Annex 4. Extending the Regional Inter-institutional Network (RIN) to sub-regional entities

Background

The document refers to a Regional Tourism Inter-Institutional Network but the design suggested by INRouTe could be further adapted to other territorial levels. The local level (any municipality where tourism is, or potentially can be, relevant) would be the first priority but also other levels should be envisaged such as:

- Multi-regional: either intra-national (two or more contiguous regions of a country) or supra-national (two or more contiguous regions of different countries)
- Other sub-national territorial entities: such entities could combine different type of units (of an institutional or analytical nature) referring to any of the previous types, (such as such as aggregations of municipalities, specific areas intra or inter contiguous municipalities, or other possible territories) where tourism is, or potentially can be, relevant may be considered for interested stakeholders -mainly investors- and analytical purposes).

It should be also recalled that the design of a Regional Tourism Information System (R-TIS) is the first priority and that its implementation is the strategic objective for INRouTe over the period 2012/2015. Having said that, INRouTe has warned in the document jointly issued by INRouTe and UNWTO "**Towards a Set of UNWTO Guidelines" (December 2012)** that even for those municipalities where tourism is or potentially could be relevant it may not be evident that a Local Tourism Information System is necessary nor that it could be feasible.

INRouTe considers that for these municipalities, the main issues to focus on could be:

- Identify the set of statistical information available and appropriate for the measurement and analysis of tourism (principally concerning accommodation services for visitors, numbers of establishments and the corresponding associated employment); most of such information will refer to a set of national sources; most of them –if not all- will be those proposed by INRouTe in order to articulate a set of national / regional statistical data and indicators (Border survey, Domestic tourism household survey, Accommodation survey, Statistical business register, Structural business survey and Population census)
- Explore the existence of a broader set of administrative information generated basically by the municipality itself that could complement the statistical set of basic data and indicators. Additional non official and non statistical information could be sought in order to identify those characteristics of tourism activity considered to be of special interest;
- Checking if such municipalities have or not the necessary resources to assess such data with the appropriate statistical insight (see chapter 6) and to properly use such administrative records or other information.
- Search for those topics that are especially relevant for the design of policies and which should be properly measured and analyzed, such as vacation homes, same-day visitors, impact of special events, identifying the main subsets of activities undertaken by visitors, etc.;

It could be the case that after such exploratory exercise the municipality would find more appropriate to address statistical and non-statistical efforts to the development of a Local Tourism Data Warehouse instead of the setting up of a proper Local Tourism Information System which is a more challenging issue assuming that such a system should be the result of the adaptation of the R-TIS explained in Chapter 2 of this document.

It might neither be obvious that the strategic objective at the local level should be the setting up of a local tourism data warehouse. It might be the case that for most of those municipalities, the lack of technical expertise would justify that other objectives such as to foster the proper management of such tourism destinations and its contribution to sustainable development would be more pertinent. In any case, if a Regional Tourism Inter-Institutional Network in the region of reference of such tourism destination existed, its experience could be helpful in providing guidance to set up the appropriate programmes and activities for the Local Tourism Destination Inter-Institutional Network.

About the opportunity to implement Local Tourism Destination Observatories

Such recommendations are rooted in the professional knowledge and experience of a good number of INRouTe members but nevertheless, the appropriateness or not to implment Local Tourism Destination Observatories should be related to the present relevance of tourism in such destination and in the availability of the necessary human resources and professional skill to support such initiative

The term relevance implies both the territorial scale of the municipality and the number of establishments in the tourism industries in such territory of reference –and, consequently, also the number of associated jobs- and the value added generated by them, in relation to the local economy. Such industries include accommodation for visitors as well as others that provide other goods and services consumed by visitors.

It should be highlighted that the concept of relevance might be redundant in mature destinations. It is defined from the supply side in order to provide a more stable criteria than a demand side approach one –like number of tourist arrivals or overnight- because demand side factors are more volatile and would require more frequent information updates of data sources.

The concept of relevance is related with that of critical mass of existing establishments providing services (to visitors in a given destination); that´s to say that it focuses strictly on the supply side, just the opposite as in IRTS 2008 where the criteria to define tourism characteristic products referred either to a demand criteria –tourism expenditure on the product should represent a significant share of total tourism expenditure- or a supply condition –tourism expenditure on the product should represent a significant share of the supply of the product in the economy (this criterion implies that the supply of a tourism characteristic product would cease to exist n meaningful quantity in the absence of visitors).

Consequently, the very concept of tourism sector is central to define if a municipality qualifies or not as a local tourism destination. That’s to say that if in addition to such qualification the municipality has the necessary human resources and professional skill to support the setting up of a Local Tourism Destination I, such initiative might have a different strategic objective than the proposed for a Regional Tourism Inter-Institutional Network or could have even more than one.

Defining programmes and activities for a Local Tourism Inter-Institutional Network

Of the four programmes proposed for the setting up of a Regional Tourism Inter-Institutional Network identified in chapter 3, the one related with *training* would be in most cases, inadequate due to the difficulty to manage the appropriate resources (especially human resources). Instead, a programme focused on the creation and follow up of tourism product/s and their effectiveness to attract visitors would be, for instance, more targeted to the strategic objective.

Nevertheless, the other three programmes about *lobbyng tourism, identification of available and necessary information* and *fostering the cooperation of key tourism stakeholders and relevant practitioners are* very adequate also at the local level but should be properly adapted.

INRouTe has identified some case studies that might be of interest for different type of regions:
- Regarding the *lobbying tourism* programme, it should be feasible to build on existing regional Tourism Observatories database. Such possibility would also allow setting up monitoring systems for tourism destination managers. Please read BOX 1 below.
- Regarding the *information* programme, measurement and research on tourism behaviour and associated topics (such as itineraries, attractions, tourism products and type of tourism) would seem of special importance to tourism destination managers
- In this regard, the guidelines provided to the Baltic Sea Region countries by the EU/ Baltic Tourism Heritage Information System (BASTIS) project, could be used as a useful material for creating attractions. Please read below BOX 2
- Regarding the *cooperation* programme, the initiative launched by the Tuscanynetwork for the setting up of a significant number of Local Tourism Destination Observatories (around 50) deserves special attention. Conceived as a network of relevant stakeholders, each RIN is designed as an operational tool serving the municipality by focusing in the evaluation and orientation of the local tourism system. For each of them, eight states are suggested for its setting up, please read BOX 3 which presents "Progetto Osservatorio Turistico di Destinazione /del Comune di Greve in Chianti"
- Such initiative illustrates the ambition of the NECStour project in the European Union.

BOX 1: Towards a monitoring system for local destinations – the Italian experience
By M. Manente, CISET, 2008
So that statistics collected by the Regional Tourism Observatory are not end in themselves but they can be a support for policy makers and destination managers, it seems relevant to stimulate the debate towards the opportunity to develop monitoring systems for local destinations. This link proposes the Italian experience, starting from the socio-economic model developed in 2006 to identify local tourist destinations as defined by the Italian law, and presented at the 8th International Forum on Tourism Statistics in Cáceres .
The resulting tool which is summarised below, represents an evolution towards an effective monitoring system to be used both from a diagnostic point of view, i.e. giving a photograph of the "here and now" of the destination, and as a support for tourism planning and management.
The objectives of the evolved monitoring system are the following:
– to evaluate over time the phases of development of a local tourist destination;
– to make comparisons with other destinations;
– to be a support for defining strategies and planning.

About 90 indicators, standardized according to a benchmark area, have been identified and integrated into the model. The benchmark area can then be identified by decision makers according to individual contexts, needs and points of reference (a region, a competitive destination, a best practice, etc.).
The set of indicators is ideal, as it is ample enough to allow the model maximum flexibility and adaptability with regards to the diverse needs of different destinations. In fact, the intention is to make available the most complete set of indicators possible for the destination, from which it can then draw its own set of indicators to meet its needs, according to its individual characteristics, experience, objectives and available data. Furthermore, in some cases, alternative calculations for certain indices are suggested.
An application of the use of a selection of a set of indicators of the proposed monitoring tool was carried out during technical assistance given to Local Tourism Systems of the region of Sardinia. During this time the model was developed and improved upon.
90 indicators can be grouped by subject, emphasizing their essential characteristics.
– Set A – Capacity of attraction: a series of indicators with the aim of evaluating the variety and number of resources and how they have been exploited.
– Set T - Tourism sector importance: gathers together all the indices that describe the essential characteristics of tourism supply and demand, for example impact of supply, tourist pressure, market diversification, average spend per capita , etc..
– Set S – System: integration of economic system indicators (number of businesses , value , relations between the different business sectors, etc.) and traditional tourism indices; this helps to evaluate the characteristics of the economic system in general, the connections between private businesses and public institutions, as the performance of the economic system, for better or for worse, will create (or not, as in the latter case), competitive advantage; within this set there is also a specific subset (St) that evaluates the characteristics and level of development of the tourism system (economic role of the tourism sector, readiness or openness of tourism enterprises to collaborate and form partnerships ,

etc.).
- Set P – Planning: planning indices, that aim at testing the ability of the system to develop projects and to attract funding, as, for example, project-making in the tourism context .
- Set O – Tourism superstructures / infrastructures: this set gathers together two subsets of indices (9 indicators for each set) and evaluates the use and suitability of infrastructures (and superstructures) (congress centres , sports centres , restaurants , etc.).
- Set E – Environment: gathers together those indicators which can evaluate the state of environmental preservation, the availability of dwindling resources , other critiques relative to carrying capacity and the possible fragile aspects of the destination which must be taken into account when planning for tourism development.
- Set F - Quality of life: the aim of this set is to demonstrate the level of use of essential services (e.g. hospitals) and the existence, if any, of anti-social risks (e.g. high level of crime) that may need to be taken into account when defining objectives and strategies for tourism.
- Set D - Performance: a set of indicators that evaluate the dynamics of supply and demand (room occupancy, variations in the number of tourist arrivals and nights , accommodation rates , etc.).
- Set M - Market: a series of indices that take evaluation beyond the borders of the destination, estimating the overall trends and margins generated by each typology of product/segment, the physical and economic volume of certain segments , etc.

This set of indicators must allow, on one hand, simultaneous evaluation of many different aspects, and on the other hand, the selection of only those indicators per each subject (capacity to attract, tourism component, etc.) that will have real significance for that particular type of strategic decision-making. Irrelevant indicators only risk creating confusion.

In order to respond to the needs of decision-makers therefore, the monitoring model presented here, regroups the indicators belonging to the sets described above (capacity to attract, the strength of tourism, planning, systems etc.) in different ways, integrating them in such a way that decision-makers are helped to evaluate, in relation to objectives and strategies:
- the strengths and weaknesses of the destination;
- opportunities and threats posed by the environment;
- the challenges posed by the competition;
- the relationship between destination and benchmark area;
- the possible gaps to be filled and how and where to invest in order to achieve predetermined objectives.

The monitoring model is then designed to prompt planners and policy-makers to take into account a series of variables in an organized way, in order to avoid the distorted effects of evaluations as a result of having to evaluate too many aspects simultaneously. The system seeks to prevent errors, or at least, it allows decisions to be made in an informed way and not made on the basis of sensations and trends dictated by other destinations.

The Italian experience can as a consequence be seen as an attempt to coordinate, organize and integrate all statistics that a Regional Observatory can collect, in order to obtain a structured and comprehensive vision of tourism in the area, to supports policy- and decision-makers.

FURTHER LINKS

http://virgo.unive.it/ciset/website/

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BOX 2: Booklet for creating tourism attractions – Tools from the AGORA 2.0 workshops (provided by www.bastis-tourism.info)

By Copenhagen Business School and Lise Lyck, 2012

In order to develop attractions to promote tourism and use of local nature and culture some instruments can be useful to apply to achieve a successful development, but how to do it in practice is often the question. What is presented is a design for development. Realization requires involvement of decision makers and of economic resources outside the AGORA 2.0 project. In other words, what can be presented are design models for decision-making.

This booklet is meant to be help in this process. It is based on the principle "learning by doing" applied to product/service ideas and concepts which the participants in the workshops have elaborated themselves. These examples have already been discussed and presented for the 22 AGORA 2.0 partners based on a draft version. It is furthermore based on "Baltic transnational learning", as a result of all participants coming from different Baltic countries and with a variety of ideas rooted in Baltic landscapes and traditions. The knowledge sharing has taken place in workshops in the Baltic Sea Region countries.

The work packages in AGORA 2.0 include workshops and development of a network that can connect and link Baltic developers and AGORA 2.0 partners and thereby create a vivid Baltic cultural cooperation and development. The design of the development process has been the following:

1. The participants meet and exchange ideas and learn to know each other.
2. The participants meet and have a first introduction to development of ideas and instruments.
3. Presentation of SWOT-analyses.
4. Presentation of the Experience Wheel.
5. Presentation of PESTEL analyses.
6. Presentation of the 7Ps model.
7. Development of business plans.
8. Production of a questionnaire to analyse the demand side of attraction development.

Concerning the AGORA 2.0 project step 1 it began with the start of the project in February 2010. Step 2 was included in the Copenhagen meeting, June 2010. Step 3 took place in Copenhagen in September, including SWOT analyses and a first step to the Experience Wheel model developed by Lise Lyck. The steps 4-7 was scheduled at the project meetings and workshops in accordance with the AGORA lead partner. Step 8 has taken place at the meetings and workshops, but especially in a current dialogue between the single partner and Center for Tourism and Culture Management, Copenhagen Business School. This booklet relates to step 3 to 8.

SWOT-Analysis:

A SWOT-analysis is related to an evaluation of a production. This wider use of the model often results in a SWOT-analysis being a brainstorm instrument. S stands for strengths and related to what internal strengths a specific production of goods or investment possess. W stands for weaknesses, i.e. what internal weaknesses are parts of a specific production or investment. Both S and W are internal in origin. By this is meant that the corporation itself can influence the S and W by own decision-making and thereby impact the S and W as well as the result of the production or investment. The two tiles that are external and have influence on the production or investment are O, which refers to opportunities, and T, that refers to threat. The question that is sought to be answered through these external factors is how they have a positive or a negative impact on production or investment? As the final step of the analyses a conclusion of the SWOT model analysis must be made. It can be a guide for management of a production or for decision-making concerning the undertaking of an investment.

The Experience Wheel:

The development of attractions both in production and investment is today narrowly connected to creation of experiences. It is not only to create an attraction; it is to create an experience that is a decisive element in production and investment of the attractions. The Experience Wheel model is produced by Lise Lyck (Lyck 2008). In order to understand, the Experience Wheel acts as a communication tool to disseminate the experience concept and to develop and measure the experience value of product clustering, such a museum or a park. The Experience Wheel measures the relevant stakeholders' experience of the products that can be of both quantitative and qualitative nature. There are no limits to the use of the Experience Wheel. It is a universal instrument. However, it best fulfils its potential when quantifying subjective, qualitative experiences

PESTEL Analyses:

The purpose of the PESTEL model is to elucidate and analyse the external factors that have an influence on the organization. By applying the model the organization gets an overview of which external factors that facilitate or limit its operations. The letters represent the following factors: P (Political), E (Economic), S (Socio cultural), T (Technological), E (Environmental) and L (Legal).

The 7Ps:

Originally, the 4Ps (McCarthy 1960) were developed to outline the variables concerned with marketing of a product: Product, Price, Place and Promotion. These were called the Marketing Mix. They served as a framework of how to carry out decision making in marketing processes. However, with the steadily increasing focus on services it became clear that the 4Ps alone were not sufficient.

Among others, two distinct implications are evident in services: 1) Difficulty in determining quality before purchase and 2) production and consumption takes place simultaneously. These implications make the correlation between price, place and promotion more complex. To cater for this the extended marketing mix was developed, i.e. the 7Ps. It adds People, Physical evidence and Process to the framework (Lovelock & Wirtz, 2011).

Development of Business Plans:

The purpose of the business plan is to provide a blueprint of your company (in this case a tourist attraction). It serves as a guideline for employees to work towards the same goal and to elucidate all relevant aspects for potential investors/sponsors. It should contain the following elements: Executive Summary (key points of your business plan); Company Summary (What does your company/organization looks like?); Services (the products and/or services that you offer); Market Analysis Summary (Segments that you are going to target or are already targeting); Strategy and Implementation Summary (organizational strategy for marketing/sales activities, and product/service development); Management Summary (management and personnel structure of the company); Financial Plan (financial aspects of your business plan - How do you generate revenue?)

The demand side of managing an attraction:

Attractions are supposed to monitor and manage customer opinion and demand in an effort to keep customers happy. It is here argued that the purpose of a business, i.e. an attraction, is to create and maintain satisfied customers. After all, customers are attracted to an attraction and retained when their needs are met. Not only do they return to your attraction, but (maybe even more important) they also talk favourably to friends and relatives about your attraction, thereby recommending them to come to visit as well (Kotler et al., 2012). Thus, instead of considering what you as a manager see at an attraction or what you think creates profit, try the alternative management approach of putting the customer first.

One method is to use the AIDA model, in which A stands for awareness. The first step is to make the attraction visible for potential visitors. I stand for interest, and deals with how to create an interest for the attraction. D stands for desire, and looks into how the potential visitor should create a desire for visiting the attraction. The last A stands for action, meaning that the process should result in a visitor action, i.e. that the potential visitor becomes an active visitor at the attraction.

Unfortunately, there is often a discrepancy between what you think you offer and what the customer perceive/think of your attraction. Please keep this in mind when you are doing product developments at your attraction. Have a look at what the statistics from questionnaires filled out by visitors say or ask visitors at your attraction yourself – before you implement your ideas. Doing analysis of your customers is important because it gives each attraction a concrete picture of the visitors of that specific attraction. By doing this the managers and the staff is provided with knowledge that gives them the opportunity to either further develop this specific customer segment or to target other customer segments, which are not being targeted at the moment.

Therefore, for product development to be successful it is important to listen to your customers. Ultimately, they are the ones who visit, revisit and recommend your attraction to others.

Conclusion

As it is shown in this methodological chapter there is a number of different ways to gain different kinds of information. Each of these methods has different pros and cons and none is superior to the others. The method of collecting data through the use of questionnaires was selected due to the wish of being able to track developments over time and to have the opportunity of comparing the individual attractions with each other. Furthermore, from a resource perspective it would have been unrealistic to conduct enough interviews of a certain quality to get useful data, if not supplemented with local resources.

FURTHER LINKS

http://www.bastis-tourism.info/images/3/33/CBS_Publication1.pdf

Cases Studies from the Baltic Sea Region where this approach was taken can be found here:

http://www.bastis-tourism.info/images/6/65/CBS_Publication2.pdf

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BOX 3: THE TOURISM DESTINATION OBSERVATORY (TDO) PROJECT IN TUSCANY

Tuscany is a laboratory where, since 2010, innovative models for the sustainable management of tourist destinations are experimented, following the principles of the EC Communications COM(2007) 621 final and COM (2010) 352 final, and inspired by NECSTouR's strategies.

With this project Tuscany promotes the birth of a regional network of tourist destinations of excellence. The experimentation is done in the context of the action no. 11 of the European Commission's Communication COM 352(2010), which assigns to the NECSTouR Network an important role in the testing and research that aim to identify a model of indicators for the sustainable management of destinations, in order to develop a brand for the promotion of tourist destinations.

The project focuses specifically on two levels: regional and local (destination) level. This because the destinations (in this case, the municipalities) are the places were sustainability can be actually put in place. At the same time, the regional level is very important, for policy making, coordination and statistical purposes.

The 64 destinations involved in the TDO - Sustainable Tourism Observatories project are highly representatives, altogether they receive 60 % of total tourist flows in Tuscany (more than 25 million tourist arrivals per year) and they include all the major tourist destinations (Florence, Pisa, Siena etc.), and all the various typologies (sea resorts, art destinations, mountain resorts, spas, cultural itineraries etc.).

The goal of the project is to create an environment capable to give strength and effectiveness to local networks of players of the tourist sector, which are willing to commit to the following fundamental principles:

- social dialogue/promotion of participatory processes, specifically related to the issues of sustainable development of tourism;
- measurement of indicators related to the ten thematic areas that are considered strategic by NECSTouR, and monitoring of these thematic areas so to ensure the true effectiveness of sustainable tourism policies and the related strategic objectives.

The 10 NECSTouR thematic areas are:

- Impact of transport,
- Quality of life of residents,
- Quality of work,
- De-seasonalization
- Active protection of Cultural Heritage,
- Active protection of environmental heritage
- Active protection of distinctive identities of destinations
- Reduction and optimization of use of natural resources with particular reference to water
- Reduction and optimization of energy consumption,
- Reduction and management of waste.

Thus, Tuscany is a sort of European lab of NECSTouR: the initial selection of Local tourist destinations can relate with one another both at the regional and European level.

The Management Model at a glance

The sustainable management model consists of four areas:

- Social Dialogue
- Self-assessment
- Management (Competitiveness)
- Management (Sustainability)

The on-line platform highlights the progress of each municipality. To each area is assigned a weight (in percentage), which will contribute to the overall assessment. The assessment foresees four quality levels:

- Model is being activated / Model needs to be reorganized
- Model is activated and functional
- Model is activated, and has a good level of functionality
- Model is activated and has an excellent functionality

The main steps of the process are the following:

1) <u>Setting up of the committees and tools for social dialogue</u>

The model for social dialogue and participation foresees two committees, the destination's Steering Committee (including various types of stakeholders' representatives) and the Technical Committee (technical people appointed by the municipalities to collect and manage data referring to each theme).

The model identifies the procedures to ensure a productive discussion and an adequate collection of the opinions of the various representatives. The areas of dialogue revolve around (but are not limited to) the following issues:

- collection / analysis of knowledge
- planning of actions for the sustainable development of tourism
- monitoring of destination management indicators

2) <u>Self-assessment of the destination</u>

This is a very delicate phase. The self-assessment, carried out by the Steering Committee, is done in a structured and consistent way, and its various stages are not stand-alone activities, but functional to the subsequent design and implementation of actions.

a) Destination profile indicators

The data relating to the indicators of the Destination Profile (IP) are collected. These are seven general indicators that are used to describe the destination in a way that can allow its comparison with the other European tourist destinations. These indicators, that represent the basic profile of each destination, should be updated annually:

1. n. of arrivals per year
2. n. of tourist stays per year
3. n. of accommodation facilities
4. n. of beds
5. n. of employees directly employed in the tourist accommodation facilities
6. n. of people employed in tourism-related activities
7. type of tourist destination (art/cultural, sea resort, lake, business/conference, thermal, mountain, religious, countryside, sports)

These indicators gain more significance if they are related to the resident population in the destination and square kilometres of the destination

b) The self-assessment questions

The Model provides a list of about 50 questions to which each destination must give a plausible answer. This set of questions is generated by the analysis of the ten NECSTouR thematic areas, taking into account the tourist demand (both internal and external) and supply of services, in all their possible forms.

The goal is to determine whether, with respect to tourism, the programming tools / planning regulations are adequate, current, and complete. First of all, the analysis impacts on the planning instruments and can enlighten the need to reorganize the overall policies. This analysis, in essence, aims to figure out how we would like the tourist destination to be in five, ten, twenty years. This is a fundamental exercise that helps to identify new choices to make, programs and projects to carry out, support requests to propose, parties to involve.

Each answer contributes to the identification of appropriate indicators of competitiveness and sustainability.

3) <u>Measurement of the level of competitiveness and sustainability of the destination</u>

In order to operate in the framework of a development program, the level of competitiveness and of sustainability of the destination is measured with respect to *the indicators of output and outcome*, which are closely related to and consequential with the results of the self-assessment phase, while taking still as a reference the ten thematic areas.

To make an example, with reference to mobility, efficiency indicators will tell us if the planned park-and-ride and shuttle service to reach the tourist areas is a goal achieved, measuring the number of infrastructures built and the number of tourists carried; effectiveness indicators will tell us whether the parameters of environmental pollution are reduced during periods of increased tourist flow.

It is then necessary to fix the target values desired for each indicators and monitor the path towards these values

The steps for the establishment of the regional network of destinations of excellence

After two years of experimentation, in 2012 the Government of Tuscany (with the Decree No.667/2012) has started a process for the setting up of **an interactive on-line platform** specifically dedicated to the model of sustainable management of the destinations.

In order to be certified by the Tuscany Region as members of the regional network, the municipalities have to carry out a process composed of the following 8 steps:

Step 1: Activation of the Partnership

This phase is activated by means of the signature of a Memorandum of Understanding with stakeholders representing the economic and social components, and with the signing of a Memorandum of cooperation with at least one university operating in the region

Step 2: Activation of the Steering Committee

This phase is activated by means of the setting up of a Steering Committee composed of experts representing the partnership, and the definition of the rules for its operation;

Step 3: 'Self assessment'

The Municipality will define a document, which, starting from the analysis of phenomena related to tourism in the destination, identifies the strengths and weaknesses of the local system in relation to the development potential and limitations arising from the objective of harmonizing the economic aspects with environmental and social issues. The analysis relates specifically to 10 thematic areas identified by the NECSTouR model and takes into account, for each issue, the implications related to the destination's competitiveness and sustainability principles. This phase is triggered by means of the formal evaluation of the document by the signatories of the Partnership Protocol (Phase 1) and the technical and administrative bodies of the municipal administration.

Step 4: Identification of the Person in charge of the Tourist Destination Observatory

The Municipal Administration checks the characteristics and the organization of the municipal offices that carry out activities related to the phenomena analysed, with particular reference to the forms of integration and communication flows among the various offices. This phase is activated with the identification of the Person in charge of the TDO and the production of the Document on cooperation procedures with the other

municipal offices;
Step 5: Setting up of the permanent Technical Structure (S T) and work plan
This phase includes the identification of the technical/operational people, appointed to be competent for each one of the 10 NECSTouR thematic areas, and the definition of the TDO Work Plan.
Step 6: Definition of competitiveness and sustainability indicators
This phase is activated with the approval by the provincial and regional offices, of a document defining: the Profile indicators and the Competitiveness and Sustainability indicators, the data collection procedures and the resulting behavioural patterns in relation to the outcomes of the surveys. The document is approved by the municipality and then sent to the provincial and regional offices.
Step 7 Defining modalities of data collection and data flow among municipalities, provincial and regional offices
This phase is activated with the approval, by the competent offices of the provinces and of the region of a specific document, prepared by the Municipality, which defines the characteristics of the information, the methods and tools that the municipality can put in place and the modalities of data collection. For the preparation of the document a group effort is essential, where the relevant provincial and regional offices are involved from a very early stage of the project.
Step 8: Approval of the TDO process and participation to the regional TDO network
The person in charge of the OTD forwards to the offices of the Province and the Region a specific request for approval of the TDO management procedure (Step 1-7), complete of all the necessary technical documentation. This phase is activated after the approval by the relevant Regional Offices. The participation to the regional TDOD network is finalized when the information relating to the TDO management process and the data relating to its profile, competitiveness and sustainability indicators are uploaded in the regional platform for the data networking, interoperability and sharing.