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## **An impact self-assessment tool for creative tourism with insights from its application to the CREATOUR<sup>®</sup> project**

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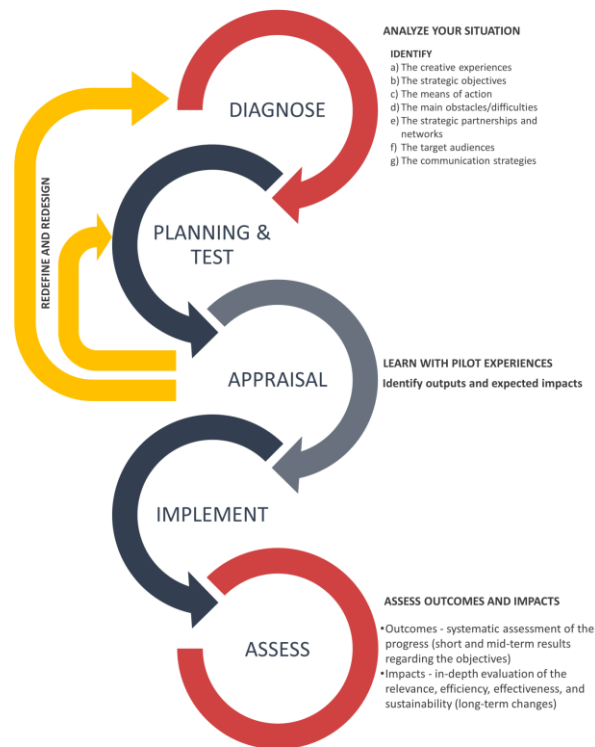
Given the enormous potential of sustainable creative tourism activities in low-density territories and local communities, creative tourism organizers/promoters should include a creative tourism impact assessment as an integrated and systematic process accompanying these activities. It can be used to identify the effects generated by such activities and support decision-making for their sustainability. It can also examine the diversity of causal links between motivations for action, networking synergies, desired results, and identified impacts for the organizers/promoters, stakeholders, and the wider community.

Considering the small scale of creative tourism, the limited resources in any specific case, and the high engagement level of stakeholders, a *self-assessment exercise* (i.e., carried out by the organizers/promoters of creative tourism activities) is most appropriate in order to monitor activities and results. Thus, within the CREATOUR<sup>®</sup> project, a self-assessment process for creative tourism initiatives was developed, beginning with an initial diagnosis and proceeding to an assessment of outcomes and impacts (see Figure 29.1). The process and tools were co-developed between researchers and practitioners to help various types of creative tourism organizers to measure, monitor, and evaluate the course of their activities in order to improve management and decision-making processes. The main objective was to assist practitioners and stakeholder organizations to become more aware of the intentional and unintentional effects generated by creative tourism activities, highlighting the potential benefits of artistic, cultural, and creative experiences for territorial development.

This article is divided into three parts: Part 1 outlines the development of the self-assessment process and tools; Part 2 presents a synthesis of overall findings from the CREATOUR<sup>®</sup>

project resulting from this self-assessment process; and Part 3 lists take-aways for practitioners.

Figure 29.1. Creative tourism initiatives assessment in five steps. Image developed by authors.



## Part 1. Self-assessment process and tools

### Searching for a multidimensional assessment for creative tourism

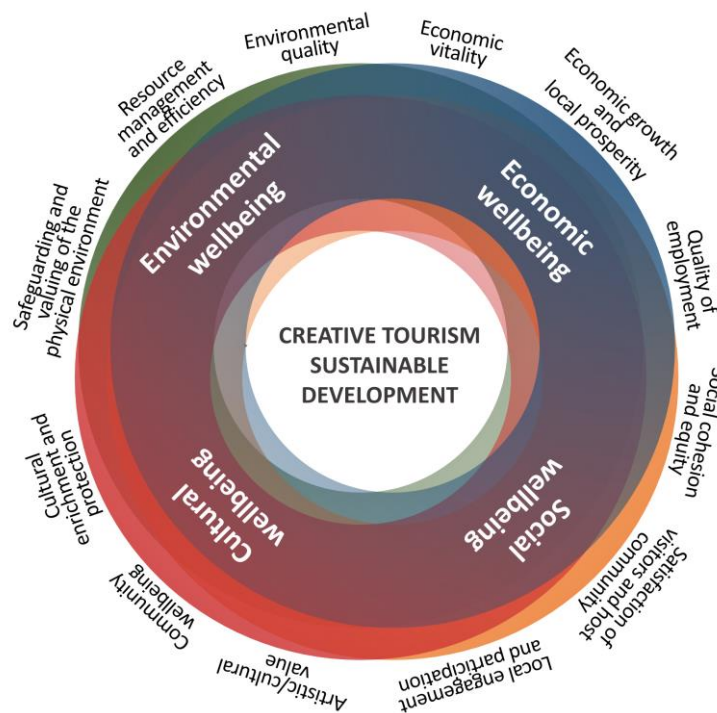
As background to the self-assessment exercise, we conducted a multidimensional analysis that took into account economic, social, cultural, and environmental factors as well as the quality of life of local communities, their cultural involvement, civic participation, and the conservation and preservation of both tangible and intangible cultural forms. Looking at the existing research, we found that the few studies that try to assess the impacts of creative tourism activities feature challenging conceptual and operational issues. These concern the nature of the cultural and creative activities, the fundamentals of the creative tourism experience itself, and the specific circumstances of each location, scale, and project.

Moreover, there is a lack of systematic evidence of the multiple effects and the sustainability of these initiatives in the territories and on the local community's engagement (Buaban, 2016; Korez-Vide, 2013; Qiu et al., 2019; Richards and Wilson, 2007). They also lack information on the networks that support creative processes, the context in which these processes take

place, and their spill-over effects (Jeffcutt and Pratt, 2002; Comunian, 2010). In addition, none of the studies examined are addressed to practitioners and their needs for conducting a self-assessment of their creative tourism activities.

Given this situation, we found that one of the most relevant approaches to framing the analysis and impact assessment of creative tourism is the integration of culture as the fourth dimension of sustainable development (Hawkes, 2011; Nurse, 2006; UNEP and WTO, 2005), along with the economic, social, and environmental ones. Thus, a four-dimensional structure was used as the basis to think about the operationalization of an impact self-assessment tool, as illustrated in Figure 29.2.

Figure 29.2. Impact assessment framework for sustainable creative tourism. Image developed by authors (Tomaz et al., 2020), drawing upon the work of UNEP and WTO (2005, p. 20)



Inspired by this four-dimensional structure, the question then became: from what perspective(s) should impacts be measured? To be relevant to the individual case and context, the impact assessment will vary depending on the perspective of interest (and what can be accomplished). For instance, one must consider questions such as:

- What kind of effects do we want to assess (i.e., direct, indirect, induced)?

- From whose perspective do we want to assess those effects (e.g., the promoters, the local community, society as a whole)?
- What is the time frame (i.e., immediate effects, short-term, long-term)?
- How can these effects be measured (i.e., quantitative/qualitative effects, tangible/intangible effects)?
- What purpose contextualizes these impacts (e.g., quality of life and wellbeing, sustainable development, cultural value, etc.)?

With these questions in mind, many arguments can be raised for the relevance and usefulness of a multi-faceted impact self-assessment in the context of sustainable creative tourism.<sup>1</sup> This relevance gains even more strength given the diversity of organizers involved in creative tourism (such as municipal entities, private entities, museums, cultural associations, local development associations, craftsmen, artists, and tour operators, among others) each with different action foci, implementing strategies, objectives, and a wide range of creative tourism experiences as driving forces behind all these elements.

### **Co-constructing a self-assessment tool for creative tourism**

A self-diagnosis exercise allows creative tourism practitioners to gain a clearer perspective on the main topics that will guide the development of their activities, as well as any necessary readjustments. Notwithstanding the nature of creative tourism activities which are carried out, or the type of organizer involved, an initial diagnosis addressing fundamental questions is essential. This diagnosis not only facilitates the planning and implementation of initiatives, but it can also be fundamental for carrying out an impact self-assessment exercise that is relevant to the project organizer and their context.

Questions involved in a self-diagnosis should include:

- What are the major objectives you want to achieve with the creative tourism initiatives?
- What are the available means of action to implement these initiatives (e.g., economic, infrastructural, material, human, communication, technological, etc.)?

- What partnerships do you have at the local, regional, and national levels and with what regularity of connection? In these networks, do you recognize interesting partners for the development of your creative tourism activities?
- What opportunities do you expect to achieve with (or arising from) the activities?
- What obstacles, difficulties, and challenges do you identify to implementing the activities?
- Which target audiences do you want to reach and how?

Thoughtfully responding to these questions can improve a creative tourism organizer's ability to perceive and reflect on activity planning processes and help to define objectives, gaps, challenges, and opportunities. The responses also set a foundation for considering the multiple effects (economic, social, cultural, and environmental) that can arise from these activities at the territorial level and involving local communities.

The questions outlined above were identified through an extensive process of monitoring and knowledge co-production during which they were developed and tested with the organizers of the pilot project initiatives of the CREATOUR® project (see Chapter 1 for a brief description of the overall project). The diversity of creative experiences proposed within this project, the different types of organizers involved, and the variety of objectives implicit in their action strategies required the development of methodological procedures that would allow for both co-monitoring the activities implemented and the subsequent evaluation of their effects in the four sustainable development dimensions. For this purpose, and to address the questions raised in the two key phases of this process, we developed an evaluation tool consisting of two distinct exercises: a strategic analysis diagram for the diagnosis phase (Figure 29.3), and an impact self-assessment matrix for the assessment phase (Table 29.1).

Based on the diagram presented in Figure 29.3, the diagnosis phase developed in the CREATOUR® project produced 40 strategic analysis diagrams based on individual interviews with project organizers at different stages of the implementation process (100 interviews approx.). This information was initially collected and returned to the individuals interviewed, allowing for a regular follow-up on the evolution of their activities. In addition to the possibility given to each organizer to monitor their activities and make necessary readjustments, sharing the results of this analysis exercise at a regional level also allowed for

a process of knowledge production and interaction among the various participants in the CREATOUR® project, thus fostering the exchange of experiences and new partnership networks.

Figure 29.3. Strategic analysis diagram for creative tourism initiatives. Developed by authors.



Once creative tourism activities were implemented, it was necessary to assess their effects on the project organizers and the network of partners involved, as well as local communities and tourists. Structured by four dimensions and 12 sub-dimensions<sup>2</sup>, an impact self-assessment matrix was built with a view to being accessible and flexible for different types of organizers and entities operating in the field of cultural and creative tourism (see Table 29.1).

Table 29.1. Multidimensional impact self-assessment matrix. Developed by authors.

Dimensions	Subdimensions	My Creative Tourism Activity	Specify the effects (How / In what way / Direct or induced effects / Time frame)			
			For me/my business/my entity	For stakeholders	For local community	For visitors/tourists
ECONOMIC	1. Economic vitality	Generated new sources of income? Fostered new investments in the creative sector and tourism? Contributed to expand markets/audiences? Promoted Economic sustainability?				
	2. Economic growth and local prosperity	Increased the value of traditional local products and sectors? Included creative products and services in tourism development? Fostered synergies between sectors/other actors? Increased the visibility of the territory as a tourism destination?				
	3. Quality of employment	Created new job opportunities? Supported the developed of business skills? Overcame the seasonality of tourism employment?				
Social	4. Social cohesion and equity	Promoted the inclusion of socially excluded or/and economically disadvantaged people? Increased the access to knowledge and creative experiences? Supported social innovation projects in creative tourism?				
	5. Satisfaction of visitors and host community	Promoted community well-being? Strengthened local cultural identity? Encouraged social innovation in tourism and community development? Encouraged sustainable and open behaviours in the community?				
	6. Local engagement and participation	Fostered creative opportunities to meet the needs of the local population and visitor expectations? Increased the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation stages? Raised public awareness of the nature and benefits of promoting creative tourism?				
Cultural	7. Artistic and cultural value	Promoted the intrinsic value of the arts? Contributed to the training and empowerment of artists? Contributed to the recognition and integration of different cultural expressions, both formal and informal?				
	8. Participant satisfaction	Developed high-quality creative experiences that increased participant satisfaction? Improved the participants' cultural capital? Encouraged change in mentalities and behaviours? Promoted personal development?				
	9. Cultural enrichment and protection	Ensured the management and conservation of local tangible/intangible heritage? Valued and promoted local knowledge? Integrated local heritage and distinctive qualities to create unique experiences?				
ENVIRONMENTAL	10. Safeguarding and valuing the physical environment	Included biodiversity values in the planning and implementation of creative tourism? Contributed to reducing the physical impact of tourism? Enhanced the landscape for creative tourism?				
	11. Resource management and efficiency	Motivated the efficient use of local resources? Created or reused local physical infrastructure for creative tourism?				
	12. Environmental quality	Explored the small-scale benefits of creative tourism experiences? Reduced potential negative externalities resulting from tourism? Raised awareness of the need to reduce the				

The co-research work carried out between CREATOUR<sup>®</sup> researchers and pilot project organizers demonstrated the need to create a qualitative self-assessment tool that could respond to the diversity of initiatives and entities operating in this sector. In addition, it also highlighted a diversity of issues linked to the subdimensions that should be included in this matrix in order to make it more comprehensive and flexible. As such, in using the matrix, a variable and non-exhaustive completion of the various rows and columns is allowed, in accordance with the nature of the creative tourism initiatives, the degree of maturity they have reached, and the organizers' objectives and intervention focus.



One of the main purposes of this matrix is to help creative tourism organizers assess their activities from several perspectives and to then make complementary analyses based on the initial diagnosis. This linked process increases their capacity to understand and monitor the multiplicity of effects generated, both within their business project and in interactions with partners and local communities. It also takes into account tourists’ or visitors’ reactions to the experiences offered, in order to better meet the expectations of both parties.

**Part 2. Applying the tool to CREATOUR®**

The diagnostics phase was methodologically supported by a strategic analysis focused on the creative tourism activities that the 40 CREATOUR® pilot project organizers intended to develop. As mentioned above, this exercise resulted in the completion of 40 diagrams, one per pilot project, in order to allow the project organizers and the research team to monitor the activities at different stages of the process. In addition to the issues covered by the diagrams, their joint analysis also made it possible to classify each organizer in terms of typologies, the main focus of action, and type of engagement with the local community. This characterization enabled us to systematize some essential information about the project organizers and to find common ground and patterns among them, while providing an interesting comparative analysis among the pilot initiatives and the regions in the project. A summary of information about the 40 pilots is provided in Tables 29.2 and 29.3.

Table 29.2. Characterization of the first 20 creative tourism pilot initiatives

Region (NUTS II)	Pilot Initiatives	Type of Entity			Dominant Intervention Focus			Local Engagement Type	
		Municipality or Other Public Body	Company	Non-profit Organization	Culture	Tourism	Territory	Predominantly Endogenous	Predominantly Exogenous
Norte	VERde NOVO	●	●					●	●
	CM São João da Madeira		●						●
	LRB	●						●	
	CM Amares & ENcontrARTE			●				●	
Centro	ADERE PG – Peneda Gerês			●				●	
	ADXTUR		●					●	●
	Quico – Turismo		●					●	
	Museu Conímbriga	●						●	
Alentejo	Associação Luzlinar			●				●	
	Domínio Vale Mondego			●					●
	Loom New Tradition		●						●
	CM Mértola	●						●	
Algarve	CM Beja	●						●	
	CECHAP			●					●
	CM Reguengos Monsaraz	●						●	
	Tertúlia Algarvia		●					●	
	PROACTIVETUR		●						●
	Associação Odiana			●				●	
CM Loulé	●						●		
Barroca		●					●		

Source: Developed by authors.

Table 29.3. Characterization of the second 20 creative tourism pilot initiatives

Region (NUTS II)	Pilot Initiatives	Type of Entity			Dominant Intervention Focus			Local Engagement Type	
		Municipality or Other Public Body	Company	Non-profit Organization	Culture	Tourism	Territory	Predominantly Endogenous	Predominantly Exogenous
Norte	Galandum Galundaina			●					●
	ADRAT – Revitalizar Vilar			●				●	
	CM Bragança – Cuscus	●							●
	CM Esposende	●						●	
	Desteque – Caretos			●				●	
Centro	Ruralidades e Memórias – 3B			●				●	
	New Hand Lab+Museu Lanifícios	●						●	
	VIC//Aveiro Arts House		●					●	●
	CM Abrantes + Canal 180	●						●	●
	Associação Destino Caldas			●				●	●
Alentejo	Genuine Alentejo		●					●	
	Marca – ADL			●				●	
	CACO – Artesãos Odemira			●				●	
	João Cutileiro – Pedra+			●					●
	Vagar Walking Tours		●					●	
Algarve	Espirito da Terra – Boliqueime			●				●	
	Associação In Loco			●					●
	C. Ciência Viva + AP Matemática			●					●
	Eating Algarve Food Tours		●					●	
	Associação BackUp			●				●	

Source: Developed by authors.

This analytical exercise was essential to design the multidimensional matrix and to better frame the 40 outcomes extracted from it. The particular characteristics of the creative tourism projects involved in CREATOUR<sup>®</sup>—small-scale activities in low-density areas—also brought additional challenges to this impact assessment exercise, such as the need to capture tangible and intangible elements, directly or indirectly. Additionally, the quantitative data available at the scale of these territories are rarely consistent and robust enough to support economic, social, cultural, and environmental impact assessments. Thus, qualitative information must be collected and strong interpretation skills are determinant for making accurate associations and relational links between creative tourism experiences and outcomes.

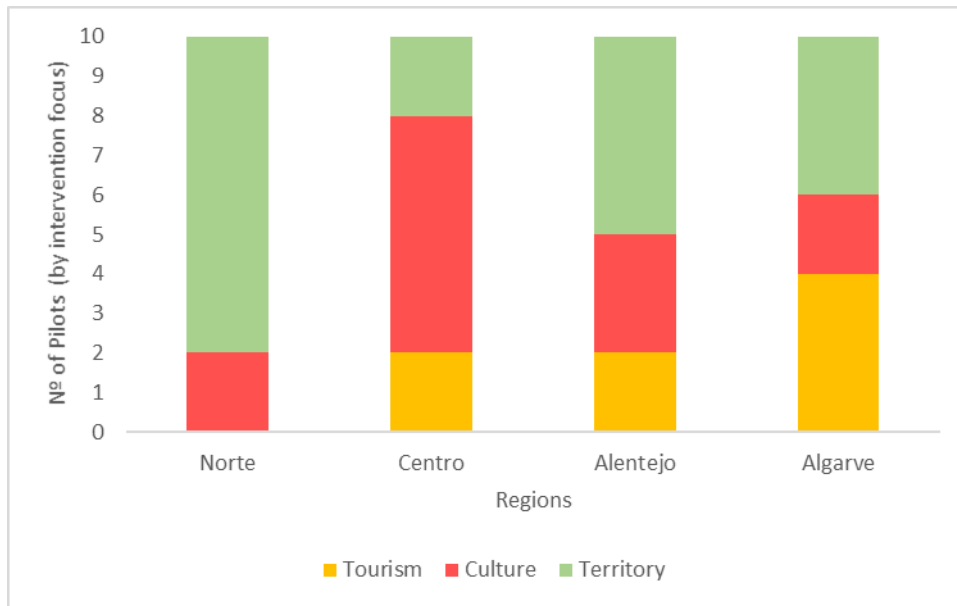
Accordingly, and following the initial exercise, the evaluation phase resulted in the production of 40 multidimensional impact self-assessment matrices. (In the Appendix to this chapter, the example of ADERE Peneda-Gerês, a local development association located in the Norte region of Portugal, is presented to illustrate the exercises carried out.) The completion of these matrices was also based on individual interviews with the project’s creative tourism developers/organizers. A content analysis subsequently carried out on the strategic analysis diagrams and self-assessment matrices produced 40 short reports. These reports sought not

only to summarize the results achieved by the activities undertaken but, above all, to present some guidelines to the creative tourism pilot project organizers.

One of the starting points for the analysis of the results obtained from these assessment exercises was the dominant intervention focus of the CREATOUR® pilot initiatives, given their relevance in guiding the implementation of the creative tourism experiences. Overall, the territory is the dominant focus of intervention for 50% of the creative tourism pilot initiatives, followed by culture (30%), and then tourism (20%). This lower emphasis on tourism in comparison to the territory (although regionally diverse) confirms the prevailing perception that creative tourism is a significant activity to leverage new territorial dynamics in low-density contexts.

As shown in Figure 29.4, there is a visible regional prevalence in the distribution of the three foci of intervention among the 40 pilots. Except for the Alentejo region, which has a relatively balanced distribution between the three foci, the other regions reflect a more specific positioning both around the territory, in the case of the northern region (Norte), and around culture, in the central region (Centro). Although they had not been predetermined, these guidelines can be strategically relevant to increase the capacity for regional coordination of the pilot initiatives. As for the southern Algarve region, the balanced territory–tourism results can be attributed not only to the specific characteristics of this region (the smallest in geographic terms) but above all to the strong predominance of tourism as the main economic activity of the region and a long and robust investment in products seeking to complement the traditional “sun and sand”. Nevertheless, the Algarve is the region where the cultural dimension of the proposed creative tourism activities is less obvious when compared to the other three regions.

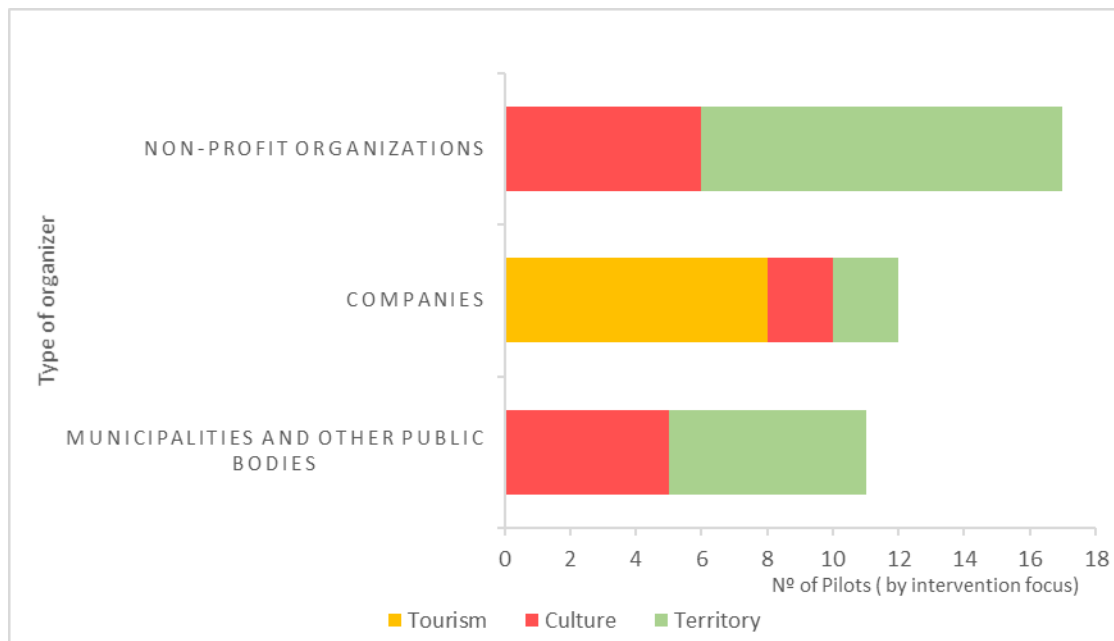
Figure 29.4. Regional distribution of pilots by dominant intervention focus



Developed by authors.

The internal coherence of the dominant intervention focus by type of organizer is also notable. Figure 29.5 illustrates the obvious weight of the territory in the actions of *non-profit organizations*, based on their concern to attract benefits to the population and territories in which they intervene, where creative tourism is envisaged as a means to achieve that goal. The territory development is also the main focus for *municipalities and other public bodies* that have incorporated the ‘creative narrative’ into their public policies in recent years. This is also an expected result, given the purposes that led these entities to focus on organizing and promoting creative tourism. According to these organizations, this differentiated tourism offer is seen as an opportunity to leverage economic, social, and cultural vitality in small towns and rural areas, due to its strong connection with the local communities and their tangible and intangible assets. Furthermore, investing in creative tourism can be a way to retain the population in these territories and promote their empowerment to play a more active role in unique and tailored interactive experiences. In the case of *companies*, their intervention is related to their survival being dependent on the economic benefits generated by tourism, so their main focus is inescapably the development of their tourism activity and client satisfaction. Most of these companies have been developing activities in the tourism sector for some time and creative tourism has appeared in this context as a complementary offer and, in some cases, as a means to counteract seasonality.

Figure 29.5. Distribution of pilot organizer types by dominant intervention focus. Developed by authors



In terms of the project organizers' expectations regarding the impacts generated by the creative tourism activities they have implemented, the analysis revealed that a concern with the economic dimension prevails regardless of the type of organizer. However, the distribution between the four dimensions is different in each case.

In an overview, it is observable that *municipalities and other public bodies* expect more economic impacts from creative tourism activities, followed by those expected at the cultural and social levels. The strategies of intervention are focused on endogenous resources seeking to boost the local economy and culture through the enhancement of tangible and intangible heritage assets, in addition to reputation-building mechanisms targeted at tourism. Strategically, some municipalities have assumed a leading role in promoting and developing creative tourism initiatives, while others are seeking partnerships to lead and expand creative tourism offers to enhance entrepreneurship and empower small local businesses to provide activities that are able to complement tourism. The proposed initiatives are not directly focused on natural resources, which explains a relatively lower emphasis on environmental impact expectations.

*Non-profit organizations* show a more uniform distribution of impacts in the four dimensions of development. Impacts in the economic and social dimensions are expected in the same proportion, with little difference from the social ones. And although the environmental dimension is the one where these organizers expect to generate the least impact, they are the ones that value this dimension the most. In parallel, non-profit organizations seem to be the

best positioned to achieve better results through creative tourism in low-density territories, not only due to the greater institutional flexibility that frames these local development organizations, but also because of their partnerships and privileged knowledge of their fields of action. In general, they mobilize around territorial and local development commitments, looking for innovative opportunities to articulate culture and tourism. However, their maintenance often implies a diffusion in relation to the focus of their multiple interventions (or a certain fluctuation according to the priorities of the main funding programmes), which can result in more superficial investment in certain dimensions or a change regarding their priorities for action.

*Companies* also express the perception of important impacts at the economic level, followed by those at the social and cultural levels. That this expectation is mainly linked to economic development is not surprising since it is the sustainability of these small companies that is at stake. However, this implies establishing partnerships in the territory in which they operate and empowering and valuing their partners to respond spontaneously and creatively to new business opportunities. Thus, the social dimension derives from the strategic priorities of developing local partnerships and tourism networks and, in a certain way, the cultural dimension acknowledges the added value conferred by their socio-economic incorporation. As such, some of them easily recognize the value of partnerships and seem to be in a better position to strengthen a national creative tourism network in the future. The environmental dimension does not take a prominent position for companies, although local endogenous resources and public spaces are valued within the scope of the tourism activities they develop.

As a result of these exercises, we can point to some challenges that require attention from creative tourism project organizers, such as the relevance of involving local communities and establishing collaborative partnerships in creative tourism experiences. We also wish to highlight that the pilot project organizers considered and incorporated a great diversity of endogenous resources that can be valued and should be protected in terms of sustainability, and they all generally acknowledged the diversity of assessment dimensions during the assessment exercises. The diverse array of organizers and pilot projects enabled us to identify some challenges, opportunities, and constraints to creative tourism initiatives as varied as those contemplated by CREATOUR<sup>®</sup>, and to take them into account in the design of the impact self-assessment matrix.

The diversity of drivers for action (i.e., motivations and rationales) animating different types of project organizers, as well as the variety of geographic areas, experiences, and social contexts under consideration unmistakably demonstrated the difficulty of making generalizations about the role and impacts of creative tourism. Moreover, it has improved our knowledge about each particular situation, and underlined the need for a closer look at the specifics of individual initiatives and the geographic and organizational settings in which they are embedded.

Other challenging lessons that emerged include:

- The difficulties of converting and exploring certain endogenous resources within creative tourism experiences;
- The constraints caused by an irregular demand in the planning and sustainability of some projects;
- The informal and voluntary link that characterizes some established partnerships has implications for the predictability of a constant supply of experiences;
- The different projects' maturity levels presented by the participating organizations limited their performances and expected results;
- The socio-cultural and political contexts in which the pilot project organizers are immersed also determined their achievements;
- The organizers' varying knowledge regarding this type of assessment tool required additional investment in the clarification of some concepts; and
- The relatively long timeframe between the performance of the activity and the observation of its results.

### **Concluding remarks**

A multidimensional impact assessment is essential to identify, monitor, and evaluate the various tangible and intangible effects of creative tourism initiatives and increase knowledge about them to create rewarding and sustainable experiences for tourists, residents, and project organizers. The identification of positive and negative repercussions through this evaluation can allow local organizers to take preventive or corrective measures and build innovative solutions that improve the competitiveness of an initiative or, more broadly, the destination, making it more viable and attractive.

The objective of this initiative presented in this chapter was to demonstrate these advantages through an assessment tool aimed at practitioners in the creative and cultural tourism sector, trying not only to meet their needs, but also to fill a methodological and operative gap. The proposed tool comprises two methodological exercises aimed at two distinct phases in the process of creative tourism activity development, but complementary in terms of the resulting analysis. The example taken from the CREATOUR<sup>®</sup> project as an inspirational case study (see Appendix) demonstrates this complementarity and highlights the decisive role that the creative tourism project organizers have had in the whole process of co-creation and co-production of knowledge within CREATOUR<sup>®</sup>.

In general terms, we can conclude that this co-creation and impact self-assessment exercise has contributed to:

- Collect and analyse relevant information, often forgotten or undervalued;
- Create unique opportunities for dialogue, participation, and collaboration around the priorities, objectives, and circumstances of different stakeholders;
- Provide a greater understanding of essential issues, such as the potential of these activities in low-density territories;
- Assist informed and reasoned decision-making to improve the effectiveness, benefits, and sustainability of future activities;
- Realize the relevance of different players in the process and the potential of their complementary roles for the results;
- Make the best use of the different motivations of those involved in creative tourism initiatives to maximize the benefits of their actions;
- Recognize the multidimensionality of sustainable development and the advantages of looking and communicating beyond economic issues;
- Discuss how creative tourism can contribute to the well-being of communities by improving socio-economic and environmental conditions;
- Empower local communities through the cultural involvement of their members and the enhancement of their tangible and intangible cultural heritage; and
- Make creative tourism a strong offer to revitalize and promote a better quality of life in low-density territories.



The work developed has also brought to light some vulnerabilities of impact assessment procedures, particularly in the specific field of small-scale creative tourism activities, and the need to continue further developing the conceptual and analytical tools that are used. The tool that we have proposed is certainly part of this and are open to improvements and further developments. This tool is able to identify positive and negative repercussions to take preventive or corrective measures, and to support the development of innovative solutions that improve the competitiveness of destinations, making them more viable and attractive. However, making it operational implies an integrative and sustainable approach that goes beyond looking at the traditional economic effects. There is a need to continue to challenge conceptions, practices, routines, and instruments on this field, and a network of creative tourism agents such as the one that is being launched by this project can be a promising path, working together in the development of these models and tools.

In parallel, this exercise confirmed the difficulties of providing (and communicating) evidence on some qualitative effects, despite the acknowledgement of their importance in the planning and design of the projects and the creation of synergies on these innovative forms of tourism. But it also confirmed that following that path is essential if we want to effectively achieve some insights into the contributions that these projects bring to the effective sustainable development of those territories and communities.

Unsurprisingly, the process and tools discussed in this chapter require a broader and longer application to better understand more deeply the various impacts of these experiences and to improve the methods to measure them on a given territory with its specificities, but also in different sectors of activity and with different types of participants. That is the work that will follow and, for that, the contribution of the academic community as well as the creative tourism project organizers in the field is essential. Toward this objective, we need to continue working together within in-depth collaboration projects that enable us to co-create knowledge in this field.

### **Part 3. Take-aways for practitioners**

- Given the potential benefits for territorial development that may arise from artistic, cultural, and creative experiences, an impact self-assessment exercise should not be limited to economic criteria to justify the relevance of such activities.
- A multidimensional analysis can obtain a more comprehensive look at particularities, both of the practitioners and the local contexts.
- Qualitative criteria are essential to better understand direct, indirect, and induced effects; to distinguish the tangible and intangible; and to identify spillover effects that can be generated by creative tourism experiences.
- An impact self-assessment exercise should start from an initial diagnosis and contemplate the whole process through to impact assessment in order to achieve a broad analysis of the results reached and to be pursued, taking into account the various time frames that may be involved.
- A self-awareness of project intentions and priorities as well as the diversity of impacts that are possible, combined with a self-monitoring of effects, can be very useful to guide and (re)direct experiences to target audiences as well as stakeholders' objectives.
- The option for a more flexible assessment model may not allow direct comparisons between several projects but can provide useful insights that can be fundamental for each particular case and transferred and applied to other projects and situations.

### **Acknowledgement**

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### **Notes**

1. The analysis is more complex in the specific case of creative tourism compared to that for creative activities or tourism activities in general. For instance, challenges will be faced when these activities involve the co-creation of tourism experiences between provider and

user; when the objectives to be achieved relate to sustainable development and are therefore multidimensional; when the objectives are related to community involvement; when these activities are performed in low population density areas or for very small-scale projects; or when the actions of a diversity of project organizers have very different objectives and rationales.

2. For each of the 12 sub-dimensions, a set of criteria was presented reflecting the sustainable objectives, collectively contributing to the design of the creative tourism impact assessment framework.

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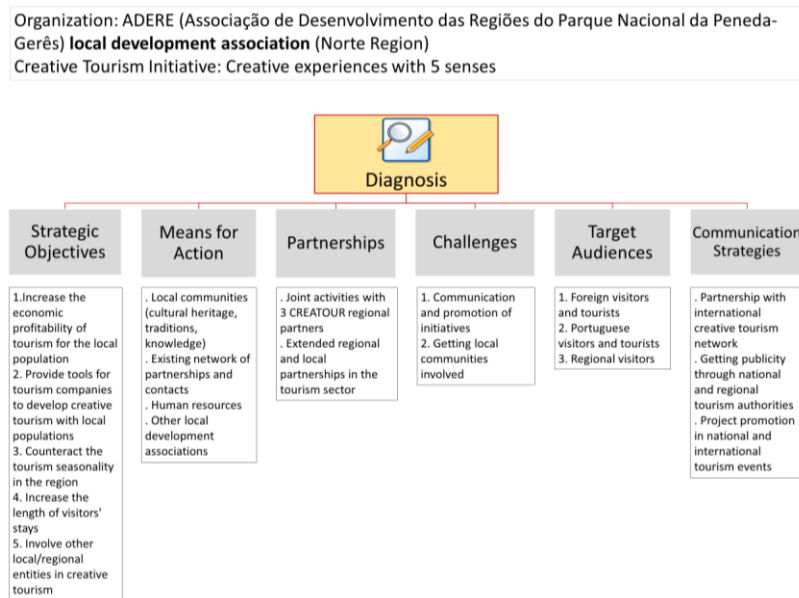
## **Appendix**

To illustrate the exercises carried out, the example of ADERE Peneda-Gerês, a local development association located in the Norte region of Portugal, is presented here.

As the findings in Figure 29.6 illustrate, this creative tourism initiative focuses on the diversity of endogenous resources of a relatively large territory as well as on the cultural and heritage values of the local communities located within the territory. The objective of counteracting seasonality through creative tourism experiences presents itself as an important added value and with successful expectations. The development of local partnerships in terms of creativity and tourism is viewed as a resource to be enhanced and developed in order to

achieve a more constant attractiveness to the territories and to promote them with greater visibility.

Figure 29.6. ADERE Peneda-Gerês self-assessment diagnosis. Developed by authors.



As illustrated in Table 29.4, the cells in the matrix were not filled in comprehensively. On the one hand, the characteristics of each creative tourism initiative meets the dimensions and sub-dimensions in a different way. On the other hand, there are effects that require a longer time frame to be properly evaluated, which does not invalidate the results already attained in this illustrative exercise.

Table 29.4. ADERE Peneda-Gerês self-assessment matrix. Developed by authors.

Dimensions	Subdimensions	<b>My Creative Tourism Activity</b> <b>ADERE Peneda-Gerês (local development association)</b>	Specify the effects (How/ In What way/ Direct or induced effects/ Time frame)			
			For me/my business/my entity	For stakeholders	For local community	For visitors/tourists
ECONOMIC	1. Economic vitality	Generated new sources of income? Fostered new investments in the creative sector and tourism? Contributed to expand markets/audiences? Promoted Economic sustainability?	An opportunity to diversify the supply and expand markets towards economic sustainability	An incentive for new investments and activities	Contributes to promote local heritage and products and greater visibility for the region as a creative tourism destination	
	2. Economic growth and local prosperity	Increased the value of traditional local products and sectors? Included creative products and services in tourism development? Fostered synergies between sectors/other actors? Increased the visibility of the territory as a tourism destination?	An opportunity to explore new sources of income in the tourism sector	Have fostered synergies and more partnerships between sectors	Engaged some residents in new activities and learning	
	3. Quality of employment	Created new job opportunities? Supported the developed of business skills? Overcame the seasonality of tourism employment?	A support to the development of new skills, activities and products in the region	Still residual contribution to mitigating seasonality		
Social	4. Social cohesion and equity	Promoted the inclusion of socially excluded or/and economically disadvantaged people? Increased the access to knowledge and creative experiences? Supported social innovation projects in creative tourism?	Indirect benefits arising from the engagement of local communities and promotion of local heritage and products		Recognition and valorisation of informal skills and know-how	Personal and cultural enhancement
	5. Satisfaction of visitors and host community	Promoted community well-being? Strengthened local cultural identity? Encouraged social innovation in tourism and community development? Encouraged sustainable and open behaviours on community?		Some economic benefits in local trade resulting from the presence of visitors	Indirect benefits arising from the presence of visitors	
	6. Local engagement and participation	Fostered creative opportunities to meet the needs of the local population and visitor expectations? Increased the involvement of all stakeholders in the implementation stages? Raised public awareness of the nature and benefits of promoting creative tourism?	Reinforcement of partnerships and conjunction of local interests with visitor expectations	Awareness of local partners for new activities	Raising local community awareness of creative tourism	
Cultural	7. Artistic and cultural value	Promoted the intrinsic value of the arts? Contributed to the training and empowerment of artists? Contributed to the recognition and integration of different cultural expressions, both formal and informal?	Promotion of traditional arts and stimulus for innovation skills	Empowerment of local artists to develop innovative products based on the traditional ones		
	8. Participant Satisfaction	Developed high-quality creative experiences that increased participant satisfaction? Improved the participants' cultural capital? Encouraged change in mentalities and behaviours? Promoted personal development?	Satisfaction coming from the visitors as an incentive for the development of more activities			
	9. Cultural enrichment and protection	Ensured the management and conservation of local tangible/intangible heritage? Valued and promoted local knowledge? Integrated local heritage and distinctive qualities to create unique experiences?	Encouragement for social innovation	Promotion of local heritage and cultural dynamism	Recognition for the enhancement of local heritage	Knowledge sharing
ENVIRONMENTAL	10. Safeguarding and valuing the physical environment	Included biodiversity values in the planning and implementation of creative tourism? Contributed to reduce the physical impact of tourism? Enhanced the landscape for creative tourism?	Promoting the fight against seasonality effects	Possibility to benefit from the break in seasonality	Possibility to benefit from the break in seasonality	Possibility to benefit from the break in seasonality
	11. Resource management and efficiency	Motivated the efficient use of local resources? Created or reused local physical infrastructure for creative tourism?	Enhancement of natural resources	Valorisation of endogenous services and products	Raising awareness on the preservation and promotion of natural ecosystems	Raising awareness on the preservation and promotion of natural ecosystems
	12.	Explored the small-scale benefits of creative	No negative			