

SPOT Newsletter

RE-IMAGINING Cultural tourism in Europe



SPOT PROJECT



SOCIAL AND INNOVATIVE PLATFORM ON CULTURAL
TOURISM AND ITS POTENTIAL TOWARDS DEEPENING
EUROPEANISATION

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SPOT Newsletter

Dear Reader,

We are pleased to share the first newsletter of the EU funded project SPOT, which aims to develop a new approach to understanding and addressing cultural tourism and to promote development of disadvantaged areas. on the one side and propose recommendations to areas with tourism overpressure on the other one. The first issue of our newsletter introduces the project and its first highlights, focusing on challenges brought on by COVID-19 pandemic.

The newsletter will be published annually and will contain up to date information on the project progress, recent events and news about related topics. Keep yourself informed about ongoing SPOT activities!

Enjoy the reading.



SPOT AT GLANCE

SPOT is 3-year EU-funded project under the Horizon 2020 programme, focused on the study of issues related to cultural tourism. The consortium is composed of 15 partners from 14 European countries and Israel. Such a diverse team will bring in a wide range of knowledge, inspirations and ideas including close cooperation with the local, regional or national stakeholders. Cultural tourism has traditionally focused upon visiting “high art” museums and galleries. Our model of cultural tourism, by contrast, reflects a massive widening of cultural tourism that more accurately reflects patterns of travel in the 21st century and digital revolution in travel as a way of accessing culture.

SPOTIT TOOL



The BIU team is in charge of SPOTIT, the GIS innovative tool. The main goal of the tool is to provide decision support mechanisms for the development of cultural heritage sites with a degree of emphasis on disadvantaged and peripheral areas. For this purpose, we have set up a virtual machine on the Microsoft Azure platform and deployed a GIS server (ArcGis for Enterprise by ESRI) on it. While all teams have delivered their study area polygons, some of the teams already collected and delivered more data files such as demographics and elevation files, and we thank all teams for that. We are now working on collecting all publicly available data for all case studies and put some effort to standardise the data before it could be embedded into the cloud. The next phase will include the development of the algorithm based on the cultural heritage sites inventory which is being built by all teams these days, followed by the development of SPOTIT web application.



PROJECT NEWS

About SPOT

The SPOT project provides an innovative response to recent problems by understanding cultural tourism across very different regions and countries and by integrating stakeholders and policy actors into the project and in feeding back to them the results. The SPOT project will address the knowledge gaps by expanding and developing the idea of cultural tourism. The five main keystones of the project will be: incorporating the role of local communities, expanding the concept of cultural tourism, from the passive consumption of cultural objects to the active and interactive participation in cultural experiences, building in the role of stakeholders, developing this interactive and dynamic view of cultural tourism and view the issue of identity not as a local phenomenon, but as a multi-scale phenomenon.

Policies, Practices and Strategies for Tourism - Aberdeen University

It is important to understand the role of local, regional and national actors in framing policy for cultural tourism. This is the purpose of the review that comprises Workpackage 2.

We have now completed a review of the relevant National, Regional and Local policies and strategies providing a policy framework for each of our 15 Case Study areas.

The review is based on the first quarter of 2020 – essentially before the impact of COVID-19, which is resulting in the reassessment of many approaches to tourism. This will represent an important benchmark against which subsequent changes can be measured.

The review highlights the different issues facing cultural tourism in the study areas – whether lack of essential infrastructure, level of citizen engagement, policies in over-touristed areas and access to finance to develop new initiatives.

The next stage of the work is to examine the policy changes since March 2020, to use survey data to highlight the important issues and to discuss the direction of progress with local stakeholders and government bodies. Important in this work will be a new understanding of ‘cultural tourism’, new national policy directions, the increasing focus on domestic and ‘near range’ tourism in the context of COVID-19 and emerging processes of citizen engagement.



FIELDWORK DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC

AS SEEN BY OUR PARTNERS

With face to face interactions restricted or no longer possible as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic partners of the SPOT Consortium faced various degrees of difficulty during the fieldwork period of the tourist, residential and entrepreneur surveys. To reach the target number of answers they found alternative ways to conduct the surveys, many of them leveraging digital technology and utilising the help of their stakeholders. The digital fieldwork has led to new challenges: a low response rate of online surveys, incomplete responses etc. They persisted in collecting responses and as a result, the Consortium obtained around 1000 completed residential, around 800 tourist and around 600 business surveys.

MENDELU surveys took place in the form of an online questionnaire and face-to-face interviews with participants involved in cultural tourism in South Moravia. The target number of answers in individual categories was obtained within the planned deadline. Out of the 125 tourists they addressed 40 completed the questionnaire. They obtained 40 completed questionnaires from 73 residents and 40 completed business questionnaires out of the 120 respondents, who started filling it out.

The UNIVR Team subscribed agreements with some of their main stakeholders at regional and local level: municipalities, local authorities,

civil associations and operators. The fieldwork of the UNIVR team took place in the area of Alba and Langhe, Monferrato and Roero, in Piedmont. They interviewed 400 inhabitants of the municipalities of the area (population universe: about 95,000, CATI CAWI method), more than 40 tourists (F2F and CAWI Method) and about 200 business operators (universe: about 2,000, CAWI Method).



Questionnaires by the KGRR team were realized on-line through GOOGLE Forms with the distribution support of the Municipal Office in Nitra, the Nitra Tourism Organization and the University of Constantine the Philosopher in Nitra. As of 15 October 2020, their status was as follows: inhabitants of the city 166, visitors 142, entrepreneurs 3. The number of completed questionnaires – especially in the business sphere – was limited by the developing pandemic, the reduction in the number of visitors, closing services, the slowdown in activities and the lack of interest in filling in the questionnaires due to their complexity.

The University of Wrocław managed to collect 60 business, 59 residential and 56 tourist questionnaires. Due to the short period in which the research could be conducted and the difficult pandemic situation, the research was conducted in three ways: an online survey (business questionnaires), a telephone survey (business and residents' questionnaires) and in-person survey (tourists' and residents' questionnaires). Their research area covers two rural communes of the Lower Silesia region: Janowice Wielkie and Mysłakowice. The survey was conducted in different villages of both communes in September and October 2020.



The IOER team conducted tourist surveys during the holiday season. The German SPOT research area Lieberose-Oberspreewald experienced a unique tourist boom in summer 2020. Many Germans changed their plans and spent holidays in domestic destinations. They obtained 103 filled questionnaires from tourists and 42 by residents. The surveys of entrepreneurs enfolded to be difficult. From more than one hundred questionnaires sent out to companies in a first wave, only five have been returned. The team is working hard to enhance the number even though field work is not possible after the second shut down in November 2020.



The Tallinn University team has gathered nearly 200 responses during the SPOT surveys for local entrepreneurs, locals and tourists despite restrictions posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. The surveys covered the whole Ida-Virumaa county with key sites being Narva, Sillamäe, Toila municipality and Kohtla-Järve. Almost everyone was impacted by the pandemic, which reduced both local and tourist visitors to cultural sites and worryingly has created a situation where over a third of surveyed businesses reported that without change in circumstances they will not be able to operate beyond another year.

At the beginning of August and mid-September 2020, IGAR team carried out two field campaigns in the study area. Overall, 161 questionnaires were applied to business, local residents and tourists across the entire study area - Buzau Carpathians and Subcarpathians. The surveys have reached 100 % of the businesses, residents and tourists. On type of business, 44% were applied to accommodation, 6% to cafés, bars and restaurants and 45% to visitor attraction (e.g. cultural heritage sites, vineyards, museums), site or activity and 5% other (e.g. festivals, outdoor activities).

The Austrian team structured research along some first regional stakeholder meetings and the regional tourism survey. The on-going COVID-19 crisis impacted negatively on these tasks, both on availability of stakeholders, as well as on the practical surveying. In the latter case, the UniGraz team resorted to online questionnaires, mostly distributed via regional social media networks and tourism associations. The approach provided some interesting methodological insights in comparison the face-to-face surveys, e.g. a higher outreach vs. more incomplete questionnaires. Overall, the approach yielded sufficient results for the partnership.

Barcelona has been particularly hard-hit by the Coronavirus throughout the fieldwork period. As a result of the ongoing and ever-tightening restrictions, the UB team has conducted its fieldwork in a fully digital capacity, utilizing Google Forms as a platform for conducting the surveys after initial contact was made by phone and/or email. At the date of publication, the UB team has fulfilled the minimum sample of 40 residents' responses. They have also secured 14 responses from local businesses

thus far. Despite the drawbacks of digital fieldwork they are persisting in collecting responses through their dual strategy of contacting as many businesses as possible using existing databases and personal contacts, and expanding possibilities for wider-scale contact with businesses through their local partner at the Catalan Tourism Agency.

JUST 30% OF BARCELONA'S HOTELS ARE CURRENTLY OPEN, WITH AVERAGE OCCUPANCY AT 20%.

The survey carried out by the KRTK team resulted in 99 completed tourist surveys, 103 filled out residential surveys and 33 responses from entrepreneurs. Because of the border crossing regulations introduced in Hungary the KRTK team carried out the surveys separately for the cities of Komárom and Komárno. They conducted face-to-face interviews approaching visitors and residents at popular and highly frequented places of the two cities. On the Slovakian side of the case-study area the questionnaires were completed with the help of the civic association Marthos (Esterházy Academy). The entrepreneurs in Komárom were approached with the help of the Tourism Association of Komárom as a representative organization. On the Slovakian side one of their main partners the Pons Danubii EGTC was in charge of carrying out the survey. Because of the partial lockdown in Slovakia face-to-face methods were greatly influenced.



The research area of the BIU team, Beit She'an Valley, consists of two municipal authorities: the town of Beit She'an and the Emek HaMa'ainot Regional Council. The pandemic did not allow the distribution of questionnaires on the basis of personal meeting with the interviewees. Therefore, they turned to online questionnaires and were assisted by local authority officials who have their own networks with business owners and local residents. Due to the unavailability of tourists in general, and foreign tourists in particular, they turned to their local networks. They approached Israeli residents who have visited the area in the last five years. So far they have managed to meet the target of the tourists questionnaires and expect to complete the target in the two other questionnaires.

The field study of the University of the Aegean in the Cyclades started on the island of Andros between 25-31/7/2020 and took place in the regions of Batsi, Chora and Korthi. It then followed with Syros between 30/8-6/9/2020 in the areas of Galissas and Ermoupoli and ended with Santorini between 17-25/9/2020 in the areas of Fira, Oia and Emporio. Besides the questionnaire survey, the field research included visiting local and cultural sites, informal discussions with locals and tourists, but most importantly interviewing key stakeholders, and reaching out to the public using both online and offline means, in order to raise awareness of the survey and to achieve the highest possible number of responses. In total, 136 island residents, 79 tourists and 67 tourism-related businesses replied to the survey questionnaires.

In September 2020 the University of Aberdeen conducted site visits to their case study sites. These sites included Doune Castle, the Glenfinnan Viaduct and Abbotsford House. It allowed them to collect information about the significance of these sites, gain a tangible understanding of how the sites are managed and how the sites are experienced from a visitor perspective. It also allowed them to see first-hand how the hospitality and tourism industry mitigates the coronavirus pandemic in practice. This trip also gave the research team insight on the most practical ways to disseminate project information and contact participants.

Drawing upon the experiences of partners, the teams successfully remodeled their working practices to overcome the challenges brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic and used this as an opportunity to develop alternative ways to conduct research and to develop better collaborations with their stakeholders.



CASE STUDY AREA NEWS



SOUTHERN MORAVIA

The first half of 2020 was affected by the COVID-19 pandemic in all case areas. Since the South Moravian Region is a destination preferred by domestic tourists, there was a significant revival of cultural tourism during the summer season, which very likely exceeded the reality of 2019. Five destination management approaches play a significant role in this. These are registered associations that bring together municipalities, tourism entrepreneurs, and non-governmental organisations to present individual regions, organise regional offer packages, provide training and information services for providers, and evaluate tourism. Destination management is covered by the South Moravian Tourist Board.

KOMÁROM & KOMÁRNO

A new bridge was built between Komárom-Komarno recently. The bridge, completed in the summer of 2020, was handed over a month ago in order to reduce freight traffic in the cities and to allow the Komárom region to forge even closer ties between the twin cities.

There is also a separate bicycle lane on the bridge, and a connection to the motorway on the Hungarian side. (See in the image above.) The two cities want to take advantage of the new opportunities that the bridge means in several ways: bus traffic, building a bicycle rental system, diverting freight traffic.

IDA-VIRUMAA

Ida-Virumaa has proved its potential for the development and growth of cultural tourism in 2020. In June, it saw 4688 more overnight stays than in 2019 being one of only four counties (of 15) that saw any growth during the pandemic. This was due to a strong marketing campaign by the Narva Museum and Ida-Viru Tourism Cluster and subsequent increase in tourist numbers from within Estonia and neighbouring countries.

At the same time, it was decided that the neoclassical town centre of Sillamäe, a formerly closed town built during the Soviet rule in the 1950s, would be taken under protection by the National Heritage Board. This move, along with the regeneration of its waterfront is set to turn this seaside location into an attractive cultural tourism destination.

KINDERDIJK IN THE NETHERLANDS IN CORONA TIME

Tourism in Kinderdijk has been hit hard this summer. Due to the corona crisis, an estimated 80 percent of tourists stayed away from the historic mills. A big blow for the not-for-profit SWEK, Kinderdijk World Heritage Foundation, the central organisation for balanced tourism promotion in the area. But also the restaurants in the village suffer severely from the crisis. Buses full of tourists stayed away.

The foundation fears that budget cuts are inevitable. About 65 employees work at the foundation, from millers, office workers, catering staff to sellers in the souvenir shops. The foundation will try to prevent dismissing staff as much as possible.

Fortunately, there is a state scheme for compensation of salary costs. This helps the SWEK to keep people in service for the time being. In addition to care for the staff and volunteers, there is also care for the area and the nineteen mills. That is why SWEK appealed to the government to set up a bridging and guarantee fund for the heritage sector in the Netherlands, which SWEK would also like to call upon. Maintenance is the second major cost item for SWEK. SWEK had budgeted two million euros for maintenance and projects for 2020. Money that tourism should have yielded. Structural maintenance is very important. If this is not done, the mills will deteriorate, which will ultimately only cost more money.

The SWEK is asking the government for a state-guaranteed credit, which they want to pay back to the last cent in the coming years. Retaining employment is also an important reason to apply for a temporary loan. Much of the maintenance in the area is done by specialists, for example mill craftsmen, entrepreneurs that are largely dependent on Kinderdijk. If the planned maintenance can be carried out, this will preserve jobs in the region.



In questionnaires prepared under the coordination of Wageningen University in the Netherlands, which is responsible for work package 1, many of our partners started collecting data in the autumn of 2020. As part of this, we will research the tourists in the case study area, the residents, and the business partners and stakeholders operating there. Their fieldwork was published as a first step by, among others, Romanian, Hungarian and Italian colleagues.

THE VALLEY OF PALACES AND GARDENS

On September 30, 2020, in Szklarska Poręba, was held a meeting as part of the 2nd Tourist Forum, entitled "Tourism in the border-lands of the Karkonosze, Iżera Mountains and Lusatia" organised by the Karkonosze Agency for Regional Development (www.karr.pl) (co-organiser: Commune of Boxberg, Germany; patronage of, inter alia, the German Consulate General in Wrocław, the Marshal of the Lower Silesian Voivodeship and the Saxon State Ministry of Science, Culture and Tourism). The forum was a meeting of representatives of the tourism industry and institutions supporting its development. Lectures and panels concerned the current economic situation in the tourism industry and the promotion of cultural tourism products.

Ornamental Farm and the Association of Karkonosze Municipalities with its seat in Bukowiec organised this year's edition of the event called "The visit at Countess von Reden - Autumn with Art in Bukowiec" on October 18-19. The program included lectures, exhibition of the winners of the Mountain Photography Biennale 2020 and music concerts. This event was accompanied by Geocaching - a field game in the Park in Bukowiec based on the book by Tomasz Szyrwiel entitled "Jelenia Góra Bestiary".



BEIT SHEAN VALLEY

The decision to focus on cultural and heritage tourism in the region of Beit-She'an (The town of Beit She'an; and the regional council The valley of Springs) was taken in 2019, before anyone foresaw the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath. Therefore, the available data on tourism activities are based on 2018/2019 surveys and documents, but - management information, definitions, characteristics of landscapes, parks and cultural attractions are the same.

The region under consideration is located in Israel's periphery and its uniqueness attracts local and foreign tourism. The touristic attractions for cultural tourism in this area have several dimensions:

National Parks; Built Vernacular Heritage; Cultural Heritage Sites; Tourism services.

In November 2019 an early survey was conducted in the Valley of Springs area and several National Parks and nature reserves were observed in order to discover their cultural and heritage potential for tourist development.

One of them was 'The valley of the springs' park (Emek HaMa'ainot Park) which is managed by the local Regional Council.

The park is known for his natural springs. Some of the springs are under the responsibility of the Nature and Parks Authority (national authority) and they are part of its network of national parks (Gan Ha-shlosha, Maayan Harod and Ganey Huga). Others (Ein Shukak, Ein Mod and Nahal Kibbutzim) which attract hikers, sport activities, mainly - cycling, are open and the regional Council is responsible for their maintenance.

THE CYCLADES

Our case study focuses on three Cycladic islands namely Andros, Syros and Santorini in the Aegean archipelago, southeast of mainland Greece. The history and culture of the Cyclades is a mix of influences by various rulers and invaders such as the Phoenicians, the Romans, Venetians and Genoan merchants and Ottomans. All three islands boast of a plethora of world cultural heritage such as archaeological, historical, religious, cultural monuments and sites.

Andros

Apart from its sandy beaches and hiking routes, Ándros can also be seen as a cultural tourism destination, mainly thanks to its museums.

The Committee for Tourism Development of the Municipality of Andros announced in 2019 the development of alternative/special-interest forms of tourism and new actions around gastronomy and the promotion of local products. The basic principles of the new programme are the extension of the tourist season, the development of alternative forms of tourism and the attraction of new markets and investments.

Syros

The island of Sýros is a unique combination of Greek tradition and western influences. The capital town (Ermoupoli) was the first important trade and industrial centre of Greece in the 19th century.

At the end of the tourist season 2020, the Municipality of Syros-Ermoupolis announced that, according to the official data of the Port Authority of Syros and given that the start of the tourist season this year took place in June, the island managed to achieve arrivals reduced by 45% compared to 2019, a record year for Greek tourism in general, exceeding the fore-

casts of the Ministry of Tourism, according to which the average drop in tourist arrivals for the country in 2020 would have been around 75-80%. The Municipal Department of Tourism carried out numerous promotional actions including online and offline media promotion and cooperation with national and international marketing agencies.

Santorini

Famous for its volcano and its unique caldera, Santorini also has numerous landmarks and archaeological sites, such as the ancient city of Akrotiri.

Together with the Region of Southern Aegean, the Municipality of Thira is responsible for the implementation of policy on the development of cultural tourism and the protection of local culture, i.e. the promotion of contemporary cultural goods, visual and performing arts, as well as local crafts. The Municipality also aims to promote the organisation and/or production of festivals, musical concerts, theatrical performances, cultural and other arts events.

LEICHHARDT LAND

As the Tourism Network Brandenburg informs, the Corona Aid for cultural Institutions, launched at the end of April 2020 is aimed at municipal cultural institutions and non-profit cultural associations as well as foundations and societies. The Federal State of Brandenburg is providing more than 30 million Euros from the Corona Rescue Fund to compensate up to 100 percent of the loss of income of public and private non-profit cultural institutions. Also cultural institutions in the Leichhardt Land – the German case study area in SPOT project – can profit from this programme.

IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON URBAN TOURISM IN LJUBLJANA AND MARIBOR

David Klepej, University of Ljubljana
SPOT research group at the University of Ljubljana carried out a study of impacts that Covid-19 pandemic has on urban tourism in Europe between May and July 2020. The research was financed by the Slovenian Research Agency through the project 'Analysis of spatial and social impacts of urban tourism on Ljubljana and Maribor'. The methodology was based on analysis of available statistical data, on-line information about Central European countries addressing the pandemic in the sector of tourism, interviews with 12 stakeholders (e.g. tourism providers, managers, urban planners) in Ljubljana and Maribor, and the internal workshop in which we re-evaluated the already identified spatial, social, economic and administrative impacts of urban tourism under the additional pressure of COVID-19 situation.



The study showed the impacts of the pandemic on urban tourism are both positive and negative. Time frame of their impact should be for a period of two to five years. Interviewed stakeholders recognise COVID-19 crisis as an opportunity for development of tourism in the direction of sustainable, boutique, innovative and digitalized. A need for a more strategic and comprehensive management of tourism has been communicated. Further consideration should be given to the relationship between the private and public sectors and the role of public institutions in the urban tourism management. The re-evaluation of the impacts in the context of pandemic shows pandemic will weaken positive economic impact, but significantly reduce negative spatial impacts. The later is mainly due to the decreased pressure of the tourism masses in the urban space. Pandemic has had mixed impacts on the society, and should stimulate improvements and innovation in the urban tourism management. The report is available [here](#) (in Slovene).



PIEDMONT LANDSCAPE

Land of noble vineyards and culinary tradition, cradle of some of the greatest Italian writers of the 19th and 20th centuries, headquarter of some of the most important global gastronomic companies (Nutella© was born in Alba), the territory we are studying is very interesting. Landscape, history, literature, art, UNESCO site, social and glamour visibility attract many Italian and foreign tourists.

We participated in the 90th International Alba White Truffle Fair, visited the Barolo vineyards with its precious chapel restored in 1995 by Sol Lewitt, admired the castle of Grinzane Cavour (municipality where was Mayor, Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour, Italian Prime Minister of the National Unification in 1861) and the views of the hills that descend from the Alps towards the Mediterranean sea of Genoa. For our interviewees, this is cultural tourism.

STYRIAN IRON ROUTE

COVID-related impact on tourism in Styria is now quantifiable. In the summer season (May till September 2020), Styrian tourism saw a minus of 21% tourism arrivals (-459.000) and an additional -14% in overnight stays (-904.400) compared to the year before. This mirrors the trend of the winter season 2019/2020 (October-April), when the negative impact was about the same perceptual decrease in both categories.

ART NOUVEAU

Barcelona's iconic Art Nouveau sites have been highly affected by ongoing struggles related to the COVID-19 crisis. After adapting to the pandemic's early stages through innovative approaches – including virtual tours, expanded health and safety measures, and steeply discounted entries for local

residents – many Art Nouveau sites have been forced to dial back their activities or close their doors temporarily, given the rise in Coronavirus cases and stricter measures decreed by the government. As of 30 October, all cultural sites must close for the second time since March 2020. We continue to watch and wait for improved circumstances and for cultural tourists' return to Barcelona.

NITRA

Since the beginning of 2020, the city of Nitra has been preparing a new Strategy for the Development of Culture, Creative Industry and Tourism in Nitra 2021 - 2031. It is created on the basis of surveys of public needs, analysis and discussion with actors. It is the foundation on which is built the city's candidacy for European Capital of Culture 2026. CPU participates as an actor in both projects including SPOT team. SPOT team members actively participated in two workshops - 4. 9. 2020 analytical and 2. 10. 2020 proposal. In November, the city plans to submit a cultural strategy to the City Council in Nitra for discussion. In both projects, not only for international prestige, but mainly on the positive effects that affect all areas of life in the city, especially tourism, culture and business environment. The aim of the implementation team is to prepare projects with a European dimension that will be applicable with a long-term effect. As a result of anti-epidemic measures in the currently declared state of emergency, all activities are muted, resp. as far as possible, they are realised online.

CONFERENCES AND EVENTS

More information: <http://www.spotprojecth2020.eu/blog>



MENDELU together with the SPOT project organised the EURORURAL '20 online conference - SMART COUNTRYSIDE FOR THE 21st CENTURY:

EURORURAL '20 conference on SMART COUNTRYSIDE FOR 21ST CENTURY was the 7th of Moravian rural conferences organised by the Department of Applied and Landscape Ecology, Faculty of AgriSciences, Mendel University in Brno. The aims of the conference were the following: to map European rural research and particular interests of investigators, to gain space for the presentation of contemporary knowledge about rural research, to continue in the tradition of international conferences dedicated to rural problems, to support intra-personal contacts among experts of different disciplines dealing with rural problems, to present South Moravian rural landscape. The conference aimed at a relatively complex view of rural problems from different viewpoints (ecology, geography, demography, sociology, economy, territorial planning), less at the research of specific problems in detail. (<http://www.eurorural.eu/eurorural20/index.html>)

European Countryside journal (Milada Šťastná as an Editor in Chief)

A special Issue of the European Countryside journal (SCOPUS CiteScore Tracker 1.15 for 2019) on rural cultural tourism has been already published as Issue 3/2020.

"Incubator of international projects" in Křtiny (CZ) - workshop

Our project Coordinator - Professor Milada Šťastná - presented information about our SPOT project to the Czech scientific community on the workshop "Incubator of international projects" in Křtiny (CZ) 15.-16. September 2020.

Geolinks conference

Recently, IGAR team has started the dissemination of the project results. During the International Conference on Environmental Sciences – GEOLINKS, which was held October 5-7 in Plovdiv (Bulgaria), a paper on the conceptual framework of cultural tourism in Romania was presented.

EUROMED 2020

Milada Šťastná is invited as the coordinator of the H2020 project (SPOT), to be a speaker at 1st International Workshop on Cultural Tourism, entitled Discovery Europe, to be held online during the EUROMED 2020 (<http://www.euromed2020.eu/>) on November 4th, 2020. Details can be found at <http://www.euromed2020.eu/workshops>

Invitation: INTER-EXCELLENCE

SPOT project coordinator Milada Šťastná was invited to share the information about the project during the workshop "Exchange of experience in the preparation and implementation of international research projects and development, possibilities of cooperation with foreign partners" on 24.9.2020 at the VŠÚO research institute in Holovousy in CZ.

28th International Geographical Conference

Geographical aspects of the Central European area Creativity of regions. 28th International Geographical Conference 14 October 2020 (online)

<http://www.kgrr.fpv.ukf.sk/en/index.php/conference/conference-2020>

http://www.kgrr.fpv.ukf.sk/images/konferencia/2020/Program_konferencie_2020.pdf

Workshop on cultural tourism

The SPOT project partnership amidst of the pandemic organised a workshop about the meaning and understanding of cultural tourism in the 21st century. The aims of the workshop were multiple: to spur discussion about cultural tourism, to define Europeanisation as a relevant process and factor of the cultural tourism development, and to present and inform the 15 case studies in the project. The workshop took place on September, 7th 2020, via the Zoom on-line platform. All 15 partners were presented with 2 to 4 members, so altogether around 40 participants took part.

In regards to the cultural tourism a lot of different literature was shared, so were the new views, types of this sort of tourism. Among those we can name the media tourism, the place-based tourism, the virtual reality tourism, the types of tourism related to the digitalisation of the sector and new ways of representing the cultural offer. Participants also displayed their views on Europeanisation which they see in two ways: as a process which shapes the cultural offer via various incentives, labels (e.g. Cultural capital of Europe, Cultural Routes initiatives), and as an instrument to cherish and contribute to the European identity of tourists. The presentations of the case studies revealed that case studies can be clustered into groups according to their cultural offer and the type of tourism, the size and the type of tourism destinations (urban vs. countryside), and the maturity of the destination (underdeveloped vs. overtourism areas). All in all, the event was evaluated a valuable input for the further activities of the WP1 and WP2.

Events in Poland

On September 7, 2020, as part of the international SPOT project, a six-hour workshop entitled Spot Cultural Tourism Scientific Workshop was held. One of the members of the organisation committee was Sylwia Dołzbłasz. The first part of the workshop was a brainstorming session devoted to the contemporary meaning of two key terms used in the project SPOT: cultural tourism and Europeanisation. In the second part of the conference, all SPOT partners presented their case study areas within the context of the potential of the areas for the cultural tourism development and the significance of Europeanisation. The Polish team from the University of Wrocław (dr Małgorzata Pstrocka-Rak, dr Anna Grochowska, dr hab. Krzysztof Janc) took a part in the workshop and presented "The Valley of Palaces and Gardens".

Małgorzata Pstrocka-Rak and Anna Grochowska registered to participate in the 5th international conference "Physical Activity in the Mountain Areas of Poland and World", organised by the Recreation Department of the University School of Physical Education in Wrocław and the Local Tourism Organisation in Szklarska Poręba. The conference was held on 19-20 November 2020 and organized on-line using the internet platform. The thematic scope of the conference covered socio-economic, natural, cultural, health, psychological and physiological aspects of mountain activities. The participants from SPOT UWr team presented some of the first field research results. The title of their presentation is "The importance of cultural resources for the development of tourism on the example of selected communes in Western Sudetes".

Anna Grochowska and Krzysztof Janc participated in the 2nd Tourist Forum "Tourism in the borderlands of the Karkonosze, Iżera Mountains and Lusatia" organised by the Karkonosze Agency for Regional Development on September 30, 2020 in Szklarska Poręba (representatives of UWR took part in the meeting and also conducted research surveys among participants).



PUBLICATIONS

MENDELU has published a special issue of the international scientific journal *European Countryside*, which has been devoted to rural cultural tourism. Among others, the following article devoted particularly to SPOT has been published.

Šťastná, M. - Vaishar, A. - Ryglová, K. - Rašovská, I. - Zámečník, S.: Cultural Tourism as a Possible Driver of Rural Development in the Czech Republic. Wine Tourism in Moravia as a Case Study. *European Countryside*. 2020. vol. 12, No. 3, pp. 292 - 311. Doi: 10.2478/euco-2020-0017.

The report responded to the COVID-19 pandemic has been submitted and already accepted for publishing to the journal *Current Issues in Tourism* (CIT-7769.R1):

Vaishar, A., Šťastná, M.: Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on rural tourism in Czechia. Preliminary considerations. *Current Issues in Tourism*. 2020 (in print)

The preparation of a Special Issue in the *Sustainability* journal continues, together with other projects of the HORIZON 2020 programme focused on tourism. MENDELU has submitted a contribution:

Šťastná, M., Vaishar, A., Brychta, J., Tuzová, K., Zloch, J., Stodolová, V.: Cultural tourism as a driver of rural development: Case study Southern Moravia. *Sustainability*. 2020, 12(21), 9064. ISSN 2071-1050. Doi: 10.3390/su12219064

Vaishar, A., Šťastná M., Zapletalová, J., Nováková, E. Is the European countryside depopulating? Case study Moravia. *Journal of Rural Studies*. 2020, Doi: 10.1016/j.jrurstud.2020.10.044 (in press)

The extended version of the presented paper was published by IGAR team in one of GEOLINK conference's ISI indexed volumes:

Mitică B., Mocanu I., Grigorescu I., Dumitrașcu M. (2020), Cultural tourism in Romania – a general outline of the conceptual framework, *Proceedings of the GEOLINKS Conference Vision for new horizons. International Conference on Environmental Sciences, Plovdiv, Bulgaria, 5-7 October 2020, Book 2, Vol. 2, Section Green Design and Sustainable Architecture, 283-296.*

CPU team published the following articles within the project: Krogmann, A., Mróz, F., Dvořáková Líšková, Z., Dubcová, A., Nemčíková, M., Oremusová, D. 2020. Possibilities for Developing Beer Routes in Slovakia. *Prace Komisji Geografii Przemysłu Polskiego Towarzystwa Geograficznego. Studies of the Industrial Geography Commission of the Polish Geographical Society*. 34 (3) 2020. p. 36–52. ISSN 2080–1653. DOI 10.24917/20801653.343.3 (case study Nitra included)

Nemčíková, M., Krogmann, A., Oremusová, D., Ambrosio, V., Mróz, F. 2020. Sts. Cyril and Methodius and Their Reflection in the Landscape of Slovakia, 2020. DOI 10.17846/CL.2020.13.1.224-236. In: *Konštantínove listy*, vol. 13, no 1, p. 224-236, ISSN 1337-8740

Oremusová, D., Krogmann, A., Nemčíková, M., Némethová, J. 2020. Využitelnost' potenciálu Oravského hradu v rozvoji. *Jihlava : Vysoká škola polytechnická*, 2020. p. 165-175, ISBN 978-80-88064-46-6.

Petrikovičová, L., Krogmann, A., Fialová, D., Svorad, A. 2019. Intensive tourist-related urbanisation impacts on a mountain village: The case study of Veľká Lomnica in Slovakia. <https://doi.org/10.7163/GPol.0155>. In *Geographia Polonica*. 2019, vol. 92, no 4, p. 395-408, ISSN 0016-7282 (to the case study Nitra related as an example of negative impacts on tourism, e.g. over-size tourism)

Hladká, A., Petrikovičová, L. 2020. Transformácia kultúrnej krajiny a jej využitie pri tvorbe náučného chodníka Bošáckou Dolinou. In: *Geografické Informácie*, Roč. 24, č. 2 (2020), ISSN 1337-9453 (in press) (in relation to case study Nitra, the article can be seen as a pilot study)

Rech G., Migliorati L., Nuove sfide al turismo culturale in un paesaggio letterario. Il caso di Langhe, Monferrato e Roero e il Covid-19 nel progetto SPOT, paper presentato alla XLI Conferenza annuale dell'Associazione Italiana di Scienze Regionali "Regioni tra sfide e opportunità inattese", Web Conference, 2-4 settembre 2020, DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.4290245.

Available here: <https://www.aisre.it/images/aisre/5f183b111d45a8.31120753/Rech.pdf>

SPOT IN THE MEDIA

SPOT news in e-newspaper IDNES (In Czech language)

MENDEL University wants to attract tourists to the periphery of South Moravia. Scientists from 15 countries, including Israel are involved in the Cultural Tourism SPOT project.

(https://www.idnes.cz/brno/zpravy/turismus-edci-grant-brno-mendelova-univerzita.A190823_497208_brno-zpravy_vh)

SPOT project on Czech national TV

Czech national TV ČT1 recorded the information about the SPOT project, including fieldwork of two Czech team members during the cultural event in Velké Bílovice (the South Moravian region) on 14.9.2020 where the first experiences of the impact of COVID-19 were shared by the local stakeholders, especially wine producers.

(<https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/porady/10122427178-udalosti-v-regionech-brno/320281381990914-udalosti-v-regionech/video/789188>)

SPOT TV interview (In Czech language)

Prof. Milada Šťastná presented the SPOT project H2020 within the live streaming programme "Events in Regions" (Brno), prepared by the Czech Television. (<https://www.ceskatelevize.cz/ivysilani/10122427178-udalosti-v-regionech-brno/319281381990809-udalosti-v-regionech>)

SPOT Radio interview (In Czech language)

Professor Milada Šťastná participated in an audio live streaming interview about the SPOT research project on Czech Radio Plus, in a 60-day session.



Podcast in Hungary

As the dissemination activities focus on spreading knowledge and raising public awareness, WP4 created a website targeting not only our stakeholders, the academic sphere and policy makers, but the wider public too. Our podcast reported on a research carried out in Hungary focusing on the effect of COVID-19 on the tourist consumer behaviour. The survey ran from late April to early June 2020 and the total number of respondents was 736. Tourism comprises around 10% of the Hungarian GDP, therefore it is important to examine the current changes related to the pandemic. The interviewed experts agreed that the coronavirus pandemic is not only a crisis, but also a chance for renewal and finding alternative ways.

More links from Verona dissemination

<https://www.gazzettadalba.it/2020/06/lue-finanzia-un-progetto-di-ricerca-per-il-sostegno-al-turismo-culturale-in-langhe-monferrato-e-roero/>

<https://daily.veronanetwork.it/news/turismo-culturale-lateneo-scaligero-partecipa-al-progetto-spot/>

<https://www.atnews.it/2020/06/turismo-culturale-nelle-langhemonferrato-e-roero-al-via-il-progetto-spot-finanziato-dallunione-europea-112972/>

Newspapers in Slovakia

- in the municipal newspaper - Radničné noviny No. 9/2020 - Kramáreková, H., Ivanič, P. 2020. Snaha zviditeľniť Nitru na kultúrnej mape Európy (Efforts to make Nitra visible on the cultural map of Europe)
<https://www.nitra.sk/zobraz/obsah/32789>

- in the university journal - Náš čas No. 4/2020 - Kramáreková, H., Ivanič, P. 2020. Spoločne za zviditeľnenie Nitry na kultúrnej mape Európy (Together for the visibility of Nitra on the cultural map of Europe)
<https://www.ukf.sk/verejnost/univerzitne-media/nas-cas>



TOURISM IN EUROPE

In 2020 May, UNWTO is reporting a historical and unprecedented situation with 100% of all destinations worldwide having introduced COVID-19 related travel measures limiting or interrupting entirely the access to their territories for tourists.

The UNWTO reports on COVID-19 Related Travel Restrictions are updated on a regular basis to support mitigation and recovery efforts of the tourism sector, providing a global overview of the measures in place and analysing them from a tourism perspective.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the COVID-19 epidemic saw a worldwide loss of more than

According to statistics published through the World Tourism Barometer, the number of tourists fell by 65 percent from January to June 2020, compared to 440 million fewer tourists. In Europe, the number of tourists decreased by 66.5% in the observed period compared to 2019.

In the first quarter by -21% and the second quarter by 94.1%. In the Czech Republic, in the period under review from the beginning of January 2020 to June 2020, the number of tourists decreased by 67.5% compared to the previous year. In January 7.7%, February -1.4%, March -74%, April -99.8%, May -99.8%, June -88.5% compared to 2019. In the period under review, tourism in The Czech Republic lost \$ 9.7 billion in revenue (UNWTO, 2020).

UNWTO, 2020. UNWTO World Tourism Barometer.

Available at:

<https://doi.org/10.18111/wtobarometereng>

\$ 460

BILLION IN TOURISM REVENUE FROM EARLY 2020 TO MAY.

According to statistics, the impact of the epidemic is three times stronger than the impact of the economic crisis in 2009.



Travel and tourism are sectors that have been hit particularly hard by the COVID-19 crisis. WTTC in partnership with Oxford Economics published a report on the recovery scenarios and economic impact from COVID-19. Based on their scenarios the impact on tourism jobs in 2020 is estimated to be a reduction of between 98 million and 198 million.

In 2019 the contribution of tourism to jobs and GDP for Europe was 37.1 million jobs and \$2,018bn of GDP. The report prognostises a 29.5 million reduction in tourism jobs and \$1,608bn fall in tourism GDP. In terms of visitor numbers it suggests a 78% decline in international and 75% decline in domestic arrivals in Europe ((ETAO, 2020) (<https://www.etoa.org/research/wttc-recovery-scenarios/>)).

The report of SmartCulTour emphasises, that in the light of the COVID-19 crisis, destinations will need to rely less on international tourists; and focus on close visitor markets (e.g. proximity tourism and staycation) (Xavier Matteucci - Jennifer Von Zumbusch: Theoretical framework for cultural tourism in urban and regional destinations. <http://www.smartcultour.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/D2.1-Theoretical-framework-for-cultural-tourism-in-urban-and-regional-destinations.pdf>).

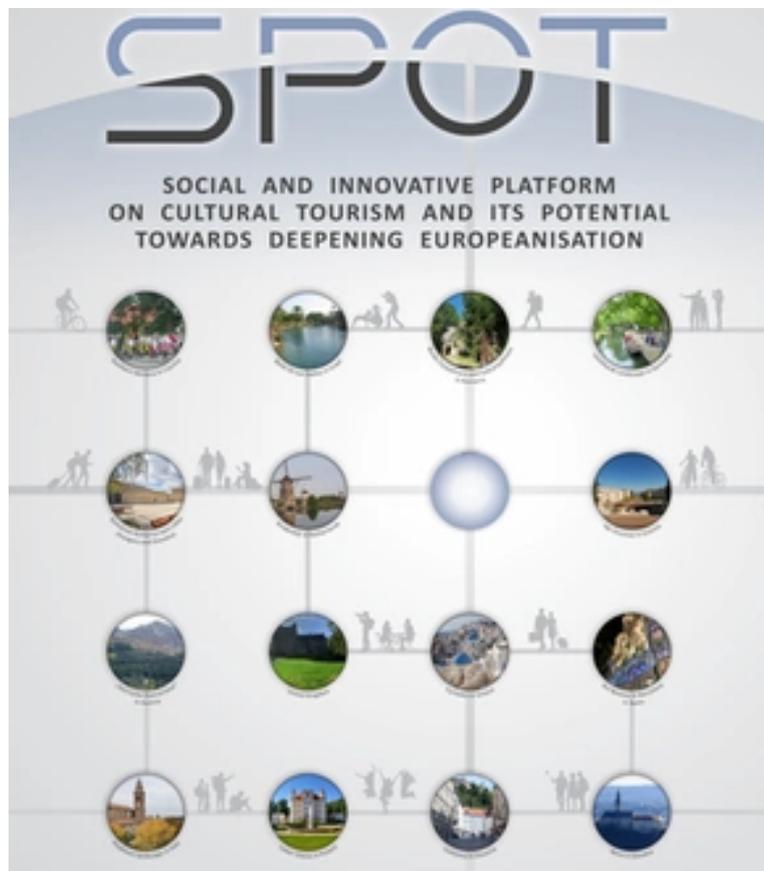
Based on the feedback from cultural tourism experts and interviewed regions a recent publication within the framework of IMPACTOUR highlights the importance of timely information regarding the cultural tourism sector. Cooperating with each other, and sharing knowledge in Europe can help to identify the policy instruments that work the best (Kalvet, T.; Olesk, M.; Tiits, M.; Raun, J. Innovative Tools for Tourism and Cultural Tourism Impact Assessment. Sustainability 2020, 12, 7470.).

Smart Cultour and Impactour and SPOT are in cooperation, their results are also related to our project.

<http://www.spotprojecth2020.eu/networking>



Roll-up, leaflets and more dissemination materials:
<http://www.spotprojecth2020.eu/media-and-downloads>



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