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Adapting Methods and Tools for Participatory Heritage-Based Tourism Planning to Embrace the Four Pillars of Sustainability

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Abstract: Sustainable cultural tourism, understood as heritage-based tourism, can support inclusive and sustainable development, especially in remote or peripheral areas. While participatory processes are mandatory, they are not sufficient to ensure sustainable cultural tourism planning. For the latter, cultural tourism must embrace the four pillars of sustainable development: focusing on economic, cultural, environmental, and social sustainability. Nevertheless, a comprehensive methodology that addresses all the aspects of sustainable planning at each stage of the process through inclusive and diverse participation of local communities is still missing. The paper introduces a specific participatory methodology for cultural tourism developed and tested in eight case studies across Europe and beyond and analyzes how the devised participatory process and tools guarantee proper incorporation of the different pillars for sustainable development at each stage. The methodology and tools presented are based on three replicable steps that aim to enhance cultural tourism in a sustainable, diverse, inclusive, and innovative way. The paper specifically focuses on three activities designed for the participatory workshops: the co-mapping exercise, the Action Co-creation, and an adapted Business Model Canvas, providing an analysis of how those contribute to an innovative participatory process, constantly considering the four pillars of sustainable development.

Keywords: heritage-based tourism; participatory process; sustainability



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1. Introduction

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) in the last three decades, tourism has been one of the largest sectors in the global economy and it continues to grow in today's world. Tourism produced 9% of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 8% of the world's employment in 2019 and it plays a prominent role within the EU countries' economy [1], contributing, for example, to 15% of employment in a country such as Italy and a relative 13% of Italian GDP in 2019 [2]. Cultural tourism is one of the most important segments of tourism [3] and is increasingly a major slice of the cultural sector in general [4]. Cultural tourism, which usually overlaps with the term heritage tourism, is mainly rooted in heritage resources in a local context [5] and is related to heritage management and development [6]. This particularly resonates in Europe, where heritage is considered “the oldest and most important generator of tourism” [7]. Hence, tourism has become increasingly important to local communities in terms of resources used and income produced, and, consequently, the need to sustainably develop tourism has become a primary concern [8]. Therefore, the development of a sustainable form of cultural tourism is considered a compromise between the conservation of cultural heritage, the financial benefits of local communities, and public access to the resources [9].

The relationship between heritage, tourism, and sustainable development has not always been straightforward in the policy development context and it was not explicitly mentioned until 1997 in the Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry [10]. Setting out the priorities for sustainable development in the 21st century, it identifies tourism as a form

of economic development aiming at improving the quality of life of the host community, providing a high quality of experience for the visitors, and maintaining the quality of the environment. This was further elaborated by the UNWTO, stating that “Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future” [11]. Especially for marginalized, remote, or peripheral areas, sustainability has become fundamental as the communities need to support themselves with their available resources [8,12]. Importantly, sustainable tourism is an overarching category and is conveniently defined to include all types of tourism (conventional or alternative forms) that are compatible with or contribute to sustainable development [13].

Although sustainability in tourism is often criticized as a vague concept, [14,15], Richards and Hall [8] observed that, for a viable and efficient approach to sustainability in tourism, a continuous improvement of the social, cultural, and economic well-being of communities is required, and this must be wholly integrated with the care for the environment. This statement connects the development of tourism to the three aspects that have imbued the definition of sustainability since the Brundtland report [16], namely economically, socially, and environmentally sustainable development. The recent literature has expanded this interpretation of sustainability to include cultural sustainability in tourism development [17–19].

As shown in the following sections, while abundant research and policy debates have addressed the role and the importance of economic, environmental, and social aspects of sustainability in tourism, much less importance has been given to the embracement of cultural sustainability.

As a result, in this paper, the authors explore in more detail the gaps in equally applying the four pillars of sustainability to cultural tourism development. While doing so, the paper defines cultural tourism as heritage-based tourism, which allows the inclusion of all tangible and intangible aspects of heritage. The paper claims that it is of the utmost importance to equally apply both in practice and theory all four pillars of sustainability at each step of a participatory process to fully achieve sustainable cultural tourism development.

The paper examines how to better embrace the four facets of sustainability by presenting a set of tools that were the result of participatory methodologies applied in the co-development of sustainable cultural tourism strategies in the TExTOUR project for eight case study areas around Europe and beyond. The paper is structured into four main parts: (i) an introductory presentation of the four pillars of sustainability for cultural tourism development, (ii) followed by a discussion about the scope and the state of the art of participation in sustainable cultural tourism development, (iii) then the methodology designed and tested for this research is introduced, and (iv) the detailed discussion of the processes and tools resulting from this methodology follows.

1.1. Research Questions and Aim of the Research

By now it is commonly thought that including coherent segments of local communities and stakeholders in planning sustainable tourism has become pivotal to ensuring sustainable development [20], and, especially in European projects, such as the one treated in this paper, it has become a “must” [21]. It has also been argued that participation, per se, is not a sufficient condition to achieve sustainable development but rather the first step to balance power relationships among the stakeholders and to provide a more neutral field to encompass the different aspects of sustainability. As Albornoz-Mendoza and Mainar-Causapé state [22], stakeholders must understand and follow sustainable tourism principles to preserve authentic tourism destinations for future generations. This implies that stakeholders do not just need to be included in a participatory process, but they also need to be aware of and embrace the sustainability goals of the process.

The current paper aims to further understand this topic by critically analyzing the benefits and limitations of a co-design participatory approach for the development of strategies and action plans in cultural tourism planning.

The paper examines how to design a multi-step co-creation process that can support stakeholders and local communities in the discussion, reflection, and design of sustainable cultural tourism actions, keeping a clear and constant focus on the four pillars of sustainability.

The participatory process is called the Sustainability-Driven Participatory Process (SDPP) and has been tested in the context of the H2020 “Social Innovation and TEchnologies for sustainable growth through participative cultural TOURism” (TE_xTOUR) project, which aims to co-design pioneering and sustainable cultural tourism strategies to improve deprived areas in Europe and beyond.

As such, the paper contributes to filling a research gap by analyzing this participatory process, aiming firstly to introduce the different activities and tools that bring together the stakeholders and support them in the discussions and reflections about possible actions that will be deployed to achieve sustainable cultural tourism development. Consequently, the objective of the research is to examine the tools and activities comprised in the process to better understand how a participatory process can answer the following questions: (i) How does one address and focus on social sustainability at each step of the participatory process? (ii) How can one embrace cultural sustainability at each step of the participatory process? (iii) How does one ensure environmental sustainability is addressed at each step of the process? (iv) And subsequently, how can one include economic sustainability in the whole process? Finally, the paper aims at providing some recommendations by exemplifying how those questions have been addressed in this participatory model.

1.2. Four Pillars of Sustainability for Cultural Tourism Development

In recent decades, the “three pillars” of the sustainability concept, namely social, economic, and environmental sustainability, have started to evolve to include culture as a fourth pillar both at international and European policy levels [17,18] and in research [23–26]. As Nurse [24] suggests, culture needs to be included in the discourse around sustainability in a twofold way. On the one hand, it needs to be included in terms of how the “culture of sustainable development” has evolved into a global agenda. On the other hand, the cultural arena, not intended just as the manifestation of culture, but instead as “cultural vitality”, namely “wellbeing, creativity, diversity and innovation” [23], should be treated as one of the basic requirements of a healthy society and, finally, culture itself can be facilitated by the construct of sustainable development.

Although the role of culture is growing and it has started to become acknowledged, most of the attention in sustainable tourism is still drawn toward environmental and economic issues linked to tourism development, followed by growing attention toward the social aspects of the tourism development discourse [27].

Culture as a pivotal driver for the sustainable development of tourism has been overlooked to such an extent that the definition of sustainable development preferred by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on their website still lacks it.

Many scholars have neglected the role of culture in the sustainable development of tourism, focusing solely on the sustainability of tourism as a means to reduce the tensions and to retain the long-term capacity of natural and human resources [28] or as a channel to contribute to sustainable use of economic, societal, and environmental resources [13]. Others [13] strictly excluded culture from the definition of sustainable tourism, such as Farrell [29], who argues that the “sustainability trinity” builds on the smooth and transparent integration of economy, society, and environment to achieve sustainable tourism, or Cater [30], who further identifies three key objectives for sustainable tourism in social, economic, and environmental goals.

These limited definitions contrast with a more extended vision of sustainable tourism building equally on the four pillars of sustainable development which this research enhances and moves forward.

1.3. Inclusive Participation in Cultural Tourism Development

Participatory models move away from hierarchical decision making to equalize the power between all parties involved and to promote an equally desirable situation in tourism planning and development for everyone involved [30–35]. Participation is defined as “a process of involving all stakeholders (local government officials, local citizens, architects, developers, businesspeople, and planners) in such a way that decision-making is shared” [36]. It means shifting the power of development from “external experts” and governmental bodies to citizens and local communities to allow them to share decision making, responsibilities, and, additionally, the advantages of tourism development.

Generally, decision makers tend to respect the community values once a participatory approach is embraced at the stages of planning [30,33,34,37]. Vernon et al. [38] affirm that a collaborative approach, especially in the tourism sector, should be interpreted as an interactive and iterative process of sharing experiences and ideas, as well as the means to identify and form a pool of finance and human resources among stakeholders and the local community to fulfil a specific goal. The application of participatory models in tourism is also relevant in enhancing Agenda 2030 and the Sustainable Development Goals, specifically the goals focusing on sustainable consumption and production, inclusive and sustainable growth, sustainable cities and communities, and the use of marine resources.

Nevertheless, whilst collaboration and participation have been part of the tourism lexicon for a long time [39,40], it has always been challenging to implement collaborative principles in practice [41–43]. Collaborative planning can result in a complex social and political process where many interconnected and interdependent parties have to work together to develop local and regional solutions. Problems in achieving participatory planning that are commonly reported are insufficient trust between stakeholders, lack of time and resources, roadblocks to finding consensus, diffidence to share power, and disbelief about the quality of collective decisions [19,20,44–48].

The stated problems are also relevant in the cases of participatory tourism planning. However, to ensure that the benefits of tourism are related to the needs of the hosting community and to develop support and acceptance of tourism development, community participation is highly recommended and considered necessary [20]. The goal of a participatory approach is eventually to create an equilibrium in the power differential between all parties and to forge an equally suitable situation in tourism development for all the people involved and affected [31,35,46–49].

Participation also allows for a framework for a more equal confrontation and discussion between those who traditionally have knowledge, money, and authority, such as investors, governments, and external experts, and the host community [50].

Another rationale for the participative approach resides in its positive outcomes such as: “decision-making based on public opinion, improved decision legitimacy and quality, enhancing tourism products portfolio, generating new ideas and innovations, increased trust among stakeholders, conflict reduction, cost reduction, and efficiency, and shared responsibility” [51,52]. In this way, the indigenous people become the main actor and decision maker in the planning, development, and management of resources needed for the tourism industry [53]. Therefore, the quality of human capital [30,33,34,54,55] such as the destination managers, local entrepreneurs, inhabitants, and NGOs, as they will be presented more in-depth in the following section, is a key precondition to successful participatory processes.

For all the reasons given, many scholars and practitioners accept that sustainable tourism needs to be based on community participation as a basis for its development and, as a service industry, tourism depends to a great extent on the goodwill and cooperation of the host communities. Virtually, all analyses on tourism show that the cordiality and goodwill of the local people are estimated high on the list of positive aspects of a destination [56]. These characteristics are particularly important in cultural tourism, where the local community can be considered as an integral part of the product. The implementation of sustainable tourism activities and actions becomes the result of the consensus of the

local community and stakeholders with efficient utilization of local human capital and local resources, especially those with unique value as in the case of cultural heritage, especially for cultural tourism [57].

Much research has shown that excluding local groups from decision-making processes could lead to tourism development in contrast to the preferences of some groups and lead to unsustainable tourism paths and impacts [58–60]. In some places such as more marginalized, rural, or peripheral areas, local communities could prefer not to attract huge businesses and big external investors to their local areas even though they could bring job opportunities and could prefer having control over local tourism activities. These types of discussions and sharing opinions from the public can only happen by promoting diversity and inclusion in participatory tourism development processes.

To this end, an inclusive participatory process in practice aims to involve as many diverse social and cultural groups as possible to achieve the most diverse representation. However, this can be challenging as well.

1.4. Which Community and Stakeholders and Why?

Community involvement is essential to the concepts of sustainable heritage management—also described as the third heritage regime—which empowers communities to influence/redefine their heritage and actively participate in transmitting and displaying it. This change has created a complex role for communities, however, not only offering economic opportunities but also generating conflicts. Among others, the local economic push has become an important component in the commercialization of heritage, further advancing the process that turns heritage into a product [61].

Importantly, there are additional traps in community engagement, given that the basic question of who constitutes a community is hard to answer. Perceptions and ideas about communities can depend on individual preferences and are deeply influenced by decisions that are often not transparent enough. Thus, being included or being left out is never arbitrary, rather it is a result of a conscious decision that resonates with other social categories. Among others, ethnicity, race, income and education level, and religion matter significantly when communities are composed, and boundaries can shift easily depending on the observer's point of view [62]. Inclusion in tourism concerns two primary inquiries within the participatory processes: on the one hand, it asks who is included/excluded, and on the other hand, on what terms they are included [57]. In this way, tourism activities can address inequalities and the discrimination of different groups in different places, understand the specific conditions of minorities, and challenge stereotypes and generalize histories [63].

Thus, successful inclusion requires deliberate action and a deliberate effort from various actors in different decision-making capacities, as well as a keen understanding of the existing local context and diversities. It requires the acknowledgment that the preservation and use of cultural heritage is a process that involves not only the past but the present and the future. Essentially, the process itself becomes a “future-making practice”, whereby communities are constituted, which are not homogeneous entities [64].

This process of defining a community can also bring up existing (and sometimes long-forgotten) social frictions, or simply become the terrain of contest among different interest groups. Scheyvens and Biddulphs [57] describe inclusive tourism as “transformative tourism engaging marginalized groups in the production and consumption of tourism and sharing its benefits”. Achieving diversity and inclusion in participatory tourism development involves a wide range of participants, including people with various interests, skills, and talents, and considering their benefits by overcoming the exclusionary aspects of the processes. Marginalized groups could differ in the context of different places; however, in a broad sense, this implies very poor, ethnic minorities, women, older adults, differently abled people, small tourism producers, and other groups who lack power and or voice [57].

In the end, there is an additional difficulty that concerns the interest of the community. Community involvement presupposes a general interest from the community's side to

participate. Nevertheless, this might be contrary to real-life experiences, where local perceptions about the meaning and importance of heritage and its role vary, as well as expectations of what heritage preservation and tourism development mean and how they affect everyday life and the livelihood of the residents. In this complex relationship, with diverging expectations from different actors, interpretations about local heritage as well as the willingness to participate in local actions or adapt to specific heritage management requirements can differ substantially within a community [65].

Additionally, inclusive tourism planning processes also rely on broad stakeholder engagement. While communities are often regarded as stakeholders, it is important to note that they are not the only ones. Engaging a variety of local civic initiatives, active entrepreneurs, and representatives of various public bodies as well as diverse cultural and touristic organizations is the minimal requirement for the successful planning to create a common vision, to meet tactical and strategic needs, to generally improve transparency, and to build trust. Stakeholder engagement can only be successful if stakeholders' interests are recognized and respected in the decision-making processes; there are active communication channels to reduce stakeholder conflicts; involvement levels are not uniform but vary between formal and/or informal mechanisms; and the process balances risks and rewards and creates transparent, regulated relationships [66].

2. Materials and Methods

The Sustainability-Driven Participatory Process (SDPP) presented in this research was designed to support sustainable cultural tourism embracing all four aspects of sustainability. The SDPP was tested by 8 different case studies that are very different in size and scale and include areas in cross-border regions, such as selected points of cultural routes or cultural landscapes, as well as abandoned villages, historical centers, and archaeological or industrial sites. The case study areas and their countries are listed in Table 1.

Table 1. Case studies' countries, participant numbers to workshops 1 to 3, and break down of the participants' sectors.

Case Study Number and Name	Countries	WORKSHOP 1 Collective Goals and Co-Mapping		WORKSHOP 2 Action Co-Creation		WORKSHOP 3 Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas	
		Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating	Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating	Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating
#1 Crespi d'Adda	Italy	24	Public: 5 Private: 6 Mixed: 2 Civic: 3 Independent Expert: 2 Associations: 2 NGO: 4	15	Public: 5 Private: 4 Mixed: 2 Associations: 4	14	Public: 2 Private: 1 Mixed: 3 Independent Expert: 4 Associations: 4
#2 Narva	Estonia/Russia	20	Public: 4 Private: 5 Civic: 4 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 6	23	Public: 4 Private: 5 Civic: 6 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 6 NGO: 1	22	Public: 6 Private: 2 Civic: 4 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 8 NGO: 1
#3 Umgebindeband	Germany/Poland/ Czech Republic	20	Public: 5 Private: 4 Civic: 2 Independent Expert: 4 Associations: 5	12	Public: 3 Private: 3 Mixed: 1 Civic: 1 Independent Expert: 3 Associations: 1	30	Public: 6 Private: 5 Mixed: 3 Civic: 5 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 3

Table 1. Cont.

Case Study Number and Name	Countries	WORKSHOP 1 Collective Goals and Co-Mapping		WORKSHOP 2 Action Co-Creation		WORKSHOP 3 Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas	
		Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating	Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating	Total Number of Participants	Stakeholders and Local Communities Participating
#4 Trebinje	Bosnia-Herzegovina/Montenegro/Croatia	14	Public: 5 Mixed: 7 Civic: 1 NGO: 1	17	Public: 6 Private: 1 Mixed: 1 Associations: 1 Local Community: 8	12	Public: 6 Mixed: 1 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 1 Local Community: 3
#5 Tarnowskie Góry	Poland	19	Public: 10 Associations: 7 NGO: 2	11	Public: 6 Independent Expert: 2 Associations: 2 NGO: 1	15	Public: 8 Associations: 6 NGO: 1
#6 Vale do Coa	Portugal/Spain	15	Public: 5 Private: 5 Mixed: 1 Independent Expert: 2 Associations: 1	12	Public: 1 Private: 6 Civic: 5	13	Public: 3 Private: 5 Independent Expert: 1 Associations: 1 NGO: 1 Local Community: 2
#7 Anfeh	Lebanon	23	Public: 1 Private: 5 Civic: 2 Associations: 3 NGO: 3	22	Public: 1 Private: 6 Civic: 2 Associations: 3 NGO: 3	24	Public: 2 Private: 6 Civic: 2 Associations: 2 NGO: 4 Local Community: 6
#8 Fikardou	Cyprus	34	Public: 4 Private: 21 Civic: 5 Independent Expert: 3 NGO: 1	13	Private: 2 Civic: 4 Independent Expert: 3 Local Community: 4	35	Private: 2 Independent Expert: 3 NGO: 1 Local Community: 3

The participatory process was initiated and applied by very different bodies, i.e., municipalities, local associations, universities, foundations, and local chambers of commerce, to demonstrate that the SDPP can be applied and initiated by governmental bodies as well as by other entities interested in the development of sustainable cultural tourism.

The SDPP builds on the traditional framework for tourism planning as presented by Murphy and Moscardo [67] (Figure 1). It provides a critical adaptation to incorporate at each participatory step reflections on the four pillars of sustainability, to address the argument by Moscardo and Murphy that “if tourism is to contribute to sustainability at all levels, then arguably tourism planning should also involve some form of sustainability evaluation of tourism development proposals before they are implemented” [67].

Moscardo [27] shows that the conventional formal approaches to tourism planning are typically focused on the destination and usually created by groups external to the local community, such as, for example, national governments, regional agencies, or development organizations. Typically, agents not belonging to the local areas designate a group responsible for the plan and set the goals or objectives. Within this traditional process, as presented in Figure 1, tourism in some form is always assumed as desirable, and the plan aims to assure that tourism is financially successful for businesses. This classic tourism planning process is usually linear and if opportunities are provided for community or public engagement, those are usually included only after the development of the plans and generally focused on generating public support for decisions already made. Hall [68] and Ruhanen [69] provide steady conclusions to those described by Moscardo [70]. Moreover, these scholars state that, despite flourishing interest in sustainable tourism, the classical

approach to tourism planning is remaining unaffected and thus it is unlikely to improve its sustainability in its essence.

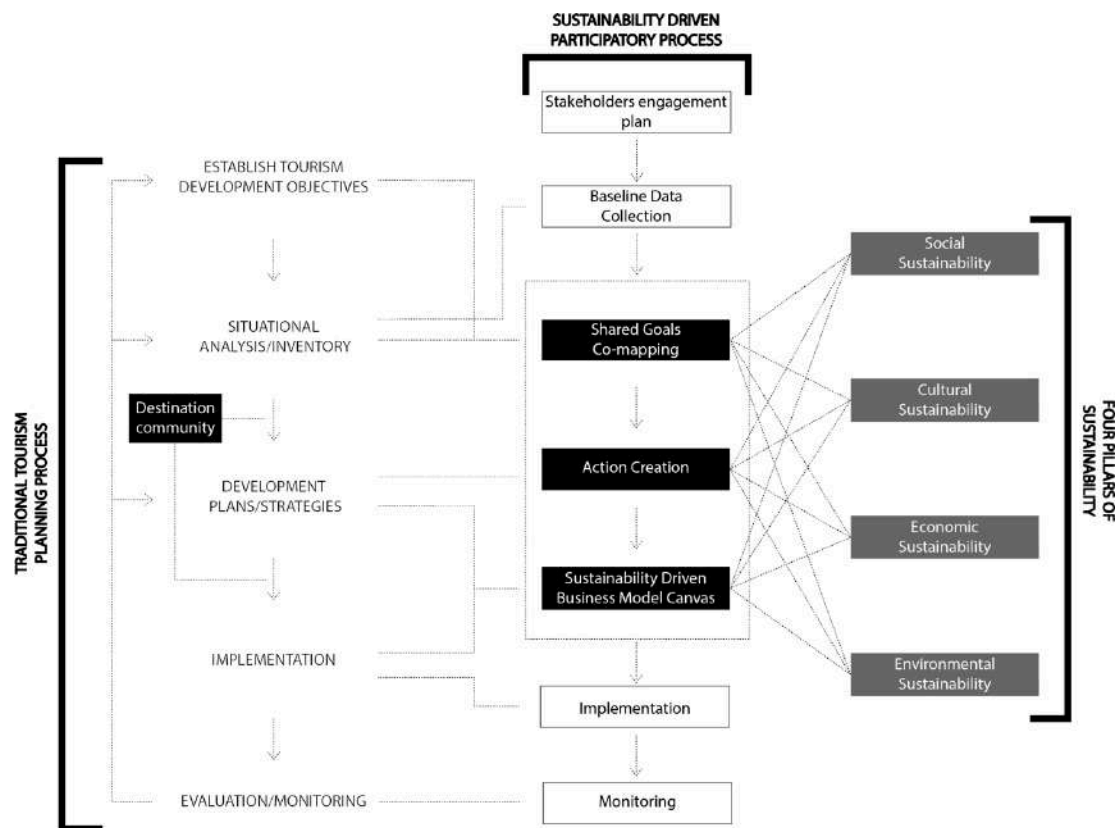


Figure 1. Sustainability-Driven Participatory Process in relation to the traditional tourism planning process and with the four pillars of sustainability. Diagram edited and implemented from Moscardo and Murphy.

Conversely, the SDPP includes the stakeholders and local community in the co-creation phase directly from the initial establishment of the tourism development objectives up to the co-creation of the tourism actions and the implementation, expanding the scope of public engagement and participation to the whole designing process. Moreover, it subverts some of the traditional steps, such as the analysis/inventory and the establishment of the objectives, to make sure to address them during the participatory segment of the process. In this way, the process includes the perspective of the local community and stakeholders on both the evaluation of the reality and the setting of the goals of the planning.

Specifically, the SDPP comprises three participatory steps, or workshops, each of which supports the integration of the diverse pillars of sustainability: Collective goals and Co-Mapping, Action Co-Creation, and Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas, as presented in the table below (Table 2).

Table 2. The description of the activities and outcomes of the three workshops comprised in the SDPP.

Workshop Name	Collective Goals and Co-Mapping	Action Co-Creation	Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas
Step	Workshop 1	Workshop 2	Workshop 3
Objectives	Create a common vision for the cultural tourism development of the area. Identify and assess local cultural heritage resources and social assets.	Being informed and inspired about cultural tourism actions in other territories and developing sustainable cultural tourism early ideas for actions in the local case study areas.	Break down and analyze the Actions to fill a detailed Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas for the selected actions.

Table 2. Cont.

Workshop Name	Collective Goals and Co-Mapping	Action Co-Creation	Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas
Tool/activity	Activity 1 “Goals, hopes, and values” Activity 2 “Co-mapping”	Tool 1 “Action Cards” Tool/Activity 2 “Action Co-creation”	Tool/Activity 1 “Sustainability Driven Business Model Canvas”
Main outcome	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate a shared vision for the territory • Identify additional stakeholders/communities to engage • Identify local heritage resources • Assess exploitation and use of heritage resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • List or select ideas/actions to be included in the actions plan 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas filled
Pillar of sustainability embraced	Activity 1: cultural, social, economic, environmental Activity 2: cultural, social, environmental, economic	Tool 1: cultural, social, economic, environmental Activity 2: cultural, social, environmental, economic	Tool/Activity 1: cultural, social, economic, environmental

3. Results

The results presented in this section are interpreted in two ways. Firstly, this section presents a methodological apparatus to specifically address the gap existing in the participatory process for sustainable and inclusive heritage-based tourism planning. In this subsection, called Methodological Results, the authors present in detail the tools, methods, and activities designed as parts and steps of the SDPP. Secondly, the section also includes an Empirical Results subsection, where the first testing of the methodology on the eight case studies is reported.

3.1. Methodological Results: Collective Goals and Co-Mapping Workshop

The first of the three workshops for co-creating strategies and action plans to develop participative cultural tourism has a twofold objective: to express and comprehend the collective values, goals, and expectations shared by the participants and to continue the process of co-mapping the existing local resources both in terms of local heritage resources and unidentified stakeholders to be further included in the process.

The workshop comprises two activities. The first, “From individual to shared goals”, aims to trigger reflections and visions about the development of tourism in the area passing from the individual perception of the single stakeholder to arrive at a shared picture. To arrive at such a common vision, the community needs to overcome, bridge, and negotiate different perspectives and points of view regarding the development of tourism in the area.

The second activity is called “Co-mapping” and targets the co-identification and assessment of local heritage resources and the identification of additional stakeholders to be invited to the participatory process. The local resources assessed will provide the material onto which the actions are built in the following steps.

The first activity builds on the “Goal Setting Workshop” [71] and aims at finding out the goals of the individuals attending the activity, as well as helps the whole group to reflect on the overlaps and commonalities between different individuals’ goals.

During the first activity, the participants, divided into different groups, are asked to answer the following questions on post-it notes:

- Hopes: what is your vision about and hope for sustainable tourism development in your area? (e.g., creating more jobs for youth in the area; attracting funding, etc.)
- Goals: What is a concrete result that you wish for your area? (e.g., refurbishment of local tourist office; creating an accessible route to local landmarks, etc.)
- Values: What is something you regard important and valuable in the sustainable tourism development of your area? (e.g., sustainable approach to nature, the inclusion of different age groups, etc.)

The answers are then grouped between similar themes by the participants and then explained to the other groups.

The second activity, “Co-Mapping”, draws references from the concept of cultural mapping as defined by UNESCO [72]. Cultural mapping is defined as the action of transforming tangible and intangible values into a factor that can be embedded into heritage management [73]. Cultural mapping allows local communities to portray cultural values qualitatively and quantitatively as they are perceived by themselves and helps communities and stakeholder groups in determining and establishing the value of cultural resources. The local community maps its perception of the place and its related social and cultural values [74]. The activity of identifying, quantifying, and geographically locating cultural resources helps to envision a value-added approach and efficacious actions for the development of cultural tourism. Specifically, the authors built on the well-established and documented cultural mapping process undertaken in Edinburgh (UK) within the Culture and Communities Mapping project [75].

Finally, the “Co-Mapping” activity also embeds elements of “Participatory Asset Mapping” to allow the community members to create a tangible display of their social and cultural assets [76].

The activity “Co-Mapping” is structured in three steps. In the first, the participants, using a map defined by the local organizer, point out heritage resource types as defined by a list (see Appendix A) previously drafted in the project. The defined list of heritage resources is aimed at being as refined as possible, showing participants multiple heritage types that they can consider. In the second step, participants assess the heritage resources identified stating if they consider them as recognized and fairly exploited, underused or underrecognized, or overexploited/at risk. In the third and last step, stakeholders identify if there are additional members of the local communities or representatives of different groups that have not yet been involved in the process and need to be included.

Empirical Results: Workshop 1

In the experimental TExTOUR project workshops, a total of 169 participants attended workshop no. 1 in the eight case study areas, 101 of which were female and 68 male. There was good diversity in terms of age groups with most people belonging to the 40–50 year-old group and with the presence of eight people belonging to disabled groups and other vulnerable groups (see Appendix B). Participants belonged to different work and stakeholder groups (see Table 1) with a striking majority of people working in the public sector. At the end of the workshops, the case study coordinators collected and translated all the materials produced into English and the authors analyzed the results, creating a series of word clouds to illustrate the outcomes of the first activity (see Appendix C). The results of the second activity regarding the co-mapping of the heritages were structured in a table and the figures were analyzed accordingly (see Appendix D). As a result of this first activity, the 169 participants identified a total of 565 cultural heritage resources.

3.2. Methodological Results: Action Creation

The second workshop, “Action Creation”, aims at reaching the core of the co-development step of cultural tourism strategies and actions. The activity designed for the workshop draws reference and adapts the “Participatory workshop” from the RURITAGE project [77]. In the “Participatory workshop”, participants were presented with a series of good practices coming from other territories to select, adapt, and develop, in a conversational setting, relevant examples for their local communities.

The second workshop culminates in the creation of a series of actions, namely innovative cultural tourism practices based on local heritage resources. Those actions will develop one or more heritage-based tourism types, will be sustained by different governance systems and funding models, and will be the result of a bottom-up process of co-creation between local organizers, stakeholders, and the community. Finally, the actions

will be subsequently co-implemented in a conjunctive effort by the local community and the stakeholders.

For the first activity of the workshop, local organizers distribute a set of Action Cards (for example see Appendix E) among the participants to trigger the conversation on cultural tourism actions. The Action Cards contain 33 case studies selected according to the same list of 11 heritage-based tourism types previously used for the first workshop (Appendix B) to identify the different types of tourism based on cultural heritage (namely, Dark Tourism, Archaeological Tourism, Industrial Tourism, City Tourism, Cultural Events and Creative Tourism, Culinary Tourism, Village Tourism, Museum Tourism, Pilgrimage Tourism, Hiking Tourism, and Eco-Tourism). The set of action cards provided to participants aims to stir the conversation about ideas to develop in the area maintaining the focus on the four pillars of sustainability.

Each case study provided in the Action Cards describes the heritage types on which they are based, the cultural tourism types they address, the action itself, the type of actors involved, the governance model and financial resources used, and presents the lessons learnt specifically addressing the cultural, social, environmental, and economic sustainability of the case studies. Participants are asked to pair and read the Action Cards, asking each other why a specific card seems interesting for their territory. To encourage the conversation between the pairs of participants, a series of questions are provided on the back of the cards. Specifically, besides questions related to the reasons how a specific action can be adapted to the territory or about how active participation from the stakeholders can be ensured, other questions are asked on what benefit an action can bring to the territory socially, economically, environmentally, and culturally.

Once the selection of the Action Cards is made, the second activity of the workshop starts. This part consists of a set of conversations between the participants, still grouped in pairs, where the discussants propose new actions. To help start the conversation, the same set of questions are asked on the back of blank cards that are there to be filled by the participants with new actions. The main outcome of the workshop is the collection of a series of actions, either created directly from scratch by the participants or modified from the given 33 action cards. Those actions should be relevant to the area as new practices and ideas are finalized for the development of sustainable cultural tourism.

Empirical Results: Workshop 2

The second workshop was attended by 125 participants in the eight case study areas. The case study coordinators presented their participants with a total of 48 Action Cards selected from the deck provided by the authors (Appendix E) and they proposed an average of 2.14 new action cards for each case study. The participants voted for a total of 233 actions as of interest for their eight areas and created an additional 62 Actions. After workshop 2, the case studies' coordinators, helped by the authors, shortlisted a total of 29 actions (Appendix F). To shortlist the actions, the coordinator paid attention to the economic feasibility of the actions, their inclusivity, the level of ICT innovation that they provided, the level of engagement showed by the participants (which would ensure a better level of participation in the co-implementation phase), and the economic, cultural, social, and environmental sustainability that the actions promoted.

3.3. Methodological Results: Implementation

The third workshop in the SDPP aims to develop a detailed Business Model Canvas for each of the actions that the case study areas have chosen or created for their territories during the second workshop. The Business Model Canvas provides the steps, activities, roles, and responsibilities that need to be addressed to successfully implement the actions.

The core activities of the third workshop build on the traditional Business Model Canvas tool and adapt it to the needs of embracing the four pillars of sustainability in cultural tourism planning. The literature provides other attempts to adjust the traditional Business Model Canvas to include different aspects of distinct organizational or business

settings, as for the Social Enterprise Model Canvas [78], or to explore the economic, environmental, and social layers of sustainability, as for the Triple-Layered Business Model Canvas [79]. However, the Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas designed for this research is specifically tailored for sustainable cultural tourism and embraces all four pillars of sustainability.

A “Business Model” commonly describes how an operation makes its own different elements work together to deliver value to the end user or customer. The phrase is used to explain how economic, social, cultural, and other types of values are created, delivered, and captured within an organization. Moreover, it is used to describe how “profit” can be made from the innovation, the service, or the feature which is intended to attract customers [80].

The original Business Model Canvas was developed by Osterwalder and Pigneur [81], and it is a creative and generative tool. It originally consisted of three elements: the value proposition; the value creation and delivery; and, finally, the value capture.

In the context of SDPP, the Business Model Canvas is adapted to focus on the specific aspects of sustainability, and it is pivotal to a smart, sustainable, and inclusive development of cultural tourism development. As shown in Figure 2, the original structure of the Business Model Canvas, in the white central section numbered 1, has been expanded to include steps that focus on the integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), social innovation, inclusivity (number 2), and the four pillars of sustainability (number 3).

Name of the Case Study Area		Title of the Action			
Inclusion Are you including vulnerable groups, minorities, people with disabilities within your Partners or as beneficiaries of the action? ②	Partners Who would you involve to get your action started and completed? ①	Activities What are the key steps to move ahead with your action? ①	Propositions/offer How will you make your visitors'/beneficiaries life happier? ①	Resources What are the resources you need to get this action started and completed? ①	ICT integration What ICT service can be useful for this action? What kind of ICT service can make the action more sustainable? ②
	Beneficiaries Who is your targets audience? ①	Cost Structure How much are you planning to spend on the action development and marketing? ①	Channels of communication How are you going to reach your visitors/beneficiaries? ①	Revenue Streams For what value are the tourists/visitors/users really willing to pay? ①	
Sustainability of the Action How can your action be sustained in the long term? Where will you look for funding/opportunities to make it sustainable through the time? What conditions will make this action sustainable in the long run?					
Economic impact on the territory What economic value can this action bring to the territory? Think about both positive and negative impacts ③	Environmental Impact on the territory What Environmental impact can this action have on the territory? Think about both positive and negative impact ③	Social impact on the territory What Social impact can this action have on the territory? Think about both positive and negative impact ③	Cultural Impact on the territory What Cultural impact can this action have on the territory? Think about both positive and negative impact ③		

Figure 2. Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas (SDBMC)—image by the Authors.

The original topics of the Business Model Canvas are retrieved from the white area at the center of the new Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas (the white boxes with pink text, see Figure 2) and its language is adapted to the needs of tourism development. The central part of the Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas is the first to be addressed in the workshop and it helps the participants in the workshop to break down and analyze the main aspects of the action such as partners, resources, activities, beneficiaries, etc. On both sides of the white area, two pink columns lead the participants to reflect on the aspect of both social and technological innovation and inclusion (Figure 2), which can

be addressed as a second step, linking back and forth with the previous one. Finally, the third step focuses on the bottom part of the canvas, where a green row invites participants to understand how the actions can be self-sustained in the long run and introduces the conversation on impacts, both positive and negative, that the action might have on all the four categories of sustainability assumed in this research (Figure 2). By filling out the last part, the participants will go back and forth with the previous steps to ensure internal coherence in all aspects of the action.

Empirical Results: Workshop 3

Workshop 3 was attended by 165 participants. In every workshop, people were subdivided into smaller groups to have each group working on one action and its related SDBMC. The workshop and the reflections and discussions triggered by the work on the Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas helped achieve a better grip on the actions and understand more clearly what actions could be possible if co-implemented in the following phase of the project. This clarity and detailed definition of the actions led to the decision to dismiss some of the actions which could not be thoroughly examined and broken down in the Business Model Canvas, and out of the 29 actions which arrived at the third workshop, 5 were ruled out and 24 passed this step and were finally moved into the co-implementation phase.

4. Discussion

As shown in the results section of this paper, both the comprehensive structure and the single steps of the SDPP tend to be different from the traditional planning process for sustainable tourism [67]. At the process level, the objective was to include participation at each step of the co-design process, subverting and including aspects such as the baseline analysis into the process. At the workshop level, the differentiation and advancement in the practice of co-planning are embedded in the possibility given by such tools to provide hands-on activities and reflections on each of the four pillars of sustainability, which usually tend to be overlooked. In the following subsections, the different steps of the SDPP are broken down to provide an analysis of their specific contributions to a comprehensive approach to a Sustainability-Driven Participatory Process.

4.1. Workshop 1

The first activity of the workshop has the aim to create a consensus about the objectives that the participatory process will carry on. Having the different stakeholders converse and discuss different themes and goals to find commonalities ensures social and cultural sustainability to sustain the process itself. Moreover, the division between hopes, values, and goals helps them have a perspective of sustainability as something to be achieved both in the short term, such as goals, and in the long term, such as hopes, based on their social, cultural, environmental, and economic values as a community.

At the same time, the second activity is fundamental in the pursuit of an encompassing embracement of the four pillars of sustainability because it requests to identify, recognize, and assess the cultural heritage resources of the case study areas. Through the definitions given by the heritage resource list (Appendix A), the participants realized and recognized many different heritage resources, both tangible and intangible, raising awareness and fostering a knowledge transfer regarding the abundance of heritages in their areas.

As many scholars and practitioners claim, the activity of identifying, quantifying, and geographically locating cultural resources can help envision value-added approaches and effective policies that enhance the development of cultural tourism [72,74].

Secondly, the activity requests an assessment of the current use and exploitation of the heritage resources, ensuring reflection on the economic and environmental fragility of such resources. Finally, the “Co-mapping” activity reinforces social sustainability for the whole process as it asks the participants to identify additional, missing groups from the local community to be included in the process and thus makes sure that all the communities

and local stakeholders are equally involved in the process to prevent exclusion and to strengthen the participatory nature of the process. This activity helps to challenge the dichotomies of the inquiries presented by Scheyvens and Biddulph about who is included or excluded from the process and on what terms they are included because it allows the community itself to self-identify, in a participative way, who should be included [57].

4.2. Workshop 2

The second workshop is fundamental to answering the questions this paper poses. The first activity of the workshop allows participants to become familiar with different cases of sustainable tourism actions happening in Europe and beyond, as they compare the Action Cards with their own specific area's needs and goals, as defined in the first workshop. In this way, they discover more and discuss the sustainability of the economic structures behind these actions, the attention to the environment they deployed, the social innovations they brought to the areas, and the cultural advancement they created. The questions on the back of the cards trigger and conduct the reflections and discussions on the four pillars of sustainability. Similarly, when they start adapting these Action Cards to their territories or they invent new actions from scratch, they are led to keep a consistent focus on the four pillars by ensuring that the actions would answer such questions.

4.3. Workshop 3

Completing a Sustainability-Driven Business Model Canvas (SDBMC) is another fundamental step to answer the questions posed in this paper as it helps the community and the stakeholders to have a hands-on activity enforcing reflection and discussion on the elements, activities, roles, connections, and communication about actions necessary for sustainability.

The SDBMC differentiates and improves previous attempts of adapting the Business Model Canvas by enlarging its scope to encompass social dynamics in its development [78,79] as it manages to embrace both social innovation and sustainability issues.

Additionally, splitting the elements of the reflections into different boxes gives visual cues that remind the participants about how the different pieces are connected and linked to each other. They also ensure that the proposed action embraces fundamental aspects of social innovation and inclusivity, supporting the coverage of social and cultural facets of sustainability. Progressively, other aspects of the canvas make participants reflect on the economic longevity of the activities and ensure that the impacts of the actions are understood and addressed with preventive and corrective measures to effectively ensure that all four pillars are all analyzed and embraced in the action. The process allows for internal iteration and a cross-checking system of the action.

5. Conclusions

The paper contributes to the existing research on sustainable cultural tourism participatory planning models by providing a framework in the form of the Sustainability-Driven Participatory Process (SDPP), which enables the inclusion of all four pillars of sustainability (social, cultural, economic, environmental) at every step of the co-creation process. The SDPP expands the traditional tourism planning framework by developing and integrating different activities and tools intended to foster and ensure reflection and hands-on decision making about sustainability and its different and interrelated facets at each step. The participatory process is designed to be either initiated by governmental bodies or by other local actors who are interested in the development of local sustainable tourism development in the region. This adapted participatory planning methodology supports developing a more robust and holistic perspective on sustainability-driven cultural tourism development and, as such, it has the potential to support those seeking ways to plan and develop local heritage-based tourism sustainably and inclusively. It is important to highlight that the work does not aim to design the definite tools for participatory planning but rather to enable the creation of a methodological framework. Importantly, the empirical results

reported herein should be considered in the light of some limitations: (1) The workshops were led in different languages and the authors' directions for the workshops were translated into the local languages and the results were translated back to English. This might have led to a certain degree of misunderstanding. (2) Not all the case studies reported all their results (see Appendix F). (3) The test has undergone just one iteration and the authors would expect different results from additional testing.

Finally, the paper contributes to the research and also fills a gap by analyzing a participatory process specifically designed for sustainable participatory cultural tourism planning with a constant focus on the four pillars of sustainability.

The eight strategies and action plans that the eight case study areas have developed through the SDPP methodology will be implemented in the future and their impact monitored by bridging the tools and steps presented in this paper. Moreover, the adaptation of the SDPP methodology in different contexts and areas will further test its efficiency and its contribution to achieving a participatory process of sustainable cultural tourism development.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

Appendix A

Table A1. Table listing the different types of cultural heritages.















	Heritage Type	Description
	Dark Heritage	It is a concept that mainly explains heritage places associated with atrocity, death, disaster, human depravity and suffering, tragedy, barbarism, holocaust, genocide, battlefields, concentration camps, prisons, crime sites, slavery, funerary heritage, or rituals about them [82].
	Underwater Heritage	Underwater heritage consists of heritage such as sites, shipwrecks, or aircraft, totally or partially underwater, which have cultural, archaeological, or historical values, periodically or continuously, for at least 100 years [83].
	Archaeological Site	An archaeological site is an area/place that is associated with past human activities. These can be structures, infrastructures, monuments, or (organized) settlements on land or an underwater surface found or revealed by archaeological methods [84].
	Industrial Heritage	Industrial heritage contains any landscapes, sites, structures, or complexes that have evidence of industrial processes and culture. The places can include machinery, workshops, warehouses, stores, mills, factories, mining sites, energy places, transport infrastructures, or social activity places. They also have intangible dimensions [85].

Table A1. Cont.

Heritage Type		Description
	Historic City Centre	Historic City Centers are places where the historical and cultural values of the past create shared identity and memory of their communities and form unique urban character and cultural significance specific to the particular place. At the operational and management level, the historic cities or centers are usually separate zones in a given city [86].
	Museum	A museum researches, collects, and demonstrates the heritage of humanity and the environment for educational, scientific, social, and cultural purposes. It could be in various forms and targets and aims to enlighten the past and its connections with the present in democratic and inclusive ways for societies and the environment [87,88].
	Monuments	Monuments are “architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science.” [89].
	Gastronomy	Gastronomy is a type of heritage that links with intangible heritage regarding “the practice or art of cooking or choosing” food, drinking, and eating. The sociability, transmission through generations, identity, tradition, and evolution of fresh and local food are significant aspects of gastronomic heritage [90].
	Movable Cultural Heritage	Movable cultural heritage includes properties such as paintings, sculptures, coins, or manuscripts which can move easily from one location to another and have significance for archaeology, prehistory, literature, art, or science [89,91].
	Living cultures	Living culture is known as “the practices, representations, expressions, knowledge, and skills handed down from generation to generation”. It is also called intangible heritage [92].
	Art/Crafts, Literature, and Music	Art/Crafts, Literature, and Music refers to the creative heritage of art/crafts, literature, and music having cultural values transmitted from generation to generation, which can be associated with intangible and tangible heritage [92].
	Living Heritage (Biodiversity)	Biodiversity is identified as the sum of biotic variation, ranging from the genetic level to the species level and the ecosystem level. This diversity is within and between species and ecosystems. Biodiversity as a living heritage is an integral part of the common natural and cultural heritage [93].
	Natural Heritage and Protected Areas	Natural Heritage is where the formation of habitats, species, ecosystems, geology, landforms, or flora and fauna have value from scientific and conservation angles or value that people attribute to them. Such places can be designated as World Heritage Sites for their outstanding universal value or recognized by laws such as national parks or protected areas [94,95].
	Geological Heritage	Geological Heritage refers to geological or geomorphological aspects having cultural, recreational, tourism, aesthetic, intrinsic, scientific, or educational value, which provides insights into geological processes impacting the formation or evolution of the Earth [96].
Assessing Heritage Resources		
Yellow dot:		Recognized/ utilized/ fairly exploited
Black dot:		Underused/ underexploited or Unrecognized and potential assets/ tourist attractions/ cultural heritage
Red dot:		Overexploited or at risk
Engaging Communities		
Green dot:		Other possible stakeholders/ communities/ vulnerable groups to include in the co-design process

Appendix B

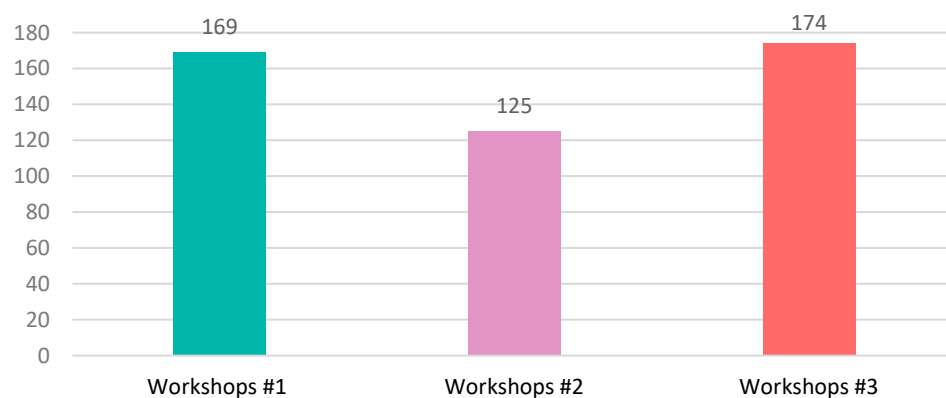


Figure A1. Comparison of total number of participants in three workshops in the eight case study areas.

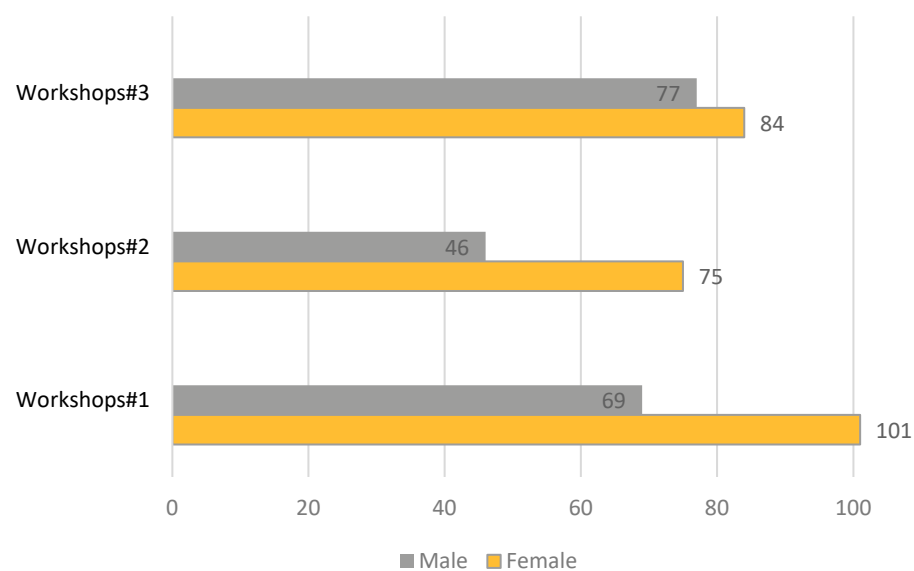


Figure A2. Comparison of total number of genders in the three workshops in the eight case study areas.

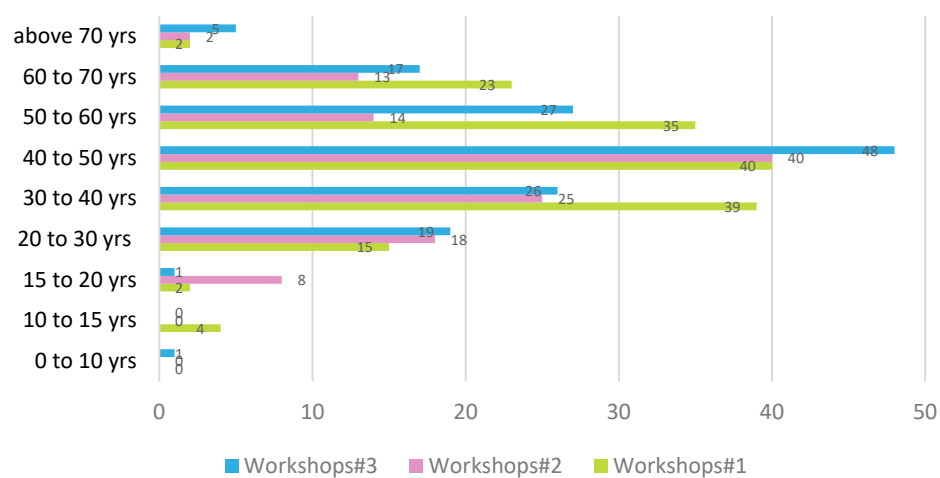


Figure A3. Comparison of total number of participants' age groups in the three workshops in the eight case study areas.

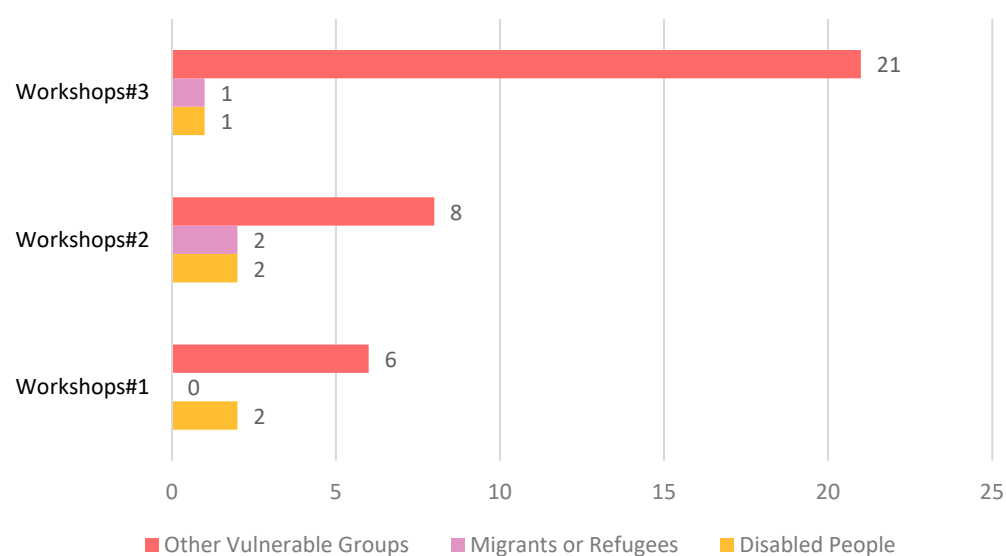


Figure A4. Comparison of total number of participants from different vulnerable groups in the three workshops in the eight case study areas.

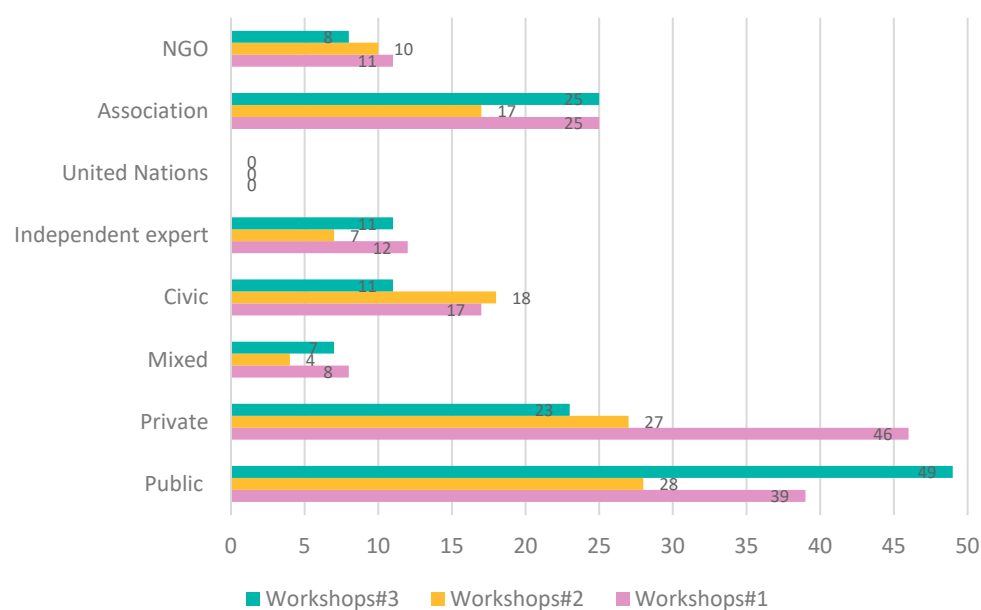


Figure A5. Comparison of total number of participants from different working sectors in the three workshops in the eight case study areas.

Appendix C



Figure A6. Word Cloud of Values from activity one “Shared Hopes, Goals and Values” in the eight #1 workshops.



Figure A7. Word Cloud of Goals from activity one “Shared Hopes, Goals and Values” in the eight #1 workshops.



Figure A8. Word Cloud of Hopes from activity one “Shared Hopes, Goals and Values” in the eight #1 workshops.

Appendix D

Table A2. Analysis of activity two, “co-mapping”, in Workshop #1.

Case Studies		#1 Crespi	#2 Narva	#3 Umgebindeland	#4 Trebinje	#5 Tarnowskie Gory	#6 Coa	#7 Anfeh	#8 Fikar dou	TOTAL all Case Study
HERITAGE TYPES	Tangible Heritage	18	44	101	29	34	97	17	12	352
	Intangible Heritage	1	1	17	9	6	48	9	0	91
	Natural Heritage	2	1	40	8	14	30	14	13	122
	Total Heritage Types by Pilots	21	46	158	46	54	175	40	25	565
	ASSESSING HERITAGE RESOURCES	Recognized or utilized or fairly exploited	0	0	0	8	8	3	44	10
Underused or underex- ploited or Unrecog- nized		1	0	0	14	21	20	45	4	105
Overexploited or at risk		1	0	0	15	5	6	53	3	83

Table A2. Cont.

Case Studies	#1 Crespi	#2 Narva	#3 Umgebindeland	#4 Trebinje	#5 Tarnowskie Gory	#6 Coa	#7 Anfeh	#8 Fikar dou	TOTAL all Case Study
Total Assessing Heritage Resources	2	0	0	37	34	29	142	17	261
Other Possible Stakeholders or Communities	4	0	26	2	2	0	14	0	48

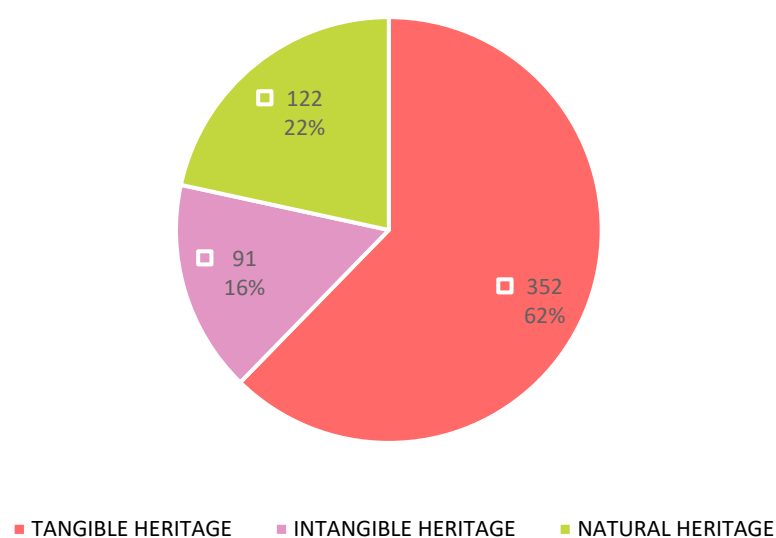


Figure A9. Percentages of tangible, intangible, and natural heritage identified by participants in workshop #1.

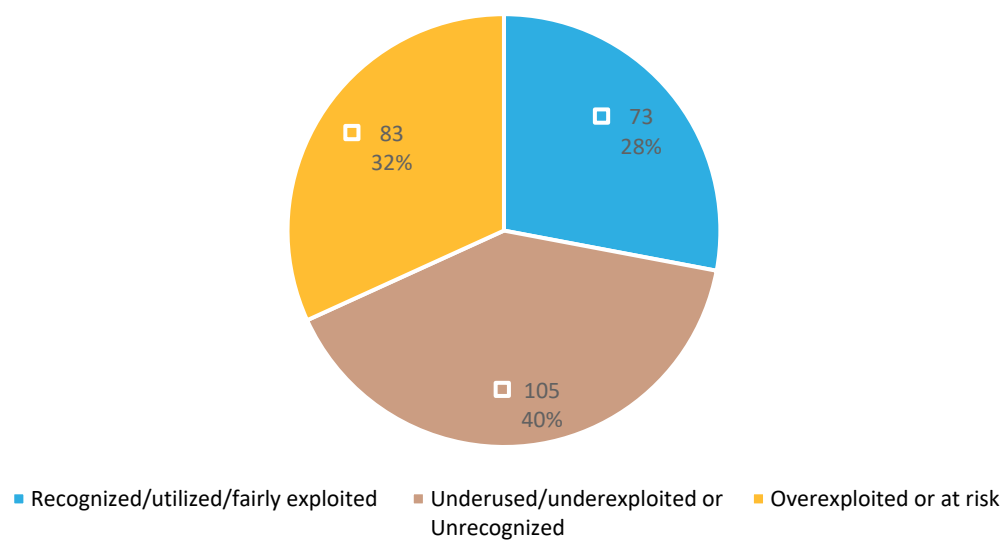


Figure A10. Percentages of recognized, utilized, or fairly exploited; underused, underexploited, or unrecognized; and overexploited or at-risk heritage resources assessed by participants in workshop #1.

Appendix E

The examples in this part can be downloaded at <https://texttour-project.eu/resources/>.



Figure A11. Example of an Action Card contained in the 33 Action Cards produced by the authors and used in workshop 2.

Appendix F

Table A3. Action Cards' selection by participants in Workshop 2.

ACTION CARDS Case Studies	Number of Action Cards Pilots Selected from UNIBO Deck	How Many Times Were the UNIBO Deck Selected Action Cards Picked by the Participants?	Number of Action Cards Created by Pilot Coordinators	How Many Times Did the Participants Pick the Action Cards Created by Pilot Coordinators?	Number of Action Cards Created by Participants
#1 Crespi	3	9	0		12
#2 Narva	4	22	2	12	12
#3 Umgebindeland	6	43	2	23	6
#4 Trebinje	11	24	5	21	11
#5 Tarnowskie	7	16	1	5	6
#6 Coa	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported	Not reported

Table A3. Cont.

ACTION CARDS Case Studies	Number of Action Cards Pilots Selected from UNIBO Deck	How Many Times Were the UNIBO Deck Selected Action Cards Picked by the Participants?	Number of Action Cards Created by Pilot Coordinators	How Many Times Did the Participants Pick the Action Cards Created by Pilot Coordinators?	Number of Action Cards Created by Participants
#7 Anfeh	10	25	1	6	6
#8 Fikardou	7	16	4	14	9
TOTAL	48	152	15	81	62

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