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D3.x.2 Report on the customization of CLLD for cross-border areas

EXTERNAL EXPERT
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1. INTRODUCTION

Albania represents a land with a rich cultural collection and, at the same time, a crossroads of diverse cultures, because of its position in South East Europe, on the Adriatic Sea and in the Mediterranean basin, and at the center of east-west and north-south arterial routes. The Albanian legislation for cultural heritage, which is based on that from the 1920s, has been modified and improved, particularly in recent years. In Albania there are actually 1500 items classified as First Class cultural heritage places (archaeological sites, fortresses from antiquity and the Middle Ages, religious objects, historic centers, residential and other buildings etc).

Albania reveals sufficient potentials to the development of activities and touristic products of different kinds such as: cultural, mountainous, coastal, curative Tourism etc and this increases the role of Tourism development in our country.

The development of Tourism also creates the possibility of fading out the barriers and obstacles and in bridging the co-operation among peoples. Being an isolated country for a long time, Albania through Tourism, offers to foreigners the possibility to know and appreciate its culture and history. Albanians in this way can get to know and appreciate from close quarters the most important achievements of world culture. With the possibility of entering European Union, Albania has the chance to demonstrate its cultural and historic potential. Even to Albanian society, the same as to nowadays industrially developed societies, Tourism is considered as an important economic and social factor that affects the evolution of society.

A developed Tourism creates the possibility of relax, entertainment and enjoying the time. On the other hand, economic sector has a considerable importance to our country. Tourism nowadays is not a luxury and privilege of specific people, but rather a physical and spiritual necessity of all members of modern present day society. In order to achieve the desired level, the Albanian state and private sector are both contributing. The private sector is contributing with great investments in Tourism.



Tourism is an important branch of economy, the income of which would affect its development through investments.

Actually Albania actively promotes its World Heritage sites and other attributes of its cultural heritage, including local food and beverages, dance, tapestries and even its communist era, in its marketing efforts. Better information about the emergent tourism sector, particularly with regard to Albanians abundant potential in nurturing and capturing the value of its cultural ecosystem services, could help the country to better manage toward its economic development objectives.

2. METHODOLOGY

The methodology (activities) of the adaptation of the CLLD tool for the purposes of the CLLD-CulTour, in the project`s territories is concluded more specifically on :

- A. THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK: TOWARDS INNOVATION NETWORK PRACTICE**
- B. EFFECTS OF INNOVATIVENESS AND INNOVATION BEHAVIOR ON TOURISM SMES PERFORMANCE:THE CASE OF ALBANIA**
- C. PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATIVE SMEs IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY CASE STUDY : THE VALENCIA CLUSTER/NETWORK (SPAIN)**

A**THEORITICAL FRAMEWORK:
TOWARDS INNOVATION NETWORK PRACTICE**

The purpose of this chapter is to develop a framework that will form a theoretical understanding and guide exploration of the empirical phenomenon of the dynamics of innovation network practices in tourism. The framework is founded in the intersection of innovation, network and practice theories.

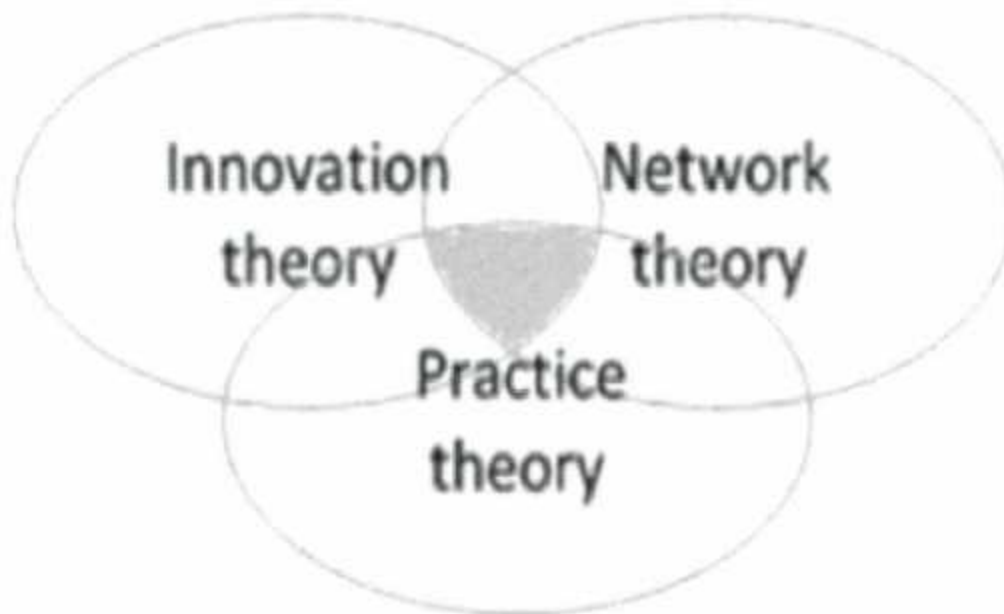


Figure 2. Theoretical mapping of the current research

A.1 PRACTICE

Research emphasizing the importance of understanding tourism from the practice-based perspective – from community-specific knowledge and learning to innovation continues to attract scholarly interest. Practice theories recognized by tourism scholars in recent years offer prospects of a more nuanced insight into “everyday activities, routines and understandings of tourism subsectors, e.g. food or outdoor activities, and collaboration across tourism subsectors as an important part of regional development. Building on these premises, my intention is to contribute to the further development of understanding tourism from the practice-based perspective by discussing how this perspective can be used to study innovation networks in tourism. To do so, this section opens by defining practice more generally. Although different traditions often emphasize different aspects of practice, for example, inseparability of knowing from doing, subject from object of practice or importance of language for constructing meanings in practising a practice, they enrich the practice tradition. Nevertheless, these traditions agree that organizing is a “practical accomplishment”. Varying understandings of practice in the family of practice approaches are also systematized in more recent works. A practice can be understood as a form of human activity that is associated with specific skills and understandings that are repeatedly exercised towards a specific purpose. In order to address the main assumptions of practice research, the further arguments in the thesis are built upon both the original definitions and the later reviews of practice-based literature. The main idea of practice-based approaches is that the focus on micro everyday activities opens up a processual more detailed and genuine understanding of organizational or social phenomenon. In order to discuss the main characteristics of practice, I shall refer to a recent work by Nicolini and Monteiro (2017, pp. 111-114) where the authors systematize the existing practice streams of research into 11 main points:

- 1. Practices “hold a number of sub-components – usually smaller units of activity”**
- 2. “Practices and their sub-elements only acquire sense when organised around an end or object”**

3. **“Practices exist in configurations”, referred to “as knots, networks, nexuses, assemblages and textures”**
4. **“Practices have a collective and normative nature”**
5. **“The normativity of practices is not found in the ability to follow general rules but in the mutual (and personal) scrutiny of its constituency”**
6. **“Practices are inherently material in nature”**
7. **“There are always partial inconsistencies and tensions within the components of a practice and among different practices”**
8. **“All practices have a history and are historically situated”**
9. **“The social and material nature of practices also makes them inherently situated in a particular moment in time, space, and history”**
10. **“The indeterminacy of practices allows scope for initiative, creativity, and biographies**
11. **“Practices and their assemblages empower certain courses of action (and those positioned to take them) over others**

The complexity of practice embraces characteristics number one, two, three and six. Practice is complex both horizontally, i.e. comprising a number of simpler processes and actions (1) and relationships between them (3), and on a more aggregated level, i.e. The totality of a given practice comprising of its core elements such as being “organised around an end or object” (2), being material (6) or other and relationships between them. The social nature of practice means that practices are performed and reproduced by a group of practitioners where norms and culture become established in the joint process of activity (4, 5). And finally, the embeddedness of practice means that a particular practice is inseparably related to other practices as well as practice being embedded socially, historically, geographically and economically, which influences the past, present and future of a practice (8, 9, 10). Therefore, although practice-based approaches are indeed processual in their nature (Langley, 2007; Pettigrew, 1997), they go further by accounting the “artefacts, the body, and the historical and social conditions within which processes take place” .

A.2 INNOVATION

This subsection provides a short review of how the understanding of innovation has evolved from innovation in manufacturing towards innovation in services and from innovation in services towards innovation in experiences. Both service and experience sectors are discussed since the focus of the current study is on tourism, which is represented by both service-based companies, e.g. more traditional accommodation and transportation, and experience-based companies, i.e. the content and activity providers who build their business on creating experiences. While experience innovation is a relatively young research field, it clearly integrates similar development trajectories in relation to service innovation research, as the latter in relation to research on innovation in manufacturing namely:

1. Assimilation of manufacturing-inherent characteristics of the innovation process in services;
2. Demarcation of service innovation processes from those in manufacturing;
3. And integration of innovation in manufacturing and service sectors under one umbrella based on shared characteristics of the innovation process.

Along the development of innovation research, understanding of what constitutes an innovation has been changing. However, what most research agrees upon is that innovation is a novel idea that must be implemented in practice. Research opinions vary on whether it necessarily has to be a radical idea and who it should be new for. A short evolution of innovation research will be summed up by the practice-based understanding of innovation used in the thesis.

A.2.1 INNOVATION: FROM MANUFACTURING TO SERVICES

Traditional innovation research is associated with the name of Joseph Schumpeter. According to Schumpeter, innovation plays a key role in economic development and is implemented by an individual entrepreneur who confronts the social inertia of the time (Schumpeter, 1934). Unlike invention that is a new idea that may originate anywhere, innovation must lead to the implementation of an idea that requires a combination of resources, knowledge and skills and that is further realized in practice. In this sense, research recognized early the dynamic nature of the innovation processes. Schumpeter's position about the major role of an individual entrepreneur who has an idea and knows how to implement it based on existing resources soon became extended (Schumpeter, 1947). The latter position, which is often called Schumpeter Mark II focused on the role of large firms with solid knowledge, competencies and resources where innovation takes place in R&D departments rather than by entrepreneurial effort. Often the consequence of the innovation process by these large firms with R&D departments is that they create monopoly conditions in industries, thus, impeding the entrance of other firms. Early innovation research discussed both the types and degree of innovation outcomes. When it comes to the types, the focus was mainly on two different types of innovation, i.e. product innovation and new ways of production. Schumpeterian typology includes five different types of innovation: "[T]he introduction of a new good... or a new quality of a good [,]... a new method of production, ...[T]he opening of a new market,...[T]he conquest of a new source of supply or raw materials or half-manufactured goods,...[T]he carrying out of the new organization of any industry..." (Schumpeter, 1934, p. 66). As to degrees of innovation, the outcomes of innovation processes may result in incremental improvements or change that is more radical.

A.2.2 INNOVATION: FROM SERVICES TO EXPERIENCES

Over the past decade, research on experience innovation in general and in tourism research, has increased. Discussion of experience innovation follows almost a two-decade old discussion of the experience sector as an apparent development of the modern economy away from the production of commodities, goods and services towards experiences (Pine & Gilmore, 1999). Similar to the discussion of how services are similar to and different from goods, research on experience economy focused on similarities and differences between experience and service industries. This led to a number of assumptions that can be attributed to assimilation and demarcation perspectives, as shown below. Although, there might be a reservation about whether experience innovation should be compared to distinctive characteristics of service innovation as in demarcation approach or characteristics also common for manufacturing industries as in assimilation approach. To avoid leaving out important characteristics of experience innovation, I shall further follow the second option.

When it comes to the driving forces of innovation, experience innovation seems to share some of the same origins as manufacturing and service innovation, namely entrepreneurship and technological development. In terms of entrepreneurs, tourism might not be the best example, due to often scarce resources and competences of tourism entrepreneurs and tourism small and medium enterprises (SME)-segment in general. Further, technology-enabled innovation is important in the experience sector because technology, particularly ICT, plays a significant role in production and consumption of experiences. However, similar to a number of service industries, experiences are personalized, which explains why innovation driving forces are not limited by the technology-push paradigm but can also be necessitated by changes in market demand and are user-driven.

B**EFFECTS OF INNOVATIVENESS AND INNOVATION BEHAVIOR ON TOURISM SMES PERFORMANCE: THE CASE OF ALBANIA**

While interplay of the attitudinal and behavioural dimensions of innovation and firm performance, are empirically investigated at mostly in Western Europe, the United States and Australia (see e.g., Agarwal et al., 2003; Tajeddini & Trueman, 2012; Grisseemann et al. 2013; Lee et al., 2016), on the other side, there is a lack of research on this issue in a small and developing country like Albania. Albanian tourism sector has a short life-span. The first tourism law and tourism strategy development was compiled only at the beginning of '90s (after the falling of the communism system) which were not fully reflected on a real industry, due to a high informality, too few tourism firms, not consolidated institutions related to the tourism policy-making, vagueness on private property issues etc. The real impact of tourism was only at the beginning of 2000s, when started to arrive a reasonable number of international visitors (WTTC, 2018). However, there are still several concerns that the sector is dealing with. To this, tourism sector in Albania yet it suffers by a high level of informality (MTM, 2014), pronounced seasonality, high turnover of employee etc., which directly and indirectly influence the SMEs' culture and implementation of innovation. For example, high turnover of employee and seasonality nature of the sector, restricts possibility of the SMEs to innovate. This restriction is reflected even at the Albania rank in terms of ICT use for biz-to-biz transactions (112th out of 136) and Internet use for biz-to-consumer transactions (116th out of 136) (WEF, 2015). Recently Albania is increasingly gaining an international reputation as a tourism destination due to its wealth in mountains, lakes, rivers and forests, varied wildlife and climates, complemented by a diverse menu of cultural heritage (Hall, 2000). Due to its geographic position within the European continent, which attracts roughly 51% of world international visitors flow (WTTC, 2018), constitute a potential opportunity for the development of the tourism industries. Referring to the World Bank (2019), along the period of 2007-2017, international tourist arrivals are increased up to 4.7 times (i.e., from 1,062,000 to 4,643,000). This exponential increase is higher than other countries of the Balkan region such as Montenegro

(1.9 times), Serbia (2.1 times), and some of the EU countries such as Italy (1.33 times), Austria (1.42 times) and Greece (1.68 times), within the same period. In Addition, Albanian government has been directly engaged in promoting its country as a tourism destination through commercial advertisement on international TV channels (e.g., BBC), social media and participation in international fairs (e.g., Expo Milano, ITB Berlin etc.). Indeed, Albanian tourism is better ranked than other countries of the Balkan region (e.g., Serbia and Bosnia & Herzegovina) in the 'Government prioritization of travel and tourism industry' index of the WEF (2015). However, while this strategy of tourism development helps to keep visitors in the short-terms, on the other side, providing high quality services helps to keep them in the long-terms. In this framework, (Mok and Armstrong, 1998) stated that aggressive advertising and promotions only attract more visitors to experience poor service and convince them to not repeat their visit in the future. To this, they suggest to be aware on this respect and to provide high quality service which in turn will determine the success. As a result, all stakeholders that are directly involved on tourism development, both public and private (i.e., policy makers and tourism SMEs) must address the issue of offering high quality services. In order to provide a high quality services, tourism SMEs (which represents the whole tourism businesses in the sector) should innovate. Indeed, one of the most important reasons for innovation is service quality improvements and customer satisfaction (Pikkemaat, 2008) which in turn directly enhance the performance. Although tourism in Albania is currently one of the sectors with a significant role on socio-economic development, it is still in an early stage of development and faces important challenges. Thus, property rights issues, high levels of informality, an underdeveloped infrastructure, seasonality and inadequately educated workforce are major concerns that clearly affect the daily operations of tourism SMEs and can make it difficult for them to continuously to innovate in terms of products and services. Given these specific features of the Albanian context, exploring the determinants of tourism SME performance takes on particular significance.



PROMOTING ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATIVE SMEs IN A GLOBAL ECONOMY CASE STUDY : THE VALENCIA CLUSTER/NETWORK (SPAIN)

DESCRIPTION

The Valencian Innovation System of Science- Technology- Enterprise (SIV) is broad and complex. The main figures, administrative, scientific and technological, to support the SIV are the following:

- Science and Technology Office.
- IMPIVA, Valencian Institute of Small and Medium-sized Industrial Enterprises.
- REDIT, Network of Technological Institutes of Valencian Region (17).
- 6 Universities (51 Faculties, 7 000 professors, 143 000 students).
- 32 University Institutes.
- 10 CSIC Centres (National Council of Scientific Research).
- 7 regional Research Centres.
- 4 European Innovative Enterprises Centres.
- 4 100 researchers.
- 7 050 workers involved in Research and Development activities.

KEY FEATURES

The Regional Plan on Scientific Research is structured around two main strategic axes: (i) improvement of scientific knowledge and technological innovation, and (ii) the strengthening of competitive capacities.

The main objectives of the Plan are the following:

- Improve the excellence and strengthen the competitiveness of the Valencian Science-Technology- Enterprise System.
- Increase the global resources (public and private) dedicated to Research and Development and Innovation in the Comunidad Valencia, with the aim of reaching 2% of regional GDP. Improve the efficiency of the distribution and use of these resources.
- Promote the vertical integration, co-ordinate on and interaction between all agents of the Science, Technological development and I innovation S system (University Institutes and Departments, Research Centres, Technology Centres and enterprises).
- Reinforce the transfer of research results, and increase the social and economic profitability of the existing ones, with the aim of achieving the maximum benefit for Valencian society.
- Promote the participation of the private sector in innovation active ties as a strategic action of Valencian enterprises and as a key factor of research and technological development.
- Promote public awareness of science, as well as the diffusion and development of a scientific and technological culture in Valencia.
- Co-ordinate the activities of the Regional Government in this field with the national and European activities in the Comunidad Valenciana, enhancing co-operation with other Governments and institutions, both national and international. In the framework of these general objectives, the new approach of PVIDI complements its activities with those implemented at the EU and national level in the new framework of the European Research Area (ERA).

Indeed, the European Research Area and the National Plan of Scientific Research, Development and Technology 2000-2003 offer the context in which a regional R&D and innovation policy must be implemented. For geographic al, dimensional and budgetary reasons, an excessively dispersed implementation must be avoided. Concentrating efforts in certain key areas is the way to achieve significant performance in the regional system.

SUMMARY AND KEY LESSONS

The Valencian Innovation System is rapidly converging with national and European standards in the field. The Regional 7/1997 Law on Promotion and Co-ordination of Scientific Research and Technological Development of the Comunidad Valenciana is the legal framework in which the regional competencies in the field of scientific and technological research are implemented. This legal base represents a significant improvement in Research and Development and Innovation policies, which are key to sustained growth. Therefore, the main purpose of PVIDI is to address the direct and indirect demands of the main technology users in the Comunidad Valenciana, while continuing to support the Valencian Centres and groups of excellence in all areas of R&D and technological innovation. The SIV and the instruments (companies, programmes, etc.) created to support the industry and promote innovation are now producing visible results. These results are being seen not just locally, but also in terms of technology exports and technology transfer to other regions and countries.

3. TEMPLATE FOR THE MAPPING OF GOOD PRACTICES

NAME OF THE PROJECT :	EMPOWERING CIVIL SOCIETY IN RURAL & REMOTE AREAS – ECSRA
TOTAL GRAND UNDP	209,492 USD
LOCATION	LEZHA, ELBASAN, BERAT AND GJIROKASTRA REGIONS
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (MAIN GOALS, TIMELINE)	<p>" Delivering as One" programme approved by the Government of Albania in October 2007, identifies civil society strengthening as an integral part of the work of UN organizations in the country. Moreover, the Common Country Programme Document (CCPD) for Albania 2012-2016 highlights the importance of strengthening the engagement of civil society with the state, to ensure government accountability and transparency, as well as to raise awareness and advocate for the promotion of human rights and access to justice.</p> <p>The absence of active civil society actors in rural areas and remote regions deprives local communities from benefits of participatory and citizen-oriented governance and also from advantages of EU accession process.</p> <p>The project aims to revitalize civil society in rural/remote areas and to promote good governance through building capacities & empowering CS, as well as through facilitating close cooperation and partnerships between CS and local & regional authorities.</p> <p>The project aimed to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build sustained capacities for rural civil society as an indispensable stakeholder to advance rural communities' priorities through concrete actions that promote the principles of participatory, accountable and citizen-oriented governance. • Advocate with national / local stakeholders to strengthen rural civil society and support their networking and tri-partite partnerships.

RESULTS /
EFFECTS

1. FAIR OF IDEAS: Good Governance and active citizenry" (Tirana, 13 July 2012) aiming to encourage concrete initiatives for joint implementation under the project with local CSOs in the target regions. Despite great interest showed by numerous CSOs, due to limited funding, ECSRA partnered with local CSOs in the implementation of 20 initiatives in Lezha, Elbasan, Berat and Gjirokastra rural and remote areas.
2. Some of the main highlights of the 20 selected initiatives (Fair of Ideas) include: establishment of a network of farmers around the country that would, among others, consolidate the managing structures of 5 communes in the district of Elbasan; establishment of a women club in the communes of Gostime, Shushice and Gjergjan; establishment of a polyphonic group with the inclusion of all the vulnerable categories in Gjirokastra region; Improving local government action plans in support of Roma and Egyptian minorities of Lezha districts; establishment of a partnership forum for the development of the tourism in the region of Gjirokastra etc. These activities were accompanied by series of capacity building, awareness raising and other actions.
3. A Book of Achievements was produced, identifying success stories and achievements of the project implementation with the aim to share project' s approach with civil society development stakeholders.

NAME OF THE PROJECT :	STAR 2, CONSOLIDATION OF THE TERRITORIAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM"
TOTAL GRAND UNDP	USD 55 million
LOCATION	22 municipalities
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (MAIN GOALS, TIMELINE)	<p>STAR2 built on the national commitment to reform and strengthen local governance and public administration in general, enhance the efficiency and transparency of public institutions for an effective response to public expectations and against corruption, make citizens central to service delivery transformation and modernization, and create climate of trust, cooperation and democratic decision-making for a healthy and sustainable development</p> <p>To sum it up, the aims of local governance mapping are the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Assist in making governance measurable and debatable at the local level; ❑ Identify potential gaps and constraints in local policy-making and implementation; ❑ Capture capacity building needs amongst all stakeholders which, if addressed properly, could strengthen local governance; ❑ Emphasize the need to prioritize, plan, budget and monitor related capacity development activities; ❑ Provide evidence-based policy advice to local and central government; ❑ Identify improvements and persisting challenges in engaging civil society in local governance; ❑ Provide an objective account of achievements and thus further build accountability; <p>The Participation and Citizen Engagement dimension is represented by the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ institutional framework (whether there is an institutional framework which ensures and manages citizen participation) ❑ decision making (involvement of all relevant stakeholders in the decision-making process), ❑ citizen engagement (the level of interaction with local government), ❑ civic engagement (the level of citizens, CSOs, and media activism on local matters and development).

RESULTS / EFFECTS

The second local governance mapping report touches upon four main good-governance dimensions selected for this assessment. The four dimensions are also essential standards for local public administration in the context of EU integration process. Thus it is strongly recommended that the findings of these report are considered as guidance in terms of understanding where further support is needed and where should our resources be focused in the future, to make sure that the local government gets able to serve to the citizens in compliance with EU standards. The conclusions of the Local Governance Mapping 2020 and the noted progress of the LGUs in terms of the Effectiveness and Efficiency, transparency and Rule of Law, Accountability and Citizen and Civic Engagement emphasize the importance to follow the recommendation structure used in under LGM 2016, namely:

1. Policy and regulatory reform related interventions
2. Local government capacities for improved service delivery
3. Bottom-up transparency and accountability mechanisms
4. Sustainable and effective mechanism for citizen engagement

NAME OF THE PROJECT :	RURAL-YOU RURAL ALBANIAN YOUTH
TOTAL GRAND UNDP	-----
LOCATION	Shkoder, Kukes, and Diber Regions.
PROJECT DESCRIPTION (MAIN GOALS, TIMELINE)	<p>The overall objective is to strengthening rural youth' s interest representation and contribution to the implementation of Albania' s EU accession agenda in the agricultural and rural development sector in the long-term. The specific objective is to enhance youth participation in the social, economic, and political life of rural and remote communities of north-eastern Albania in the medium-term, namely in Shkoder, Kukes, and Diber Regions.</p>
RESULTS / EFFECTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> □ To increase activism of young people on sustainable development of target rural areas. Set-up of the RURAL-YOU Endowment Fund to guarantee financial support for innovative initiatives for rural development in agriculture, sustainable tourism and safeguarding the rural environment. The Fund will target grassroots organizations for medium-scale initiatives, focused on youth employment and professional development; informal groups of young people and / or young people, for the launch and / or promotion of small-scale entrepreneurial and self-employment initiatives through the "Young Rural Producers" competition. Establishment of a youth support pool, made up of experts from partner organizations, to provide technical assistance throughout the implementation cycle of their initiative. □ To consolidate the Rural Youth Hub platform as a pilot experience to engage young people living in remote areas in networking actions and the policy dialogue. Participatory workshops to develop its internal organization and strategic planning; peer-to-peer visits for sharing experiences with important rural youth initiatives at the national and EU level; a training course on advocacy for rural development. All this with the aim of offering more opportunities for Albanian rural youth to better represent their interests and influence policies and decision-making at local, national and EU levels.


4. MAPPING OF THE SOCIAL INNOVATION AT CROSS-BORDER LEVEL

4.1 Rural Development

Rural development has been highlighted by multiple groups, notably the EU in the IPA II and the ITU Measuring the Information Society Report³⁹ as a priority for Albania. Much of the progress which has been made, in terms of infrastructure, support networks and several other areas, has been unequally distributed. Rural areas are less connected and have less access to support networks and education. Most entrepreneurs are clustered in urban areas, especially Tirana, and serve primarily urban populations, largely as a consequence of the unequal distribution of resources. The benefits of their work, both in terms of economic development and utility for end users, is clustered in urban areas as well. There are two mutually supportive components of this objective, supporting entrepreneurship ecosystems in rural areas, and encouraging entrepreneurship in sectors such as agriculture and tourism that would have a positive impact on rural areas in terms of innovation of activities and economic development.

Rural Development political objective and supporting policies





Mapping of local ecosystems in rural areas would be a key first step in any kind of rural innovation development, as a diagnostic of current situations. Such mapping would serve as an initial effort to bring together the ecosystem and as a grassroots needs-analysis on a local level. Importantly, doing this kind of mapping in multiple rural communities in Albania would allow knowledge sharing among stakeholders in different ecosystems, allowing them to expose synergies and resources, and share best practices. One of the major issues of rural development is that of infrastructure, which is weaker outside of urban centres. The recognition of ICT as a strategic sector would be a major step toward encouraging the kind of investment required to build up rural infrastructure. Connecting agricultural and tourist clusters with an ICT innovation 'bridge cluster would bring technology and innovation to these areas that are central to rural economies. The modernization of these industries would be valuable for Albania overall, but particularly for rural areas. Additionally, it would create connections between rural businesses and urban innovators, academics and support networks that could be useful in terms of supplementing rural knowledge infrastructure.

Fostering innovation ecosystems for 40-50 per cent of a country improves quality of life, economic development and provides significant opportunities to that population. Creating more equal access to resources and opportunities would help with issues of rural poverty, and would strengthen the critical sectors of agriculture and tourism for Albania. Building up rural ecosystems would also be valuable in terms of building up a larger pool of potential innovators and of potential consumers for innovative products and services. A wider variety of actors would allow for greater experimentation and specialization among support networks as different programmes can develop along different lines. Coupled with best practice sharing this allows the national ecosystem to have access to a better array of potential concepts. Finally, this would improve Albania's ranking and standing in international development analyses such as ITU connectivity studies and the EU accession process, and in ratings such as the Global Innovation Index of Global Entrepreneurship Monitor. Not only would this be a positive for the country on a political level, but it may also serve to strengthen the case that investors and international programmes should be interested in engaging with the ecosystems in Albania.

4.2 ECOSYSTEM MAPPING

As noted, there are a number of efforts to map the innovation ecosystem in Albania. These efforts at mapping ideally should be leveraged to create a comprehensive map of the ecosystem, notably incorporating support networks, communities, start-ups and research institutions, among other actors. It may be based in part on the ecosystem review process as described in the ITU-D Innovation Policy Toolkit, or UNIDO Systems of Innovation Survey. Different mapping methodologies would have different specific uses, for example, the ecosystem reviews are focused on developing collaborative projects, and grassroots analysis, and the systems of innovation surveys are focused on giving a longitudinal mapping and economic measurement. Whatever the format, this map would help to coordinate efforts to create new projects and activities, both by facilitating cooperation between existing actors and by highlighting gaps in the ecosystem where stakeholders can have a high impact. It would help potential entrepreneurs to locate resources to help them develop. In particular, it could serve as a way of drawing foreign resources and investment, by displaying entrepreneurial success stories and efforts that reduce risk, and by demonstrating opportunities and needs in the ecosystem. It would also help bring in financing for support networks, competitions, events, and other projects from abroad and from established industry players by raising the profile of these events and showing their potential impact.

This kind of effort is rooted in our theoretical framework that is based in large part on a national systems of innovation model. There is a critical need to strengthen linkages and collaboration between all stakeholders, understand priorities from the local ecosystems in various cities, engage in trust building, and map resources in terms of projects and programmes.

To ensure good matching and policy coherence, mapping of local needs throughout the country is a key step to take in parallel with this. Having a common understanding of the needs and resources will help direct resources to the good practice grassroots programmes and engage the ecosystem in a process of development and transformation. To achieve these goals, a comprehensive mapping and measuring of the ICT sectorial system of innovation is needed. Following this, ecosystem

gatherings, following the model of Innovation Week and other good practices should be encouraged in order to best develop networks and communities that can exploit these opportunities, especially on a local level. Mapping exercises are also needed on a local level. This is because the best mapped and best developed ecosystems exist in Tirana and other urban centres. To better develop ecosystems throughout the country and lessen innovation divides, mapping and strengthening of local ecosystems is needed. This will help with rural development and in the connection of the ICT sector and cluster to the tourist and agricultural sectors.

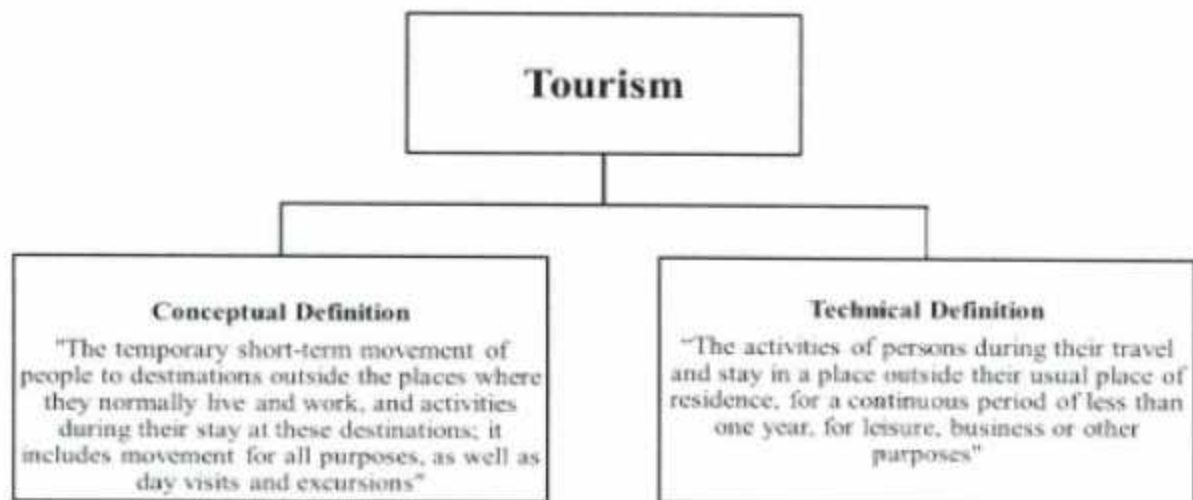
Policy Implication	Challenge	Recommendation
Strengthen key stakeholders ability to connect to resources, to engage in collaborative transformation, and creates services for needs across the country.	<p>Inability to find the resources needed to inspire, to innovate, and to scale.</p> <p>Inability to develop demand driven relevant projects to Albania context or market.</p> <p>Need synergies in experience sharing at national and global level.</p> <p>Need trust building activities between all stakeholders.</p> <p>Mismatch in demand of high impact projects and supply between actors especially public and private.</p> <p>Need cohesive vision supporting the entire ecosystem.</p>	<p>Conduct ecosystem review/mapping for major metropolitan areas, including creating relevant local initiatives and projects.</p> <p>Develop a local knowledge sharing platform for all communities.</p> <p>Participate in global knowledge sharing platforms linking to global ecosystems and knowledge.</p> <p>Develop support network for government stakeholders, including local administrations, and ecosystem for bridging know-how and resources.</p> <p>Develop and communicate a cohesive vision at national level with supporting regional linkages and strategies.</p>
Good practice example: Protik Ecosystem Mapping	As part of the process of launching, Protik developed a map of key actors in the innovation ecosystem. This included those who would be considered as competitors or colleagues, and those who would be involved in other activities. This was developed in house as a means of identifying key partners and resources, but would be a good baseline for the kind of mapping recommended above.	
Good practice example: South Africa Network Mapping by ANDE	The ANDE map of South Africa Innovation Ecosystem identifies key actors, notably investors, but also consultants, academic institutions, media outlets, and foundations. It lays them out based on the kind of support provided and the stage of start-up they work with. It would be a valuable resource to a start-up or other potential entrant into the ecosystem, such as a support network or investor. ⁴⁷	

5. CHARACTERISTICS OF CULTURAL TOURISM

Tourism has a vital role in development of different destinations all around the world. Accordingly, culture is assumed as one of the primary beneficiaries and is regarded as a key asset in tourism development by promoting both tangible (i.e. cultural attractions, like museums and heritage centres, natural assets like beach, sun and mountain) and intangible (i.e. promoting gastronomy cultural events and festivals and selling "atmosphere") elements. However, the diversity of known definitions and a complex relationship between culture and tourism underlines the problem of defining cultural tourism. For instance, considering culture as a component in every single aspect of human life, it is possible to assume that everything is cultural, therefore all tourism is somehow cultural tourism. However, this broad and holistic approach is not particularly useful in identifying those cultural values important in tourism and vice versa, or in other words, in defining cultural tourism. This paper analyses the ever changing and indistinct definition of cultural tourism by reviewing the known approaches and perspectives adopted in defining this complex concept.

In order to clearly define the concept of cultural tourism it's first necessary to have a basic understanding of the two complex definitions of culture and tourism. However, it should be noted that recognizing the two concepts of culture and tourism separately is considered as a pre requisite for defining cultural tourism. The definition of cultural tourism itself is quite different and should not be assumed as a combination of the meanings of these two terms, culture and tourism.

Comparing to the broad concept of culture, tourism is perhaps an easier term to deal with. The known definitions of tourism is divided into two categories; the „conceptual“ definition of tourism, dealing with the core meaning of tourism, and the „technical“ definition of tourism, focused on evaluating and measuring the value of tourism which is particularly variable in different countries. These two categories are briefly explained in Figure 1 below.



Culture is a very complex concept; hundreds of definitions for it are in literatures. Generally, „culture“ is viewed as a “complex whole, which delivers a unifying concept for the extensively varied ways of life.” “Trying to describe “culture” in a single broadly acceptable definition therefore produces a level of generalization which renders the act of definition useless.” (Richards, 1996) Two available uses of this concept in literature, culture as „process“ and culture as „product“, are described below:

Culture	
As 'Process'	As 'Product'
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derived from anthropology and sociology which regard culture mainly as codes of conduct embedded in a specific social group. Culture designates the social field of meaning production, or the processes through which people make sense of themselves and their lives. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Derives particularly from literary criticism. Culture is regarded as the product of individual or group activities to which certain meanings are attached. Thus 'high' culture might be used by some to refer to the products of famous artists, whereas 'low' culture might refer to TV soap programs.

In the field of tourism, these two distinctive approaches seem to slightly overlap and integrate. In other words, tourism, accompanied by other social mechanism, may act as a catalyst to transform culture as process into culture as product, thus isolating and detaching cultural products from their initial social context. As mentioned before, this issue poses a challenge in defining the creditability of cultural tourism in the first place. Although understanding different definitions of culture and its role in society may easily reveal its relation to tourism, it would be

unwise and needless to explain them in this article. Ashworth (1995) categorized three definitions of culture related to tourism shown in Figure 3. The first one and the most limited definition is aesthetic productivity. Regarded as „ArtTourism”, this is the simplest form of culture to be commodified for tourism, generally associated with art and artistic products and performance; i.e., theater, ballet, concert festivals, museums and opera performances. The second definition of culture is mentioned as „HeritageTourism”, most manifested in a mix of preserved buildings, conserved cityscapes and morphological patterns, as well as places associated with historical events and personalities. The last and the most general of the three definitions of culture mentioned by Ashworth is „Place-specific Tourism”, „meaning that culture can be defined as the common set of values, attitudes and thus behaviour of a social group” (Ashworth, 1995)



5.1 HOW CULTURAL TOURISM IS VALUED/ THE EXPANDING NOTION OF CULTURE AND HERITAGE

The concept of cultural heritage has continued an uninterrupted enlargement process over the last century. The artistic, historical and monumental heritage continues as core values and types, but it has also incorporated other elements that make up a new expanded notion of culture. This responds to a new conception derived from scientific theorizing of ethnology and anthropology, which increased social awareness of these other expressions and manifestations of culture. This process could be synthesized in the idea of a transition from 'objects' to 'activities' or, in more modern terms, from material assets to intangible assets." The intangible cultural heritage shall be considered to include the practices, representations,

expressions, knowledge and skills that communities, groups and, in some cases, individuals recognize as an integral part of their cultural heritage, and in particular: a) traditions and oral expressions, including modalities and linguistic characteristics as a vehicle of intangible cultural heritage; as well as traditional place names as an instrument for the valorization of the geographical name of the territories; b) performing arts; c) social practices, rituals and festive events; d) knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; e) traditional craftsmanship; f) gastronomy, culinary preparations and food; g) Specific uses of natural landscapes; h) forms of collective socialization and organizations; i) sound demonstrations, music and traditional dance.” This concept of intangible cultural heritage builds on the UNESCO (2003) definition, but adds some nationally-specific elements, such as the valorisation of place names.

The basic drivers of the convergence of tourism and cultural consumption in recent decades can be attributed to the growth in education and travel as a result of rising living standards in the developed world, and the more widespread use of culture for extrinsic as well as intrinsic motives. The report also identifies the synergy between tourism and culture as one of the important drivers, with culture providing a major attraction for tourism, which in turn boosted the economies of the destinations visited. These synergies between tourism and culture have been instrumental in developing what was termed a culture of tourism¹. The growth of postmodern culture and the increasing de-differentiation of different life spheres now mean that virtually all tourism can be seen as having a cultural dimension. Culture is increasingly less likely to be consumed on specific types of holiday or by specific types of people – it is now an integral part of many tourist experiences – either as a backdrop, a form of atmosphere, souvenirs, what people eat, etc. In this overall culture of tourism the division between tourism and culture is increasingly hard to discern, and the culture that tourists consume is increasingly integrated into the everyday life of the places they visit. As the tourism marketing strategy for Albania points out:²

“[...] cultural heritage is made up of the ways in which the population of a given location expresses itself in relation to its history, social systems, values, and their relationship, with the environment in which they live. A location’s topography, ecosystems and biodiversity cannot, thus, be divorced from the cultural heritage of the people who inhabit it. Cultural and natural heritage should be seen as part and parcel of the destination’s total heritage.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Creating vision

The development of tourism and culture synergies should stem from a clear vision of what culture means to the places visited, and how the values of those places should be shared with visitors. A place-based cultural vision can become a means of creating distinction in an increasingly crowded cultural tourism marketplace, giving new meaning to cultural assets and practices for local communities. Such a vision needs to clarify why culture is important to a place and what benefits it offers to all place stakeholders, including visitors. Such a vision can provide direction and leadership for a diverse group of stakeholders, and stimulate collaboration in reaching shared goals. Collaboration can also be supported by linking specific aims and objectives to the vision, which can be adjusted to take account of changing stakeholder needs and the dynamic nature of tourism and culture.

In developing such a vision, stakeholders should take account of the cultural diversity of place and visitors, linking tangible and intangible heritage and contemporary culture in a way that inspires respect and stimulates inter-cultural communication.

Developing more specific cultural tourism policy

There is some evidence from the current study that suggests that more active cultural tourism policy development can help to stimulate greater cultural tourism flows. By strategically highlighting key cultural experiences, the attention of different stakeholder groups can be attracted to specific fruitful development areas. Although most countries see cultural tourism as an important market, fewer have yet come up with specific policies aimed at developing cultural tourism or ensuring the flow of benefits to all stakeholders.

Ensuring cultural protection

Protecting cultural assets is essential to maintain the attractiveness of cultural destinations. This is a particular challenge for emerging destinations, where rapid

tourism growth can occur in the absence of well-defined regulation and a lack of stakeholder awareness. In many destinations with popular cultural sites, management and control systems (for example timed ticketing, differential pricing) are already in place to cope with visitor pressure. As cultural tourism grows, it is likely that such systems will be extended, and this is an area where the exchange of knowledge and experience between destinations can be of great value.

Using technology and innovation

New technology can support the development of engaging experiences related to tangible and intangible heritage as well as contemporary culture. This report shows that a number of destinations are already employing many new means of distributing information or enhancing the visitor experience. In future these developments are likely to become even more important, as access to communication technologies among consumers increases and those technologies continue to become more powerful. Destinations should examine the potential to utilize the information available to governments (national, regional and local) to create new information portals or applications that will allow visitors to access richer data. The possibilities of enhancing the interpretation of cultural assets through augmented reality and other techniques should also be explored.

Building collaboration

The exchange of views and information between stakeholders is vital in maximizing the synergies between tourism and culture. Destinations should therefore consider establishing stakeholder forums to identify issues, suggest solutions and influence policy-making. Many destinations already have networks related either to tourism or culture, but few currently provide opportunities for an exchange of views and experience between stakeholders from the different sectors. Destinations where these have been developed have already shown that they can offer significant advantages in terms of increased marketing power, information exchange and funding. One expert recommended:

“Creating stakeholder fora in destinations, involving the most senior players with both power and influence across public and private sectors, and within such fora allowing a common agenda to evolve and thus a common framework for strategic interventions.”

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