launched: solutions for coping with the negative effects of the pandemic.

In the following, we present the collected GPs in connection to the key topics with their short description (a compulsory content provided by partners). After representing the GPs, we will evaluate 2 GPs (1: The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg (since 1740) and St. George's Day celebrations and 2: The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana) in detail according to the seven principles of authenticity by Yeoman et al. [2007].

From the four key topics, there are two specific ones where authenticity is the source for cultural heritage valorisation, namely: Public-private cooperation in the cultural product, service and destination development and Vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms. The first key topic concerns how authenticity could be assessed, while the fourth emphasizes how authenticity could be valorised in rapidly changing circumstances. Accordingly, the GPs discussed later belong to the second and third key themes.

G. RESULTS

In this part, we would like to introduce the Good Practices which have been collected around the various topics of the project. In the case of the first key topic, five GPs have been identified (Table 1). They are innovative practices, research activities that highlight different data gathering methods for evaluations of local authentic tourism potentials including storytelling, participative planning, survey and art projects.

Table 1: New Evaluation Methods of Local Authentic Tourism Potentials

Name of the GP	Partner	Short description
Talking Houses project ²	iASK	Cultural heritage management and placemaking by the storytelling of Talking Houses in Kőszeg town.
Participatory approach Spoorzone	Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch	The involvement of the public in the planning and decision-making process (participatory governance) with emphasis on local cultural heritage as a result.
Tourism Analysis & Promotional Plan 2019	Waterford City and County Council	The development of a promotional plan and the analysis of the tourism industry in Waterford to ensure the continued development and marketing of new and existing assets not only as individual attractions but also as a region.
Opportunity Study Approach – Communities of Place		Research Opportunity Study which identifies key opportunities for locations with a shared sense of identity/place.
Murals for Communities – Creative Europe project		Murals for Communities explored, captured and formalised the potentials of mural arts as a tool for community engagement in three European cities: Waterford (Ireland), Kaunas (Lithuania), Heerlen (Netherlands).

Source: own editing based on partners' GPs in the Local Flavours Project [2021]

In the case of the second key topic, fifteen GPs have been identified (Table 2). They are innovative practices where different organisations (NGOs, businesses, municipalities) work together often with volunteers to enhance the cultural heritage-based authentic experiences.

² A book, called 'Stories of Kőszeg' has been already published (Mátay eds. 2019). The publishing of the stories is ongoing, the second book of 'Stories of Kőszeg' will be published in the near future.

Table 2: Public-private Cooperation in Cultural Product, Service and Destination Development

Name of the GP	Partner	Short description
The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg (since 1740) and St. George's Day celebrations	iASK	In Kőszeg, since 1740, samples of grapevine shoots are annually harvested on St. George's Day and then are pictorially reproduced in the 'Book of Vinesprouts'.
Fair of Saint Ursula's Days for traditional cultural handcraft in Kőszeg		The Fair of Saint Ursula's Day ('Flavours of the Nature Park') for traditional cultural handcraft in Kőszeg is organized yearly in October since 2002.
Day by day summer programme in Kőszeg and its neighbourhood		A visitor experience offers to acknowledge the various cultural, natural heritage in Kőszeg and its surrounding with the collaboration of local businesses.
"The way I see Kőszeg" – collaborative creative arts project for the students of the secondary school		"The way I see Kőszeg" art project shows an effective collaboration amongst the youth of Kőszeg, iASK and local entrepreneurs for local product development.
Kőszegi Beer – "A Legend Returns"		The Kőszegi Beer project shows an effective way of how to utilize a tradition or a once alive brand and turn it into a selling value.

<p>Chernel Fizz Water – product development based on the memory of Hungarian ornithologist István Chernel</p>		<p>The Chernel Fizz Water local product commemorates István Chernel, a famous ornithologist born in Kőszeg who published the first scientific ornithological work as a Hungarian author.</p>
<p>Events related to the protection of traditional folk costumes</p>	<p>Harghita County Council</p>	<p>All three events (The Day of the Thousand Szekler Girls, “Csúrdögölő” Children Folk Festival and The Day of Szekler Folk Costume) encourage the protection and preservation of traditions, raise the awareness of young people to pay attention to their traditional values.</p>
<p>The special grant program for popular ports and traditional costumes for 2020 in Harghita County</p>		<p>The program is financing the projects related to the making/purchase of popular port elements and traditional costumes and uniforms, submitted by NGOs.</p>
<p>Folk costume collection, entitled – "My great-great-grandmother woven, my great-grandmother sewed and embroidered"</p>		<p>The book promotes the protection of traditions, focuses on the preservation of traditions, and raises awareness of traditional values and folk costumes.</p>
<p>Monastery hotel The Sweet Mother</p>	<p>Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch</p>	<p>Adaptive reuse of a former monastery for hospitality purposes. It serves as a hotel and a neighbourhood meeting centre with an educational and social mission.</p>

Culture Finland: National cultural tourism coordination programme Finland	Savolinn Development Services Ltd.	Culture Finland is a national level cultural tourism promotion and coordination programme crossing the gaps between tourism operators and cultural producers.
Prosecco Hills - Network of Enterprises for Touristic Product Club (MVV, Italy)	Municipality of Vittorio Veneto	ProseccoHills is a network of 23 tourism-oriented enterprises linked to a specific touristic product club (wine tourism in the UNESCO Site of Prosecco Hills).
Urban Regeneration of a dismissed military barrack		The regeneration of the Caserma Piave, a former military barrack, in the Municipality of Belluno, is one of the first and most representative cases in Italy.
Urban Regeneration in Ferrara		The former firefighters' buildings (MOF Meis) and surrounding area in Ferrara (IT) have been regenerated through a series of co-design, co-planning, and co-management processes, and public-private partnership establishment.
Society "Friend's club of Banitis" organisation	Riga Planning Region	The association "Friend's club of Banitis" by involving the community of local and railway enthusiasts, aims the preservation of narrow-gauge railway heritage.

Source: own editing based on partners' GPs in the Local Flavours Project [2021]

In the case of the third key topic, twelve GPs have been identified (Table 3). They are diverse in terms of aims and partnerships, proving that networks are really important in placemaking activities.

Table 3: Vertical and Horizontal Cooperation Mechanisms

Name of the GP	Partner	Short description
Regional extension of city Veszprém's successful proposal for European Capital of Culture 2023	iASK	The "KRAFT Creative Cities, Sustainable region" methodology was integrated into the ECoC 2023 proposal of Veszprém and resulted in success against the favourite cities.
Science in the pub		Science in the Pub is a series of lectures in restaurants to bring science closer to everyday people about popular topics (for e.g. cultural heritage, religion).
Saimaa Destination Co-operation	Savolinn Development Services Ltd.	Five cities in two regions of the Lake Saimaa area have agreed to pool resources for tourism promotion and develop a joint tourism brand.
Museum Card		The Museum Card opens unlimited entry to participating museums for an annual payment (G9 €, 2020). The card has significantly increased visits to museums.
The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana	Municipality of Vittorio Veneto	The Area Brand of Educational Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana, a tourism promotion strategy based on networking and with a learning by visiting approach.
Slow tourism and slow food: the case of Bra		Bra town is the centre of Langhe province and the former founder of two international networks, i. e. slow food (hub) and cittaslow.
Rural Co-living		Co-living houses: a new way of living and touring. The current new practices of living in the cities and rural areas for short- (2 weeks), mid- (2 months), and long- (2 years) term periods.
Matera – the compound effect of EU-funded projects, local grassroots initiatives, and European Cultural Capital Award		Matera city, jointly with Region Basilicata, by building on the strong heritage and UNESCO awards, set up an effective network of organizations (public and private) that have collaborated towards the achievement of several goals for cultural local

Name of the GP	Partner	Short description
		business and regional tourism business.
A small city in the inner Basque country awarded with several EU eco-labels		Vitoria-Gasteiz is currently on the international map of tourism thanks to a series of EU eco-sustainable-green awards. It offers a multitude of services, i.e. history, gastronomy, nature, culture, and it is a strategic place where tourists spend holidays in the urban and rural parts.
Cultural Route of Becharac and Ganga	Institute for Tourism	The project focused on the promotion of cultural tourism and sustainable cultural development by discovering the rich and diverse cultural heritage and history.
Improving continental tourism - the City of Ludbreg		Improvement of continental tourism through tourism valorization of the historical and cultural heritage of the City of Ludbreg.
Pop-up tourism and pampering days for tourism agencies and guides organized by Mrs. Wolf husky park	Riga Planning Region	Mrs. Wolf in cooperation with self- and neighbour county tourism companies, organizing events, of which the main audience was incoming tourism agencies and guides.

Source: own editing based on partners' GPs in the Local Flavours Project [2021]

During Summer 2020 the Joint Secretariat of INTERREG Europe Program encouraged partners to share COVID-proof GPs (Table 4). The GPs prove the importance of digitalization and the role of small-scale events for adaptation.

Table 4: Adaptation to the Effects of COVID-19

Name of the GP	Partner	Short description
The Den Bosch Summer Programme	Municipality of 's-Hertogenbosch	A close collaboration between the municipality and entrepreneurs to enable residents to meet respecting the Covid-19 rules and enjoy culinary and cultural events.
The Online Monuments Day		The Online Monuments Day is an initiative of 3 municipalities to offer online visits of 12 monuments that are visualised innovatively and spectacularly.

Source: own editing based on partners' GPs in the Local Flavours Project [2021]

From the GPs described we evaluate two in detail afterwards.

Case 1: The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg (since 1740) and St. George's Day celebrations

Kőszeg with its approximately 11,500 inhabitants and ageing society faces challenges of population retention and attractiveness as a typical rural small- and medium-sized town. Its traditional region was torn by the iron curtain just at the edge of the town for decades that have affected the integrity of the community. Since 1740, samples of grapevine shoots are annually harvested on St. George's Day (24th April) and recorded with professional accuracy, reproduced pictorially in the Book of Vinesprouts, which custom is worldwide unique. This remarkable book kept in Kőszeg Town Museum preserved all records and water-coloured painted pictures providing the scientific basis for the annual Grape and Climate conference.

The tradition and celebrations on St. George's Day is one of the most dominant programmes of the town where the sense of belonging of inhabitants could be improved. As a unique tradition, inhabitants as beneficiaries of the practice could feel proud of this custom, which forms their regional identity. The celebration covers a wide variety of programmes from street dance shows, orchestra music to scientific lectures and the county-level wine competition. All non-governmental institutions which preserve the wine tradition in the area are represented as main stakeholders.

The St. George's Day celebrations programme (approx. from the '70s) attracts numerous inhabitants and visitors year by year. Besides this, the greatest evidence of success is keeping this tradition alive which positions the town on the global map.

Table 5: Evaluation of the GP according to the Seven Principles of Authenticity

Ethical	The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg (since 1740) represents a custom, tradition which meets the requirement of ethics. This celebration calls attention to the relationship of the society with the natural environment, ecosystem services and the preservation of natural capital, thus connected to sustainability.
Natural	This experience is fully associated with Kőszeg and represents the wine-maker character of the town, which belongs to the Sopron Wine Region.
Honest	The experience is absolutely honest. The visitors can see how this custom is maintained over centuries, could also see The Book of Vinesprouts of Kőszeg.
Simple	The experience is organized simply. Samples of grapevine shoots are annually harvested on St. George's Day, 24 th April, and then are pictorially reproduced in the so-called Book of Vinesprouts – visitors and locals could follow the procedure then enjoy the celebration.
Beautiful	The custom is considered worldwide unique – this tradition somehow contributes to the historic character of the town and belongs there.
Rooted	The experience has a sense of past rooted in the destination or community – with the wine heritage of the town.
Human	It is also connected to the community – to the winemakers, producers and customers who are open to celebrate.

Source: own compilation [2021]

Case 2: The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana

The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana, a tourism promotion strategy based on a “learning by visiting” approach, has been created by the Municipalities of Cappella Maggiore, Cordignano, Fregona, Revine Lago and Sarmede located in the Northern part of Treviso Province. The territory is situated between Venice and the Dolomites thus suffer from the “crossway” role due to its location

(see also: <https://www.interregeurope.eu/policylearning/good-practices/item/4590/the-area-brand-of-the-thematic-didactic-parks-of-the-alta-marca-trevigiana/>).

The territory, except for the recently nominated UNESCO Heritage Site of Prosecco Hills, finds it difficult to attract tourists and visitors for a longer period. Challenging that, in 2016, a network of 3 municipalities around Vittorio Veneto (Sarmede, Fregona and Revine-Lago) launched a “protocol of cooperation” in the field of tourism promotion based on the valorisation of 3 specific sites:

- Fregona, The Caglieron Caves: <https://www.prolocofregona.it/grotte-del-caglieron/>
- Sarmede, the Town of Tales: <http://fondazionezavrel.it/> and <https://www.sarmede.org/>
- Revine Lago, The Archeological Park of Livelet: <https://www.parcolivelet.it/>

Two years later, in 2018, this protocol has been turned into an “Area Brand Plan” with a specific roadmap for the sustainable development of the territory based on a tourism approach focused on “children and families” and “educational tourism”. This transformation included also 2 additional municipalities:

- Cappella Maggiore (the Land of Olive Oil)
- Cordignano (with the Carbonai Park)

The “Learning by visiting” approach aims to turn simple leisure activities into experience, by adding an aware perception of the value of territories, both in terms of folks and history and in terms of environment and culture.

Table 6: Evaluation of the GP according to the Seven Principles of Authenticity

Ethical	The first phase of the development aimed to increase the communication and promotion of the territories involved (joint branding, website and media communication), while the current one (“networking and empowerment of local tourism-related SMEs”) enhances the available services for visitors and tourists (didactic, as well as accommodation and logistic facilities). The initiative is based on cooperation, builds community, pays attention to sustainability and enhances the experience economy.
Natural	The experience has a really strong environment-friendly character, the approach calls attention to the value of territories both in terms of folks and history and in terms of environment and culture.
Honest	The “Learning by visiting” approach incorporates a high level of honesty and trust and pays attention to future generations and integrity.
Simple	The experience is well-communicated, easy to understand. Each educational park has a strong character and it is presented on the website: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Livelet Educational Archaeological Park (The open-air museum between lakes and stilts) • Caglieron Caves Park (At the foot of the Cansiglio Forest it offers a fascinating geological experience) • The Park of Fantasy (Fairy tale and street theatre in a magical place) • The Parco dei Carbonai (The use of the Cansiglio Forest by the Serenissima Republic) • The Olive Park (To guide adults and children to the knowledge of extra virgin olive oil)
Beautiful	The Area Brand of the Thematic Didactic Parks of the Alta Marca Trevigiana meets each requirement of this dimension: the brand enhances the sense of place, the experience is unique.
Rooted	The initiative has relations with the past in terms of communities, values, habits, lifestyles or more generally heritage. It represents an example of a heritage-based economy.
Human	Calling attention to the sustainable use of natural and cultural heritage, the GP puts people in first place.

Source: own compilation [2021]

CONCLUSION

In this research, we provided an overview of the connections of authentic, experience-based, heritage and sustainable tourism. A successful international project (Local Flavours, LF) was introduced as a multi-country case study in the specific field. Territorial development projects have distinct characteristics to call attention to place-specific values and resources. Authenticity could be a key driver for long-term viability and success if the special character, the sense of place, could offer such experiences which are attractive for visitors interested in cultural, historic and environmental aspects. Our experience underlines the global tendency of the Experience Economy, as visitors are revaluing experiences that help them to develop their creative potential through active participation in different learning experiences, and this could be a take-off point for small and medium-size towns and regions to valorise their cultural heritage. Self-development through authenticity may gain further importance in the future parallel to the growing importance of other initiatives, for example, slow tourism. Challenging that, LF partners agree that to empower and support their territories, it is necessary to develop and implement strategies and management tools tailor-made to local circumstances and ambitions. The three key topics of the project help partners to assess, manage and improve authentic tourism sites through new evaluation methods. In their management, both public-private cooperation and vertical and horizontal cooperation mechanisms play an important role, since these actions require a certain level of community commitment. The two detailed good practices from the above-mentioned topics underline the importance of community-building, experiences and sustainability. Our analysis proved that the seven principles of authenticity by Yeoman et al. [2007] is a good tool both for the development and for the evaluation of authenticity-based initiatives; it underlines the most important success factors of ecologically responsible cultural development. We also discovered that global tendencies and challenges of our everyday lives could also be addressed by touristic products and services, for example in case of co-living and co-working spaces, slow food and slow tourism movements, shared community-focused infrastructures, digitalized and COVID-proof solutions, and a strong focus on unique “soft” factors of a locality as authentic values, for example, folk songs, traditional drawings and costumes, or referential heritage with contemporary design.

With the exploitation and advancement of an innovative, regional development concept (KRAFT Programme “Creative City – Sustainable Region”) that integrates soft and hard factors and utilizes synergies of interdependencies among rural and urban development, the developed offer of specific experiences rooted in local history and the preserved cultural legacy of communities could add to a deeper touristic experience. Based on the results of the next phase of the Local

Flavours project and the developed Action Plans, our further aim is to contribute to policy change and improve local/regional institutional, administrative and financing frameworks.

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