A Map of Social Economy in Tourism

diesis
network

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Contents

I. Executive summary

The purpose of this paper is to address the important role that social economy can play in improving the sustainability, inclusion and diversity of the tourism sector in Europe and beyond. At the same time, it wishes to explore how tourism and the social economy together can deliver collaborative, sustainable and regenerative local development.

The paper proposes an overview of the latest EU policy developments and strategies on both the social economy and tourism and a collection of several best practices from different European countries in the fields of rural communities, community-based enterprises, cooperatives in action, cultural heritage, digital platforms, inclusion and diversity. The best practices presented in this paper show the benefits of tourism when developed in a social economy perspective.

Social economy and tourism are a major driver of social, environmental and economic change. Nowadays, the sectors face some major challenges that prevent them from further scaling up. In parallel, new priorities, such as new business models embracing digitalisation and sustainability, could be further developed.

Considering the lack of research on the connections between these two fields, and the attention that both have received lately from both national and European institutions, this paper aims to take a first look at these interconnections and undertake an initial mapping exercise.

II.   Introduction

Our contemporary world is both socioeconomically and environmentally unsustainable. (Postma, Cavagnaro, & Spruyt, 2017). Since the 1970s, sustainable development has been addressed from both environmental and economic-social dimensions. Indeed, it has been recognised that to achieve sustainability, social issues such as poverty reduction and capacity development also need to be addressed (see e.g. United Nations, 1962; Dag Hammarskjöld Foundation, 1975 (Postma, Cavagnaro & Spruyt, 2017). This applies also to tourism and the social economy.

Tourism is a major driver of social, environmental, economic, and political change. Nowadays, the sector presents structural and management problems that should be further addressed. In parallel, new priorities, such as new business models embracing digitalisation and promoting connectivity, should be further developed. (OECD, 2021).

The participatory business models offered by the social economy could represent an opportunity for tourism. First, by applying such models to the field, a further contribution to green and digital transitions could be achieved. (European Commission, 2021) Furthermore, social economy realities within the tourism sector could have an important role in facing unemployment, creating decent and fair jobs, and promoting social inclusion and social innovation. The role of social economy and tourism has also been recognised and enhanced at the EU level, as shown by important strategic documents such as the Social Economy Action Plan, the recommendation of the OECD on the social and solidarity economy and social innovation and the Transition Pathways for Tourism and the Proximity and Social Economy Ecosystems.

The purpose of this paper is to address the important role that the social economy can play in improving the sustainability, inclusion and diversity of the tourism sector in the EU. At the same time, it aims to explore how tourism and the social economy together can deliver collaborative, sustainable and regenerative local development.

Considering the lack of research on the connections between these two fields, and the attention that both have received lately from both national and European institutions, this paper aims to take a first look at these interconnections and undertake an initial mapping exercise.

After a short explanation of the methodology used, the paper will start with an overview of the latest EU policy developments and strategies on both the social economy and tourism, including how these fields foster an ecological approach to territorial development, accelerate the green and digital transitions, increase the resilience of EU ecosystems, and regenerate communities.

The second part of the research presents various best practices from different European countries in the fields of rural communities, community-based enterprises, cooperatives in action, cultural heritage, digital platforms, inclusion and diversity. The best practices presented in this paper show the benefits of tourism when developed from a social economy perspective.

III. Methodology

An exploratory study was conducted to understand how social economy and tourism could be linked to promote sustainable economic development.

The first part of the paper was drafted thanks to a brief academic and policy literature review, which gave the authors an overview of the social economy and tourism fields in terms of definitions, size and impact in Europe, as well as the latest EU policy developments.

Then, a wide collection of social economy organisations and support structures active in the field of tourism in Europe was collected. These examples come from the literature and suggestions from the main national federations and European networks active in the fields of tourism and/or social economy (including but not exclusively, members of Diesis Network).

The cases selected in this paper meet the following criteria:

- they are social economy organisations and/or enterprises;
- they are well-established organisations and/or enterprises (with more than 3 years of activity);
- the organisations' main field of activity is tourism, or they have relevant activities related to tourism;
- they have implemented measures to ensure the safety of travellers and safeguard the local community.

Moreover, in 2022, Diesis organised two events on this topic whose results have been integrated into the paper: the "Masterclass on Social Economy & Sustainable Tourism" on 16th March 2022, and the "Social Economy in Tourism for a Sustainable Economic Development" Roundtable on 24th June 2022.

IV.   Definitions and statistics

Tourism and the social economy play a vital role in fostering and maintaining a healthy, vibrant society.

The social economy comprises a wide a range of bodies with various business and organisational models, which operate in a large variety of economic sectors. These bodies share common values and features: the primacy of people as well as social and/or environmental purpose over profit, the reinvestment of most of the profits and surpluses to carry out activities in the interest of members/users ("collective interest") or society at large ("general interest") and democratic and/or participatory governance. Social economy business models bring value to local economies and societies by fostering their inclusiveness, resilience and sustainability (EUbusiness, 2021).

Historically, the term 'social economy' refers to some main types of organisations, which have in common the mission to provide goods and services to their members or society at large: cooperatives, mutual benefit societies, associations (including charities) and foundations. Moreover, nowadays, social enterprises are also part of the social economy (European Commission, 2021).

In the EU, there are 2.8 million social economy enterprises, which represent 10% of all businesses in the EU, this means that almost 13.6 million people, circa 6.2% of people employed in the EU, work for social economy enterprises (European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 2022). Moreover, up to 160 million people in Europe are members of social economy enterprises (Euroepan Commission, n.d.).

Tourism can be defined as the activities of persons travelling to and staying for leisure, business and other purposes in places outside their usual environment. Therefore, tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people (OECD, 2022) (UNWTO, n.d.).

Tourism is a major economic force worldwide and in the EU, which is the world's leading tourist destination, with four of its Member States among the world's top 10 destinations (Eurostat, 2022) (UNWTO, 2019). Indeed, the sector plays a key role in generating overall economic growth and contributing to the development of many European regions, including less developed ones, due to its considerable spillover and job creation potential, in particular for young people (European Commission, n.d.).

According to the OECD, "tourism has the ability to make a considerable contribution to urban, rural and regional development, and support inclusive economic growth by providing i) diverse employment opportunities, ii) benefits for urban and regional economies, iii) opportunities for innovative small-scale business operations, iv) support for the promotion of cultural authenticity and natural assets, and v) support for infrastructure-related development and maintenance" (OECD, 2021).

Therefore, tourism occupies is a key factor in Member States' economies and employment opportunities (Eurostat, 2020) (Eurostat, 2019). In 2019 it was estimated to generate 9.5% of total GDP, which represents EUR 787 billion, and 22.6 million jobs, along with having a major social impact (European Commission, 2021).

Moreover, in recent crises, the tourism field has also proved to be very resilient and to maintain persistent growth. Nevertheless, policy intervention will be necessary to address structural problems in the sector, to avoid the return to issues of tourism management (e.g. overtourism), and to advance key priorities, such as encouraging new business models, embracing digitalisation, and promoting connectivity (OECD, 2021).

V. Background

Both tourism and social economy seek to enhance social innovation, support the development of local communities, allow fair and sustainable social and economic growth, and boost the social and economic transformative power of social businesses.

Indeed, it appears that social economy enterprises and tourism share common goals. Among others, these are: the creation of decent and fair jobs and sustainable and inclusive economic growth, developing a sense of community and solidarity, decreasing poverty and including people at risk of exclusion, boosting innovation in the products and services provided, protecting and preserving the environment and cultural heritage, and developing and connecting local and communities (Pollock, Social Entrepreneurship in Tourism The Conscious Travel Approach, 2018) (Boluk, 2017) (Dodds, 2017) (Richard S. Aquino, 2018) (ILO, 2016).

The participatory business models of social economy are the new business models for tourism, which could contribute to the green and digital transitions by supplying sustainable goods and services and bridging the digital divide, and which consider the needs of citizens, employees, and other stakeholders (European Commission, 2021).

1. Latest policy developments at EU level

Governments, international organisations and the EU can contribute to creating the conditions for social entrepreneurship to flourish and scale up in the tourism sector. They can develop policies that support and encourage the development and operation of social enterprises in the tourism sector, and they can assist in general the creation of conditions that encourage and legitimise social entrepreneurship (Dredge D. , Institutional and Policy Support for Tourism Social Entrepreneurship, 2016).

This is why, in order to develop, update, innovate and scale up both the social economy and tourism sectors, several relevant EU policy instruments, strategies and documents have been released in recent years. At the European level, a set of policy instruments targets the topic of social economy and tourism by promoting their development.

A. Social economy

a. *The Social Economy Action Plan (2021)*

The Social Economy Action Plan published in 2021 not only defines social economy organisations but also recognises their important role from the social, economic and environmental perspectives. Furthermore, in parallel to supporting the development of better framework conditions, access to finance, and scaling up, the objective of the Action Plan is to help the social economy to adopt and develop green practices, products and services, and to improve its digital capacities (EUbusiness, 2021) (European Commission, 2021).

Therefore, with this Action Plan, the Commission aims to help successful ideas be replicated across the EU. Concretely, the Action Plan proposes a series of actions for the period 2021-2030, and focuses on three main areas (EUbusiness, 2021):

- Creating the right conditions for the social economy to thrive;
- Opening opportunities for social economy organisations to start up and scale up;
- Making sure the social economy and its potential are recognised.

b. *Recommendation of the OECD on the social and solidarity economy and social innovation*

Adopted on 10 June 2022, the OECD Recommendation on the Social and Solidarity Economy and Social Innovation provides a new common policy framework, which takes a holistic approach to finding concrete solutions to barriers and challenges that may hold back social economy organisations (OECD, 2022).

The recommendation builds on the assumption that national differences exist and that the social economy has different development levels according to national contexts.

The recommendation provides nine building blocks to create the conditions for the social economy to thrive at the international, national, and local levels. The nine building blocks are: 1) social economy culture; 2) institutional frameworks; 3) legal and regulatory frameworks; 4) access to finance; 5) access to markets; 6) skills and business development support; 7) managing, measuring, and reporting impact; 8) data; and 9) social innovation (OECD, 2022) (OECD, 2022).

Figure 1. The nine building blocks. Source: (OECD, 2022)

c. *International Labour Organisation's Resolution concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy*

In June 2022, the International Labour Conference adopted a resolution and conclusions concerning decent work and the social and solidarity economy (SSE). In this document, the ILO gives the following definition of social and solidarity economy: "The SSE encompasses enterprises, organisations and other entities that are engaged in economic, social, and environmental activities to serve the collective and/or general interest, which are based on the principles of voluntary cooperation and mutual aid, democratic and/or participatory governance, autonomy and independence, and the primacy of people and social purpose over the capital in the distribution and use of surpluses and/or profits as well as assets. SSE entities aspire to long-term viability and sustainability, and to the transition from the informal to the

formal economy and operate in all sectors of the economy. They put into practice a set of values which are intrinsic to their functioning and consistent with care for people and the planet, equality and fairness, interdependence, self-governance, transparency and accountability, and the attainment of decent work and livelihoods. According to national circumstances, the SSE includes cooperatives, associations, mutual societies, foundations, social enterprises, self-help groups and other entities operating in accordance with the values and principles of the SSE" (ILO, 2022) (ILO, 2022).

This has been a landmark moment in the history and development of social economy worldwide, as an international organisation has for the first time given a definition of the social economy, which was widely approved. Indeed, this definition was welcomed by ILO members and social economy stakeholders from around the world (ILO, 2022) (Social Economy Europe, 2022) (ILO, 2022).

d. Transition Pathways for the Proximity and Social Economy ecosystem

In 2021, the European Commission's Annual Single Market Report presented an analysis of the challenges in 14 industrial ecosystems – one of these was the proximity and social economy ecosystem – in the EU and the changes needed to successfully achieve the twin transition, both green and digital, and increase overall economic resilience in Europe. Starting from that, the European Commission started co-creating these 14 transition pathways with the stakeholders and groups concerned, to transform European industry (European Commission, 2022) (European Commission, 2021).

The Transition Pathway states that "Parts of the social economy contribute to the green and digital transitions at large by supplying sustainable goods and services and bridging the digital divide. Their participatory business models, which take into account the needs of citizens, employees and other stakeholders, help to ensure that the transitions are fair and inclusive. At the same time, reinforcing sustainable and digital practices within the whole ecosystem will build long-term resilience and allow its diverse actors to be active levers of the twin transition." (European Commission, 2022).

Therefore, the Transition Pathway outlines 14 action areas for the green and digital transition of the ecosystem.

Transition Pathway Action Areas – Green Transition

1. Reinforcing Business to Business collaboration for greener and circular value chains

2. Creating financial incentives and supportive regulation for green and circular social economy business models

3. Certification, labelling and self-regulation

4. Innovation as enabler for green transition and business development in the social economy

5. Greening infrastructures and business operations

6. Local Green Deals, green business communities and citizens' initiatives

7. Addressing capacity and skills gap

Transition Pathway Action Areas – Digital Transition

1. New business models – the platform economy
2. Data Maturity and data driven business models
3. Public and private tech partnerships and support
4. Data sharing, Data management & Code of Conduct
5. Supporting Digital Social Innovation & Tech for Good entrepreneurship
6. Access to technology
7. Boosting digital skills by - and in the social economy

Figure 2. 14 action areas for the green and digital transition of the ecosystem. Source: (European Commission, 2022)

B. Tourism

a. Europe, the world's no. 1 tourist destination

In June 2010, the European Commission adopted the Communication, 'Europe, the world's No. 1 tourist destination – a new political framework for tourism in Europe' (European Commission, 2010). This communication set out a new strategy and action plan for EU tourism. Four priorities for action were identified:

- To stimulate competitiveness in the European tourism sector;
- To promote the development of sustainable, responsible, and high-quality tourism;
- To consolidate Europe's image as a collection of sustainable, high-quality destinations;
- To maximise the potential of EU financial policies for developing tourism. (European Commission, 2011)

b. Policy developments related to COVID-19 recovery

COVID-19 had a great impact on the tourism industry, as all Member States implemented measures and restrictions on non-essential travel and quarantines, closed their borders and reinstated internal border controls within the Schengen area. The industry was under great pressure as companies and organisations of all sizes faced major economic challenges, resulting in the loss of many jobs (Eurostat, 2020).

In May 2020, the European Commission adopted the 'Tourism and Transport package' of initiatives (including several Communications) to allow for a coordinated framework within which to resume transport and tourism safely, enable Europeans to travel safely, and address pressing issues for tourism operators and consumers (European Commission, 2020).

In the same year, in June 2020, the Commission launched Re-open EU, a website and mobile app which provides real-time information on borders and available transport and tourism services in EU countries (European Commission, 2020).

c. Transition Pathway for the Tourism ecosystem

In line with the 2021 Annual Single Market Report, in 2022 the Commission published the Transition Pathway for the tourism ecosystem (European Commission, 2021).

The Transition pathway for tourism proposes 27 focus areas to develop services that are more circular and environmentally friendly, enhancing the use of data and with better accessibility. These areas have subtopics and actions where stakeholders should act in the upcoming years to accelerate the twin transition, promote more resilience in the tourism ecosystem, adapt regulation and public governance and develop green and digital skills. (European Commission, Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs, 2022).

2. Regenerative and responsible tourism: the future of communities

Most of the conversations are about what comes next for tourism and increasingly often the answer is that the next big thing must be 'Regenerative Tourism'.

In recent decades, various tourism models conform to the sustainable development paradigm, such as steady-state, responsible, sustainable, resilient, transformative and social tourism (Ateljevic, 2020) (Cheer, 2020). Furthermore, despite sustainable development efforts to mitigate damage, doing less harm is considered inadequate (Chassagne, 2019) (Pollock, Creating destinations that flourish: Why change?, 2019). Regenerative tourism wants to be a step forward compared to sustainable tourism by positioning tourism activities as interventions that develop the capacities of territories, local communities and guests (Bellato, 2022).

Regenerative tourism goes beyond "not damaging" the environment; it looks to actively revitalise and regenerate human and natural ecosystems, resulting in a positive impact on local communities and economies (Regenerative traveller, n.d.). However, achieving a regenerative approach requires shifting our economic model and societal paradigms to evolve from seeking "sustainable" growth in volume to pursuing a more qualitative development that fosters human health and well-being through ecosystems' health (Laurent C. M.-R., 2021). The regenerative approach is a holistic co-creation pattern to invest in environmental, social, cultural and economic values.
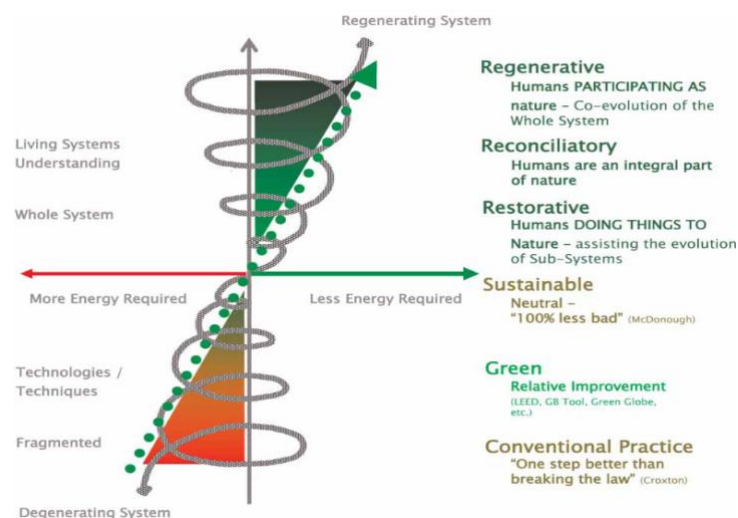

Figure 3. Systems Understanding – Regenerating Systems vs Degenerating Systems. Source: Laurent, 2020

According to (Laurent M. , 2020), in order to leave a place better than it was before, all actors involved in the tourism value chain, including travellers, businesses, workforce and communities have a shared responsibility to preserve local assets and enable the destination as a whole to flourish. Even the United Nations, in line with the SDGs and drawing upon nature's wisdom, elaborated a set of principles for regenerative tourism, as shown in the graph below.
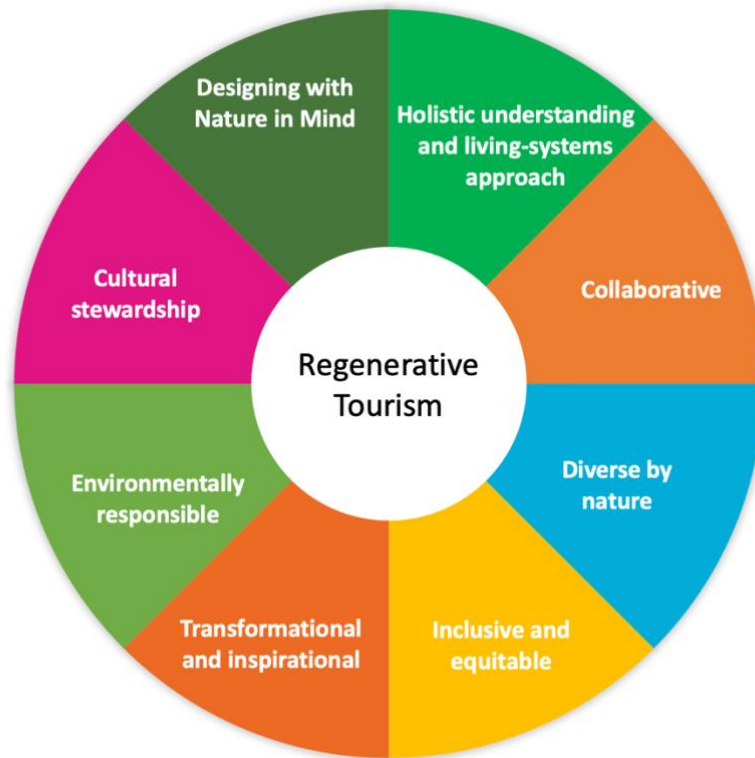

Figure 4. Own elaboration of graph based on the UN's set of regenerative tourism principles

Tourism has always been seen as an economic resource sustained by culture, history, gastronomy and nature. However, recently, we are observing that tourism can help the regeneration of territories, especially those marginalised communities facing challenges such as depopulation, desertification and deprivation of services and resources. Regenerative tourism offers a ground-breaking set of solutions to rethink and rebuild the tourism industry in a way that builds long-lasting capabilities and strengthens the resilience of its direct and indirect stakeholders during and beyond the crisis.

The regenerative tourism approach means that tourists can: i) choose responsible agencies, tour operators and hotels that have the lowest environmental impact possible or that have some kind of a positive impact on the local community; ii) support the local economy, buying from local businesses; iii) get actively involved in cleaning areas of their travel destinations such as beaches and forests, etc.; iii) support social projects that help local communities that they are visiting.

(Dredge D. , 2022) argues that understanding the difference between regenerative and sustainable tourism is important since they are complementary and not competitive concepts.

As (OECD, 2021) points out, sustainable tourism should not be considered as a special form of tourism, but rather, all forms of tourism should strive to be more sustainable. Long-term sustainability requires a suitable balance to be struck between the environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development. It requires the informed participation of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to ensure wide participation and consensus building. Achieving sustainable tourism is an ongoing process that requires constant monitoring of impacts (economic, social and environmental) to capitalise on opportunities and respond to challenges as they arise, and to inform future policy responses.

VI.   Good practices: Social economy business models and successful stories

"A good practice is not only a practice that is good, but a practice that has been proven to work well and produce good results and is therefore recommended as a model. It is a successful experience, which has been tested and validated, in the broad sense, which has been repeated and deserves to be shared so that a greater number of people can adopt it." (Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, 2015).

In this part of the paper can be found a series of social economy organisations and support structures active in the field of tourism in Europe, following the criteria listed in the methodology part.

The good practices are divided into the following categories:

- Developing and connecting rural communities
- Cultural heritage
- Digital platforms
- Social inclusion and promotion of diversity
- Making travel accessible
- Support structures and clusters

1. Developing and connecting rural communities

By being close to their beneficiaries and the local communities, social entrepreneurs often better understand local issues and therefore create better-targeted solutions. Therefore, social enterprises in the field of tourism will better develop products and services that respect the local communities and boost their potential.

This section presents social economy organisations and enterprises with activities in the field of tourism, aimed at developing and connecting rural communities.

Organisation	**Partners Albania**
Country	Tirana, Albania
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Entrepreneurship, social innovation, integrated services, green ideas competition
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 27:** Support visibility of funding opportunities for tourism actors **Actions:** Providing a one-stop-shop that links to key support resources and funding opportunities for tourism SMEs on European, national, and regional level
Website	https://partnersalbania.org/

Partners Albania is an independent Albanian NGO established in 2001, working to support civil society and facilitate inter-sector cooperation to strengthen democratic institutions and advance economic development.

Partners Albania is a member of Partners Networks, a partnership of 19 independent, local organisations in Europe, the Americas, Africa and the Middle East working for peaceful and democratic change. It is also a member of several European and regional networks such as BCSDN, ECAS, DIESIS, ANNA LINDH and WINGS.

Partners Albania provides fee-paying services on learning, knowledge-sharing, institutional capacity-building, dialogue and process facilitation, and thematic discussions, segmented to the business, donor institutions, and the non-profit sectors.

Partners Albania supports the development of innovative start-ups through the provision of integrated services such as the Green Business Competition, an activity organised since 2012. The Green Business Competition aims to stimulate and encourage innovation for green business ideas at the local level and explores the role of philanthropy in engaging local communities to generate green business ideas that use local resources and revitalise disappearing traditional production chains and community-based markets. By supporting innovative, local sustainable economic development initiatives, the competition contributes to building a peaceful, competitive, and prosperous Western Balkans and Greece region in line with the seven Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda. During the two days of the competition, finalists selected among competitors from non-profit organisations, social enterprises, small

business ventures and individuals present their business ideas before an independent jury of experts in economy, education, and business development.[1]

Organisation	Railcoop
Country	Figeac, France
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Cooperative, rail services, territorial inequalities, energy transition
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 5:** Collaborative governance of tourism destinations **Actions:** Providing awards for smart destination management and studying and sharing best practice on destination management **Topic 6:** Sustainable mobility **Actions:** Improving the appeal of railways for visitors **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers
Website	https://www.railcoop.fr/

Created in 2019, Railcoop is the first collective interest cooperative in France dedicated to freight and passenger rail transport.

Railcoop brings together citizens, businesses, communities, railway workers and more broadly any natural or legal persons sharing a common objective: to design, in accordance with common values, rail services adapted to the needs of all territories.

In the context of global warming, the train is an essential link in the ongoing ecological transition, in addition to being one of the safest means of transport. Transporting passengers by rail requires less than one-twelfth of the energy required to move one person or one ton of goods by road. Developing rail also means, indirectly, protecting biodiversity, curbing the artificialisation of land and therefore preserving territories.

Railcoop offers solutions to open up territories and reduce territorial inequalities and meets the societal demand for new modes of citizen participation, in order to accelerate the energy transition in the field of transport.

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[1] A lot of entrepreneurs in the field of the tourism sector have been supported over the years through the competition, among them:
- The Gjirokastra Foundation, a non–governmental and non-for-profit organisation whose mission is the preservation and development of heritage as a source for social and economic development. It was founded in 2001 with the support of the Packard Humanities Institute.
- Tirana Ekspres, a non-profit organisation initiated by artists, activists, environmentalists, policy-makers, social entrepreneurs and researchers whose purpose is to enhance cultural and artistic perception and expression in Tirana and beyond. Tirana Ekspres contributes to the sustainable development of the environment through the promotion of clean-up actions and ecotourism.
- The Eco–Social Farm, a project which aims to increase social inclusion and provide space for social economic integration for people with low contracting capacities. It is providing services, space and activities in nature for children, youth and families.

Railcoop is an offer complementary to public service and falls within the framework of freely organised services. Railcoop runs passenger and freight trains without public subsidy, providing mainline national and international services, day and night, as well as local services useful to territories. The equality of territories is also a priority for Railcoop, which promotes direct connections between territories, and not a centralisation of the offer around metropoles.

Plus, thanks to its cooperative status, Railcoop employees are directly involved, alongside users, in defining new services that meet everyone's needs. Moreover, the opinion of each member is respected. In concrete terms, all decisions of Railcoop's management bodies are public and each member of Railcoop can consult the accounts at any time. Thus, Railcoop members can participate in the construction of the cooperative by joining circles of reflection.

Organisation	SZOWES
Country	Koszalin, Szczecin – Poland
Relevant SDGs	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Key words	Network, national cooperation, platform, digital
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 5:** Collaborative governance of tourism destinations **Actions:** Providing awards for smart destination management and studying and sharing best practice on destination management **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://szowes.pl/

The mission of the West Pomeranian Social Economy Support Centres Network is to promote the idea of the social economy and to strengthen the potential of local social economy entities. SZOWES's offer is a response to the need to activate local communities and investment in projects aimed at using market niches and local resources, enabling, through the development of the social economy sector, the creation of new jobs, with particular emphasis on the professional activation of people at risk of professional exclusion. It develops the capacity of the social economy in key areas consistent with global challenges, i.e. the green and digital transformation.

The main activities of the organisation are:

- Financial (subsidies) and micro-financial support for social economy entities and financial intermediation in repayable instruments;
- Innovative social services (inc. care services connected to digital transformation);

- Consultancy in the areas of inclusive HR and accessibility (including job placement and consultancy in the employment of disabled people, profiling social economy services in terms of people with special needs;
- Integration and employment services addressed to third-country nationals, especially refugees from Ukraine.

SZOWES actively engages in activities promoting the development of accessible tourism through the organisation of training and consultancy in the field of accessibility among representatives of the social economy sector operating in the tourism sector. Together with Social Economy Europe, the network has developed a guide to the availability of offers and employment addressed to social economy entities operating in tourism and leisure services in the region. Daily, SZOWES stimulates activities aimed at the professional and social activation of people at risk of social exclusion (especially the disabled).

The SZOWES network consistently cooperates with regional agendas for the adaptation of tourism development and promotion strategies through the use of social economy solutions. Partners of the SZOWES network are co-creating regeneration strategies at the local level, together with local authorities' direct strategic directions and activities aimed at using local tourism assets by social economy entities and social enterprises created by grassroots communities. SZOWES organises and co-organises conferences and meetings devoted to local development through the use of social tourism solutions. SZOWES network actively contributes to regional policy regarding the social economy through the Regional Committee for the Social Economy and other advisory bodies at the local and national levels.

Organisation	**Cooperativa di Comunità Valle dei Cavalieri**
Country	Tuscan-Emilian Apennine National Park - Italy
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Community tourism, cooperative, agritourism, social and economic response
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on the tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://valledeicavalieri.it/wp/

Valle dei Cavalieri is a cooperative located in the small village of Succiso, in the province of Reggio Emilia and inside the Appennino Tosco Emiliano National Park. The cooperative was created in 1991 and has since grown to have 63 shareholders, with 7 permanent employees and occasional collaborators.

Over the years, the cooperative has promoted community tourism, alongside agritourism and a restaurant. The cooperative also acts as the visitor centre of the National Park. This gives the cooperative the opportunity to experiment with new tourist offers in collaboration with the park. The cooperative also grew by developing an agricultural enterprise that produces pecorino DOP. At the same time, it purchased a minibus to transport students and deliver medicines to the elderly in the country, and made a major investment in the installation of a photovoltaic system. In 2018, it won the Second Prize for Excellence and Innovation in Tourism in the business category, established by the World Tourism Organisation.

In line with the principles of community tourism, Valle dei Cavalieri puts the authenticity of the territory, genuineness of relationships, and specificity of local culture and tradition at the heart of its activities. It promotes responsible tourism based on the warm hospitality of the community, so that tourists are actively involved with the traditions, peculiarities, and typical expressions of the local communities. A network of tourism and cultural realities, services and structures for hospitality make the inhabitants the main resource for a distinctive tourist offer.

Organisation	**Cooperativa di Comunità Briganti di Cerreto**
Country	Cerreto Alpi - Italy
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Community tourism, cooperative, local communities, territory
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.ibrigantidicerreto.com/

The "I Briganti di Cerreto" cooperative is based in Cerreto Alpi, in the municipality of Collagna (Italy). It was created in June 2003 by a group of young people residing in Cerreto Alpito to develop and implement local activities targeting the community and environment.

Activities of the cooperative are related to the protection of the territory, community tourism,[2] promotion of local craftmanship and local forest and countryside products, school tourism (including educational courses on issues related to the territory, including agricultural, forestry, natural, environmental, historical and cultural aspects), environmental services for the control and monitoring of the territory, coordination and management of accommodation, and recreational, sports and cultural activities for groups and associations.

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[2] "Community-based tourism is a type of tourism where local communities invite tourists into their communities, giving them insight into their culture and daily lives. It is a form of sustainable tourism that allows travellers to connect closely to the local community they visit." (De Jong, 2019).

2. Cultural heritage

UNESCO states that "cultural and natural heritage is not only an irreplaceable source of identity and inspiration, but also a key driving force for sustainable development" (UNESCO, n.d.).

This section presents social economy organisations and enterprises active in the cultural field and focused on the protection and promotion of cultural heritage.

Organisation	**CoopCulture**
Country	Venice – Italy
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Cultural heritage, regional development, integrating technology and physical moments
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 15**: R&I for digital tools and services in tourism **Actions:** Innovative tourism services using advanced technologies (virtual reality, augmented reality, AI) and digitised cultural heritage **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.coopculture.it/

CoopCulture, founded in 2010, is one of the largest cooperatives operating in the cultural sector in Italy. It offers innovative solutions to meet the needs of a continually evolving sector and contributes to the development of an economy based on regional development and social cohesion. CoopCulture promotes cultural heritage, creates regional networks, and designs activities and services starting from the needs of the communities. Through specific actions, such as the construction of community maps and local action plans, CoopCulture spreads good practices and contributes to the promotion of new skills.

CoopCulture is a worker's cooperative which promotes know-how and experience in tourism and cultural and developing projects focused on the sustainable development of communities and regions at a national and international levels.

CoopCulture designs and offers services targeting especially museums, exhibitions, libraries and archives, visits and routes with archaeologists and art historians, combined with virtual reality.

The training and growth of people have always been at the core of CoopCulture's interests and mission. In 2013, It won the CECA Best Practice Award, the international award of the Committee for Cultural Education of ICOM, for the important and innovative activity of its teaching system.

Plus, in its offers for schools, CoopCulture develops educational proposals that combine real and virtual experiences.

Organisation	**Young Ambassadors**
Country	Niš – Serbia
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Young people, local community, KreNI conference, cultural heritage
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors **Topic 27**: Support visibility of funding opportunities for tourism actors **Actions :** Providing a one-stop-shop that links to key support resources and funding opportunities for tourism SMEs on European, national and regional levels
Click to learn more	https://ambasador.rs/

Young Ambassadors is a youth organisation founded in 2014 to strengthen the capacity of young people and the development of each individual to stimulate the development of the local community.

The Young Ambassadors Initiative is a unique project for the participation and involvement of young people in various fields (cultural, educational, and training). Young Ambassadors provide a model for involving young people with the mission of raising awareness and sharing knowledge between several generations following European values.

Through education, peer-to-peer communication, exchange of knowledge and the digital transformation they are active in the fields of culture and creative industries, entrepreneurship and social economy and market placement and sustainable development of the local community.

Over 7 years, the Young Ambassadors have implemented 48 projects and more than 300 educational workshops related to the personal and professional development of people from different social groups in the community.

One of the main annual programmes of Young Ambassadors is "The KreNI conference" – the first and most influential creativity festival in south-eastern Serbia gathering innovative creative professionals and experts from all over the world. The KreNI conference is about the creativity of young people and their engagement and empowerment in society. The conference normally focuses on topics related to tourism, smart tourism and creative industries.

For instance, there was the organisation of the interactive exhibition "The Museum of Memories – 140 Years of Freedom" which consisted of photographs, letters, objects and documents from the archives of fellow citizens who reflect the spirit of a period and a 140-year timeline. This project was supported by the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Serbia. There was also the Vila Naisa application, a reliable guide through the Fortress of Niš. The app invites people around the world to explore the history of Niš on the paths through the fortress.

3. Digital platforms

As also recalled in the Social Economy Action Plan and the Transition Pathways for the Proximity and Social Economy, the social economy is an important driver of a fair and inclusive twin transition. It contributes to the development of sustainable practices and provides solutions for those impacted by the green and digital challenges, for example through training and reskilling workers, and by providing job opportunities (EUbusiness, 2021).

It can also contribute to tackling the digital divide and ensuring that the digital transition leaves no one behind. This is why, when digital solutions of social enterprises are applied to tourism, new innovative product and services can be created, that respect the people and the environment, while generating economic growth.

Organisation	Fairbnb
Country	Europe
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Regenerative tourism model, communities, travel experience, network
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.fairbnb.coop

Fairbnb.coop started its journey in 2016 as a movement seeking to create a just alternative to existing home-sharing platforms. Initially, the movement emerged in Venice, Amsterdam and Bologna, but soon other groups from all over Europe joined.

Fairbnb.coop offers sustainable travel experiences while facilitating the development of socially relevant projects within communities worldwide. Local experiences and activities are closely related to the projects, the territory and the culture. Concretely, Fairbnb.coop is a social booking and crowdfunding platform that aims to limit the negative effects of tourism, amplifying its positive impact on the host community through cooperativism, involvement of local communities and sustainable tourism.

For Fairbnb.coop, responsible tourism means that all hosts should be transparent and follow the local regulations of the destination. It opposes gentrification and "touristification", so as to avoid too many properties in the hands of few being placed on the tourist rental market, damaging citizens. Fairbnb also works with local authorities, through a network that connects the platform through the local node with all the institutions involved. All hosts should follow the local regulations of the destination.

Organisation	Socialbnb
Country	Cologne – Germany
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Empower local communities, ecological approach, regeneration of territories
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.socialbnb.org/

Socialbnb is an innovative online platform that connects travellers with social and ecological projects, community-based organisations and social businesses around the world. Travellers can book free rooms for these projects on the platform and have an authentic and local travel experience. The money for the overnight stay goes straight to the local projects and thus helps to finance education, animal rescue, environmental protection and many other activities.

Socialbnb imagines tourism in a way that the local community and the region as a whole benefit from it. To strengthen this development, Socialbnb looks for social and ecological projects with an impact on the region and advises them on how to get started in sustainable tourism and make their accommodation bookable for visitors.

Indeed, on the website, visitors can get to know the people behind the unique projects – people who want to make a difference and make the world better through their work. Visitors can decide what impact they would like to have through their overnight stay: education, nature preservation, animal welfare, equality, health or sports. Their stay supports the financing of the projects and thus the visitors have a positive impact on the region and the local community.

Organisation	Les Oiseaux de Passage ('Birds of Passage')
Country	Marseille – France
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	communities, cooperative, platform, collaboration
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 23**: One-stop shop for learning opportunities for tourism SMEs **Actions:** Providing an online space where tourism SMEs can connect with each other to share learning from one another **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://lesoiseauxdepassage.coop/

The collaborative online platform "Les Oiseaux de Passage" was set up in France at the beginning of 2019 with the aim of encouraging the travel and hospitality industry to embrace sustainable development in the communities and destinations involved. The social ambitions of the cooperative are to realise economic benefits from the heritage of the 15th and 16th districts of Marseilles, to ensure that it remains a living heritage, and to improve the lives of those who live and work there.

The cooperative was born in January 2016, from three previous cooperatives – Hôtel du Nord, Ekitour and Point Carré – along with the Minga network and five individual members, who founded Les Oiseaux de Passage, a Cooperative Society of Public Interest (*société coopérative d'intérêt collectif* or SCIC).

The purpose of this SCIC is to research and develop a set of online tools for promoting and commercialising an alternative kind of hospitality, which goes beyond just providing accommodation to include workshops and activities that enable the hosts to share their expertise and passion for their heritage. The platforms aim to contribute to the economic, social and cultural development of the participating areas, improving the quality of life of those living and working there, enriching people's awareness of other regions and cultures, and, more generally, reinforcing the principles of democracy, the rule of law and human rights. Moreover, the platform allows all major stakeholders to be involved in the decision-making process.

4. Social inclusion and promotion of diversity

Historically, and rooted in its mission, the social economy has always had social inclusion and the promotion of diversity within its core values. Having a direct link and dialogue with the beneficiaries, social economy organisations and enterprises are well fit to propose solutions to social issues and to promote social inclusion that is shaped to real needs. Thus the tourism sector is a great field in which to create new jobs and to promote these values within these activities.

This section of the paper presents several social economy initiatives in the field of tourism proposing social inclusion and promoting diversity.

Organisation	Άνεμος Ανανέωσης **(Anemos Ananeosis) – 'Wind of Renewal'**
Country	Athens – Greece
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Hostel, supporting the community, innovation, intercultural dialogue
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://anemosananeosis.gr/en/

Anemos Ananeosis/Wind of Renewal is a social cooperative which carries out financial and economic activity to make a social and environmental impact. It has a strong commitment to building a better world through social and green innovation and the cooperative business model. It assists the development of social cooperation structures in Greece through training, consultancy, monitoring and support of cooperatives/social enterprises and social actors. It carries out public awareness, cooperation and activities to promote the green/circular economy, social economy, eco- and social innovation and intercultural dialogue information.

The Welcommon Hostel is an example where Anemos Ananeosis/Wind of Renewal is promoting a new sustainable model for tourism combined with sustainable economic development and the protection of the natural and cultural environment. The visitors can enjoy a comfortable stay in Athens while funding essential social programmes for refugees and activities for environmental protection, energy transition and climate protection. The aim is also to create new employment opportunities for everyone in areas such as upcycling, ethnic cuisines, culture, green/circular economy and energy efficiency. The Welcommon Hostel is also a centre for social and green innovation and economy.

The hostel also offers classes (e.g. in language, painting, puppet shows and music) with the support of volunteers for refugees, migrants, local people, and tourists; works for the

empowerment and training of its guests; and designs interactive workshops for the professional training and promotion of the abilities and qualifications of refugees, especially young people, along with Greek nationals, to enable them to find their way in society for the benefit of society.

The Welcommon Hostel highlights the positive impact that cooperatives and social enterprises have on communities, revitalising neighbourhoods and building bridges between communities, social groups, newcomers and local people.

Visitors can join initiatives working for the transformation of the city and its environmental protection and can contact human rights groups and initiatives working with the unemployed and young people and for the inclusion of refugees.

Organisation	**Cooperativa Città SO.LA.RE. (Solidarietà, Lavoro, Responsabilità)**
Country	Veneto Region – Italy
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Cooperative, community, health protection, social integration
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 8:** Green transition of tourism companies and SMEs **Actions:** Tourism operators to use relevant EU green public procurement (GPP) criteria where applicable; tourism accommodations, including SMEs to apply for the EU Ecolabel or other EN ISO 14024 type I ecolabels or equivalent voluntary labels, which are independent, multi-criteria based and third party verified **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions :** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 24:** Fairness and equality in tourism jobs **Actions:** Tourism companies to offer stable and decent employment, with fair and equal pay, full social security coverage, respect of workers' rights to organise and to bargain collectively, working contracts and gender equality **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.cittasolare.org/

The Città So.La.Re cooperative (Solidarity, Work, Responsibility) was founded in 1997 to offer job opportunities to people in difficult situations. The cooperative pursues the general interest of the community in human promotion, health protection and social integration of Italian and foreign citizens. The cooperative has over 100 members and employs an average of 120 workers.

In particular, Città So.La.Re. is dedicated to the work and social integration of disadvantaged people, such as prisoners and ex-prisoners, former drug addicts, people with mental and

physical disadvantage, over-50s who have lost their jobs, immigrants, single parents with children, etc.

The cooperative collaborates with public and private bodies, other social cooperatives and voluntary associations, according to the principle of subsidiarity.

Città So.La.Re encourages the construction of the 'ideal community' which promotes, through work, solidarity and shared responsibility, human promotion and health protection by taking a human-centred approach.

The activities of the cooperative take place in the following sectors: environmental, housing, employment, reception and cleaning.[3]

In addition, through the 'Casa a Colori' brand, the cooperative offers tourist services. It manages a network of facilities providing affordable accommodation for tourists, workers, students, city users and people in housing difficulty. Moreover, the cooperative has demonstrated an environmental awareness, having invested more than €3 million in the renovation and energy requalification of the building in which Casa a Colori is housed, definitively renouncing fossil fuels.

Organisation	Migrantour – intercultural urban routes
Country	Turin – Italy
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Recognising diversity, sharing stories, including people, tourism
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions :** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 24**: Fairness and equality in tourism jobs **Actions:** Tourism companies to offer stable and decent employment, with fair and equal pay, full social security coverage, respect of workers' rights to organise and to bargain collectively, working contracts and gender equality **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike

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[3] In particular:

- Environmental services: street and square sweeping, collection and recovery of used clothing, waste collection and transport of hazardous waste, always favouring job placement of socially disadvantaged people.
- Housing services: this activity started in 1993 with the Nuovo Villaggio co-op.
- Personal and employment services: the objective is to skill, reskill and upskill target groups and connect them with the labour market.
- Reception services: proposes a reception model for asylum seekers and refugees, creating small-sized collective centres, organising specific and customised language courses, and job search support to allow these people to reach full autonomy.
- Industrial services/assembly: since 1999 it has been working on behalf of third parties in high-precision mechanical and high-precision electromechanical assembly and pre-assembly.
- Cleaning services: this activity, originally started with the cleaning experience in the hospitality sector, has since extended to the civil sector in medical clinics, schools, gyms, offices and blocks of flats.

Actions: Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors	
Website	http://www.mygrantour.org/en/

Migrantour, born 12 years ago, is a network that offers intercultural urban walks, and a form of responsible tourism which sees fellow citizens coming from far away as protagonists. Migrantour aims to enhance migrants' belonging and civic involvement through engaging with cultural heritage.

The initiative aims to provide a new instrument for integration that promotes the cultural heritage brought by migrant citizens, asylum seekers and refugees, and it will contribute to the development of a new narrative on the phenomenon of migration. The project is active in 10 cities in four different European countries. As in previous experiences, since the first pilot project carried out in 2010 in Turin, the migrants play a fundamental role in the development of an alternative and positive way to talk about the phenomenon of migration.

Organisation	Invisible Cities
Country	Edinburgh, United Kingdom
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Employment, homelessness, tours, empowerment
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions :** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 15**: R&I for digital tools and services in tourism **Actions :** Innovative tourism services using advanced technologies (virtual reality, augmented reality, AI) and digitised cultural heritage **Topic 24**: Fairness and equality in tourism jobs **Actions:** Tourism companies to offer stable and decent employment, with fair and equal pay, full social security coverage, respect of workers' rights to organise and to bargain collectively, working contracts and gender equality **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://invisible-cities.org/

Invisible Cities offers high-quality training for people who have experienced homelessness to help them gain confidence, self-esteem and transferable skills so as to become tour guides in their own cities. Invisible Cities raises awareness about homelessness and, through the tours, aims to change perceptions and break down the stigma that exists around it. Its impact is achieved both in the direct employment of tour providers and through the wider training and advocacy work delivered by the team.

Invisible Cities operated across five cities in the UK in 2019. In each city, it partners with another organisation and develops a team to scale the initiative up. The four staff members and 12 volunteers have provided training to 23 people who have become tourist guides. To date, the organisation has trained 62 people.

Invisible Cities also delivers awareness-raising campaigns, training sessions to schools and major businesses and collaboration sessions between homeless people and service providers. This approach to facilitation and shared learning enables the outcomes of Invisible Cities' work to be shared with others.

Organisation	Ilunion
Country	Madrid - Spain
Relevant SDGs	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH, 10 REDUCED INEQUALITIES, 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES, 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Key words	Inclusion, hotel chain, accessible tourism, diversity
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 8**: Green transition of tourism companies and SMEs **Actions:** Tourism accommodation, including SMEs to apply for the EU Ecolabel or other EN ISO 14024 type I ecolabels or equivalent voluntary labels, which are independent, multi-criteria based and third party verified **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 24**: Fairness and equality in tourism jobs **Actions:** Tourism companies to offer stable and decent employment, with fair and equal pay, full social security coverage, respect of workers' rights to organise and to bargain collectively, working contracts and gender equality **Topic 25**: Enhancing accessible tourism services **Actions:** Raising awareness of the importance of accessibility in tourism; Improving the supply and visibility of accessible tourism services **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.ilunion.com/es

The Ilunion hotel chain is one of the brands of the ONCE Social Group of companies, a unique company that is committed to integrating people with disabilities into the workforce and to providing accessible tourism for all: over 40% of the staff have some type of disability. Moreover, Ilunion hotels seek to eliminate the physical and mental barriers that people with disabilities often encounter. For this reason, the hotels have championed this dream for a universally accessible and egalitarian world within the tourism sector. The concept of "design for all" has become one of Ilunion hotels' hallmarks: the hotels have accessible rooms, accessible toilets, accessible counters, accessible leisure, signalling and levels, accessible parking, information in braille, and wide accessible spaces.

The 30 hotels of the chain, present in 13 locations in Spain, have been adapted for people with disabilities and have been awarded the universal accessibility certification (UNE 170001-2) and the QSostenible certificate that guarantees the sustainability of the buildings. Ilunion is also the first Spanish company to receive the Ethics Award from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) for its work in the field of accessible tourism.

The pioneering policies of Ilunion hotels in universal accessibility carry an enormous potential to change attitudes, break down social barriers and make the accommodation sector more inclusive by creating quality employment for people with disabilities. The best way to achieve this goal is to develop and professionalise profitable and sustainable lines of business that provide a specialised service.

Ilunion's aspiration is to be a leading group that seeks business excellence to demonstrate that economic and social profitability can go hand in hand.

Organisation	Caritas Šabac
Country	Bogatić and Šabac – Serbia
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	People with disabilities, social entrepreneurship, catering, agriculture
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 24**: Fairness and equality in tourism jobs **Actions:** Tourism companies to offer stable and decent employment, with fair and equal pay, full social security coverage, respect of workers' rights to organise and to bargain collectively, working contracts and gender equality **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://caritas-sabac.com/

Caritas is an organisation responding to social problems, present in Šabac. Caritas Šabac is a voluntary, non-governmental and non-profit association, founded to support overall human development, social justice, peace and building civil society. It works primarily in the social, health and humanitarian fields.

The goals of Caritas Šabac are to assist the elderly, sick and disabled, children and youth, poor and socially vulnerable, mentally ill and addicts, minorities, marginalised, unemployed, prisoners and people with special needs; to develop volunteering; to encourage of education and training; and to protect the environment.

During 20 years of dedicated work on realising its vision, Caritas Šabac, in addition to providing social protection services, has also developed its model of social economy and created an opportunity to employ people from vulnerable groups. That is why today it is recognised as one of the best examples of social enterprises in Serbia and the region. An innovative element is the combination of social protection services and social entrepreneurship through the development of skills of service users and the establishment of their independence and ability to work. Thus, Caritas Šabac founded two companies - Social Synergy in Šabac and the Courtyard for Sustainable Development in Bogatić.

Organisation	**Women in Travel**
Country	London – the United Kingdom
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Empowerment, women, Women-Led Tours, multicultural
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 26:** Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.womenintravelcic.com/

Women in Travel is an award-winning UK-based social enterprise dedicated to empowering all women using travel, tourism and hospitality as a 'force for good'. Women in Travel believes that empowered women thrive and in turn, foster thriving communities. It partners with employers and charities to provide all women – especially marginalised, vulnerable, and underrepresented women – with visibility, confidence, access to training, mentoring and eventually employment and enterprise.

Travel, tourism, and hospitality employers often struggle to find good staff – and this issue has been compounded by Brexit and Covid. Women in Travel can help by providing access to a pool of skilled individuals from diverse backgrounds who are eager to get back to work.

Women in Travel, a community interest company, aims (i) to leverage a thriving global travel and tourism industry and its suppliers to provide all women and non-binary individuals with the opportunity to fulfil their economic and individual potential through employability and entrepreneurship; and (ii) to provide communities in key regions (UK, Middle East, Africa and Latin America) with a sustainable livelihoods by enabling women to become economically independent through entrepreneurship and thriving careers in the travel and tourism industry.

5. Making travel accessible

As previously mentioned, the social economy promotes social inclusion and equal opportunities. When this principle is applied to the tourism sector, it means providing the same access to tourism to everyone, despite any difficulties and barriers.

This section will present social economy organisations and enterprises that promote accessible tourism.

Organisation	**Difftravel**
Country	Līgatne – Latvia
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Tourism for all, social mobility, routes, disabilities
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Click to learn more	http://www.difftravel.org/

Difftravel is a specialised tourism office operator for disabled people. It works on tourism for people with hearing, visual and movement disabilities, and offers tours with specialised vehicles.

Difftravel is adapted to tourism for people with various disabilities: hearing, visual or mobility impairments, as well as older people with walking difficulties, their friends and relatives.

The organisation currently offers tours for up to 24 hours without an overnight stay in Latvia and Lithuania

Thorough the survey, the organisation detects the environmental accessibility of sites (producers, craftsmen, museums, castles, manors and other cultural sites are surveyed and then visited).

From that exercise, a database of accessible catering facilities and accommodations was born and the creation of routes and trips was possible.

For instance, for the blind, Difftravel create routes based on feelings, feelings and sounds; for the deaf, a sign language translator will be available; for those who use a wheelchair, the route is designed to be wheelchair accessible.

Organisation	**Chemins Solidaires**
Country	Bordeaux – France
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Social utility, social, environmental, donate profits, finance projects
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10:** Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Developing partnerships with on-line portals and booking platforms to provide more visibility to certified accommodation providers; Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26:** Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://chemins-solidaires.fr/

Chemins Solidaires is a social and solidarity economy (ESS) company, a solidarity travel agency which promotes discovery, meetings and sharing. It is committed to preserving an economic, social and environmental balance. All stays promote the local economy and preserve biodiversity.

Chemins Solidaires works to develop more sustainable and united tourism. The trips are designed in partnership with local actors to provide an experience on a human scale while contributing to the balance of the territory. To do this, Chemins Solidaires is committed to promoting travelling in small groups, favouring meetings, enhancing the local economy, respecting the environment and financing projects of general interest. It organises trips to Senegal, Iceland, Sardinia and Morocco.

Organisation	**Cooperativa sociale Viaggi Solidali**
Country	Turin - Italy
Relevant SDGs	8 DECENT WORK AND ECONOMIC GROWTH 9 INDUSTRY, INNOVATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE 11 SUSTAINABLE CITIES AND COMMUNITIES 17 PARTNERSHIPS FOR THE GOALS
Key words	Social cooperative, traveling, development, local communities
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10:** Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Developing partnerships with on-line portals and booking platforms to provide more visibility to certified accommodation providers; Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26:** Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.viaggisolidali.it

Cooperativa Sociale Viaggi Solidali is a social cooperative that has been operating since 2004 as a responsible tourism tour operator. In all these the cooperative has accompanied over 20,000 travellers with professionalism and passion to discover Italy and the world.

The cooperative prefers to work with local service providers which guarantee an economic return for the resident community. The cooperative takes care of training travellers before departure through meetings and information notes. It organises travel in small-medium groups (generally between 6 and 12 people), using local transport whenever possible and staying overnight in small family-run hotels.

Travelling with Cooperativa social Viaggi Solidali means enjoying a nice holiday, but also bringing concrete financial support to the communities.

The cooperative has also been promoting the "tourism with a human face" approach through conferences, training, meetings and events. Indeed, it is committed to spreading the best practices of responsible tourism and raising awareness among the public through educational interventions, in collaboration with associations, public administrations, schools and universities.

Together with NGOs such as CISV, ICEI, OXFAM, COSPE and ACRA, the cooperative has also taken part in development cooperation projects, carrying out interventions linked to the sustainable development of the territory according to the principles of responsible tourism.

Organisation	WISE.travel
Country	Romania
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Tour operator, travel, accessibility
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10:** Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Developing partnerships with on-line portals and booking platforms to provide more visibility to certified accommodation providers; Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26:** Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://wise.travel/

WISE.travel was established in 2017 by ADV Romania as a tour operator in the field of social enterprise tourism. It fully reinvests its profits to support the activities of the "Youth Club", a day centre set up by the ADV Romania Foundation, whose services are accessed by approximately 60 children and young people with disabilities and from vulnerable groups in Iași county.

WISE.travel offers complete corporate tourism services in over 150 countries on 6 continents. These include hotels worldwide, flights with all airlines, hire cars, transfers and health insurance as well as more than 1,450 non-profit organisations offering volunteer programmes, and social and business services.

When clients search for accommodation or activities in a certain area, the first on the list are the social enterprises that offer the appropriate solution. After a client has made the reservation, he/she automatically receives a message with the recommendation to drink a coffee or to have dinner in a social restaurant.

For each sale, WISE.travel gives 50% of the agency's commission to a social cause, non-profit association or foundation in Romania.

Organisation	Sardaigne en liberté
Country	Sardinia - Italy
Relevant SDGs	(SDG icons: 3 Good Health and Well-being; 4 Quality Education; 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth; 17 Partnerships for the Goals)
Key words	Ecotourism tour operator, eco-responsible, fair, ethics
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 7:** Circularity of tourism services **Actions:** Reducing food waste in the hospitality industry; Reducing and separating overall waste of tourism services **Topic 10:** Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Developing partnerships with on-line portals and booking platforms to provide more visibility to certified accommodation providers; Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26:** Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://sardaignenliberte.com/it/home-it/

Sardaigne en Liberté was set up in 2016 and was the first local ecotourism tour operator based on the island of Sardinia (Italy). Sardaigne en Liberté is eco-responsible as it involves local actors and local communities in the development, implementation, and supervision of the trips, and minimises the impact of the activity on the environment (systematic collection of waste).

Sardaigne en Liberté also respects and enhances the cultures, traditions and ways of living of local people and tells its customers how responsible hikers and traveller should behave.

The agency is also attentive to providing fair and equitably distributed remuneration to all players, supports partners in their development and promotes the necessary training to improve workers' skills.

6. Support structures and clusters

Given the collaborative and inclusive approach that both the social economy and tourism ecosystems have, it is not unusual to find the existence of several support structures and clusters. These entities support the work of other organisations and enterprises by carrying out important tasks such as networking and proposing collaborations, organising events, identifying trends and funding opportunities, analysing data and advocating within public authorities.

In this section, you will find some examples of such organisations relevant both for the tourism and social economy fields.

Organisation	ISTO
Country	International
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	International, social, tourism, fair business
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 5**: Collaborative governance of tourism destinations **Actions:** Studying and sharing best practice on destination management **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.isto.international/

The International Social Tourism Organisation (ISTO), initially created under the name International Bureau for Social Tourism (BITS) in 1963, is an international non-profit organisation whose mission is to promote access to leisure, holidays, and tourism for all. This involves young people, families, senior citizens, and people with disabilities.

ISTO has two main goals. The first is to raise awareness among governments, international institutions, and competent local and regional authorities of social policies in tourism and best practices in facilitating holidays for all. The second is to offer its members a platform through which to interact and enrich one another with shared experiences, know-how and project development.

ISTO has 168 member organisations in Europe, the Americas and Africa and one ISTO section just for Europe, America and Africa.

ISTO focuses on five main areas related to tourism, which are accessibility, the environment, solidarity, fair business practices and quality of life. These commitments are in line with the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) set by the United Nations in its 2030 Agenda.

Organisation	AITR – Italian Association for Responsible Tourism
Country Relevant SDGs	Bologna - Italy SDG 4 Quality Education · SDG 5 Gender Equality · SDG 8 Decent Work and Economic Growth · SDG 10 Reduced Inequalities · SDG 11 Sustainable Cities and Communities · SDG 17 Partnerships for the Goals
Key words	Responsible tourism, gender perspective, cooperation, school trip
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 11**: Easily accessible best practice, peer learning and networking for SMEs **Actions :** Establishing a collaboration platform for tourism SMEs and destinations that supports their access to information, specific tools, best practice and knowledge sharing opportunities to support their engagement in twin transition. **Topic 21**: Educational organisations to engage in developing and renewing tourism education **Actions:** Incorporating new skills profiles in vocational education and training policy and curricula, through cooperation between education authorities, social partners and institutions for vocational and higher education **Topic 22**: Pact for skills in tourism **Actions:** Engaging tourism companies, education providers, trade unions and other organisations to commit to jointly agreed training targets for their workforce; Fast training courses, apprenticeship schemes and blended models for the unemployed and job seekers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.aitr.org/italian-association-responsible-tourism/

AITR is the Italian association for responsible tourism. Since 1998 it has promoted the culture, principles and practices of sustainable and responsible tourism. The association favours positive interaction between local communities, travellers and tour operators. It also supports the development of its members through communication, promotion, partnership and training initiatives.

AITR brings together travel organisers, environmental organizations, NGOs, cultural associations, cooperatives, hospitality operators, and service companies. The different natures of the members has stimulated an articulated organisational structure and internal activity with round tables, commissions, and individual and group responsibilities. A heterogeneous composition that is increasingly accentuated today involves animated and vital reflections and is a source of sharing and plurality of vision.

AITR promotes dialogue with the tourism industry without considering conventional tourism irrecoverable and instead tries to orient it towards the adoption of good practices.

AITR has always considered that the values and practices of responsible tourism are applicable not only in the South of the world but also in countries with a consolidated tourist history, such as in Europe and Italy: they are universal values to be affirmed in any country and any territory.

Organisation	**Eugénio de Almeida Foundation**
Country	Évora - Portugal
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Foundation, cultural, educational, social
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible and specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.fea.pt/

The Eugénio de Almeida Foundation is a private institution of public utility, created in 1963. Its mission is carried out in the cultural, educational, social and spiritual domains, with the main institutional objective of promoting the sustainable development of the region.

Over the years, the foundation has offered a regular programme of initiatives around the dissemination of contemporary art and music, the promotion of knowledge, reflection and the debate of ideas, and training. The preservation and enhancement of heritage, as well as the qualification of volunteering, have been the main areas of the foundation's work at the service of the community.

Organisation	Rede das Aldeias de Portugal
Country	North Region – Portugal
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Culture, rural communities, network, development
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 5:** Collaborative governance of tourism destinations **Actions:** Providing awards for smart destination management and studying and sharing best practice on destination management **Topic 10**: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer **Actions:** Improving the online availability of validated information on sustainable, accessible, or specifically targeted tourism offers **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.aldeiasdeportugal.pt/

The ATA – Village Tourism Association – is a non-profit association made up of several local action groups that came together to enhance the development and promotion of rural territories. The mission of ATA is to improve the quality of life of the rural population and the cult of Portuguese rural traditions and experiences, through the promotion and preservation of rural heritage. Currently made up of 83 villages classified and integrated into the intervention territories of the 15 "Aldeias de Portugal" in the northern region of the country, it offers a differentiating and identity mark to promote its partners' services and products in health and wellness, flavours and tradition, heritage and history, traditional parties, nature paths, adventure, and water activities.

The challenge of the Aldeias de Portugal network is the establishment and rejuvenation of populations, the enhancement and promotion of local heritage, and the reinforcement of territorial identity, with a view to consolidating and expanding the local, regional, national and transnational partnerships created.

The network has supported the development of villages, by financing the restoration of the facades of traditional buildings, investment in public infrastructure, the creation of tourist accommodation, arts and crafts workshops, points of sale, regional cuisines, taverns, restaurants, training/raising awareness among the population and economic agents, as well as cultural entertainment activities.

The funding led to the achievement of some of the goals that Aldeias de Portugal advocated, namely the settlement of the population in the villages, the creation of employment, the promotion of traditions, the increase in self-esteem and reinforcement of the identity of the populations, the improvement of the quality of life and, consequently, the positive visibility of their territories. Its work allowed the villages recovered to be included in the AGRIS and LEADER programmes.

Organisation	CEDRA Split
Country	Split – Croatia
Relevant SDGs	
Key words	Cluster, cycling tourism, eco-social entrepreneurship, eco-social innovation
Contribution to Transition Pathway for Tourism	**Topic 6**: Sustainable mobility **Actions:** Improving the appeal of railways for visitors **Topic 26**: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike **Actions:** Diversifying and developing tourism services so that they benefit both residents and visitors
Website	https://www.cedra.hr/

CEDRA, the Cluster for Eco-Social Innovation and Development, is one of the first clusters in Europe and the world which, in addition to the public and private sector and scientific-research-development-innovation entities, includes not only the civil sector and local communities, but also the natural context. The cluster focused on the eco-social economy and sustainable regenerative development.

The Cluster for Eco-Social Innovation and Development is an association founded in 2013 by five organisations promoting the idea of economics based on values and harmony of environmental, social and economic goals in business: Association for Creative Development Slap Osijek, DEŠA Dubrovnik, Centre for Technical Culture Rijeka, Cluster for Eco-Social-Entrepreneurship and Development CEDRA Split, Centre for Eco-Social Innovation and Development CEDRA Čakovec (which today operates under the name ACT Group) and the Dubrovnik Development Agency DURA.

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