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TOURISMO Final Conference

Data-driven solutions for smart crowd flow management.

Visitor counting with sensors and AI at tourism hotspots.

9th of June 2026

Valletta, Malta

Strengthening Sustainable Tourism Governance through Data-Driven
Solutions and Mediterranean Cooperation
Flora Leroy, CPMR-Intermediterranean Commission

The Sustainable Tourism Mission

4 Specific Objectives are common to the **4 Thematic Missions** of the Interreg Euro-MED programme. The Sustainable Tourism Mission includes all of them, being a **transversal topic**.

1.1 Consolidating a competitive innovation ecosystem 

2.4 Promoting climate change adaptation and risks prevention 


2.6 Supporting circular economy 


2.7 Enhancing Nature & Biodiversity 



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Structure and objectives of the Mission



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Mission's Activities and Resources: C4T MED Clusters

THE MED CLUSTERS & WORKING GROUPS



Strategic networks to promote the dissemination of the results of the Community of projects and the participation of actors, beyond the Sustainable Tourism Community. Regular meetings (online and in presence), during the year.



**Orientation
Papers**



Brochure



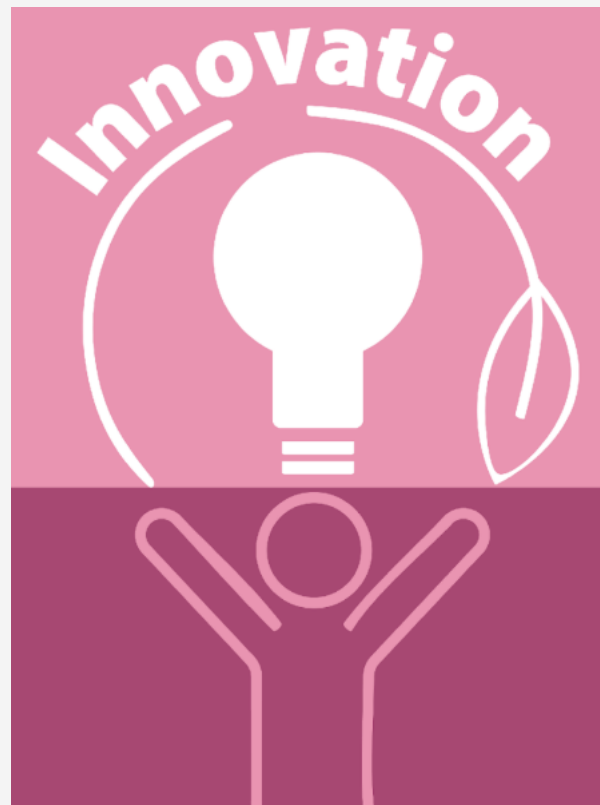
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MED Clusters Innovation objectives



This Cluster will cover different topics related to the innovation and use of advanced technologies in the tourism sector, reinforcing tourism as a growth sector supporting environmental and climate change initiatives, improving innovation capacities, competitiveness internationalization and promoting new business models, among others.



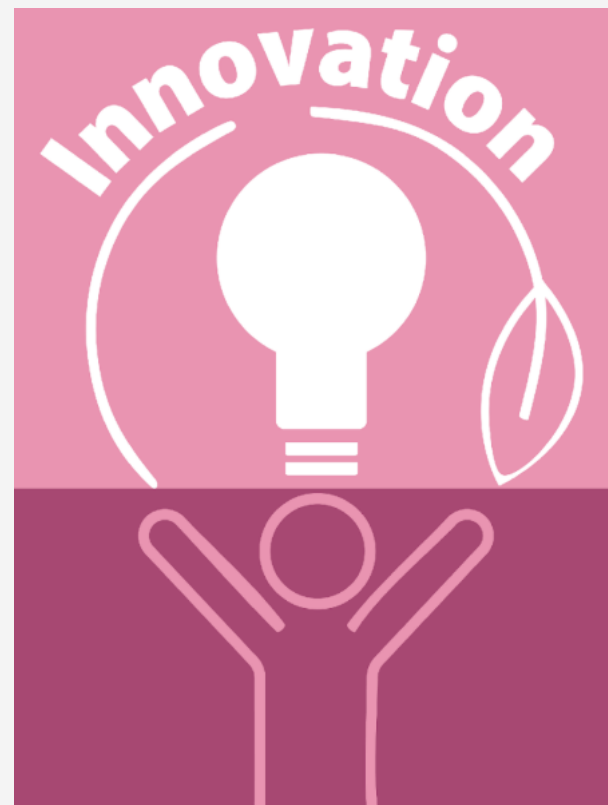
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MED Clusters Innovation members



Thematic Project LIBECCIO
Thematic Project MedDiet
Go
Thematic Project SMITour
Thematic Project
TOURISMO
Dialogue4Tourism Partner
ASCAME (ES)
CETT - University of
Barcelona (ES)
Institute for Tourism (HR)
University of Ljubljana (SI)

Foundation for Research and
Innovation (IT)
University of Palermo (IT)
Corsican Tourism Agency
(FR)
Balearic Islands Agency for
Tourism Strategy - AETIB (ES)
Observatory on Tourism in
the European Islands - OTIE
(IT)
Interreg Euro-MED
Innovative Sustainable
Economy Mission

Coordinated by
Adriatic Ionian Euroregion (AIE) and the
Conference of Peripheral Maritime Regions (CPMR)



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What have been done so far

1

1st Annual Meeting, April 2024 (Roma)
→ **Orientation Paper:** gathering state of the art, projects approach, main challenges & topics for discussions, and key documents

2

1st Online meeting, 15 November 2024
→ **Action Plan** - outlines the approach to achieving the Cluster's objectives
→ **Mind Map of solutions:**

3

2nd Online meeting, 29 April 2025
→ to explore replicability concept with the validation of joint transferability criteria

4

2nd Online meeting, 29 April 2025
→ to start thinking about most transferable solutions

5

2nd On site meeting, 2nd October 2025 (Tirana)
→ to review challenges, identify transferable solutions, and define next steps toward the preparation of thematic papers contributing to the III MED ST Convention in 2026.

6

3rd and 4th Online meetings – 6 February & 7 May 2026
→ to work on the 1st Thematic Paper on “Smart and data-driven destination management for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean”



Orientation Papers



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MED Clusters Innovation 1st Thematic Paper

Why a thematic paper ?

- **Showcase project achievements:** Serve as a flagship publication highlighting concrete, on-the-ground solutions, tools and methodologies developed by TPs and other Cluster members

- **Support transferability and policy impact:** Facilitate the uptake of project results by other stakeholders and destinations

- **Build knowledge and capacity:** Provide clear and accessible technical insights, helping to bridge knowledge gap by translating complex concepts into practical examples and field-based action

Selected topic:

“Smart and Data-driven Destination Management for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean”

- It provides a **coherent framework** with the Cluster scope and allow us to consolidate and showcase the **largest number of project results** while keeping it **concrete**

- It is the **most voted topic** by thematic project members



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“Smart and data-driven destination management for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean” Thematic Paper

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The cover features a grid of abstract, colorful patterns in shades of pink, purple, and blue. At the top, it includes logos for Sustainable tourism, Interreg Euro-MED, and the European Union. The title is written in a bold, dark font. Below the title, it says 'THEMATIC PAPER' and 'by Community4Tourism'. At the bottom, there is a row of various partner logos including UN@, MedDiet, and others.

Key challenges

01

Data availability & quality

Building and maintaining large, up-to-date datasets is costly

02

Heterogeneity & interoperability

Fragmented, non-standardised formats limit usefulness

03

Technological infrastructure

Peripheral destinations risk exclusion without support

04

Digital literacy

Uneven skills among tourists and stakeholders

05

Privacy & data governance

GDPR compliance and ethical data collection

06

Workforce & AI readiness

Digital skills gap in a highly seasonal sector

07

Stakeholder cooperation

Trust, shared objectives, and defined roles essential



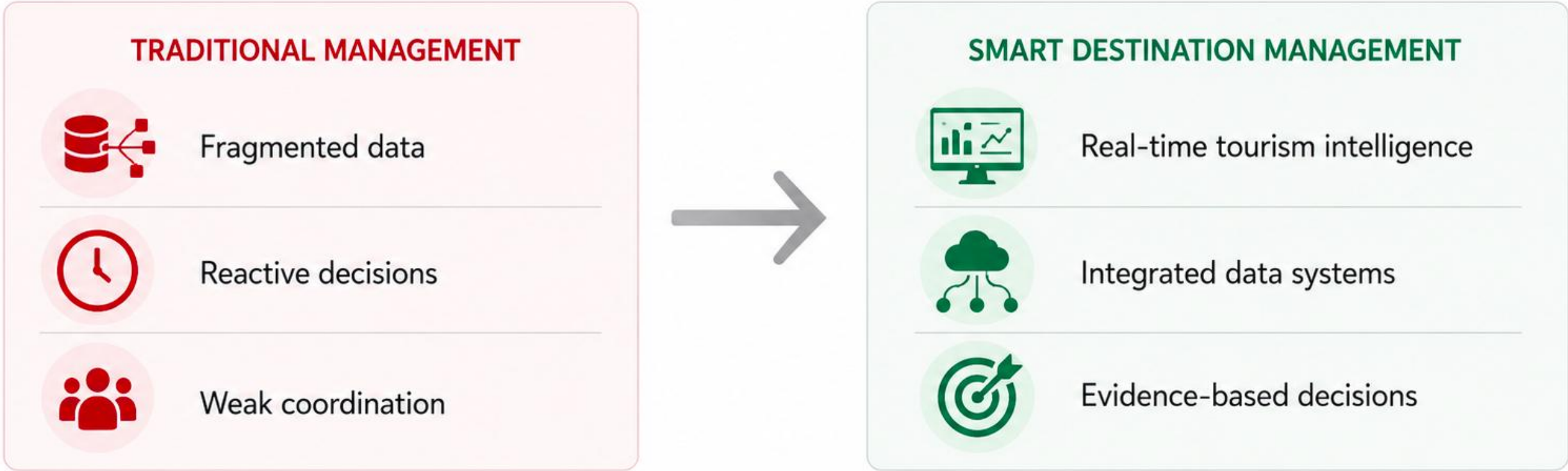
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In depth analysis: From Fragmented Management to Adaptive Destination Governance in the Mediterranean



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Policy & Governance Frameworks for Smart and Data-Driven Tourism in the Mediterranean

Global Level

UN 2030 Agenda, SDGs, UN Tourism Digital Transformation

European Level

Digital Decade 2030, Data Governance Act, European Agenda for Tourism 2030, EU Tourism Data Space, EU Tourism Dashboard

Mediterranean Level

UfM Digital Economy Platform, WestMED Initiative, Adriatic-Ionian Strategy

National & Regional Level

Digital Strategies, Tourism Strategies, Destination Observatories

i The forthcoming **EU Strategy for Sustainable Tourism** (spring 2026) will further embed smart and data-driven solutions across policy levels.

Key instruments shaping the transition:

- **Data Governance Act & Data Act** — trusted cross-border data sharing
- **Common European Tourism Data Space** — interoperability for SMEs & DMOs
- **Pact for Skills** — upskill 60% of tourism workforce by 2030
- **European Capital of Smart Tourism** — peer learning & incentives



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MED Cluster Solutions

MED CLUSTER SOLUTIONS

Selected Field-Tested Solutions

Thematic projects of the Interreg Euro-MED Sustainable Tourism Mission deliver concrete, transferable tools for smart destination management.

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IoT sensors & AI for real-time visitor flow monitoring across 8 pilot sites

LIBECCIO

Destination Management Support System integrating multi-source data into unified dashboards

MedDiet Go!

Transnational Eurocluster connecting rural Mediterranean Diet territories and SMEs

SMITour

Smart Industrial Tourism strategy transforming heritage sites into data-driven destinations



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Example of a showcased solution

SOLUTION 3 · MedDiet Eurocluster

Structure

- **Living Labs** - co-creation with Quadruple Helix actors
- **One-Stop Shops** - practical SME support: training, digitalisation, funding
- **Digital Platform** - interactive tourism map, performance tracking

Added value

- Aligns Mediterranean Diet heritage with EU Green Deal & Digital Decade
- Strengthens rural economies and Mediterranean identity
- Formal transregional network for sustainable rural tourism models



Description: Visit to Bioalverde Social Farm, Dos Hermanas (Seville, Spain), 23/09/2025. Ownership of the Chamber of Commerce of Seville.



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Complementary Initiatives and Solutions Supporting Smart and Data-Driven Destination Management for Sustainable Tourism in the Mediterranean



DEPLOYTOUR & DATES

European Tourism Data Space — trusted cross-border data sharing, semantic interoperability & governance standards



SEGITTUR

Spain's 5-pillar smart destination programme — proven model for national-scale ICT integration in tourism governance



CulTourData & ToT Lab

Capacity-building for tourism SMEs — data-driven marketing, peer learning, sustainability measurement



NSTO & Policy Labs

Mediterranean observatories & participatory labs — cross-border knowledge transfer and co-created policy solutions



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Key messages from the Cluster on Smart and Data-destination Management

01 • Interoperable ecosystems

Common indicators and multi-source platforms enable anticipatory decisions on flows, pressures and impacts

02 • Technology within governance

Smart tools only deliver when embedded in structured cooperation, shared standards and formal coordination

03 • Balanced, resilient models

Data-driven solutions reduce seasonality, redistribute flows and protect environmental and cultural assets

04 • Enabling conditions matter

Replication requires policy frameworks, stable investment, skills, data-sharing rules and institutional commitment

The full version of the
“Smart and data-driven destination management for sustainable tourism in the Mediterranean”

Thematic Paper will be released this week and introduced during the III MED Sustainable Tourism Convention on the 18-19 of June in Barcelona – Stay tuned!



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HERIT DATA mainstreaming model

From pilot sites to scalable solutions for tourism flows management

What is the Mainstreaming Model?

A knowledge-transfer approach built on:

- 6 pilot heritage sites
- 6 additional European & Mediterranean destinations facing similar tourism flow challenges

👉 Objective: **scale up tested solutions for smarter destination management**

What was shared?

A set of **infographics + short videos** showcasing real case studies, structured around:

- What was the tourism flow / destination management problem?
- How was the decision-making process organised?
- Which methodology was applied?
- What concrete actions were implemented?

Why it matters?

- Transforms local experience into **transferable knowledge**
- Supports **data-driven tourism management**
- Inspires other destinations to adopt **proven methodologies and tools**

Complementary activities

- **Advocacy campaign** via website & social media
- **MoU signature**

Interreg Mediterranean
Project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund
HERIT-DATA

HERIT DATA PROJECT

GOZO, MALTA

Best practice, case study

EXISTING NEED/ISSUE

Gozo is an island in the Maltese archipelago known for its beautiful natural and cultural wonders. Its Mediterranean climate and geographical composition correlate the destination to sun and sea, meaning that the largest concentration of visitors takes place in the summer months, hence creating an issue of seasonality. In addition, the number of overnight stays compared to the number of visitors was another issue. While visitors who chose to stay more than one night in Gozo tend to have respectable long stays, 87% of visitors are same-day visitors from mainland Malta.

DECISION MAKING PROCESS

In order to mitigate the issue, the Ministry for Gozo spoke with stakeholders and conducted research to better understand the different segments of Gozo's tourism demand.

METHODOLOGY

The research was conducted through discussions with stakeholders, the analysis of data from national statistics, and from a semantic analysis of source markets already present in the destination. It was determined that Gozo's topography and coastal settings allow for a strong adventure tourism brand. Data showed that such enthusiasts tend to enjoy longer stays in the destination. Apart from that, activities related to adventure tourism are enjoyed throughout any period during the year, curbing seasonality challenges. Another important segment related to the research is historical and cultural factors which are also enjoyed in any season of the year.

MEASURES TAKEN

Once the Ministry identified the average length of stays related to adventure tourism, while acknowledging the opportunities available in Gozo, several actions were taken. These include the development of a Diving Master Plan, the availability of marketing support grants and the development of a scheme that is in the pipeline to support operators in their purchase of eco-friendly adventure tourism related equipment. Finally, an interactive mobile app, that gives an experience in coastal and country hiking is also being developed.

Entity behind this case study: Ministry of Tourism for Gozo



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HERIT DATA mainstreaming model – Key results

- **Strong territorial uptake**

Over **30 signatories** (incl. **Occitanie, Tuscany**) committed to adopt and scale project-tested tools for sustainable heritage site management.

➔ Additional replication confirmed: **Crete, Catalunya, Murcia**

- **Policy impact strengthened**

Increased visibility and uptake of project results in key EU and international policy processes.

- **High-level institutional outreach**

Policy recommendations shared with European Commission, European Parliament & UN Tourism.

➔ Contribution to EU Tourism Transition Pathway and related frameworks

- **Catalyst for new initiatives**

Project results inspiring new collaborations and follow-up project development.



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Find out more about HERIT
DATA Mainstreaming Model!

EU Priorities & Initiatives: Sustainable Tourism & Data-Driven Smart Crowd Flow Management

1. Tourism Transition Pathway

Policy area “Digital Transition”

Enhancing digitalization through platforms, AI, online services, and data sharing to improve competitiveness and innovation

2. EU Sustainable Tourism Agenda 2030

Digital transformation is a core pillar, supporting:

- Stronger use of data, AI and interoperable systems
- Innovation and SMEs digital uptake



3. Towards a Future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy

Key strategic priorities under discussion:

Competitiveness & sustainability

Skills & labour transition

Data, digitalisation & AI

Europe as a global destination



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Future EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy: Proposed Measures for Data-Driven Smart Crowd Flow Management

1. Strengthening Destination Management Organizations (DMOs)

- key role in balancing tourism flows across destinations
- Address both **overcrowding and under-visitation**
- Upcoming EU guidelines to support more effective destination governance

2. Data-driven governance for tourism management

- Decisions increasingly based on data, evidence, and best practices
- Enhance cooperation across governance levels (EU, national, regional and local)

3. Digitalisation

- Integration of digital tools into tourism management systems
- Development of a **Common European Data Space for Tourism** to support:
 - Better visitor flow management
 - Stronger sustainability and resilience
 - Enhance competitiveness of destinations
- Ensure respect for local communities, heritage, and the environment



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CPMR Policy Position (March 2026): Regional Priorities for Data-Driven Smart Crowd Flow Management in EU Tourism

Seasonality & Diversification

- Spread **tourism flows across seasons & territories**
- Diversify **tourism models & products**
- More **balanced & resilient destinations**

Skills & Capacities

- Address **skills gaps & labour shortages**
- Invest in **training & reskilling**
- Strengthen **regional capacities for transition**

Digitalisation & Data Governance

- Promote **data-driven tourism governance**
- Improve access to **regional tourism data**
- Support smart tools for **visitor flow management**
- Build on **HERIT-DATA** for heritage & tourism data use

Public-Private & Participatory Governance

- Strengthen **public-private cooperation**
- Promote **inclusive stakeholder governance**
- Reinforce the role of **regions & local authorities**



**Read the full
policy position!**



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Making
the **Mediterranean**
Green Transition
happen

