

POLYCENTRIC SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TOOLKITS
Strategy and Communication Tools

Interreg
Atlantic Area
POST

Co-funded by
the European Union

POLYCENTRIC SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TOOLKIT

Strategy and Communication Tools

COPYRIGHT PAGE

Title: Polycentric Sustainable Tourism Toolkit: Strategy and Communication Tools
Published by: IPVC
Place and Date: Viana do Castelo, February de 2026
Layout: Hugo Rios
Director: Mª Carmen Pardo-López
ISBN: 978-989-9141-51-3
DOI: 10.57910/ipvc-estg-978-989-9141-51-3

This publication was produced within the framework of the POST Project (EAPA_0003/2022 -Polycentric Sustainable Tourism), co-financed by Interreg Atlantic Area Programme. The views and opinions expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the Programme authorities.

AUTHORS

M.ª Carmen Pardo-López (IPVC, CITUR)
Ana Ladeiras (Eixo Atlântico do Noroeste Peninsular)
Paulo Carrança (TPNP)
Nuno Ferreira (TPNP)
Saber Laïche (Grand Cognac)
Eliane Vera Paz (Atlantic Cities)
David Lawless (Dun Laoghaire Rathdown County Council)
James Hanrahan (Atlantic Technological University)
Deirdre Byrne (Atlantic Technological University)
María Montserrat Cruz González (U. Vigo)
Francisco Javier Sánchez Sellero (U. Vigo)
Elvira Vieira (ISAG)
Bárbara de Sousa (ISAG)
Ana Pinto Borges (ISAG)
Susana Mesquita (ISAG)
Kevin Hemsworth (ISAG)
Carla Pinto Cardoso (Braga City Council / Universidade Católica Portuguesa)
Luís Ferreira (Braga City Council)

INDEX

I. Introduction 7

II. Methodology 13

III. Strategy Tools 17

Tool 1. SWOT Analysis 19
Tool 2. Tourism Readiness Checklist 23
Tool 3. Territory Comparison Dashboards 27
Tool 4. Opportunity/Gap Analysis Framework 31
Tool 5. Governance Maturity Assessment 35
Tool 6. Stakeholder Mapping 40
Tool 7. Stakeholder Prioritization Matrix 43
Tool 8. Roadmap Development 47
Tool 9. Action Planning Template 53
Tool 10. Circular Business Model Canvas 59
Tool 11. Data Collection Guidelines 63
Tool 12. Impact Measurement Framework for Sustainable 66
Tool 13. Visitor Flow Mapping 69
Tool 14. Monitoring Observatory 73
Tool 15. Resident Feedback Monitor 76
Tool 16. Signature Tourism 80

IV. Communication Tools 85
Tool 1. Storytelling/Narrative Building 87
Tool 2. Stakeholder Alignment 91
Tool 3. Content Calendar Template 95
Tool 4. Cross-Territory Campaign Planner 98
Tool 5. Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist 103
Tool 6. Messaging Templates 111
Tool 7. Visual Assets/Graphic Kits 144
Tool 8. Content Adaptation 117
Tool 9. Tourist Information 120
Tool 10. Influencer Engagement Plan 124
Tool 11. Micro-Influencer/Ambassador Program Guidelines 128
Tool 12. Visitor Experience Feedback 132
Tool 13. Campaign Analytics Dashboard 135
Tool 14. Template Campaign Evaluation Indicators 139

V. References 143

VI. Attachments 147

INTRODUCTION 1

INTRODUCTION 1

This work was developed within the framework of the **POST – Polycentric Sustainable Tourism** project, a transnational cooperation initiative funded by the **Interreg Atlantic Area Programme**. The project aims to develop and validate an innovative tourism model based on the concept of **polycentric sustainable tourism**, providing a strategic response to some of the most pressing challenges currently affecting tourism destinations across the Atlantic Area. These challenges include the concentration of tourism demand in a limited number of destinations (overtourism), territorial inequalities in tourism development, and the underutilisation of inland and rural areas despite their significant natural, cultural, and heritage resources.

Unlike traditional tourism models, which tend to concentrate visitors in a few iconic destinations, the POST project promotes a network-based approach in which multiple interconnected destinations cooperate to create complementary tourism experiences. Through this polycentric perspective, tourism flows can be redistributed more evenly across the territory, contributing to regional cohesion, reducing pressure on overcrowded destinations, and generating new economic opportunities for less-visited areas. At the same time, the model seeks to strengthen environmental sustainability, improve visitors' experiences, and enhance the resilience of tourism destinations facing future social, economic, and environmental challenges.

The project brings together a multidisciplinary consortium composed of public authorities, higher education institutions, regional development organisations, and tourism experts from **Spain, Portugal, Ireland, and France**. The partnership is coordinated by the **Eixo Atlántico do Noroeste Peninsular**, a cross-border association with extensive experience in territorial cooperation between Galicia (Spain) and Northern Portugal. The diversity of the consortium enables the integration of academic research, policy development, and practical experience in destination management, ensuring that the proposed model is both scientifically grounded and applicable to different territorial contexts across the Atlantic Area.

The development of the project followed a collaborative and evidence-based methodology combining literature reviews, territorial analyses, SWOT assessments, stakeholder interviews, focus groups, and the identification of transferable good practices. This participatory process enabled the partners to develop a common understanding of the tourism challenges faced by the participating regions and to design a strategic framework that can be adapted to destinations with different levels of tourism development. The resulting model includes a definition of polycentric sustainable tourism, six strategic intervention axes, permeability measures to facilitate tourism redistribution, and a portfolio of practical actions to support implementation.

One of the main outcomes of the project is the policy report *The Strategy of a New Tourism Model: Polycentric Sustainable Tourism* (Ladeiras, Pardo-López et al., 2026), which provides the conceptual foundation and operational framework for the proposed model. The report presents the territorial diagnosis of the pilot regions, the common SWOT analysis, the strategic objectives, implementation guidelines, and a series of policy recommendations designed to support tourism authorities and stakeholders in promoting more balanced, connected, and sustainable tourism systems across the Atlantic Area.

The work presented in this dissertation focuses on one of the outputs developed within the POST project and should therefore be understood within the broader context of this European initiative. By contributing to the design and implementation of the polycentric tourism model, this research supports the project's overarching objective of fostering a more balanced distribution of tourism benefits, strengthening territorial cooperation, and promoting sustainable regional development throughout the Atlantic Area.

This Toolkit has been designed as a practical companion to the policy report The Strategy of a New Tourism Model: Polycentric Sustainable Tourism, which establishes the strategic framework and policy recommendations for implementing polycentric sustainable tourism across Atlantic regions (Ladeiras et al., 2026).

While the Policy Report explains what polycentric sustainable tourism is and why it should be adopted, this Toolkit focuses on how to put that vision into practice through a collection of practical methods, templates and implementation tools.

The Toolkit is intended for a broad range of stakeholders involved in tourism planning and management at different governance levels, including regional and local authorities, Destination Management Organisations (DMOs), tourism agencies, development organisations and other public bodies.

The tools are not intended to be used sequentially or in their entirety. Rather, they form a flexible toolbox from which users can select the instruments that best respond to their specific needs, priorities, governance context and stage of implementation. Depending on the territory, some organisations may only require a small number of tools, while others may combine several to support more comprehensive planning processes.

Each tool is designed to address a particular challenge or opportunity related to the implementation of polycentric sustainable tourism. Together, they provide practical support for translating the strategic principles presented in the Policy Report into concrete actions, helping destinations strengthen cooperation, improve governance, diversify tourism flows, enhance sustainability and monitor progress over time.

Users are therefore encouraged to adapt the tools to their local context, institutional capacities and available resources, rather than applying them as a fixed methodology.

This document presents two complementary toolkits developed within the framework of polycentric sustainable tourism in the Atlantic Area: the Strategy Toolkit and the Communication Toolkit. These instruments are designed to support policymakers, destination managers, communication officers, and other stakeholders in implementing polycentric approaches, fostering cooperation among multiple destinations, and ensuring sustainability, regional cohesion, and enhanced territorial visibility.

The toolkits are the result of a joint methodology developed by the project partners, under the coordination of ATU and IPVC. This methodology was designed to detail the steps that must be followed by mass tourism destinations and less-developed tourism destinations to implement the polycentric sustainable tourism approach, including both implementation and follow-up processes. It defines objective indicators to measure the impact and success of implemented actions, and, wherever possible, identifies potential data sources, subsequently validated by local support groups.

The toolkits have two complementary objectives:

1. **Strategy Toolkit:** To support analysis, planning, governance, and monitoring, enabling local territories to manage and distribute tourism flows sustainably.
2. **Communication Toolkit:** To provide practical tools for tourism promotion and communication, reinforcing regional cohesion and visibility, and facilitating the permeability of tourism flows across territories.

Each toolkit is **modular, actionable, and practical**, consisting of tools that include: name, description, implementation steps, expected outcomes, and basic indicators (KPIs), allowing partners to apply and assume responsibility for specific tools within the territorial network.

METHODOLOGY 2

METHODOLOGY 2

The development of the Strategy and Communication Toolkits follows a multi-stage process grounded in collective analysis, partner expertise, and validation across the project's territories. The process unfolded through four main stages:

1. Review and Analysis of Existing International Toolkits

A wide set of international and European toolkits created by recognised institutions in the tourism and sustainability fields was analysed, including:

INSTITUTION	TOOLKIT
UNWTO	*Toolkit of Indicators for Projects*
Smart Tourism Destinations (European Commission)	*Mastering Data: Toolkit for Tourism Destinations*
World Bank	*Tourism Diagnostic Toolkit*
European Commission	*EU Communication Toolkit - Sustainable EU Tourism*
Switch Asia/European Union	*Sustainable Marketing and Communications Toolbox*

This review enabled the identification of an initial list of useful approaches, frameworks, and tools that could be adapted to the polycentric tourism model of the POST project.

2. Selection of Relevant Tools for the POST Context

A second selection phase focused on identifying which tools were most relevant to the specific objectives of POST.

This stage included:

- Presentation and discussion of potential tools with project partners.
- Assessment of suitability for a polycentric, multi-territory tourism system.
- Allocation of tools to partners according to their expertise, thematic knowledge, and territorial experience.
- Provision of a standard template with structure, definitions, and an example tool to ensure consistency across all contributions.

3. Collaborative & Autonomous work of tools development by Partners

Each partner developed 2–3 tools assigned to them based on their expertise.

This stage involved:

- Consolidating information from the initial review.
- Translating concepts into practical, operational tools.
- Ensuring each tool included:
  - a clear rationale
  - implementation steps
  - expected results
  - practical examples related to POST strategies
  - basic indicators or KPIs

This phase resulted in drafts harmonised across partners and territories.

4. Partner Meetings and Joint Validation

The drafted tools were presented and discussed during partner meetings, including in-person sessions.

Validation included:

- Feedback from Local Support Groups at regional level.
- Cross-territorial discussion to ensure relevance, usability, and transferability.
- Final adjustments to guarantee that tools were context-sensitive, operational, and aligned with the project's strategic objectives.

Final Outcome

These activities were based on the outcomes of WP1 and Activity 2.1, including the development of local action plans for strategy implementation.

The final result consists of the Strategy Toolkit and the Communication Toolkit, designed to:

- support the adoption of polycentric sustainable tourism across Atlantic Area territories
- promote cooperation and coordinated planning
- strengthen sustainability, identity, and territorial visibility

STRATEGY TOOLS 3

STRATEGY TOOLS 3

Tool 1. SWOT Analysis

1. Rationale

Description:

The SWOT Analysis Tool provides a common analytical framework to assess the internal and external factors that influence sustainable tourism development within polycentric territories. It serves as a bridge between the *Territorial State of the Art* and the design of strategic axes and action plans within the POST methodology.

Objective:

To establish a harmonised and standardised method for evaluating tourism performance and sustainability potential across multiple destinations. The tool enables regions to identify and compare internal strengths and weaknesses, assess external opportunities and threats, and inform strategic priorities and investment focus areas for polycentric tourism development.

Justification:

The SWOT framework is one of the most recognised tools in strategic management and territorial planning. Within the POST context, it transforms diagnostic insights (from the *State of the Art* and interviews) into a shared evidence base for decision-making. This common analytical foundation supports the creation of strategic axes (Offer, Mobility, Digitalisation, Partnerships, Adaptation, and Resilience) within the Polycentric Sustainable Tourism Model.

2. When to Use

- During the initial diagnostic phase of a regional or local tourism strategy.
- When reviewing or updating an existing plan to incorporate sustainability and polycentric principles.
- To compare performance and identify complementarity among neighbouring destinations.
- Prior to defining joint actions or investment roadmaps.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Territorial data: socio-economic indicators, tourism statistics, infrastructure, demographics.
- Environmental data: land use, biodiversity, climate risks, natural resources.
- Cultural data: heritage assets, events, creative industries.
- Governance data: stakeholder mapping, partnerships, institutional capacity.
- Qualitative insights: results from semi-structured interviews per pilot area (public & private).

3.2. Implementation

1. **Collect and Review Data** – Gather quantitative and qualitative insights from the *Territorial State of the Art* and interviews.
2. **Identify Strengths and Weaknesses** – Analyse internal factors related to tourism resources, infrastructure, and governance.
3. **Identify Opportunities and Threats** – Examine external factors such as markets, trends, policies, and environmental pressures.
4. **Consolidate Results** – Summarise findings in a 2×2 SWOT matrix for each territory.
5. **Integrate and Validate** – Merge local SWOTs into a Common Atlantic SWOT, then review results with stakeholders in participatory workshops.

3.3. Expected Results

- Harmonised diagnostic matrices per territory and a consolidated transnational SWOT.
- Identification of shared priorities for sustainable and balanced tourism development.
- Common understanding of how cooperation can increase territorial permeability.
- Analytical foundation for defining strategic axes and pilot actions.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

Example: PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac (France)

Application of SWOT analysis to identify strategic factors for sustainable tourism development in rural municipalities such as Bourg-Charente and Châteauneuf-sur-Charente, supporting immersive heritage and digital tourism initiatives.

Results:

- Strengths: Cognac brand, cultural identity, river-based tourism, gastronomy.
- Weaknesses: Limited multimodal transport, fragmented governance.
- Opportunities: Slow tourism (Flow Vélo, river cruises), European cooperation.
- Threats: Climate risks to vineyards, competition from coastal destinations.

5. Potential Risks / Obstacles and Solutions

RISK / OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Inconsistent data collection	Use shared templates and indicators (ETIS, UN Tourism, GSTC).
Lack of stakeholder participation	Conduct participatory workshops early.
Over-complex or unbalanced SWOTs	Limit to 3–5 key factors per quadrant.
Limited comparability across territories	Apply standardised terminology and definitions.
Results not used strategically	Integrate findings into the Action Planning Template and Roadmap.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

Aligned with ETIS, UN Tourism, and GSTC sustainability criteria.

Contributes to the SDGs: 8, 11, 12, 13.

Provides a foundation for strategic coherence within the Polycentric Sustainable Tourism Model. Also supports the Communication Framework by providing evidence-based insights that inform consistent storytelling, messaging, and promotion across the POST network.

7. Responsible / Implementing Entity

- Led by: Local authorities, DMOs, tourism observatories.
- Supported by: Academic institutions and regional experts in sustainable destination management.

8. Others

- **Format:** Printable SWOT matrix + Excel summary for comparison.
- **Evaluation cycle:** Biennial, integrated with the Monitoring Observatory Tool.
- **Scalability:** Adaptable to other European polycentric regions.

Polycentric Tourism Communication
SWOT Analysis Tool

Provide a shared framework to assess Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats affecting sustainable tourism development

PROCESS

1 Data collection and review
Compile territorial data + interview insights

2 Internal analysis
Identify Strengths & Weakness

3 External analysis
Identify Opportunities & Threat

4 Consolidation
Merge into a Common Atlantic SWOT

5 Validation
Stakeholder workshops & collective review

BENEFITS

- **Harmonised diagnostic across territories**
- **Clear identification of shared priorities**
- **Stronger cooperation based on complementary assets**
- **Solid analytical basis for strategic planning**

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Low stakeholder input** → participatory workshops
- **Over-complex SWOTs** → focus on 3–5 items per quadrant
- **Limited comparability** → standardised terminology
- **Weak strategic use** → link results to Action Roadmap

Tool 2. Tourism Readiness Checklist

1. Rationale

Description:

The Tourism Readiness Checklist is a diagnostic tool developed to evaluate how prepared a territory is for sustainable tourism development. It assesses four essential dimensions: Infrastructure & Services, Digitalization, Sustainability & Heritage, and Governance & Tourism Management, offering a clear picture of destination's strengths and gaps. This makes it easier to plan strategically and benchmarking across regions. It also provides a practical reference for aligning local strategies with the POST model, enabling shared learning and replication across territories.

Objective:

To determine the level of readiness of a territory to attract, host, and manage tourists effectively and sustainably, ensuring positive impact, high-quality experiences, and long-term viability.

Justification:

Territorial readiness is a key prerequisite for successful tourism strategies. By identifying a territory's strengths, weaknesses, and priorities, this tool supports informed decision-making, fosters efficient resource use, and promotes balanced and inclusive tourism development aligned with regional strategies.

2. When to Use

- During territorial diagnosis and strategic planning for tourism development, including new products or promotional campaigns.
- When benchmarking or comparing tourism performance across territories.
- As part of regional or cross-border cooperation initiatives to align standards and expectations.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation/ Inputs

Before starting the assessment, gather and review the following information:

- Data on infrastructure, accessibility, services, and tourism governance.
- Information on public services (healthcare, safety, and waste).
- Existing tourism policies, plans and strategic documents.
- Visitor data: arrivals, overnight stays, satisfaction levels (if available).
- Stakeholders input (municipalities, local businesses, community groups).

INDEX

3.2. Implementation

Step 1. Define scope: Start by clarifying *what* will be assessed, including dimensions, indicators, and data sources. The structure provided in Annex 1 offers a recommended baseline to guide this process (aligned with GSTC and UNWTO Criteria).

Step 2. Collect & Assess Data: Gather the necessary evidence and evaluate each dimension and indicator using a standardized scoring scale (e.g., applying a 1–5 scale as illustrated below).

Scoring scale:

SCORE	READINESS LEVEL	DESCRIPTION
1	Very weak/not available	The element is largely absent or non-functional.
2	Low/limited presence	Some initiatives or facilities exist, but coverage or quality remains limited.
3	Moderate	The element exists and operates but needs improvement or modernization.
4	Good	Well established and meeting most requirements effectively.
5	Excellent	Fully developed, integrated and effective

Step 3. Analyse results: Calculate the readiness score for each dimension, identify strengths and weaknesses, and highlight priority areas for improvement.

Step 4. Benchmark and Compare: Contrast results with other territories or reference standards to understand positioning and competitiveness.

Step 5. Validate findings: Review and discuss results with local stakeholders to confirm interpretations and agree on next steps.

Step 6. Record and store results: Complete the checklist template, attach evidence or links, and store results in a shared database for future comparison.

3.3 Expected Results

- A comprehensive, evidence-based overview of the territory's tourism readiness level.
- Identification of key strengths, gaps, and areas for improvement.
- Prioritization of strategic actions and investments.
- Comparative readiness map or table for benchmarking with other territories.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

In the Azores Archipelago (Portugal), the regional government conducted a comprehensive Tourism Readiness and Sustainability Assessment across its nine islands. The process combined quantitative indicators and qualitative surveys involving residents, businesses, and visitors. The results highlighted strong performance in environmental sustainability and digital readiness but faced some challenges in inter-island mobility and service quality consistency. These results led to the Tourism Management Action Plan, focusing on strengthening transport links, enhanced digital visitor information, and expand professional training.

The initiative was later recognized by the UNWTO as a best practice in sustainable island tourism planning, showing how readiness assessments can directly shape strategic investment and governance decisions. The methodology has strong parallels with the POST Readiness Checklist, illustrating how structured diagnostics can be scaled and adapted to different territorial contexts.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Risk: Insufficient or outdated data → Solution: Combine official data with field surveys and stakeholder interviews.
- Risk: Subjective scoring → Solution: Use standardized criteria and ensure team calibration before scoring.
- Risk: Lack of stakeholder engagement → Solution: Involve key actors early and validate findings collectively.
- Risk: Tool not integrated into planning → Solution: Include checklist results as a mandatory input in planning and funding proposals.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

The Tourism Readiness Checklist contributes directly to POST's strategic objectives by fostering evidence-based territorial planning and encouraging collaboration among municipalities. It supports the identification of common challenges, promotes balanced territorial development, and provides valuable input for complementary tools such as the Territory Comparison Dashboard and Action Planning Template. It ensures that tourism development follows coherent, evidence-based principles and contributes to a shared vision for polycentric and sustainable territorial growth.

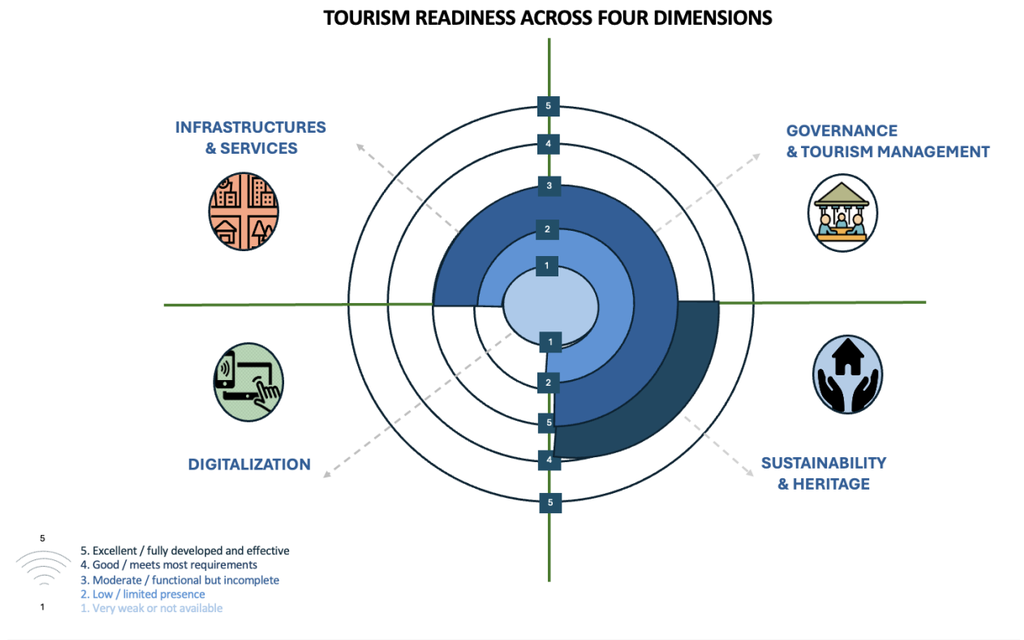
7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Municipalities, Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), or regional tourism boards, supported by academic, professional, and research partners experienced in tourism assessment and strategic planning.

8. Others:

It may include relevant indicators such as:

- Percentage of tourism infrastructure meeting quality standards.
- Accessibility Index (transport, signage, digital presence).
- Proportion of tourism-related jobs within total employment.
- Stakeholder satisfaction level with tourism governance.
- Visitor satisfaction (where available).



Tool 3. Territory Comparison Dashboards

1. Rationale

The Territory Comparison Dashboards empowers regions to monitor, compare, and align tourism performance across multiple destinations using open-source data platforms. By integrating key indicators from the EU Tourism Dashboard (link, national tourism statistics, and regional/local datasets, destinations can build a robust evidence base for strategic planning and collaboration. This tool facilitates access to harmonised, transparent data sources to identify disparities, synergies, and opportunities for joint action. It enables visualization of visitor flows, sustainability metrics, and territorial linkages - supporting informed decision-making and alignment with global and European sustainability goals.

Description:

A digital toolkit linking to open-source dashboards that compare tourism performance, sustainability indicators, and visitor dynamics across territories. It promotes data-driven collaboration, strategic alignment, and transparent governance.

Objective:

To provide municipalities, DMOs, and regional stakeholders with access to shared open-source platforms for monitoring, comparing, and interpreting tourism-related data - enabling joint decision-making and coordinated destination management.

Justification:

Polycentric tourism systems require coordinated planning across diverse areas. By leveraging EU, national, and local open-source dashboards, destinations can transparently compare performance using recognised indicators. This supports:

- Identification of strengths and gaps
- Evidence-based cooperation
- Strategic alignment with EU and global frameworks

2. When to use

- During regional tourism planning and policy development
- When evaluating performance across multiple destinations
- To identify disparities or synergies in visitor flows and sustainability outcomes
- For annual reporting and benchmarking
- When preparing joint funding applications or strategic initiatives

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

Key Open-Source Data Sources

Use the following open datasets to populate the dashboard:

- EU Tourism Dashboard: Visitor flows, sustainability KPIs, economic impact
- National Tourism Statistics: Arrivals, overnight stays, transport modes
- Regional/Local Open Data Portals: Environmental, cultural, and governance metrics
- GIS Data: Mapping visitor flows and territorial assets

Indicators to include:

- Visitor statistics (arrivals, overnight stays, transport modes)
- Environmental indicators (waste, water, biodiversity, emissions)
- Economic data (revenue, employment, seasonality)
- Social/cultural metrics (resident satisfaction, heritage protection)
- Governance indicators (stakeholder engagement, policy integration)

3.2 Implementation Steps

- Define Destination Parameters: Select territories and indicators for comparison
- Collect and Harmonise Data: Use standardised formats across regions
- Integrate Data into Action Plans: Align with strategic goals
- Build Destination Virtual Dashboard: Use infographics, maps, graphs, and tables
- Facilitate Stakeholder Review: Share insights and gather feedback
- Update and Refine: Refresh data regularly and adjust visualisations

3.3 Expected results

- Visual maps of current and desired visitor flows
- Identification of territorial linkage opportunities
- Evidence base for joint strategic decision-making

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory (Portugal)

Uses GIS and sustainability indicators to monitor tourism across municipalities, enabling regional coordination and strategic planning.

Adaptation to POST (Place-based Open Source Tourism):

- Universities and regional partners replicate using EU KPIs
- Destinations visualise performance across areas
- Supports evidence-based planning, storytelling, and community engagement

5. Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	SOLUTION
Data inconsistency across territories	Develop shared data protocols and training
Limited technical capacity	Partner with academic institutions for dashboard development
Resistance to transparency	Build trust through participatory design and shared benefits
Indicator overload	Focus on core indicators aligned with regional goals
Lack of regular updates	Establish annual review cycles and automated data feeds

6. Connection to Global Strategy

- Aligns with European KPIs and indicator frameworks
- Supports EU Green Deal, Smart Specialisation, and SDGs
- Contributes to SDGs: 8, 11, 12 & 13

7. Responsible/Implementing Entities

- Local technical teams (municipalities, DMOs)
- Supported by specialists in spatial analysis and dashboard design
- Coordinated by academic institutions (e.g., ATU) or regional observatories

8. Toolkit Format and Features

- Format: Static virtual dashboard + printable summary reports
- Languages: English and others as needed
- Evaluation Cycle: Annual updates with stakeholder workshops

Territory Comparison Dashboards

Empowers regions to monitor, compare, and align tourism performance across multiple destinations using open-source data platforms

1 **Description**

- A digital toolkit linking to **open-source dashboards** that compare tourism performance, sustainability indicators, and visitor dynamics across territories.
- Promotes **data-driven collaboration**, strategic alignment, and transparent governance.

2 **Objective**

- To provide municipalities, DMOs, and regional stakeholders with access to **shared open-source platforms** for monitoring, comparing, and interpreting tourism-related data—enabling joint decision-making and coordinated destination management.

3 **When to Use**

- Regional tourism planning and policy development
- Evaluating performance across multiple destinations
- To indemnify visitor flows and sustainability outcomes
- Annual reporting and benchmarking
- Preparing joint funding applications or strategic initiatives

4 **Implementation Steps**

1. Define Destination Parameters
2. Collect and Harmonise Data
3. Integrate Data into Action Plans
4. Build Destination Virtual Dashboard
5. Facilitate Stakeholder Review
6. Update and Refine

5 **Expected Outcomes**

- Visual maps of current and desired visitor flows
- Identification of territorial linkage opportunities
- Evidence base for joint strategic decision-making

Scalability: Expandable to other regions and cross-border initiatives

INDEX

Tool 4. Opportunity/Gap Analysis Framework

1. Rationale

Description:

The Opportunity/Gap Analysis Framework is a strategic tool designed to identify where destinations and territories can benefit from cooperation, investment, or innovation to strengthen sustainable tourism within the Polycentric Tourism Model.

It complements the SWOT Analysis by focusing on comparative advantages, missing links, and synergies between regions. By mapping existing assets and identifying missing elements - in products, infrastructure, governance, or capacity - this tool helps partners detect where collaboration can generate added value and where joint action is most needed.

Objective:

To support partners and decision-makers in:

- Identifying areas with high cooperation potential across the Atlantic Area;
- Detecting gaps or weaknesses where joint action or knowledge exchange is needed;
- Prioritising investment or policy interventions under the Polycentric Tourism Strategy;
- Aligning territorial strategies with the shared POST sustainable tourism vision.

Justification:

The diversity of tourism maturity levels among Atlantic territories requires a common framework to compare needs and opportunities. This tool enables the consortium to move beyond local analyses and identify leverage points at the transnational level - where collaboration can make the greatest impact. The Opportunity/Gap Analysis Framework therefore acts as a bridge between diagnostic tools (SWOT, Impact Measurement) and planning tools (Action Roadmap, Strategic Axes).

2. When to Use

- After completing the SWOT and territorial diagnostics.
- When preparing joint strategies, pilot actions, or investment plans.
- During partner workshops to identify areas for transnational cooperation.
- As input for the Polycentric Strategy and Action Roadmap.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Consolidated SWOT analyses from all partners.
- Tourism performance indicators (visitor flows, seasonality, sustainability metrics).

- Mapping of existing tourism products, infrastructure, and governance models.
- Qualitative insights from interviews and stakeholder consultations.
- Partner self-assessment on strengths and needs (survey or matrix).

3.2. Implementation (5 Steps)

1. **Collect and Standardise Data** – Gather and align data from all territories (based on SWOTs and KPIs).
2. **Define Thematic Areas of Comparison** – e.g. mobility, innovation, governance.
3. **Identify Gaps and Opportunities** – Use a matrix approach:
   Gap = missing capacity or resource;
   Opportunity = transferable good practice or shared potential.
4. **Map Cross-Territorial Matches** – Highlight where one partner's opportunity can address another's gap.
5. **Prioritise Cooperation Areas** – Select key themes for pilot actions and funding opportunities.

3.3. Expected Results

- Comparative matrix showing gaps and opportunities per partner and theme.
- List of potential cooperation actions or pilot projects.
- Evidence-based input for the Polycentric Strategy and Action Roadmap.
- Stronger alignment between regional and transnational tourism policies.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example:

The framework could reveal, for instance, that while coastal destinations (Portugal, Spain) have strong digital marketing systems, inland regions (France, Ireland) have underdeveloped tools but high potential for nature and slow tourism.

By connecting these complementary strengths and needs, the partners can design joint actions such as:

- Shared digital training programmes for inland DMOs;
- Cross-promotion of coastal–inland tourism routes;
- Development of a joint Atlantic "Sustainable Experience" label.

This demonstrates how the Opportunity/Gap Analysis Framework can convert diagnostic insights into practical cooperation opportunities aligned with the POST strategy. *Note: This example is illustrative and aims to show how the tool can be applied within the POST methodology.*

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Uneven data availability across partners	Use qualitative scoring or estimates to fill missing data.
Difficulty comparing diverse territories	Standardise indicators and use visual dashboards.
Limited stakeholder engagement	Organise participatory validation workshops.
Overly broad list of gaps/opportunities	Focus on 3–5 strategic priorities.
Lack of follow-up after identification	Integrate results into the Action Planning and Pilot Selection phases.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

Supports the definition of the Polycentric Tourism Strategy and the Action Roadmap. Strengthens transnational cooperation by matching local needs with shared capacities. Contributes to SDGs 8, 11 & 17:

Also supports the Communication Framework by translating technical insights into cooperation narratives that strengthen POST's visibility and identity.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Contributors:** All POST partners (data sharing and participation in comparison workshops).
- **Support:** Academic and technical experts in regional development, data analysis, and tourism policy.

8. Others

Recommended tools and resources:

- Gap–Opportunity Matrix Template (Excel).
- Partner Self-Assessment Form (qualitative insights).
- Comparative Dashboard (Power BI or Tableau).
- Workshop Facilitation Guide (for participatory analysis).



Polycentric Tourism Communication
Opportunity / Gap Analysis Framework

Identify what regions can benefit from in order to strengthen sustainable tourism under the Polycentric Tourism Model

PROCESS

1. **Data collection**
consolidate SWOTs, KPIs, diagnostics
2. **Define comparison themes**
mobility, digitalisation, governance, etc.
3. **Identify gaps & opportunities**
using a shared matrix
4. **Match complementarities**
partner strengths meeting others' needs
5. **Prioritise cooperation areas**
select strategic actions & pilots

BENEFITS

- **Clear overview of territorial strengths & weaknesses**
- **Stronger transnational cooperation pathways**
- **Better investment and policy prioritisation**
- **Alignment with Polycentric Strategy & Action Roadmap**

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Uneven data availability** → use qualitative scoring & estimates
- **Hard to compare regions** → standardise indicators
- **Low stakeholder involvement** → validation workshops
- **Too many gaps/opportunities** → focus on 3–5 priorities
- **Lack of follow-up** → integrate results into planning phases

INDEX

Tool 5. Governance Maturity Assessment

1. Rationale

Description:

In this case, it wants to describe the operation and implementation of a strategic diagnostic tool, based on the participative action of the actors, evaluating the level of maturity of governance in a territorial tourism area, identifying the public-private institutions, as well as the actors in general, who will participate in it. Therefore, the relationships, responsibilities, coordination mechanisms and transparency in decision-making shared by the stakeholders will be analysed. In definite, the tool should be an instrument that offers a structured framework for action where existing strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are identified in the definition of more effective governance models.

Objective:

Evaluate of complete way the level of maturity of territorial governance, how governance works, in order to identify weaknesses, priorities for improvement of institutional behaviour, actions for participatory behaviour and enhancement of strengths.

Justification:

The planning of governance in the case of the implementation of sustainable polycentric tourism must be the basis for its good management. Therefore, we must know the level of maturity of this governance, i.e. whether we are at a more inexperienced stage, or whether the governance is already developed or even consolidated, which will allow us to define a scheme of action, detecting strengths and weaknesses that need to be corrected. Based on this analysis, the most suitable actions to develop public-private collaboration will be identified, as well as the most important actions to promote interaction between actors involved in polycentric tourism.

2. When to use

This tool must be used within a strategic planning process, as has been defined throughout the polycentric tourism action strategy, in order to define, above all, improvement actions. It is necessary to know public-private, social and community actors in order to obtain information on the governance process and thus be able to identify and respond to the governance situation in a territory.

- It would be important to take this into account from the beginning of the strategic diagnosis.
- In a phase prior to the formalisation of formal governance structures, and before the development of territorial partnerships for action.
- At the time of the evaluation and review of the coordination mechanisms in place.
- In final evaluation phases of projects involving the collaboration of differentiated actors.

- When conducting an internal assessment of an entity.
- When benchmarking across territories.

3. Step-by-step

1. The first step is to convene the key actors, defining the objective of the meeting, as well as document review and preparation of working materials.
2. Analysis of the governance maturity assessment, defining the initial level of maturity.
3. Collect a variety of data to evidence and assess governance maturity, identifying critical areas.
4. Validation and action plan.
5. Integration of the results obtained in the action strategy, indicating the goals to be achieved in order to improve territorial governance.

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Short document defining the objectives, scope and actors involved.
- Visual record of relevant actors in governance management, differentiating their role, level of influence and interest in the polycentric strategy.
- Folder of documentation to be handed over to stakeholders: institutional documents, planning of meetings.
- Analysis documentation folder: evidence of the different participations in the meetings, results and assessments.
- Assessment Document for Analysis and Reflection (Maturity Assessment Matrix).
- Actions for information gathering, governance arrangements, governance maturity targets, assessment and monitoring.
-

3.2. Implementation

1. Identification of Stakeholders: Make a list of all types of stakeholders, taking into account their influence on decision-making and level of interest.
2. Information gathering: Institutional documents, territorial strategic plans, monitoring reports, audit reports.
3. Planning of meetings: Committees, citizen consultations and working groups through participatory workshops. It is necessary to draw up a confirmed agenda and list of attendees for meeting activities.
4. Design of instruments for collecting formalised and comparable information: Design of questionnaires, evaluation sheets, templates that make it possible to create an editable and visual set of information.
5. Elaboration of an evaluation and monitoring document: This document will include the results obtained on the current governance, and will serve as a guiding principle for decision-making and monitoring of actions in the field of polycentric tourism governance.

3.3. Expected results

- Updated and realistic list of stakeholders involved in governance. Active participation of stakeholders who actually exist and participate in decision-making processes is promoted.
- Document of scope of the level of maturity of the gobernanza in the territories
- Monitoring document for the improvement of territorial governance, tools for improvement and monitoring. This type of document facilitates transparent analysis and the definition of improvement actions.
- List of governance measurement indicators and measurement values. This will create an empirically grounded basis and facilitate comparison at the same level of items between territories.
- Diagnosis of the functioning of territorial governance in the field of polycentric tourism.

4. Inspiring example / Good Practice

On 13 May 2025 in Santiago de Compostela hosted an edition of the Galicia Tourism Day, a meeting promoted by the Galician Press Association (APG) with the collaboration of the Galician Tourism Agency, which brought together representatives from all sectors involved in the tourism chain - including communication - this meeting highlighted the challenges and opportunities of a key sector in the Galician economy and identity.

The Galicia Tourism Conference served as a space for shared reflection between administrations, companies, journalists and citizens, at a key moment to redefine the Galician tourism model towards quality, sustainability and social cohesion.

https://mesadelturismo.org/galicia-analiza-el-presente-y-futuro-del-turismo-en-una-jornada-que-llama-a-la-reflexion-y-al-consenso/

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Solutions

- **Risk**: There is a risk of low participation of key stakeholders.
- **Solution:** To make calls in time for diverse agendas, which implies a transparent and inclusive process, where calls are highly customisable.
- **Risk:** Assessments can be subjective and biased, with problems of prior perception.
- **Solution:** Own self-assessments should be combined with external assessments carried out by aseptic technicians with no clear links to stakeholders.
- **Risk:** Problems in obtaining documentary data.
- **Solution:** It would be necessary to search for primary data through interviews or any other tool that involves a direct search for information.
- **Risk**: Establish a realistic analysis of the governance situation, and that this involves making agreements with commitments that are not made by those responsible for governance.
- **Solution:** The option to solve this problem is to formalise monitoring agreements..
- **Risk**: The evaluation can produce results that imply a planning of concrete actions; this is a problem if the actions are not properly interlinked with the evaluation results.

- **Solution:** The option is that the results are clearly defined and integrated directly into the plan as part of the outcomes.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

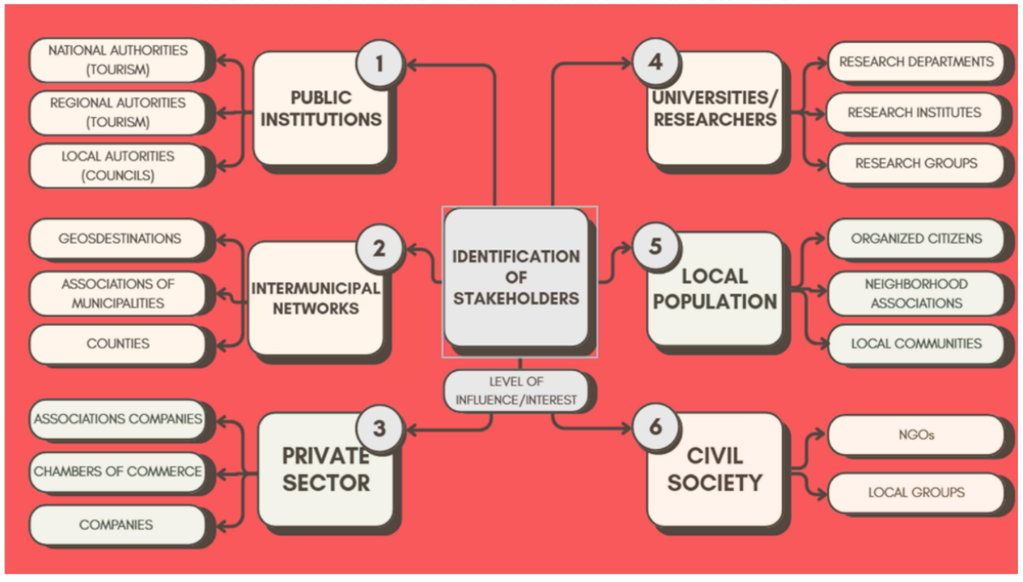
This tool is relevant to the POST Strategy because it values governance as a fundamental behaviour for its implementation. This governance activity must be based on accurate information, evidence and collaborative action, so that common actions can be defined for different territories in the Atlantic Area.

In other words, it will help to establish a comparative matrix between territories in order to be able to compare governance homogeneously, and also to design action measures that help to plan specific governance actions for the different institutions.

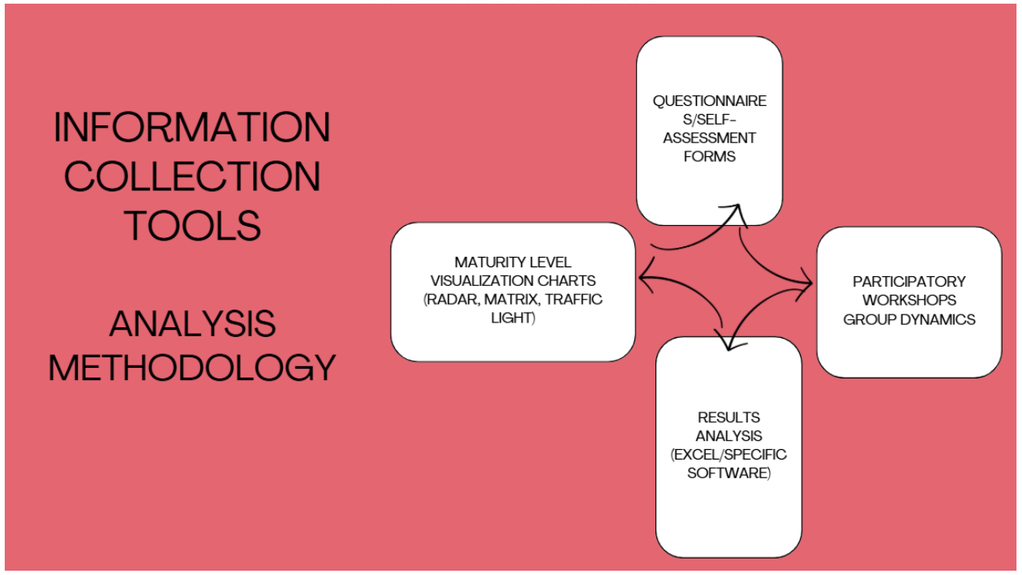
7. Responsible/Stakeholder

- **Lead:** Ministries, Autonomous Communities, City Councils, authorities at different decision-making levels, which establish public management and decision-making policies.
- **Collaborators:** Private sector, the local population, civil society.
- **Facilitator:** Researchers and transfer generators.

IDENTIFICATION AND CLASSIFICATION OF STAKEHOLDERS



INFORMATION GATHERING



Tool 6. Stakeholder Mapping

1. Rationale

Description:

Effective governance in polycentric tourism relies on collaboration across multiple destinations, sectors, and administrative levels. Stakeholder Mapping helps identify all relevant actors - public, private, and community-based - who influence or are influenced by tourism development. By visualizing their roles, relationships, and influence levels, destinations can create a shared understanding of who should be involved, avoid overlaps, facilitate work flows, and strengthen cooperation across territories.

Objective:

To create a shared and comprehensive understanding of the governance landscape, enabling better coordination, collaboration, and inclusivity among stakeholders.

Justification:

Use this tool to systematically list and categorize stakeholders within your tourism ecosystem. It provides a visual representation (map or network diagram) of relationships and interdependencies. This enables project partners and local authorities to understand governance dynamics, foster collaboration, and design targeted engagement actions.

2. When to use

At the **start the planning of the strategy** to establish a clear overview of key players.
Prior to **joint initiatives or campaigns** to identify roles and avoid duplication.
During **governance reviews** to assess inclusion, coordination, and effectiveness.

3. Step-by-step

1. Define the territorial scope (local, regional, or cross-border)
2. Identify all stakeholders related to tourism (government, businesses, NGOs, residents, community, visitors).
3. Classify them (by internal or external stakeholder or public, private, civil)
4. Map their connections and interdependencies (visual diagram or digital tool).
5. Validate with partners to ensure no relevant actor is missing.
6. Use results to plan engagement and communication strategies.

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Existing lists or databases of tourism actors (e.g., DMOs, municipalities, chambers of commerce, tourism departments).
- Information on each stakeholder's mission, influence, and geographic scope.
- Access to visualization tools (e.g., PowerPoint, Miro, Excel, Canva)
- Define a small working group to review and validate the map.

3.2. Implementation

- Brainstorm and list stakeholders.
- Categorize them by influence and interest (e.g., using a grid).
- After designing the overall stakeholder network, the next move is to break it down by stakeholder type or governance layer.
- Visualize relationships in a diagram or matrix.
- Discuss findings with project partners and refine.

3.3. Expected results

- A clear and visual overview of all relevant tourism stakeholders.
- Improved understanding of governance dynamics and collaboration needs.
- Strengthened multi-level and cross-border coordination.
- Foundation for future prioritization and engagement strategies.

4. Inspiring example / Good Practice

HUB-IN Project – Stakeholder Mapping. Source: HUB-IN Stakeholder Mapping

The HUB-IN project focuses on heritage-led urban regeneration and has developed a comprehensive stakeholder mapping tool to identify and prioritize key actors involved in the process. This tool includes a stakeholder map and a stakeholder database, allowing project teams to visualize relationships, assess influence and interest, and develop tailored engagement strategies. The HUB-IN stakeholder mapping approach is particularly relevant for projects aiming to decentralize tourism and strengthen regional governance. By identifying and engaging diverse stakeholders, the project fosters inclusive decision-making and builds community trust, which are essential for successful and sustainable tourism development.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Risk: Overlooking informal or community actors → Solution: Include NGOs, residents' groups, and local entrepreneurs early.
- Risk: Static mapping that becomes outdated → Solution: Review and update annually or when new projects arise.
- Risk: Excessive complexity → Solution: Focus on key stakeholders most relevant to your tourism strategy.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

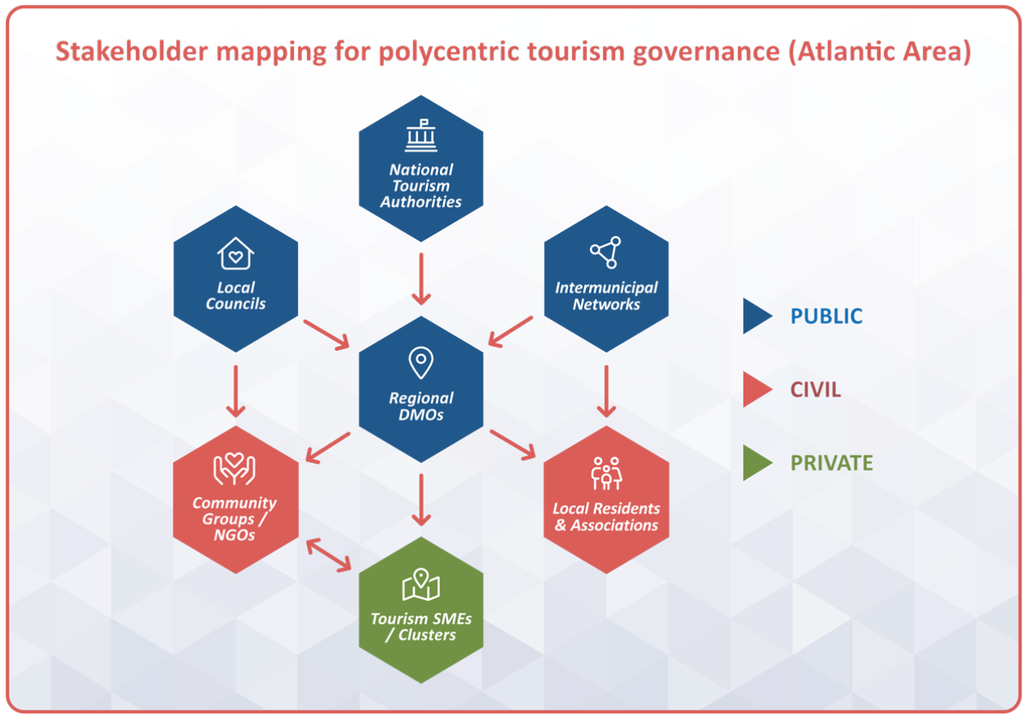
This tool contributes primarily to Axis 4 - Cooperation and Partnerships, by strengthening inter-destination collaboration, and supports Axis 1 and Axis 3 through improved governance coordination and data-based engagement planning.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Lead: Regional or local tourism governance body (e.g., public authority, Municipality).

Supporting entities: Project partners, local businesses, tourism clusters, community groups.

Coordination/Technical support: Governance or communication officer responsible for stakeholder engagement.



7. Stakeholder Prioritization Matrix

1. Rationale

Description:

The Stakeholder Prioritization Matrix is a practical tool used to evaluate and categorize stakeholders according to their influence and interest in tourism development initiatives. It builds on stakeholder mapping by helping decision-makers focus resources and engagement efforts on actors who are most critical for project success. In polycentric tourism, some stakeholders have high influence but low engagement, while others may be highly motivated but lack leverage. Without prioritization, resources may be wasted, and key actors overlooked. By identifying which stakeholders to actively engage, monitor, or inform, the tool ensures that governance efforts are strategic, targeted, and aligned with the goal of redistributing tourism flows across under-visited destinations in the Atlantic Area.

Objective:

To prioritize stakeholders in a systematic way, enabling governance teams to allocate attention, resources, communication, and collaboration efforts efficiently, particularly in a polycentric tourism context with multiple interconnected destinations.

Justification:

It supports decision-making by identifying where engagement efforts should be focused and helps to visualize where attention and resources should be focused, and it visually demonstrates where governance attention and resources should be concentrated to ensure effective stakeholder engagement. It should be structured as a 2x2 grid:

X-axis: Level of interest in tourism initiatives (Low → High)

Y-axis: Level of influence over decision-making or resources (Low → High)

Stakeholders should be plotted in one of four quadrants:

- High Influence / High Interest: Key players — actively engage and involve.
- High Influence / Low Interest: Keep satisfied — monitor and inform strategically.
- Low Influence / High Interest: Keep informed — involve where possible.
- Low Influence / Low Interest: Minimal effort — monitor only.

2. When to use

- **During project design**, to ensure key actors are involved.
- **After creating a stakeholder map** to prioritize engagement efforts.
- **At the planning stage** of any POST Model initiatives.
- **For governance reviews or mid-project evaluations**, to reassess priorities.

3. Step-by-step

- List all stakeholders identified in the stakeholder mapping process.
- Assess each stakeholder's level of interest and influence.
- Place each stakeholder into the appropriate quadrant of the 2x2 matrix.
- Develop tailored engagement strategies for each quadrant.
- Review the matrix periodically (e.g., every 6–12 months) to reflect stakeholder changes.

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Complete stakeholder matrix with roles, sectors, level, and locations.
- Data or expert input on stakeholders' influence (decision-making power, resources) and interest (motivation, alignment with tourism goals).
- Tools for visualization (Excel, PowerPoint, Miro, Canva or other digital platforms).
- Prepare a small working group to validate assessments.

3.2. Implementation

- **Gather the stakeholder list** and background information (according to stakeholder map)
- **Score or categorize each stakeholder on influence and interest** (e.g., Low, Medium, High).
- **Plot stakeholders within the 2x2 matrix and group them by sector or governance level if needed.**
- **Discuss the placement with your team** to reach consensus.
- **Define engagement actions for each quadrant** (communication, collaboration, monitoring).
- **Share with project partners** and integrate into governance and communications planning.

3.3. Expected results

- Clear identification of stakeholders requiring active engagement versus monitoring.
- Optimized allocation of resources for collaboration and governance.
- Improved coordination and communication across destinations.
- Enhanced capacity to influence key actors and achieve polycentric tourism goals.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

ARSINOE Project. (2022). *D2.1: Stakeholder Mapping Methodology*. Retrieved from **https://arsinoe-project.eu/securstorage/2024/03/ARSINOE_D2.1.pdf**

The ARSINOE project, funded by the European Union under Horizon 2020, implemented a stakeholder mapping tool to identify and analyze key actors involved in sustainable tourism and climate adaptation.

Relevant sectors and sub-sectors related to the local challenges were identified, such as the water sector, encompassing suppliers, users, and managers.

Within each sector, various categories of stakeholders were identified, including industry, government, academia, NGOs, and citizens.

A comprehensive list of stakeholders was compiled, and key stakeholders were identified using the Influence/Interest Matrix.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

Risk: Misjudging influence or interest → Solution: Use multiple perspectives and validate with partners.

Risk: Overlooking informal stakeholders → Solution: Include NGOs, associations, and community groups in the assessment.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

Supports Axis 4 – Cooperation and Partnerships, by enabling targeted governance engagement and collaborative decision-making. Also contributes indirectly to Axis 1 and Axis 3 by facilitating better coordination for product development and digital cooperation.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Lead: Regional tourism authorities or governance team.

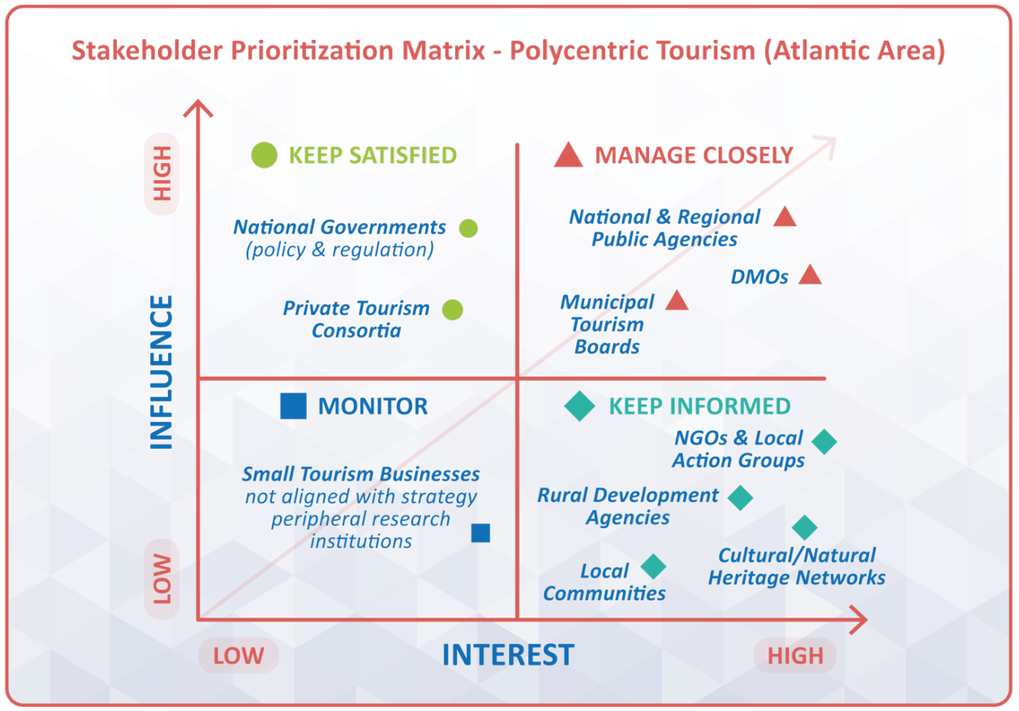
Supporting entities: Project partners, local authorities, tourism clusters.

Coordination/Technical support: Stakeholder engagement officer or communications coordinator.

8. Others:

Frequency of review (every 6–12 months).

Suggested outputs: visual matrix, stakeholder database, engagement plan by quadrant.



Confidentiality note (avoid publishing sensitive influence data).

Tool 8. Roadmap Development

1. Rationale

Description:

A strategic planning tool designed to translate diagnostic results (e.g., State of the Art, SWOT, Visitor Flow Mapping, benchmarking) into a clear, operational roadmap with defined priorities, timelines, responsibilities, and measurable goals, for implementing the polycentric tourism model in the regions of the project.

Objective:

To convert analytical findings into a practical, time-bound strategy that guides municipalities towards the implementation of the POST polycentric tourism model, ensuring coherence across local, regional, national and transnational levels.

Justification:

This tool bridges the gap between analysis results and implementation of practical measures. It transforms diagnostic evidence into a structured roadmap that clarifies how each partner territory contributes to balanced, sustainable, and interconnected tourism development. It helps to articulate coordination, coherence, and accountability across different governance levels.

2. When to Use

- After completing the diagnostic phase (before defining pilot actions that will be developed and implemented across all project territories, or municipal budget priorities).
- When revising or updating strategic plans.
- When multiple municipalities, DMOs – destination management organizations, or cross-border territories require a shared action framework to coordinate sustainable tourism initiatives under the POST model.
- When venues or events of transnational interest take place in one of the regions, requiring joint efforts and coordination under the POST model.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs:

- SWOT analysis, Visitor Flow Mapping data, sustainability indicators such as maximum capacity of visitor flow, lodging availability, pressure on local commerce and residents and pressure on natural resources, heritage conservation and cultural integrity, overall safety,

among others; local and regional strategies, tourism and mobility data, and relevant previous or ongoing project outputs.

Resources:

- Facilitation and planning expertise, data/GIS – Geographic Information System support, POST templates (e.g., Action Planning Template), among others.

Key Stakeholders:

- Local and regional authorities, DMOs, private sector, mobility providers, academic institutions, NGOs, and local community.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Synthesize Evidence**: Summarize key diagnostic findings per territory (e.g., main strengths, connectivity gaps, opportunities).
2. **Define Strategic Priorities**: Identify implementation objectives by time horizon (short-term, medium-term and long-term) and align with POST axes.
3. **Set Measurable Targets**: Define clear KPIs in cooperation with local entities such as hotels (REVPAR – Revenue per available room, Average Length of Stay, Client satisfaction rating), Municipal traffic and transit management division (foreign and local car counting); other initiatives that profile and count visitor on a local or regional level. (e.g., visitor dispersion rates, satisfaction scores, off-season growth).
4. **Assign Responsibilities**: Define roles (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed – RACI) and allocate tasks to relevant entities (municipalities, DMO, regional boards).
5. **Create a Timeline**: Organize actions by phase: short-term (quick wins), medium-term (expansion), long-term (consolidation; for example: Year 1 = pilot actions, Year 2–3 = expansion, Year 4+ = consolidation).
6. **Validation and Feedback**: Present the roadmap to stakeholders for validation, ensuring collective ownership and alignment with regional priorities.

3.3. Expected Results

- Clear and shared strategic roadmap document.
- Agreed priorities, KPIs and measurable goals per region.
- Strengthened governance and coordination mechanisms between territories.
- Best-practices and benchmarking data to share with regional stakeholders and POST partners.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

A cross-border partnership identifies high visitor concentration in two main cities through Visitor Flow Mapping. The Roadmap Development tool helps the partners to:

- Develop new thematic routes linking both cities with smaller inland areas;
- Create shared communication campaigns emphasizing regional complementarity;
- Set measurable targets (e.g., 15% increase in visits to secondary hubs, 20% improvement in sustainable mobility options)

For example, for the TPNP, it allows the alignment of Porto's management of concentrated flows with the district of Braga's capacity to absorb and diversify them, creating a balanced, polycentric regional network.

5. Potential Risks/ Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

POTENTIAL RISK	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Fragmented governance or lack of coordination	Define a lead coordination committee and clear monitoring mechanisms.
Lack of stakeholder engagement	Use participatory workshops and visual tools (maps, dashboards) to build ownership.
Low stakeholder compliance with regional strategies.	Establish written agreements among all participants, under the coordination of the committee.
Limited funding or staff	Prioritize quick wins and align with ongoing national/ regional strategies (Portugal 2030, Turismo 2027).

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

Roadmap Development aligns directly with the overall POST strategy by transforming diagnostic insights into joint, evidence-based action plans overlooked by a coordinating committee.

- It enables shared decision-making and ensures that all partner territories work towards measurable, balanced outcomes.
- It translates perceptions into data-driven actions that prioritize cooperation, connectivity, and sustainable growth.
- It identifies opportunities for collaboration among national and cross-border territories and connects strategic planning to other POST tools such as:
  - Territory Comparison Dashboard (diagnostics and benchmarking);
  - Action Planning Template (definition of concrete measures);
  - Marketing ↔ Sustainability Checklist (alignment between messages and objectives);
  - Regional Tourism promotion tools (billboards, televised documentaries, promotional videos, social networks, etc.).

It contributes to all POST Axes (I–VI) - strengthening the offer, improving mobility, promoting digital transformation, fostering cooperation, adapting to trends, and managing global challenges.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Lead: Local, regional, or cross-border tourism authority/ coordinating committee/ DMO/ consortium.

Equivalent examples: regional tourism boards, municipal tourism departments, national observatories, research institutions, or intermunicipal councils.

Technical support: planning facilitators, data analysts, academic partners, GIS experts.

8. Others

Suggested indicators:

- Visitor dispersion: % of visitors visiting 2+ hubs; variation of spatial concentration; % of visits outside hotspots.
- Seasonality: GINI index; % of stays during shoulder/off-peak seasons.
- Mobility: % of trips using public/soft transport; average travel time between hubs.
- Sustainability: estimated CO_2 per visitor; % of local suppliers involved; % of eco-certified products.
- Experience: visitor satisfaction, repeat visitation, Net Promoter Score.
- Recommended templates: roadmap cover page; RACI matrix; KPI dashboard; timeline chart; action sheet (objective, activities, risks, budget).
- Update frequency: quarterly monitoring and annual roadmap revision (v2.0, v3.0...).
- Data sources: official statistics, mobile tracking, card transactions, ticketing, surveys, web analytics, trail counters.
- Data retrieved with strategic partners such as hotels (e.g., REVPAR – Revenue per available room, Average Length of Stay, Client Satisfaction Rating), municipal traffic divisions (foreign and local car counts), and other local or regional visitor profiling initiatives.



Roadmap Development

Province of Ourense, Galicia (O Barco de Valdeorras)

1

1. Synthesize Evidence

Focus on mountain and inland tourism; analyze current dependence on local visitors and potential for sustainable cross-border routes.

2

2. Define Strategic Priorities

Strengthen Valdeorras as a mountain and nature destination; integrate with cross-regional heritage and ecotourism routes.

3

3. Set Measurable Targets (KPIs)

KPIs: length of stay, % of cross-regional visitors, tourism seasonality index, and biodiversity impact indicators.

4

4. Assign Responsibilities

Lead: Deputación de Ourense;
Partners: local councils, Galicia Tourism, mountain park authorities, cross-border tourism clusters.

5

5. Create a Timeline

Year 1 – diagnostic and route mapping; Year 2 – cross-border initiatives; Year 3+ – integration with Atlantic cooperation network.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Validation via participatory sessions with local actors and cross-border peer review.

Roadmap Development

Dublin Region (Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown)

1

1. Synthesize Evidence

Focus on coastal urban tourism and day-trip dynamics; evaluate mobility links with Dublin city centre and surrounding coastal areas.

2

2. Define Strategic Priorities

Enhance sustainable mobility, slow tourism, and inclusive coastal experiences; support diversification beyond central Dublin.

3

3. Set Measurable Targets (KPIs)

KPIs: modal share of sustainable transport, visitor satisfaction, % of local suppliers in tourism chain, accessibility metrics.

4

4. Assign Responsibilities

Lead: Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council;
Partners: Fáilte Ireland, Dublin Regional Authority, sustainable mobility providers.

5

5. Create a Timeline

Year 1 – pilot sustainable mobility initiatives; Year 2–3 – inclusive tourism campaigns; Year 4 – evaluation and continuity.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Feedback through citizen consultations and monitoring by local tourism observatories.

Roadmap Development

PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac (France)

1

1. Synthesize Evidence

Focus on wine, gastronomy, and cultural heritage tourism; assess existing visitor circuits and opportunities for longer stays.

2

2. Define Strategic Priorities

Develop thematic routes connecting Cognac's heritage with rural and artisanal experiences; strengthen brand identity as sustainable "art de vivre."

3

3. Set Measurable Targets (KPIs)

KPIs: number of visitors to rural areas, % local products in offer, visitor satisfaction, CO_2 footprint reduction in events.

4

4. Assign Responsibilities

Lead: PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac;
Partners: Cognac City Council, regional DMO, wine/cultural associations, local businesses.

5

5. Create a Timeline

Year 1 – creation of heritage circuits; Year 2–3 – expansion to rural micro-destinations; Year 4 – brand consolidation and monitoring.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Validation by local and regional committees; integration of feedback from producers, cultural institutions, and residents.

STEP	NORTH OF PORTUGAL REGION (BRAGA)	PROVINCE OF OURENSE, GALICIA (COMARCA DE VALDEORRAS)	DUBLIN REGION (DÚN LAOGHAIRE – RATHDOWN)	PETR OUEST CHARENTE – PAYS DU COGNAC (FRANCE)
1. SYNTHESIZE EVIDENCE	Focus on religious and heritage tourism (e.g., Bom Jesus, Sameiro, Guimarães). Identify visitor flow patterns from Porto and opportunities for dispersion.	Focus on mountain and inland tourism; analyze current dependence on local visitors and potential for sustainable cross-border routes.	Focus on coastal urban tourism and day-trip dynamics; evaluate mobility links with Dublin city centre and surrounding coastal areas.	Focus on wine, gastronomy, and cultural heritage tourism; assess existing visitor circuits and opportunities for longer stays.
2. DEFINE STRATEGIC PRIORITIES	Diversify and extend stays beyond Porto; promote the district of Braga as a complementary hub integrating cultural, spiritual, and rural experiences.	Strengthen Valdeorras as a mountain and nature destination; integrate with cross-regional heritage and ecotourism routes.	Enhance sustainable mobility, slow tourism, and inclusive coastal experiences; support diversification beyond central Dublin.	Develop thematic routes connecting Cognac's heritage with rural and artisanal experiences; strengthen brand identity as sustainable "art de vivre."
3. SET MEASURABLE TARGETS (KPIS)	KPIs: visitor dispersion ratio, average stay, satisfaction, off-season visits, % of visitors using sustainable transport, destination KPIs retrived from local partners	KPIs: length of stay, % of cross-regional visitors, tourism seasonality index, and biodiversity impact indicators.	KPIs: modal share of sustainable transport, visitor satisfaction, % of local suppliers in tourism chain, accessibility metrics.	KPIs: number of visitors to rural areas, % local products in offer, visitor satisfaction, CO_2 footprint reduction in events.
4. ASSIGN RESPONSIBILITIES	Lead: Turismo do Porto e Norte de Portugal (TPNP), Municipality of Braga; Partners: regional DMO, cultural and religious institutions, academia.	Lead: Deputación de Ourense; Partners: local councils, Galicia Tourism, mountain park authorities, cross-border tourism clusters.	Lead: Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown County Council; Partners: Fáilte Ireland, Dublin Regional Authority, sustainable mobility providers.	Lead: PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac; Partners: Cognac City Council, regional DMO, wine/cultural associations, local businesses.
5. CREATE A TIMELINE	Year 1 – pilot projects and mobility routes; Year 2–3 – expansion and branding; Year 4+ – consolidation and monitoring.	Year 1 – diagnostic and route mapping; Year 2 – cross-border initiatives; Year 3+ – integration with Atlantic cooperation network.	Year 1 – pilot sustainable mobility initiatives; Year 2–3 – inclusive tourism campaigns; Year 4 – evaluation and continuity.	Year 1 – creation of heritage circuits; Year 2–3 – expansion to rural micro-destinations; Year 4 – brand consolidation and monitoring.
6. VALIDATION AND FEEDBACK	Validation through regional stakeholder workshops, cooperation with POST partners, and written compliance agreements with stakeholders	Validation via participatory sessions with local actors and cross-border peer review.	Feedback through citizen consultations and monitoring by local tourism observatories.	Validation by local and regional committees; integration of feedback from producers, cultural institutions, and residents.

INDEX

Tool 9. Action Planning Template

This tool aims at supporting tourism actors in creating structured action plans based on a previous diagnosis, setting priorities, sequencing, and coordinating the development of a polycentric strategy in a specific territory.

1. Rationale

Description:

The Action Planning Template is a strategic tool designed to translate diagnostic insights into clear, actionable measures. It provides a structured framework to prioritize, sequence, and coordinate initiatives across territories, ensuring that all planned actions align with common objectives and available resources.

Objective:

To guide territories in converting strategic goals into a realistic, time-bound action plan that supports the implementation of the overall tourism strategy.

Justification:

After diagnostic and planning phases, many strategies remain conceptual and lack operational application. This tool bridges that gap by providing a practical and standardized method to define what will be done, by whom, when, and with which resources. It promotes coherence, accountability, and shared monitoring among different actors. This tool ensures that strategic objectives are translated into concrete, measurable actions and it ensures coordination across governance levels (local, regional, national) and fosters shared accountability among partner territories.

2. When to Use

- After completing the diagnostic and strategic analysis phase.
- When defining short, medium, and long-term priorities.
- Before resource allocation, budgeting, or partnership coordination.
- When monitoring or updating the progress of an existing strategy.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Results from diagnostic tools (e.g., SWOT, Opportunity / Gap Analysis, Visitor Flow Mapping).
- Defined strategic goals and thematic priorities.
- Information on available financial, human, and institutional resources.
- List of key stakeholders responsible for implementation.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Identify Key Objectives and Actions** → Translate strategic objectives into specific actions or measures. Each action should directly respond to one or more diagnostic findings.
2. **Define Responsibilities and Partnerships** → Assign a lead entity (municipality, DMO, association) and identify partners for coordination and support.
3. **Establish Timeline and Milestones** → Define realistic deadlines and intermediate milestones to ensure gradual implementation and monitoring.
4. **Allocate Resources and Indicators** → Estimate the necessary budget, human resources, and key performance indicators (KPIs) for each action.
5. **Validation and Approval** → Present the draft plan to stakeholders (local authorities, operators, community representatives) for feedback and endorsement.

3.3 Expected Results

- A clear, structured Action Plan with objectives, activities, timelines, responsibilities, and indicators.
- Shared coordination and accountability mechanisms between territories and stakeholders.
- Enhanced capacity for monitoring and adjusting implementation over time.

It also provides a clear baseline for periodic monitoring and updates of the strategy, ensuring continuous alignment with evolving territorial needs.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: Following a regional diagnostic, several municipalities in the Alto Minho identified a lack of low-season tourism offers. Using the Action Planning Template, they structured a joint plan including:

- Creation of "Winter Experience Routes" connecting local gastronomy and nature tourism.
- Training workshops for small businesses on off-season marketing.
- A shared digital calendar to coordinate events between municipalities.

This structured approach ensured that each partner knew its role, timeline, and expected outcomes, resulting in better coordination and measurable results after one year.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- **Overly ambitious or unrealistic actions** → Prioritize fewer, feasible actions per year. Validate with available resources.
- **Lack of coordination between actors** → Always assign a clear lead entity and include coordination meetings in the plan
- **Inconsistent monitoring** → Define measurable KPIs and reporting frequency from the start.
- **Plan not aligned with the global strategy** → Use the diagnostic phase results and POST axes as guiding references.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

The Action Planning Template is central to the POST methodology. It connects the diagnosis phase (e.g., SWOT, Visitor Flow Mapping, Gap Analysis) with the implementation phase, ensuring that actions reflect real needs and available resources. It also supports cross-border and multi-territorial coordination, reinforcing shared goals and collective impact measurement.

The Action Planning Template operationalises the strategic priorities defined in the Roadmap Development tool, translating them into concrete measures with defined responsibilities, resources, and indicators.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Led by** Local or regional tourism management bodies (e.g., municipalities, DMOs).
- **Supported by** Regional observatories, academic partners, private sector and technical coordinators.
- **Validated by** Tourism bodies (eg: national government), private sector, local community

8. Others/Relevant Indicators

Suggested indicators for monitoring the Action Plan:

- Number and percentage of actions completed per year.
- Level of stakeholder participation in implementation.
- Budget execution rate (per action or strategic axis).
- Number of cross-territorial initiatives generated.
- Qualitative assessment of impact (e.g., improved coordination, visibility, sustainability outcomes).



INDEX

Tool 10. Circular Business Model Canvas

1. Rationale

Description:

The *Circular Business Model Canvas (CBMC)* is a strategic and collaborative tool to help territories and tourism stakeholders redesign their products and services based on circular economy principles. Its purpose is to reduce waste, maximize local value, and differentiate destinations sustainability. Inspired by the traditional Business Model Canvas, this adapted version integrates circular dimensions such as resource reuse, intersectoral linkages, and the energy efficiency and material flows.

Objective:

To support municipalities, DMOs, and tourism entrepreneurs in developing or redesigning business models around circular and regenerative tourism that promote innovation and sustainability in the local economy.

Justification:

The CBMC offers a practical approach to transition to circular models where resources, experiences, and value are continuously regenerated within the territory, enhancing competitiveness and community well-being.

2. When to Use

This tool is most relevant during the planning and design phase of tourism strategies, particularly when developing new products/services or rethinking existing ones to align with sustainability and circular economy principles.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation 7 Inputs

Data needed: Local resource inventory, material and energy flows data, stakeholder mapping, existing tourism offers, and current sustainability practices.

Resources: CBMC templates printed or digital, co-creation materials and, workshop venue.

3.2. Implementation

Step 1. Introduce and define

Present the concept of the circular economy and its relevance for tourism. Define the product, service, or area to improve or redesign.

Step 2. Map local resources and flows

Identify local resources, energy and material flows, skills, and cultural assets. Find inefficiencies and opportunities for circularity such as reuse, sharing, or cross-sector cooperation.

Step 3. Introduce the Circular Canvas Framework

Explain the structure and purpose of the *Circular Business Model Canvas* and how it supports systemic thinking and innovation.

Step 4. Co-create the Circular Canvas

Work collaboratively with stakeholders to fill in the adapted Circular Business Model Canvas, focusing on:

- Key Circular Partners & Collaboration
- Circular Activities & Processes
- Target Customers
- Engagement & Communication Channels
- Key local resources & renewable
- Value & Regenerative Revenue
- Enablers & Barriers
- Impact & Measurement
- Circular Value Proposition
- Cost Structure

Step 5. Validate and refine the model

Discuss what worked well, what could be improved, and where there is room for innovation.

Step 6. Implement and Monitor

Put actions into practice and use simple indicators (e.g., waste reduction, local sourcing, stakeholder collaboration) to measure progress.

3.3. Expected Results

- Completed Circular Business Model Canvas for selected products or destinations.
- Action plan for implementation and follow-up.
- Improved collaboration between local stakeholders.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

South Baltic Circular Tourism Network

Established as part of the CIRTOINNO, co-funded by the European Union, the South Baltic Circular Tourism Network links coastal destinations, local authorities and small businesses from Denmark, Sweden, Germany, Poland and Lithuania. Partners work together to craft sustainable tourism solutions in accordance with circular economy principles. Instead of competing, they share resources, knowledge, and good practices to enhance prosperity in the region and generate new sustainable growth opportunities for the sector.

Building on this cooperation, this network promotes tourism experiences on local food, crafts and building materials and eco-innovation in lodging and visitor services. These initiatives help to reduce waste, strengthen local economies, and foster the sharing of value through multiple destinations within a polycentric approach. The network operates joint marketing campaigns, training, and supports small business in turning to a circular business model. Visitors can experience authentic, low-impact experiences, while participating destinations enjoy higher economic value and contribute to protection of the natural environment along the South Baltic coast.

For additional information see:

https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/from-crm/cirtoinno-handbook_crt_05102017-002-.pdf

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Limited understanding of circular economy principles → Provide practical training and a simple visual tool to introduce the concept.
- Resistance to change → Present successful examples and highlight financial, environmental, and reputational benefits.
- Low stakeholder participation → Organise participatory workshops and offer incentives to ensure engagement.
- Difficulty quantifying circular benefits → Integrate simple KPIs (e.g., % local sourcing, waste reduction).
- Limited data on resource flows. → Apply participatory mapping and local knowledge.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

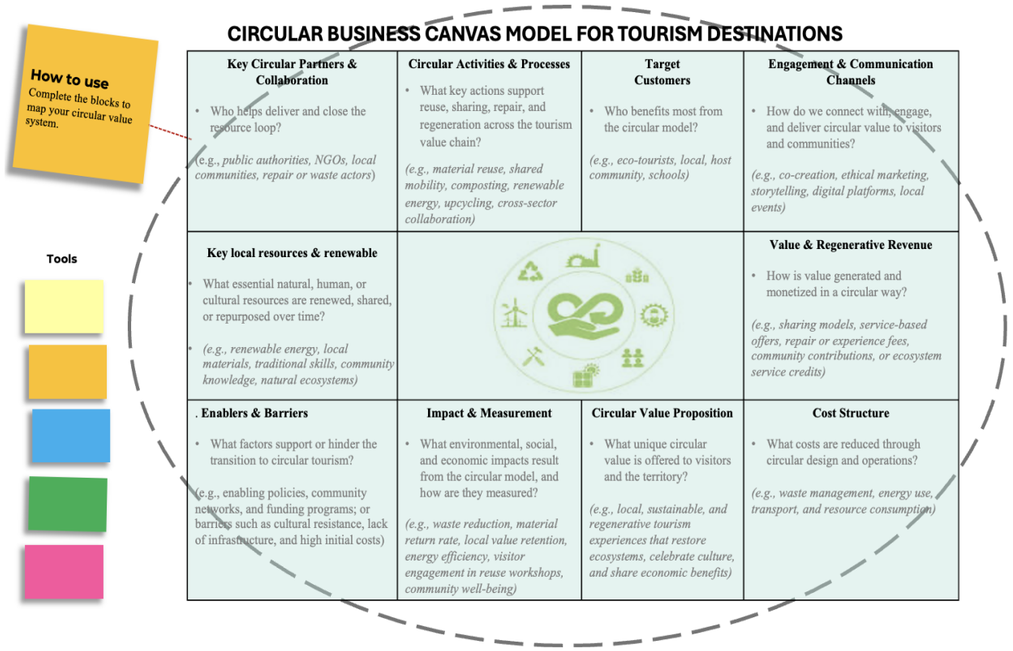
The CBMC promotes innovative, circular, and community-driven approaches. It strengthens regional collaboration, minimizes environmental impacts, and supports the development of regenerative business models aligned with POST's sustainability objectives. It supports knowledge transfer and replication across territories.

7. Responsible / Implementing Entity

Local technical teams from municipalities and DMOs, with coordination by regional development agencies or academic and innovation institutions when required.

8. Others:

- Share of locally sourced or circular materials in tourism offers.
- Reduction in waste and energy consumption per visitor.
- Number of new circular partnerships established.
- Visitor satisfaction with sustainable experiences.
- Local value retention index (share of revenue kept within the territory).



Tool 11. Data Collection Guidelines

1. Rationale

Description:

The Data Collection Guidelines provide standardised protocols and templates describing how data must be collected, stored and shared across partner territories. It covers sampling methods, frequency, metadata requirements, common indicator definitions, data formats (CSV/Excel/API), quality checks and a minimum dataset to ensure consistency.

Objective:

To harmonise data-gathering procedures across partners so datasets are comparable, auditable and interoperable - enabling reliable cross-territory analysis and feeding downstream tools (measurement, mapping, monitoring).

Justification:

In polycentric contexts, inconsistent collection methods prevent valid comparison and joint decision-making. Clear, practical guidelines reduce measurement bias, speed up integration, improve data quality and make subsequent analysis (impact measurement, flow mapping, dashboards) feasible and trustworthy.

2. When to use

- At the beginning of monitoring activities within a destination network.
- When establishing a new observatory or data-sharing platform.
- Before launching regional reports, benchmarking analyses, or impact assessments.
- Whenever discrepancies or gaps in data collection between territories are identified.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation /Inputs

- Existing datasets from municipalities, DMOs, and national statistical institutes.
- Information on data collection methodologies currently in use.
- List of priority indicators (tourism demand, supply, sustainability, mobility, etc.).
- Definition of shared objectives and data needs among territories.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Mapping existing data sources** → Identify what data each territory collects, by whom, and with what frequency.
2. **Indicator alignment** → Define a common list of key indicators (e.g., arrivals, overnight stays, visitor satisfaction, environmental impacts).

3. **Methodological standardization** → Establish shared protocols (e.g., survey formats, data frequency, geocoding rules, metadata structures).
4. **Quality assurance** → Create validation procedures for accuracy, reliability, and timeliness of data.
5. **Capacity building** → Train local technical teams to apply the standardized methods and use shared tools (dashboards, templates).
6. **Validation and adoption** → Discuss and agree upon the final guidelines with all partners (municipalities, DMOs, regional entities).

3.3. Expected results

- Common methodological framework for all territories.
- Set of standardized indicators and metadata templates.
- Improved comparability and transparency across destinations.
- Evidence-based foundation for collective monitoring and strategic evaluation.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

Alto Minho Cross-Municipal Data Alignment (Portugal)

Several municipalities in Alto Minho were collecting tourism data independently, using different formats and indicators. As part of a regional initiative, the Intermunicipal Community implemented a unified data collection template based on ETIS and UN Tourism indicators.

- Each municipality appointed a data focal point.
- A shared Excel dashboard was created with common definitions for arrivals, overnight stays, occupancy rates, event participation, seasonality and mobility indicators.
- Monthly coordination calls were held to validate data and ensure consistency.
- Results:
- Comparable datasets across 10 municipalities for the first time.
- Identification of seasonal imbalance between coastal and inland areas.
- Better evidence to design joint marketing campaigns and visitor dispersal actions

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- • **Inconsistent data definitions** → Provide clear technical sheets for each indicator (definition, unit, source, frequency).
- • **Resistance to change** → Promote capacity-building sessions and demonstrate the benefits of comparability.
- • **Limited data availability** → Use proxy indicators or complementary sources (e.g., Google Trends, online platforms, social media).
- • **Lack of technical capacity** → Develop user-friendly templates and provide ongoing technical support.
- • **Data silos and confidentiality concerns** → Establish data-sharing protocols with clear privacy and access rules.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

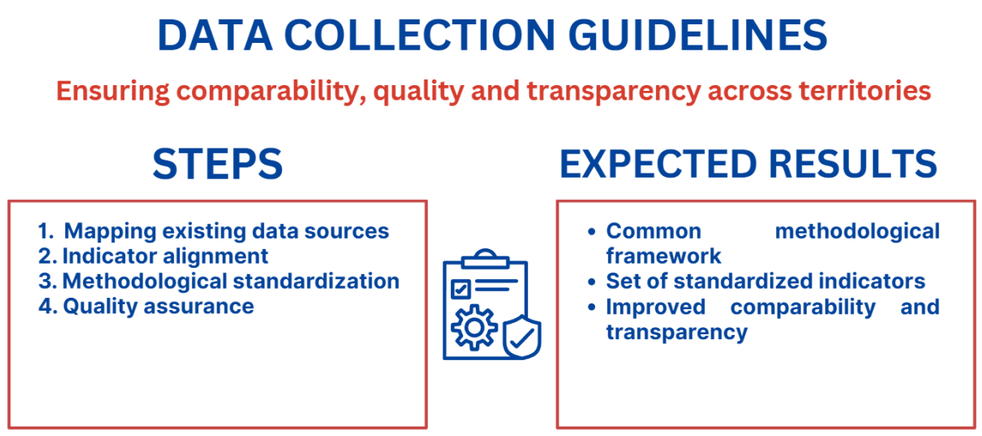
The *Data Collection Guidelines* reinforce the POST strategy by establishing a coherent foundation for monitoring and decision-making. They ensure that all territories collect and share data in a compatible format, enhancing transparency, comparability, and collective learning. This tool supports other instruments such as the Territory Comparison Dashboard (by providing standardized inputs) and the Impact Evaluation Template (by ensuring reliable baseline data). It contributes to the creation of an integrated, evidence-based governance system across the destination network.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Local and regional technical teams (municipalities, DMOs, observatories) coordinated by the IPVC or other academic institutions. Oversight may be provided by a regional steering committee to ensure alignment and consistency.

8. Others:

- List of recommended core indicators (e.g., tourist arrivals, length of stay, visitor satisfaction, local employment, CO_2 emissions per visitor, waste generation).
- Metadata template (source, frequency, responsible entity, methodology).
- Suggestions for digital tools (shared databases, online dashboards, open-data platforms).



Tool 12. Impact Measurement Framework for Sustainable

1. Rationale

In regions where tourism is distributed across multiple interconnected destinations - **polycentric tourism systems** - traditional single-site management approaches are insufficient. These regions require **coordinated, evidence-based strategies** to ensure that tourism development is **balanced, sustainable, and inclusive**. The **Impact Measurement Framework** addresses this need by providing a **shared tool** for municipalities, DMOs, and regional stakeholders to **measure, visualise, and manage tourism impacts collectively**. It enables the identification of visitor flow patterns, territorial linkages, and pressure points, while fostering **joint strategic planning** across destinations. This framework supports:

- **Sustainable resource use** by preventing over-tourism in hotspots and promoting underutilised areas.
- **Equitable development** by aligning tourism benefits across communities.
- **Collaborative governance** by creating a common evidence base for decision-making.

Ultimately, it empowers regions to transition from fragmented tourism management to integrated destination stewardship, aligned with global sustainability goals and local cultural values.

Description:

A methodological framework that defines *what* to measure and *how* to quantify tourism impacts using harmonised sustainability indicators (ETIS, UN Tourism, GSTC). Includes indicator definitions, scoring rules, baseline-setting, aggregation logic and guidance for adapting indicators to local context.

Objective:

To provide partners with a standardised set of indicators and a replicable method to quantify environmental, social and economic impacts of tourism interventions - enabling comparable impact assessment across territories.

Justification:

Measuring impact (not merely collecting raw data) requires agreed indicators and scoring approaches. Without a common measurement framework, results are inconsistent and cannot support transnational strategy, funding decisions or evaluation of policy effectiveness. This tool converts raw data into meaningful, comparable metrics.

2. When to use

- Use during strategic planning phases to align tourism goals across multiple destinations.
- Apply when assessing current tourism impacts using standardised sustainability indicators.
- Deploy to visualise visitor flows and identify underutilised or overburdened areas.
- Use to support collaborative decision-making among municipalities and DMOs.
- Integrate during monitoring cycles to track progress toward sustainable tourism targets.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- **Visitor data**: arrivals, overnight stays, transport modes
- **Environmental data**: water/energy use, waste generation, biodiversity impact
- **Socio-cultural data**: resident satisfaction, cultural heritage preservation
- **Economic data**: tourism revenue, employment, seasonality
- **Governance data**: stakeholder engagement, policy alignment
- **Spatial data**: GIS layers for land use, infrastructure, protected areas

3.2. Implementation

1. **Stakeholder Alignment**: Define shared sustainability goals across destinations.
2. **Indicator Selection**: Choose relevant indicators from ETIS, UN Tourism, and GSTC.
3. **Data Collection & Integration**: Gather and harmonise data across territories.
4. **Spatial & Impact Analysis**: Use open-source data (EU Tourism Dashboard etc) and indicator scoring to assess performance.
5. **Scenario Modelling**: Simulate visitor redistribution and policy interventions.
6. **Strategic Planning**: Develop joint action plans based on indicator outcomes.

3.3. Expected results

- Visual map of current and desired visitor flows.
- Mapping of territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence basis for joint strategic decision-making among territories.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

Catalonia Tourism Observatory (Spain) – Uses ETIS and GIS to monitor tourism sustainability across multiple municipalities. It enables coordinated planning and transparent reporting.

Adaptation to POST:

- ATU and regional partners can replicate this model in Sligo and surrounding areas.
- Use ETIS core indicators (e.g., destination management, local satisfaction, seasonality) and GSTC criteria (e.g., cultural heritage, environmental conservation).
- Engage communities in storytelling and participatory mapping.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

Risks/Obstacles

- Indicator overload or complexity
- Data gaps or inconsistency

- Limited stakeholder buy-in
- Technical limitations
- Available Budget

Solutions

- Prioritise core indicators relevant to local context
- Use proxy indicators and build local data capacity
- Use participatory methods and transparent reporting
- Partner with academic institutions for GIS and analysis

6. Connection to the current POST Strategy

- UN Tourism Indicators: Aligns with SDGs and global tourism monitoring
- GSTC Criteria: Global standard for sustainable destination management
- Supports SDGs: 8, 11, 12 &13.
- ETIS (European Tourism Indicator System): Core sustainability indicators for EU destinations

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- Local technical teams (municipalities, DMOs)
- Supported by destination sustainability specialists
- Coordinated by academic institutions (e.g., local University) or regional observatories

8. Others:

- **Evaluation Cycle**: Annual review with stakeholder feedback
- **Scalability**: Adaptable to other polycentric regions across Europe

Impact Measurement Framework

To help regions track tourism impacts using recognised sustainability indicators. enables early identification of risks such as over-tourism or seasonal imbalance.

1 **Description**
- Provides a **shared tool** for municipalities, DMOs, and regional stakeholders to **measure, visualise, and manage tourism impacts collectively**.

2 **Objective**
- To establish a consistent collaborative monitoring system to tracks tourism's environmental, social, and economic impacts across destinations.

3 **When to Use**
- Strategic planning, policy development
- Performance evaluation of tourism initiatives or campaigns
- To identify emerging issues such as over-tourism or seasonal imbalances
- Annual sustainability reporting & benchmarking
- When coordinating actions across multiple municipalities or DMOs

4 **Implementation Steps**
- Define scope & indicators
- Collect & harmonise data
- Apply sustainability
- Analyse & visualise
- Engage stakeholders
- Adjust strategies

5 **Expected Outcomes**
- Visitor flow maps.
- Territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence for joint decision-making.

INDEX

Tool 13. Visitor Flow Mapping

1. Rationale

Description:

A spatial-visual tool and procedure to map how visitors move through and between territories: origin-destination flows, routes, bottlenecks and temporal patterns. It specifies recommended data layers, visualization templates (flows, heatmaps, routes), and simple GIS workflows for combining mobility, booking and survey data.

Objective:

To visualize visitor movements and concentrations so partners can identify hotspots, under-used assets, connectivity gaps and opportunities for dispersal or route development.

Justification:

Understanding the spatial dynamics of visitation is essential to inform targeted interventions (mobility, routing, product development). Flow maps make invisible movement patterns visible, supporting decisions to re-route visitors, develop multimodal links, or design cross-territory experiences that relieve pressure on crowded sites.

2. When to use

- Initial phase of strategic diagnosis.
- Before defining new itineraries or campaigns.
- When seeking to integrate less-visible territories into visitor routes.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Mobility and transport data.
- Official statistics (tourism, transport, national institutes).
- Mapping data from credit card transactions and mobile phone movements.

3.2. Implementation

1. Data collection → origins, destinations, and internal movements.
2. Initial mapping → main entry points, key attractions, and existing routes.
3. Flow analysis → identifying strong routes, weak connections, and escape points.
4. Identification of bottlenecks → transport gaps, poor signage, or missing services.
5. Interpretation of results → identification of flows and bottlenecks to highlight opportunities for territorial linkage.

6. Validation with local stakeholders (municipalities, DMOs, operators) → confirming the interpretation of flows and bottlenecks to ensure they reflect the local reality.

3.3. Expected results

- Visual map of current and desired visitor flows.
- Mapping of territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence basis for joint strategic decision-making among territories.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

Example: Porto – Minho – Santiago Visitor Flow Gap (Portugal & Spain)

Visitor Flow Mapping revealed that while thousands of visitors travel annually from Porto to Santiago de Compostela, less than 8% stop in the inland Minho territories. Mapping the flows showed:

- A strong linear route (Porto → Viana do Castelo → Galiza)
- Very low cross-flows into inland areas (Arcos de Valdevez, Ponte da Barca, Melgaço)
- Zero promotion of "secondary cultural loops" along the border

Insight:

The tool identified an opportunity to create a *"Minho Cultural Detour Route"*, connecting river landscapes, wineries, and historic villages, supported by coordinated mobility information and shared signage.

Result:

Territories used this mapping to design a new cross-border itinerary and position inland areas as meaningful stopovers rather than bypass regions.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- **Insufficient or outdated data →** use alternative sources such as online reviews (TripAdvisor, Google Maps), local operators, or regional observatories.
- **Limited budget for data collection technologies →** establish agreements with banking entities (for mapping card transactions flows) and telecom operators (for mobile phone flows).
- **Misinterpretation of flows and bottlenecks →** always validate results with complementary data, stakeholder feedback, and expert technical review.
- **Underutilisation of the generated map →** ensure that mapping results are integrated into subsequent phases (planning and communication) to transform diagnosis into concrete action.

6. Connection to the current POST Strategy

Visitor Flow Mapping aligns with the overall POST strategy by facilitating joint decision-making among territories. It transforms assumptions or perceptions into clear, evidence-based maps that support accurate diagnosis and prioritisation of interventions. This tool helps identify opportunities for collaboration between national or cross-border territories. It also provides objective evidence to feed into other tools, such as the Territory Comparison Dashboard (diagnostic and benchmarking) and the Action Planning Template (definition of concrete measures).

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

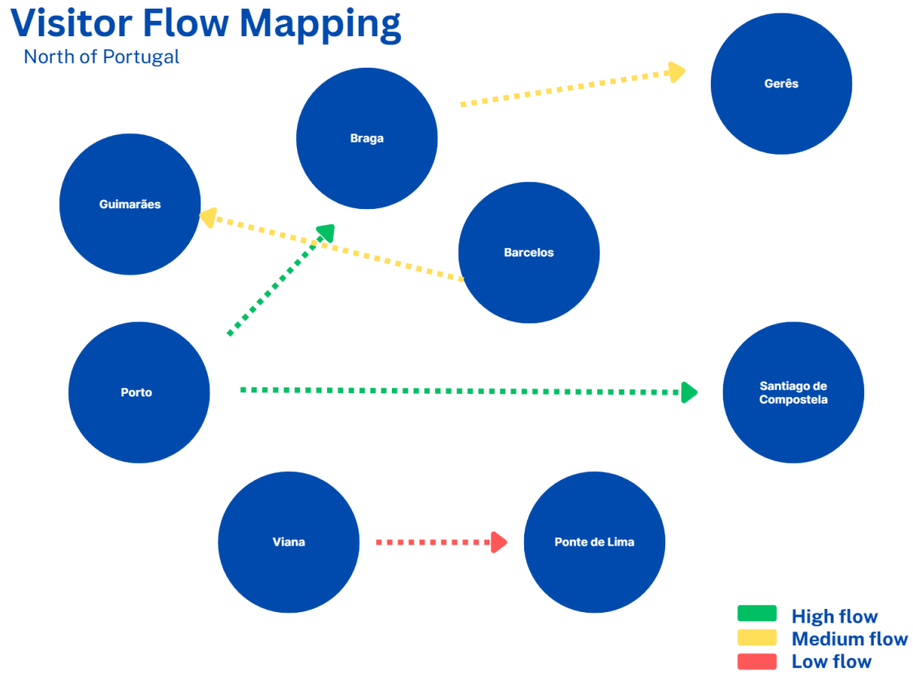
Local technical teams (municipalities/DMOs) supported by specialists in spatial analysis (GIS). Coordination may be carried out by academic institutions or regional observatories.

8. Others:

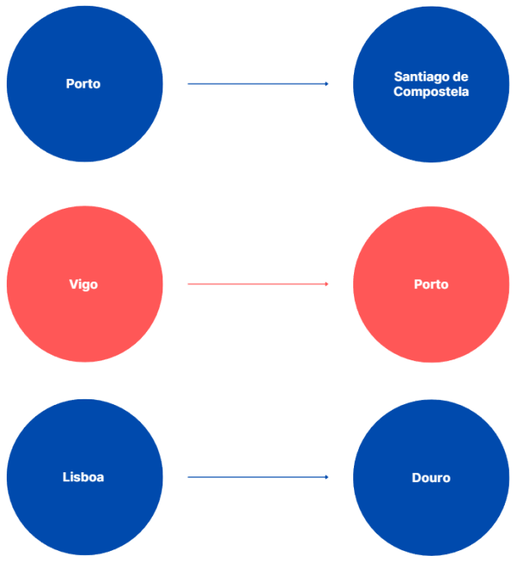
This section remains open for any additional information not covered above.

For this tool, it may include relevant indicators such as:

- • **Average visitor density across different routes** (to identify both over-concentrated and undervisited areas).
- • **Intensity and frequency at critical points (bottlenecks)** - to support decisions such as where to prioritise interventions, whether to relieve pressure or strengthen territorial connectivity.



Visitor Flow Mapping



Visitor flow: High
Bottlenecks: Interior of Minho rarely visited
Opportunities: Creation of secondary routes along the Way

Visitor flow: Medium
Bottlenecks: Incompatible train schedules
Opportunities: Strengthening joint communication

Visitor flow: High
Bottlenecks: Concentration in specific regions
Opportunities: Creation of routes with neighbouring villages

Visitor flow: Low
Bottlenecks: Lack of joint promotion
Opportunities: Joint campaign

Visitor flow: Low
Bottlenecks: Poor rail connection
Opportunities: Road improvements and creation of new joint products

INDEX

Tool 14. Monitoring Observatory

1. Rationale

The Monitoring Observatory helps regions track tourism impacts using recognised sustainability indicators. It supports evidence-based decision-making and fosters collaboration across multiple destinations. By integrating tools like ETIS, UN Tourism, and GSTC, it ensures consistent and transparent evaluation. Monitoring enables early identification of risks such as over-tourism or seasonal imbalance. This toolkit empowers local stakeholders to manage tourism sustainably and align with global goals.

Description:

An operational monitoring system (dashboard + processes) for continuous tracking of agreed KPIs and early-warning signals. It specifies dashboard structure, reporting cycles, roles/responsibilities, data governance, thresholds/alerts and stakeholder communication workflows for adaptive management.

Objective:

To enable ongoing oversight of tourism performance and sustainability indicators across territories, support evidence-based management, detect deviations early and trigger coordinated responses.

Justification:

Periodic measurement alone is insufficient for responsive governance. A monitoring observatory operationalises indicator data into regular reports, trend analysis and alerts so partners can adapt actions in near-real time, coordinate mitigation measures and demonstrate accountability to stakeholders.

2. When to use

- During strategic planning and policy development phases.
- When evaluating the performance of tourism initiatives or campaigns.
- To identify emerging issues such as over-tourism or seasonal imbalances.
- For annual sustainability reporting and benchmarking.
- When coordinating actions across multiple municipalities or DMOs.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

Visitor data: arrivals, overnight stays, transport modes, satisfaction

- **Environmental data**: waste, water, energy, biodiversity impact
- **Economic data**: tourism revenue, employment, seasonality

- **Social data**: resident attitudes, cultural heritage status
- **Governance data**: stakeholder engagement, policy alignment
- **Spatial data**: GIS layers for land use, infrastructure, protected areas

3.2. Implementation

- **Define Monitoring Scope**: Identify key indicators and destinations involved.
- **Collect and Harmonise Data**: Use standardised templates and shared protocols.
- **Apply Sustainability Indicators**: Use ETIS, UN Tourism, and GSTC frameworks.
- **Analyse and Visualise**: Use GIS and dashboards to interpret trends.
- **Engage Stakeholders**: Share findings and gather feedback.
- **Adjust Strategies**: Use insights to refine destination management plans.

3.3. Expected results

- Visual map of current and desired visitor flows.
- Mapping of territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence basis for joint strategic decision-making among territories.

4. Inspiring Example / Good Practice

Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory (ASTO). Developed by Turismo do Alentejo ERT, University of Évora, and other regional partners, to monitor and measure tourism sustainability using internationally recognised indicators, aligned with UN Tourism standards.

Approach: Combines spatial analysis, stakeholder engagement, and real-time data to inform evidence-based planning and protect natural and cultural assets.

Impact: Supports coordinated destination management, promotes territorial cohesion, and contributes to Portugal's national sustainability goals

STORY Sustainable Tourism Indicators, developed by ATU through the STORY project

Purpose: To help destinations measure and monitor their sustainability performance across environmental, social, cultural, and economic dimensions

Structure: Indicators are grouped into:

Destination Management (e.g. % of certified tourism enterprises)

Economic Value (e.g. tourism revenue, employment)

Social & Cultural Impact (e.g. resident satisfaction, heritage protection)

Environmental Impact (e.g. waste, water, biodiversity)

Application: Used by local authorities and DMOs to guide sustainable planning and improve visitor experience through evidence-based decision-making **https ://www.storyatu.ie/destinations-1**

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	SOLUTION
Inconsistent data collection	Develop shared protocols and training
Lack of stakeholder engagement	Use participatory workshops and transparent reporting
Technical limitations	Partner with academic institutions for GIS and analysis
Indicator overload	Prioritise core indicators relevant to local context
Resistance to change	Highlight benefits through pilot projects and success stories

6. Connection to the current POST Strategy

- ETIS (European Tourism Indicator System): Core sustainability indicators
- UN Tourism Indicators: Aligns with SDGs and global tourism monitoring
- GSTC Criteria: Global standard for sustainable destination management
- Supports SDGs: 8 (Decent Work), 11 (Sustainable Cities), 12 (Responsible Consumption), 13 (Climate Action)

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- Local technical teams (municipalities, DMOs)
- Supported by specialists in sustainable destination management
- Coordinated by academic institutions (e.g., ATU) or regional observatories

8. Others:

- Digital dashboard or Power BI link with indicator tracking
- Printable guidebook with methodology and templates
- Evaluation Cycle: Annual review with stakeholder feedback
- Scalability: Adaptable to other polycentric regions across Europe

Monitoring Observatory

Supports polycentric governance and sustainable visitor flow management using internationally recognised indicators.

1 **Description**
- Helps regions track tourism impacts using recognised sustainability indicators.
- Enables early identification of risks (e.g., over-tourism, seasonal imbalance).

2 **Objective**
- Enable destinations to monitor, evaluate, and manage tourism impacts using harmonised sustainability indicators.
- Foster collaboration and evidence-based decision-making.

3 **When to Use**
- Strategic planning across multiple destinations.
- Assessing tourism impacts.
- Visualising visitor flows.
- Sustainability reporting & benchmarking.
- Supporting collaboration across municipalities or DMOs.

4 **Implementation Steps**
- Stakeholder alignment.
- Indicator selection.
- Data collection & integration.
- Spatial & impact analysis.
- Scenario modelling.
- Strategic planning.

5 **Expected Outcomes**
- Visitor flow maps.
- Territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence for joint decision-making.

INDEX

Tool 15. Resident Feedback Monitor

1. Rationale

Description:

The Resident Feedback Monitor is a structured tool designed to collect, analyse, and integrate residents' perceptions of tourism. It provides a systematic overview of how local communities evaluate tourism's impacts - positive and negative - serving as a social barometer to support balanced and sustainable destination planning.

Objective:

To ensure that residents' voices inform strategic decision-making, reinforcing legitimacy, transparency, and long-term social sustainability in tourism development.

Justification:

Residents are key stakeholders in any destination. Negative perceptions can signal social saturation, reduced quality of life, and resistance to tourism initiatives. Conversely, when residents perceive clear benefits and feel included in decision-making, they become active allies in destination promotion. This tool provides evidence-based insights that help anticipate issues, guide policy adjustments, and strengthen trust between institutions and the community.

2. When to use

- Early strategic diagnosis.
- Before launching new projects, events, or investments.
- To monitor acceptance after implementing strategic actions.
- When signs of community tension or pressure emerge.
- For regular monitoring of resident–tourism relations.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Local networks and databases (municipalities, associations, schools).
- Tools for surveys, interviews, or focus groups (online/offline).
- Existing indicators on tourism flows and impacts.
- Technical support for data analysis.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Design of the survey model** → quality of life, perceived impacts, expectations, concerns, suggestions.
2. **Multichannel data collection** → online surveys, in-person sessions, short interviews, suggestion boxes.
3. **Sample segmentation** → age, locality, proximity to tourism activities.
4. **Data analysis** → identifying satisfaction levels, tensions, opportunities, and recurring patterns.
5. **Interpretation of results** → cross-analysis with territorial data and strategic objectives.
6. **Community validation** → presenting results back to residents to confirm interpretations and enhance transparency.

3.3. Expected results

- Clear overview of residents' perceptions and their evolution over time.
- Mapping of social impacts and community priorities.
- Identification of risks and opportunities for local cooperation.
- Evidence base to adjust planning, communication, and visitor management measures.
- Foundation for participatory governance processes.

4. Inspiring Example

All regions involved in the POST project face a dual challenge: destinations under pressure from mass tourism, and at the same time, areas with strong tourism potential that remain unknown or unrecognised by visitors. A concrete European example illustrates this dynamic. A recent European Parliament report identified clear signs of **overtourism in Dublin**, including:

- a high ratio of tourists to residents
- increasing risk of residents being priced out
- a shortage of hotel rooms during peak periods
- and visitors themselves reporting "too many tourists".

According to Jim Deegan, head of the Centre for Tourism Policy Studies at the University of Limerick, these are critical indicators of social and urban pressure driven by tourism intensity. *Source: European Parliament report on the tourism industry (cited by Jim Deegan).*

A tool such as the Resident Feedback Monitor would enable destinations to assess residents' perceptions, detect early signs of dissatisfaction, and identify opportunities to redistribute tourism flows toward lesser-known areas with strong development potential.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Low response rates → diversify channels and involve community leaders.
- Biased or unrepresentative samples → triangulate with qualitative methods and complementary data.
- Lack of continuity → schedule annual or biannual monitoring cycles.
- Community mistrust → ensure transparent communication on how results will be used.
- Lack of integration in planning → include findings in dashboards, plans, and stakeholder coordination.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

The Resident Feedback Monitor strengthens the social dimension of the POST strategy by embedding community perception in all decision-making processes. It enhances participatory governance and aligns tourism development with residents' well-being.

Alignment with other POST tools:

- Feeds the Territory Comparison Dashboard with social perception indicators.
- Informs the Action Planning Template with resident-identified priorities.
- Complements the Visitor Flow Mapping by assessing whether mobility patterns affect quality of life.
- Supports coordinated action among municipalities through objective social evidence.

The tool responds directly to EU priorities recognising that:

- rural areas offer unique nature and cultural experiences but face vulnerability due to strong seasonal fluctuations;
- long-term resilience requires **smart and sustainable tourism strategies**, anchored in regional strengths and market diversification;
- sustainable tourism must integrate **residents' well-being** into service provision and destination management.

This tool provides the evidence needed to build resilient, diversified, and socially balanced tourism systems - core principles of the POST polycentric approach.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Local technical teams (municipalities/DMOs), supported by:

- specialists in data collection and analysis;
- academic institutions and regional observatories;
- community organisations for dissemination.

8. Others

Optional indicators

- Overall resident satisfaction with tourism (1–5 scale).
- Perceived positive impacts (economic, cultural, service improvement).
- Perceived negative impacts (noise, mobility pressure, housing costs).
- Trust in local tourism institutions.
- Willingness to engage in participatory processes.

Resident Feedback Monitor

Track, analyse and integrate residents' perceptions of tourism for socially balanced destination planning.



Community insights
Resident feedback
Impact analysis
Strategic guidance
Ongoing monitoring
Continuous improvement
Participation



Longitudinal evolution of perception.

Tool 16. Signature Tourism

EIXO

1. Rationale

This tool aims to empower local tourism experience creators and foster the development of authentic tourism experiences that leverage and consolidate new tourism centralities (destinations) within a polycentric tourism strategy. It supports tourism actors in identifying, designing, and promoting signature tourism offers - experiences co-created and led by local authors, artists, artisans, and creative entrepreneurs that reflect the territory's authentic identity through their personal interpretation.

Description:

The Signature Tourism Tool provides guidance for integrating creative and author-driven tourism into local tourism strategies, with the purpose of strengthening new destinations and attracting flows away from overtouristed sites, thus supporting the implementation of a Polycentric Sustainable Tourism model. It encourages collaboration between tourism actors, cultural and creative practitioners, and the local community to develop unique, personalized experiences that highlight the human voice behind the destination.

Objective:

To guide tourism actors in supporting local creators and businesses to design and promote "authored" tourism products - or to guide them in doing so independently - enhancing distinctiveness, authenticity, and emotional connection in tourism experiences.

Justification:

In a globalized market, travelers increasingly seek authentic, personal, and meaningful connections. Signature tourism strengthens the link between people and place, transforming residents into interpreters and ambassadors of their territory. It also supports sustainable polycentric tourism by diversifying the tourism offer of lesser-known destinations, enhancing their attractiveness through year-round, small-scale, high-value experiences.

2. When to use

- After setting the territorial permeability dimension objectives.
- After defining the "Strengthening the Tourism Offer" strategic axis objectives.
- After completing the territorial SWOT analysis.
- After defining the territorial narrative or identity (potentially with support from the Storytelling tool).

- When designing new tourism products and creative experiences — immersive, sensory-rich visitor experiences that deepen emotional connection, enhance satisfaction, and reflect the destination's unique culture and heritage.
- During co-creation processes with the polycentric tourism ecosystem (local entrepreneurs, artists, and cultural organizations).
- When establishing the destination's differentiating factors based on a unique, human-centered tourism portfolio.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs)

- Results from diagnostic tools (e.g., SWOT, Opportunity/Gap Analysis, Visitor Flow Mapping).
- Defined strategic goals and thematic priorities.
- Results from the territorial permeability dimension objectives.
- Defined tourist profile to be attracted to the new centrality (especially main travel motivations).
- Consolidated knowledge about the new centrality's tourism assets (including identity values and differentiating factors).
- Information on available financial, human, and institutional resources.
- List of key stakeholders responsible for implementation.

3.2. Implementation

- Define Core Themes and Values → Identify the local community's cultural and emotional themes that can serve as the basis for signature experiences. Ensure alignment with the territory's strategic tourism objectives, permeability goals, and potential demand profile.
  Outputs:
  → Clear guidelines for future authors - these should remain flexible to allow for creative proposals.
  → A set of inspirational themes derived from the territory's identity values and differentiating factors.
- Identify Potential Local Authors and Creative Actors → Map local creators (artists, guides, chefs, artisans, musicians, storytellers, etc.) with a strong personal connection to the territory and potential to become signature experience authors.
  Output: A "Local Author Database" highlighting skills, stories, and potential contributions. This database can also help identify training needs.
- Signature Tourism Experience Training → Deliver tailored training to prepare potential authors - regardless of background - to translate their knowledge, traditions, and emotions into tourism experiences. Provide dedicated support in storytelling, experience design, packaging, and market communication.
  Output: Skilled tourism actors capable of delivering unique signature experiences.

- Co-design Signature Experiences → Facilitate co-creation workshops between authors and tourism operators. Develop small-scale experiences (workshops, walks, performances, tastings) that reflect each author's creative language.
  Output: A portfolio of Author Experiences ready for pilot implementation.
- Evaluate and Evolve → Gather visitor feedback and author reflections to improve and refine the offer.
  Output: An Evaluation Dashboard tracking satisfaction, participation, and impact.

3.3. Expected Results

- Increased differentiation and authenticity of tourism offers (beyond conventional circuits).
- A dynamic network of local creators (authors) involved in polycentric tourism development.
- Strengthened territorial cohesion through human-centered storytelling.
- New sustainable and small-scale economic opportunities for local actors.

4. Inspiring example / Good Practice

Example: Sporski - "Viagens de Autor"

A travel agency specialized in ski tourism that offers:

"Tailor-made programs. Inspiring places. The best snow. Learning and overcoming challenges. Sensations and emotions. Exceptional experiences. Memories for life. All this and much more is what our Signature Trips are all about. And as the authors don't just sign their names, they will be present throughout the trip, sharing with you their conviction that these are unique and unforgettable journeys."

Results: A distinctive, highly specialized sports tourism offer based on the personal experience, taste, and vision of its creators.

Source: Sporski "Viagem de Autor"

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Limited identification of creative actors → Partner with local cultural associations and art schools.
- Difficulty integrating authors into tourism value chains → Offer mediation and training sessions on tourism dynamics.
- Risk of inauthentic experiences → Prioritize quality over quantity and maintain authors' creative autonomy.
- Marketing and visibility limitations → Use shared storytelling platforms and cross-promotional campaigns.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This tool supports the development of high-value tourism experiences that strengthen the attractiveness and positioning of the new centralities that polycentric tourism aims to establish.

Signature Tourism can address challenges such as overcrowding in popular destinations and seasonality of tourism activities. It places authenticity and community at the centre, emphasizing products rooted in heritage, creativity, and local identity. By avoiding standardization, it fosters unique, place-based development and cultural resilience.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- Led by municipalities, DMOs, and/or the private sector.
- Supported by local communities, associations, and tourism operators.
- Validated through market performance and visitor feedback.

8. Others/Relevant Indicators

Some examples of Signature Tourism experience indicators:

DIMENSION	EXAMPLE INDICATORS
Creative Participation	Number of local creators involved; diversity of themes represented
Experience Offer	Number and type of signature experiences created
Visitor Engagement	Participant satisfaction; qualitative feedback on authenticity
Economic Impact	Revenue generated for local authors; repeat bookings
Visibility	Media mentions; online visibility of signature experiences



COMMUNICATION TOOLS 4

COMMUNICATION TOOLS 4

Tool 1. Storytelling/Narrative Building

This tool aims to support tourism actors in defining and co-creating a shared narrative that reflects the collective identity, values, and distinctiveness of the new centralities involved in/part in a polycentric tourism strategy.

1. Rationale

Description:

The Action Storytelling / Narrative Building tool is a communication tool that offers support in defining and articulating a collective story for a “polycentric territory” that binds diverse local identities/assets into a coherent, shared narrative. It provides a participatory process to uncover authentic stories, link them to the tourism polycentric strategy, and strengthen the emotional and cultural cohesion of a region providing this same sense of belonging and emotion to visitors.

Objective:

To guide tourism actors and new centrality destinations in developing a unifying narrative that expresses the essence of the territory and informs its communication, product development, and tourism experiences. It will guide tourism actors in developing emotional contents to be used in media campaigns and tourism products packaging, and help territories create and strengthen communicational permeability.

Justification:

While diagnostic tools identify assets and opportunities, many territories struggle to convey a unified sense of place. Most of the time it’s difficult to reconcile the feeling of belonging of the

local community with the message of the tourism promotion and the tourist's perception of the destination. This tool bridges those gaps, transforming insights into a living story that reinforces identity, enhances cooperation, and differentiates the destination (especially the new centralities).

2. When to Use

- After completing the diagnostic and strategic analysis phase.
- After defining short, medium, and long-term priorities.
- After setting the communicational permeability dimension objectives.
- When defining branding, positioning, or communication strategies.
- When refreshing or realigning destination messaging.

3. Step-by-step

3.1 Preparation / Inputs

- Results from the communicational permeability dimension objectives setting.
- Existing shared narratives that reflects the collective identity, values, and distinctiveness of the new centralities involved in/part of a polycentric tourism strategy.
- Deep knowledge about the new centrality tourism assets and its community core values (traditions, way of living, life style,…).
- Available information on the tourism demand profile, destination offers, tourism pressure points / new centralities characterization, baseline statistical data.

3.2 Implementation

1. Discover the Core Narrative → Identify key themes, emotions, and values that define the territory. Ask: "What makes us who we are?"; "What is the story that we want to share with our friends about our homeland?"; "How can I explain the emotional value of this tourism asset?"; "What are the most important things that I want to tell people about my destination/this asset?" Output: A Territorial Narrative Statement (1–2 sentences capturing the essence).

2. Map Local Stories and Voices → Collect stories, myths, traditions, legends, crafts, and practices across the new centralities. Involve local storytellers, associations, elders, and youth. Output: A Story Map linking stories to places and actors.

3. Co-create a Shared Narrative Framework → Group stories around common threads (e.g., traditions, nature, craftsmanship, resilience). Ensure all local stories connect under a shared narrative umbrella. Output: A Narrative Framework organizing local themes and values.

4. Translate the Narrative into Tourism Actions → Integrate the shared narrative into experiences, routes, events, and branding. Develop storytelling-based products and communication materials. Output: An Implementation Plan linking narrative to concrete actions.

5. Validate and Share → Present and refine the narrative through participatory validation workshops. Finalize and adopt a Territorial Story Charter as a common reference. Output: A Territorial Story Charter as a common reference.

3.3 Expected Results

- A cohesive and inclusive regional narrative.
- Strengthened identity and cooperation across territories.
- Enhanced storytelling capacity among local actors.
- Greater emotional connection for visitors and residents.
- Strengthened territorial cohesion through human-centered storytelling.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: ""Heroic Viticulture" – Ribeira Sacra, Galicia (Spain)

Local winemakers, tourism associations, and heritage organizations joined forces to build a shared story around "Heroic Viticulture" — the centuries-old tradition of cultivating vines on the steep terraces of the Sil and Miño river gorges. The narrative highlights human perseverance, harmony with nature, and the spiritual roots of the landscape shaped by monastic life.

Through collaborative storytelling, wineries and guides were trained to share personal and family histories, linking each bottle of wine to the people and slopes that created it. The initiative inspired new wine routes, interpretive signage, and multimedia content at the Centro do Viño da Ribeira Sacra. Marketing campaigns and festivals now celebrate the concept of "heroic viticulture" as a symbol of identity and pride.

Results: Strengthened the Ribeira Sacra's image as a unique cultural landscape. Fostered emotional visitor engagement and community pride. Promoted sustainable tourism by valuing traditional knowledge and preserving the terraced vineyards. (**https://ribeirasacra.org/noticia/en/1/9404/doribeira-sacra-extreme-viticulture-that-aspires-to-be-a-world-heritage-site?utm_source=chatgpt.com**)

5. Potential Risks Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- **Fragmented narratives** → Use inclusive workshops to identify shared themes.
- **Inauthentic or romanticized storytelling** → Base narratives on lived experiences and local voices.
- **Low stakeholder engagement** → Use creative participation formats (story cafés, youth contests).
- **Disconnection from strategy** → Align narrative with existing strategic goals and axes.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This tool aims to reinforce the positioning and attractiveness of the new polycentric centralities and/or of its tourism products

It supports the polycentric tourism strategy by contributing to create destinations own narratives; by contributing to Strengthening the Tourism Offer or by improving the communicational permeability dimension of the polycentric model.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Led by Local or regional tourism management bodies (e.g., municipalities, DMOs) and/or by the private sector (in the case of the tourism products).

Supported by Cultural organizations, universities, creative partners (e.g. artists, historians, cultural custodians, handcrafters).

Validated by Tourism bodies (eg: national government), private sector, local community

8. Others/Relevant Indicators

Some examples of campaign effectiveness indicators:

- Number of stories collected and validated.
- Degree of stakeholder participation.
- Integration of narrative themes into tourism products.
- Visitor recognition of shared identity (via surveys).

Storytelling & Narrative Building

Creating a shared story that connects places, people and emotions.

1) DISCOVER THE CORE NARRATIVE
Identify the essence: emotions, values and identity of the territory.
Ask: "What makes us unique?"

2) MAP LOCAL STORIES & VOICES
Collect authentic stories, legends, and traditions from communities.
Involve locals, artisans, and storytellers.

3) TRANSLATE INTO TOURISM ACTIONS
Connect individual stories under a common theme or message.
Build unity through diversity.

4) CO-CREATE A SHARED NARRATIVE
Apply the narrative to routes, experiences, and branding.
Turn stories into tangible visitor experiences.

5) VALIDATE & SHARE
Engage communities to approve and celebrate the shared story.
Adopt a "Territorial Story Charter."

New cross-territorial projects inspired by the shared narrative.

INDEX

Tool 2. Stakeholder Alignment

1. Rationale

Description:

Stakeholder Alignment offers a systematic framework to ensure that all parts involved in tourism development are aligned and working cohesively. It supports the creation of a unified and collaborative narrative aligned with the POST axes, particularly those linked to Strengthening the Tourism Offer (Axis I), Cooperation and Partnership (IV), Digital Transformation (Axis III). This tool focuses on integrated communication and destination storytelling as key drivers for enhancing visibility and shared identity.

Objective:

To facilitate collaboration and coordination between local and regional stakeholders by defining common messages, clear communication roles, and effective engagement mechanisms.

Justification:

Consistent communication is essential to maintain a shared identity and avoid fragmented messaging. Furthermore, this tool promotes collaborative storytelling that and strengthens the destination's shared visibility, ensuring alignment with strategic objectives and fostering long-term cooperation across the territory.

2. When to Use

During the planning and coordination phase of the destination strategy, particularly when defining communication frameworks and governance models. It is particularly useful:

- When launching new tourism products or routes to ensure consistency under the POST identity.
- When developing joint marketing campaigns and coordinated actions between partner destinations.
- When creating and sharing a common narrative for the territory (*Destination Storytelling*).

It should be revisited periodically during implementation to maintain coherence and alignment among all stakeholders and with the POST brand.

3. Step-by-step

3.1 Preparation / Inputs

- Review communication guidelines to ensure alignment with the POST identity and overall strategic framework
- Compile stakeholder information, including contact details, roles, and preferred communication channels.

- Collect campaign data, such as objectives, key messages, hashtags, and timelines.
- Review social media analytics to identify communication patterns and audience profiles.

3.2. Implementation

Step 1. Stakeholder Mapping → Review and update the list of partners, categorizing them by their role (e.g., tourism boards, municipalities, cultural organizations, etc.)

Step 2. Communication Audit → Review ongoing or planned campaigns, checking how each actor is applying the POST brand and communication guidelines.

Step 3. Alignment sessions→ Hold alignment workshops or meetings to:

- Identify any overlaps or inconsistencies in communication.
- Discuss ways for stakeholders to align messaging, visuals, and timing.
- Reinforce the use of shared assets such as logos or templates.

Step 4: Coordination Mechanism → Establish an effective coordination tool (e.g. such as a shared calendar, mailing list, or collaborative platform) to align campaigns and disseminate updates.

Step 5: Feedback and Monitoring → Develop a feedback system (annual assessment, dashboard overview, or regular reporting) to evaluate message consistency and stakeholder involvement while recommending changes as necessary.

3.3 Expected Results

- Coherent and aligned communication across the POST network (e.g., number of joint campaigns launched).
- Enhanced coordination and collaboration among stakeholders (e.g., Trello, Google Calendar).
- Consistent use of the POST identity in digital and promotional actions (e.g., % guideline use)
- Measurable increase in brand visibility and engagement across regions. (e.g reach & impressions)

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

UNESCO Integrated Communication Framework and European Heritage Label (EHL)

Both UNESCO and the European Heritage Label (EHL) provide valuable guidance for POST on maintaining consistent communication across various regions and organizations.

UNESCO's approach shows how shared values and coordinated narratives can connect multiple actors under a single cultural and heritage vision. Its communication framework promotes collaboration, inclusivity, and clear alignment between global and local messages, ensuring each site contributes consistently to a common identity.

The EHL applies these same principles at the European scale, helping sites communicate under one recognizable label while keeping their local voices. Through its outreach strategy, visual identity system, and audience-focused actions, particularly those engaging young people and communities, the EHL demonstrates how to strengthen visibility and participation across regions.

For POST, these examples highlight how a shared communication framework, clear identity guidelines, and active stakeholder engagement can reinforce both the polycentric brand and the sense of belonging among partner destinations.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- Conflicting interests or political agendas among stakeholders → Employ a neutral facilitator and highlight mutual advantages (such as visibility, funding, and sustainability).
- Excessive communication or inadequate coordination → Create well-defined communication pathways and designate clear roles.
- Resistance to shared branding or guidelines → Engage stakeholders early in the co-development phase to foster a sense of ownership.
- Deterioration of coherence over time → Schedule regular alignment assessments and update communication tools accordingly.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

The Stakeholder Alignment Tool enhances the communication framework of the POST strategy by facilitating a unified and complementary message among all partners. By bringing stakeholders together around common narratives and established communication guidelines, it strengthens governance through clear coordination, supports identity and image by unifying the diverse brand, promotes sustainable development through ongoing collaboration and storytelling across the network, and reinforces cross-territorial cooperation through continuous dialogue and shared governance.

7. Responsible / Implementing Entity

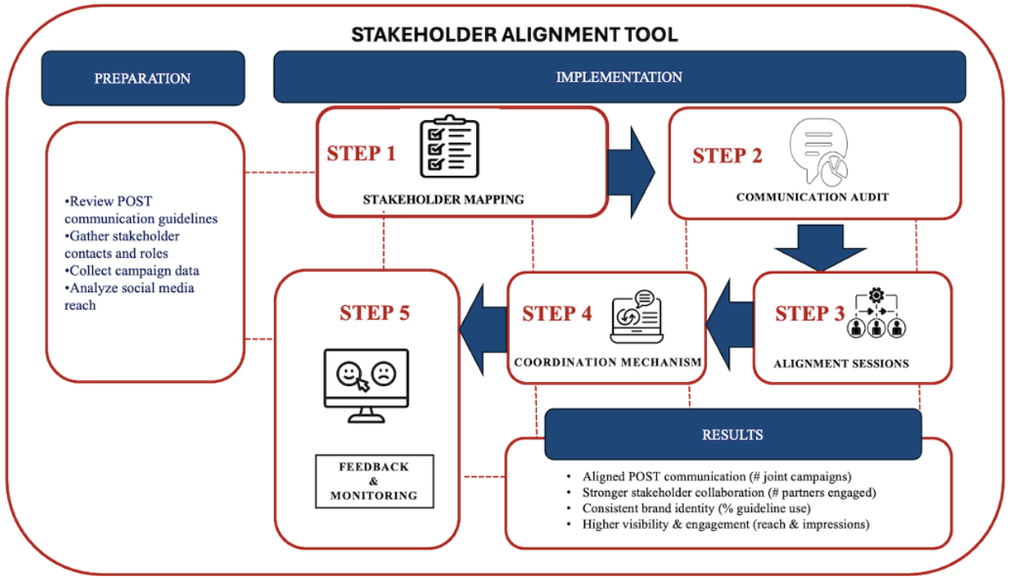
Lead: Regional Tourism Coordination Body or Lead Municipality.

Support: Communication experts, tourism clusters, and local cultural organizations.

Facilitation: Independent mediator or branding consultant experienced in destination governance.

8. Others:

- Number of stakeholders participating in alignment sessions.
- Degree of message coherence (measured through content analysis).
- Frequency of cross-institutional communication.
- Visibility and consistency of the shared brand across external channels.



Tool 3. Content Calendar Template

1. Rationale

Description:

The Content Calendar Template is a practical tool designed to organize, plan, and schedule communication and marketing activities across multiple destinations. It enables project teams, tourism boards, and DMOs to coordinate content publication, monitor progress, and ensure a consistent flow of messaging that supports the polycentric tourism strategy.

In polycentric tourism, destinations are interconnected, and without coordinated communication, issues such as over-tourism in one area or low visibility in another may arise. A content calendar helps harmonize messaging, supports strategic campaigns, and improves the efficiency of cross-territorial communications.

Objective:

To provide a structured framework for planning communication campaigns that align with project goals, ensuring that information reaches stakeholders and audiences at the right time, while reinforcing regional collaboration.

Justification:

Teams can use the calendar to schedule campaigns, prevent overlapping messages, track progress, and ensure balanced representation across destinations and tourism experiences. This is how should be structured:

- Content topic (key message)
- Target audience
- Responsible person/organization
- Publication channel and format (e.g., social media platform, website, newsletter, press release)
- Timing / date of publication
- Status (planned, in progress, published, cancelled)

2. When to use

- **During project planning** to align content across multiple destinations.
- **At the start of a communication campaign** to schedule activities in advance.
- **For ongoing communications management**, monitoring, and reporting.
- **To coordinate messages during joint initiatives** or special events.

3. Step-by-step

1. **Define objectives:** Align content planning with the goals of polycentric tourism: decentralization, sustainability, and territorial development.

2. **Identify audiences:** Consider residents, visitors, local businesses, media, and policymakers.
3. **Develop a coherent set of messages** aligned with POST objectives. Focus on sustainable practices, cultural events, seasonal highlights, heritage preservation, and visual storytelling, among others
4. **Assign responsibilities:** Allocate content creation, approval, and publication roles to relevant stakeholders.
5. **Schedule publication:** Determine timing, frequency, and channels for each piece of content.
6. **Monitor and adjust:** Track outputs and engagement, and adapt the calendar as new opportunities or challenges arise.

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Determine project objectives and key messages for campaigns.
- Stakeholder lists and communication responsibilities.
- Content inventory (existing articles, images, videos).
- Identify preferred communication channels and their technical requirements.
- Tools for scheduling and tracking (Excel, Google Sheets, Trello, or dedicated social media management platforms).

3.2. Implementation

1. **Create the structure for the calendar template:** Set up columns for date, content (key messaging), audience, channel, responsibility, and status.
2. **Populate initial content:** Enter planned campaigns, posts, and activities – using color codes for clarity
3. **Assign roles:** Designate owners for content creation, review, and publishing.
4. **Review and approve:** Ensure alignment with strategic objectives.
5. **Publish and monitor:** Track content performance.
6. **Adjust as needed:** Update the calendar dynamically to respond to seasonal shifts, events, or emerging opportunities.

3.3. Expected results

- Coordinated communication across destinations, avoiding duplicated efforts.
- Increased visibility of under-visited destinations and attractions.
- Clear responsibilities and accountability among partners.
- Consistent messaging supporting sustainable tourism and polycentric development goals.
- Enhanced audience engagement and better monitoring of campaign effectiveness.

4. Inspiring example:

European Commission – Sustainable Tourism Communication Toolkit

Overview:

The European Commission's toolkit helps EU destinations promote sustainable tourism. It includes a **content calendar template** to plan and schedule communication activities, social media posts, and campaigns. Destinations across Europe use it to coordinate messaging, increase visibility of less-visited sites, and share best practices.

Relevance:

This aligns with the goals of polycentric tourism by fostering coordinated communication, balanced visitor flows, and stronger regional collaboration.

5. Potential Risks/Errors & Solutions

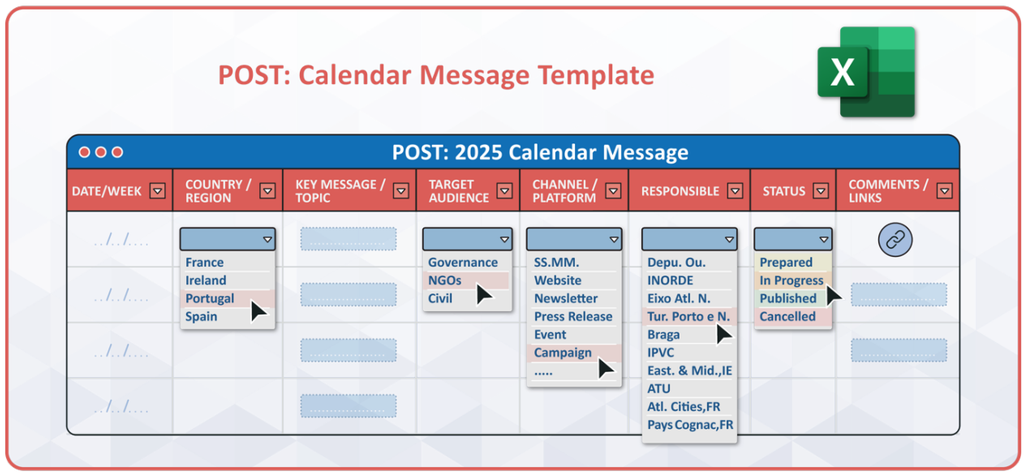
- **Risk:** Audience mismatch or irrelevant content. **Solution:** Define target groups for each content item and tailor messaging accordingly.
- **Risk:** Lack of updates or dynamic adjustments, resulting in outdated information. **Solution:** Review the calendar weekly or monthly and adapt as necessary.
-

6. Connection to the Current POST Strategy

The content calendar directly supports the polycentric tourism communication strategy by **ensuring that messages are synchronized across destinations**, providing coherent, proper and updated information for all the stakeholders involved. providing coherent, accurate, and up-to-date information

7. Responsible/Stakeholder

- **Lead:** Project communications coordinator or lead DMO.
- **Collaborators:** Regional tourism boards, local authorities, marketing teams, NGOs.
- **Facilitators:** Content creators, social media managers, and campaign planners.



Tool 4. Cross-Territory Campaign Planner

1. Rationale

Description:

The **Cross-Territory Campaign Planner Tool** provides guidance for public and private entities in the coordinated planning, implementation, and evaluation of joint tourism communication and promotional campaigns across multiple territories. Grounded in the principles of **polycentric and sustainable tourism**, the tool promotes **interterritorial synergies**, **narrative coherence**, **shared identity**, and **collective performance assessment**.

Objective:

To establish a unified operational model that enables partners to:

- Coordinate marketing and communication planning collaboratively.
- Ensure strategic alignment of narratives and objectives across territories.
- Integrate complementary or joint tourism products and experiences.
- Measure campaign impact through shared performance indicators (KPIs).
- Strengthen institutional alignment and collaborative governance among polycentric territories.

Justification:

In the context of polycentric tourism, regional cooperation is essential for achieving balanced visitor flow distribution. Conducting isolated promotional actions often results in **incoherent or contradictory messages**, **communication competition** between territories pursuing collaborative strategies, and **duplicated efforts** or **fragmented resources**. This tool translates the collaboration principles of the polycentric tourism model into communication practice by promoting a **coordinated planning process** that generates **economies of scale**, **stronger media impact**, and a **unified image** of polycentric territories, fully aligned with POST principles.

2. When to use

- After defining institutional and communicational permeability objectives.
- After drafting the polycentric communication proposal or action plan.
- After identifying participating territories and their specific roles within the regional strategy.
- After defining the regional portfolio of polycentric tourism products (including complementary or joint offers).
- During the planning of brand positioning and communication campaigns.
- At mid-term or final evaluation points of campaigns.
- When comparing communication performance among polycentric territories or partners.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Results from diagnostic tools (e.g., SWOT, Opportunity/Gap Analysis, Visitor Flow Mapping).
- Institutional and communicational permeability objectives.
- Shared narrative reflecting the collective identity, values, and distinctiveness of the new centralities.
- Defined campaign goals, target audiences, key messages, and timeframes.
- Data on tourism demand profiles, destination offers, pressured sites/new centralities, and baseline statistics.

3.2. Implementation

1. Define the Campaign Vision

Align the campaign with the polycentric tourism communication strategy and objectives.

Output: Clearly defined key messages, target audiences, and expected outcomes.

2. Build the Shared Narrative

Apply storytelling methodologies to ensure emotional and cultural coherence among participating territories, validating the joint narrative through participatory methods.

Output: Polycentric territorial storytelling framework.

3. Select Anchor Products and Experiences

Identify the tourism experiences and destinations that best express authenticity, complementarity, and alignment with the shared narrative.

4. Operational Planning and Timeline

Use the Action Planning Template to define actions, responsibilities, and schedules.

Output: Polycentric Communication Plan or Roadmap.

5. Campaign Launch and Implementation

Identify communication channels and ensure message and visual consistency across all media.

Output: Communication channels matrix per territory and target group.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

Apply the Campaign Evaluation Indicators framework to measure performance and prepare shared reports.

3.3. Expected Results

- More cohesive, effective, and measurable cross-territorial campaigns.
- Consolidation of a polycentric identity built on authentic narratives and unique local experiences.
- Strengthened perception of a joint “polycentric brand” encompassing multiple destinations.
- Improved communication and marketing performance through shared learning and data exchange.
- Increased tourism attractiveness and more balanced visitor flow distribution.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Eixo Atlântico – "Two Countries, One Destination"

Eixo Atlântico has developed a tourism promotion strategy for the Galicia–Northern Portugal Euroregion, presenting this cross-border area as a single destination.

One flagship action, recognised at the European level as good practice, is the **EXPOCIDADES joint tourism fair**, held every two years in a different city of the Euroregion. This campaign encourages citizens to explore lesser-known but authentic destinations nearby, promoting **desea-sonalised tourism flows** and reducing pressure on overcrowded areas.

The fair rotates among cities, functioning itself as a cross-border territorial campaign. It promotes the Euroregion under a shared slogan that highlights unity across borders and showcases cultural diversity through gastronomy, crafts, and nature.

Each edition includes stands, tastings, and performances, as well as dissemination of Eixo Atlântico's joint promotional materials — bilingual tourism guides and thematic publications that reflect a **shared storytelling and complementary tourism offer**.

Results:

- Increased number of participating destinations in recent years.
- Growth in visitor attendance and media coverage.
- Strengthened cross-border tourism identity and awareness.

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Weak collaboration between territories	Establish a governance model (e.g., steering committee).
Unequal financial or operational contribution	Define transparent cost-sharing based on benefits; seek EU or regional co-funding.
Inconsistent messaging or visuals	Provide training, shared templates, and appoint a campaign creative lead.
Reluctance to share data	Sign data-sharing agreements and use a shared analytics dashboard.
Confusing "multi-territory" concept for visitors	Simplify offers and assure clear mobility connections across territories.
Residents feel excluded	Promote community-led experiences and communicate local benefits.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This tool reinforces the POST methodology by strengthening **institutional and communicational permeability**, enhancing **networking among polycentric territories**, and supporting the **positioning of new centralities** while redirecting tourism flows.

It builds on the outcomes of other POST tools such as:

- *Action Planning Template*
- *Storytelling and Narrative Building Tool*
- *Campaign Evaluation Indicators Tool*

The resulting campaigns should be **evidence-based, narratively coherent, and measurable**, contributing directly to **shared governance and the strategic visibility** required for polycentric tourism.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Lead:** Local or regional tourism management bodies (e.g., municipalities, DMOs), preferably through their communication departments; implementation may be outsourced.
- **Support:** Regional observatories, media partners, tourism communication specialists, storytelling consultants, or operators.
- **Validation:** By the polycentric tourism ecosystem (including media partners, private stakeholders, and public entities involved in the campaign).

8. Others/Relevant Indicators

DIMENSION	EXAMPLE INDICATORS
Visibility	Digital reach, media mentions, combined web traffic
Engagement	Click-through rate, social media interactions, content shares, video views
Reputation / Perception	Visitor satisfaction, awareness studies
Collaboration	Number of territories involved, co-branded actions, interterritorial meetings
Conversion / Impact	Bookings generated, event participation, visitor flow variation
Learning & Improvement	Evaluation reports, strategy adjustments

CROSS-TERRITORY CAMPAIGN PLANNER

From shared vision to joint impact

1) DEFINE VISION: Align territories, goals & key messages
2) BUILD SHARED NARRATIVE: Create one storytelling for all territories
3) SELECT ANCHOR EXPERIENCES: Choose authentic, complementary tourism offers
4) PLAN & ORGANIZE: Actions, roles, timeline
5) LAUNCH CAMPAIGN: Unified visuals & messages across channels
6) MONITOR & EVALUATE: Shared KPIs, common reporting, learning

RESULTS:

Unified polycentric brand
Stronger collaboration
Measurable joint impact

Tool 5. Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist

1. Rationale

Description:

A practical checklist that ensures all communication and marketing activities (campaigns, websites, social media, press, trade materials) are aligned with sustainability principles and the polycentric vision of the POST strategy.

Objetive:

To verify that marketing messages and visuals support balanced narratives, responsible storytelling, and territorial complementarity, avoiding over-promotion of iconic destinations.

Justification:

Marketing often unintentionally reinforces concentration by promoting well-known destinations. This tool ensures that campaigns promote fair visibility of different territories, ethical representation of communities, and credible sustainability claims.

2. When to Use

- During the planning phase of marketing and communication campaigns.
- Before launching or renewing a destination branding initiative. As part of the validation process of destination communication strategies.
- When reviewing content created in partnership with DMOs, municipalities, or creative agencies.

This checklist can be used both during the planning phase of marketing campaigns and after their implementation, to review whether sustainability principles were effectively integrated and to identify opportunities for improvement.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- POST brand guidelines
- Sustainability strategy and POST communication principles.
- Campaign materials (visuals, slogans, social media).
- Market data, flow and dispersion insights.
- Stakeholder consultation (municipalities, creative agencies, private tourism-related stakeholders).

Resources:

- Communication/marketing team, sustainability expert, creative partners, stakeholder advisory group.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Message Audit:** Review whether the campaign narrative supports sustainable and inclusive tourism principles.
2. **Territorial and Temporal Balance:** Ensure equal visibility between core and peripheral destinations and promote off-peak periods.
3. **Sustainable Behaviour and Environmental Integrity:** Ensure that marketing actions promote environmentally responsible behaviour, respect local ecosystems, and highlight measurable sustainability commitments (e.g., CO_2 labels, eco-certifications, regional products). Incorporate elements that encourage slow mobility, eco-friendly practices, and responsible visitor engagement, supported by visual cues such as sustainability icons, labels, or KPIs (e.g., carbon-neutral experiences).
4. **Validation:** Conduct a final internal and stakeholder review before campaign approval.

3.3 Expected results

- Marketing content aligned with ethical and sustainable standards.
- Improved brand coherence and credibility under the POST framework.
- Completed sustainability-alignment checklist for each campaign.
- Balanced and credible destination storytelling.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: In the "Feel the North" campaign, TPNP restructured its message from "Discover Porto" to "Discover the North through Porto and Beyond." This repositioning integrated sustainable mobility (train and bike routes), promoted local gastronomy in Braga and Douro, and featured real community voices.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

POTENTIAL RISK	MITIGATION STRATEGY
Greenwashing or superficial sustainability messaging	Validate campaigns through sustainability checklists and external review (e.g., Turismo de Portugal).
Imbalanced focus on Porto	Set minimum visibility quotas for other territories (e.g., Braga, Douro, Minho).
Lack of agency awareness	Conduct internal training on responsible storytelling.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This checklist operationalizes the POST strategy by transforming shared sustainability and dispersion principles into concrete communication actions.

- It facilitates coordinated decision-making between territories and ensures that marketing efforts are evidence-based and mutually reinforcing.
- It identifies cross-border collaboration opportunities for co-branding and joint storytelling.
- It provides data-driven validation that communication supports dispersion, cooperation, and sustainable behaviour.
- It also feeds into and receives inputs from other POST tools:
  - Visitor Flow Mapping (identifies hotspots and under-promoted areas),
  - Roadmap Development (defines strategic priorities for messaging),
  - Action Planning Template (integrates communication actions).

Contributes to all POST Axes (I–VI) - diversification, infrastructure and mobility, digital transformation, cooperation, adaptation to trends, and resilience.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Lead: Communication and marketing unit of the relevant tourism authority, DMO, or project partner.

Equivalent entities: regional tourism boards, national promotion agencies, municipal communication offices, observatories, universities, and creative agencies.

Support: sustainability advisors, ethics committees, local community representatives.

8. Others:

Suggested indicators:

- Dispersion & Equity: % of campaign visibility (impressions/clicks) for secondary destinations; % of multi-hub content; seasonal distribution of exposure.
- Sustainability & Mobility: % of messages promoting public/soft mobility; clicks on eco-travel options; number of sustainability labels used.
- Ethical Storytelling: % of materials including local voices; diversity and authenticity score; % of verifiable claims.
- Performance: CTR and conversions by destination; NPS linked to campaign perception.

Templates: standardized checklist (Yes/No/Not Applicable + comments), message plan template, sustainability KPI sheet, quota matrix for balanced visibility.

Frequency: pre-launch validation; post-launch review (30–60 days); quarterly optimization cycle.

Data sources: ad managers, analytics dashboards, CRM, social listening tools, campaign reports, surveys.

Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist

North of Portugal Region (Braga)

1

1. Message Audit

Ensure campaigns highlight Braga's heritage, religious, and cultural identity through responsible storytelling. Avoid over-promotion of Porto; emphasize dispersion and authenticity.

2

2. Territorial and Temporal Balance

Balance visibility between core (Braga, Guimarães) and rural areas (Gerês, Minho). Promote off-season visits (pilgrimages, cultural events).

3

3. Mobility and Behaviour

Highlight sustainable transport to Braga and nearby hubs; encourage soft mobility (train, walking routes, cycling).

4

4. Environmental Integrity and Sustainability Tagging

Use sustainability labels and KPIs (e.g., CO_2 per visitor, eco-certified accommodations). Highlight Braga's green initiatives.

5

5. Ethical Storytelling, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Representation

Ensure campaigns include authentic voices from local communities, artisans, and heritage custodians. Avoid stereotypes.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Conduct stakeholder review sessions with municipalities, DMOs, and community groups before campaign approval.

Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist

Province of Ourense, Galicia (O Barco de Valdeorras)

1

1. Message Audit

Promote Valdeorras as a natural and sustainable mountain area; focus on authenticity and local traditions; avoid mass-tourism imagery.

2

2. Territorial and Temporal Balance

Promote smaller inland villages and off-peak seasons. Align messaging with rural tourism diversification goals.

3

3. Mobility and Behaviour

Promote eco-friendly travel (rail, hiking, cycling) and responsible visitor behaviour in natural areas.

4

4. Environmental Integrity and Sustainability Tagging

Include environmental certifications and biodiversity values in messages. Promote local eco-certified products.

5

5. Ethical Storytelling, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Representation

Represent local traditions, languages, and mountain communities ethically. Use imagery of real residents and natural environments.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Validate campaigns through local meetings and peer review with regional actors and cross-border partners.

Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist

Dublin Region (Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown)

1

1. Message Audit

Audit messages to ensure inclusive, sustainable communication reflecting local communities and coastal heritage.

2

2. Territorial and Temporal Balance

Ensure equal representation of coastal, suburban, and green spaces. Promote year-round, accessible experiences.

3

3. Mobility and Behaviour

Integrate references to public transport, cycling, and pedestrian-friendly travel between Dublin and DLR.

4

4. Environmental Integrity and Sustainability Tagging

Feature sustainability commitments in campaigns (e.g., "Green Coast Dublin"), highlighting accessible low-carbon options.

5

5. Ethical Storytelling, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Representation

Promote diversity and accessibility; include voices of local residents, creative industries, and minority communities.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Review by sustainability boards, citizen groups, and tourism observatories to ensure inclusiveness and credibility.

Marketing – Sustainability Alignment Checklist

PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac (France)

1

1. Message Audit

Review campaigns to emphasize Cognac's cultural heritage, craftsmanship, and eco-responsible wine tourism; avoid luxury-only narratives.

2

2. Territorial and Temporal Balance

Balance city and countryside storytelling. Promote year-round tourism linked to local products and events (harvest, gastronomy).

3

3. Mobility and Behaviour

Emphasize slow mobility and responsible travel (walking circuits, vineyard cycling routes).

4

4. Environmental Integrity and Sustainability Tagging

Incorporate sustainability indicators and eco-labels related to Cognac's vineyards, water use, and carbon reduction.

5

5. Ethical Storytelling, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Representation

Highlight the human dimension of the "art de vivre" — authentic people, traditions, and rural artisans. Avoid elitist narratives.

6

6. Validation and Feedback

Validate messages through community workshops and tourism councils; ensure alignment with sustainability goals and local identity.

Step	North of Portugal Region (Braga)	Province of Ourense, Galicia (Comarca de Valdeorras)	Dublin Region (Dún Laoghaire–Rathdown)	PETR Ouest Charente – Pays du Cognac (France)
1. Message Audit	Ensure campaigns highlight Braga's heritage, religious, and cultural identity through responsible storytelling. Avoid over-promotion of Porto; emphasize dispersion and authenticity.	Promote Valdeorras as a natural and sustainable mountain area; focus on authenticity and local traditions; avoid mass-tourism imagery.	Audit messages to ensure inclusive, sustainable communication reflecting local communities and coastal heritage.	Review campaigns to emphasize Cognac's cultural heritage, craftsmanship, and eco-responsible wine tourism; avoid luxury-only narratives.
2. Territorial and Temporal Balance	Balance visibility between core (Braga, Guimarães) and rural areas (Gerês, Minho). Promote off-season visits (pilgrimages, cultural events).	Promote smaller inland villages and off-peak seasons. Align messaging with rural tourism diversification goals.	Ensure equal representation of coastal, suburban, and green spaces. Promote year-round, accessible experiences.	Balance city and countryside storytelling. Promote year-round tourism linked to local products and events (harvest, gastronomy).
3. Mobility and Behaviour	Highlight sustainable transport to Braga and nearby hubs; encourage soft mobility (train, walking routes, cycling).	Promote eco-friendly travel (rail, hiking, cycling) and responsible visitor behaviour in natural areas.	Integrate references to public transport, cycling, and pedestrian-friendly travel between Dublin and DLR.	Emphasize slow mobility and responsible travel (walking circuits, vineyard cycling routes).
4. Environmental Integrity and Sustainability Tagging	Use sustainability labels and KPIs (e.g., CO_2 per visitor, eco-certified accommodations). Highlight Braga's green initiatives.	Include environmental certifications and biodiversity values in messages. Promote local eco-certified products.	Feature sustainability commitments in campaigns (e.g., "Green Coast Dublin"), highlighting accessible low-carbon options.	Incorporate sustainability indicators and eco-labels related to Cognac's vineyards, water use, and carbon reduction.
5. Ethical Storytelling, Inclusiveness, and Cultural Representation	Ensure campaigns include authentic voices from local communities, artisans, and heritage custodians. Avoid stereotypes.	Represent local traditions, languages, and mountain communities ethically. Use imagery of real residents and natural environments.	Promote diversity and accessibility; include voices of local residents, creative industries, and minority communities.	Highlight the human dimension of the "art de vivre" — authentic people, traditions, and rural artisans. Avoid elitist narratives.
6. Validation and Feedback	Conduct stakeholder review sessions with municipalities, DMOs, and community groups before campaign approval.	Validate campaigns through local meetings and peer review with regional actors and cross-border partners.	Review by sustainability boards, citizen groups, and tourism observatories to ensure inclusiveness and credibility.	Validate messages through community workshops and tourism councils; ensure alignment with sustainability goals and local identity.

INDEX

Tool 6. Messaging Templates

1. Rationale

Description:

This is an operational communication tool designed to standardize how information and messages are created, collected, and disseminated across territories. While based on a common structure, it allows local adaptation to reflect each territory's tourism reality and stakeholder needs. The tool formalizes communication by providing a shared repository of messages, templates, and results, facilitating coordination and consistency throughout the polycentric network.

Objective:

To create a scalable framework that supports consistent, comparable, and adaptable communication across all territories, ensuring that shared messages and data collection processes are aligned with the principles of polycentric tourism.

Justification:

Consistent and coherent communication across territories is essential for the visibility and credibility of polycentric tourism. Messaging templates ensure that all actors share the same tone, structure, and key messages when communicating internally or externally. These templates can also be adapted for information collection purposes, maintaining coherence in both inbound and outbound communication.

2. When to use

This tool serves as a practical reference for designing and disseminating communication materials or collecting information. It should be applied when:

- Developing communication materials, promotional content, or social media posts.
- Collecting standardized information from stakeholders or territories.
- Disseminating project results to ensure coherent presentation.
- Updating or aligning tourism messages across multiple regions.

3.Step-by-step

3.1 Preparation / Inputs

- Identify the target audiences and purposes (information gathering, promotion, internal communication).
- Define the key messages and tone aligned with the polycentric tourism framework.
- Create an editable standard template adaptable to different media and audiences.
- Establish a clear system for collecting and storing responses or content generated through these templates.
- Set up a review and update mechanism to maintain relevance and quality.

3.2. Implementation

- Design model templates → Develop base templates for different purposes (e.g., questionnaires, press releases, stakeholder communication).
- Adapt templates to local context → Tailor content to each territory's identity and communication needs while preserving structural consistency.
- Validate templates → Conduct pilot testing with a small group of users to ensure clarity and usability.
- Disseminate → Share templates with communication teams and stakeholders through agreed channels.
- Monitor and update → Review usage and effectiveness periodically, integrating feedback to improve templates and maintain engagement.

3.3. Expected results

- A common and adaptable base of tourism messages and templates.
- Greater coherence and efficiency in communication across territories.
- Improved collaboration and recognition of a shared regional image.
- Consistent and comparable information for analysis and reporting.

4. Inspiring example / Good practice

Gua_metodologica_rutas.pdf

A network of rural tourism destinations develops a shared set of communication templates for press releases, visitor surveys, and partner updates. Each destination adapts the content to its local context but maintains the same tone, structure, and branding. This ensures a coherent external image while allowing for local specificity, resulting in better coordination and improved visibility for the region as a whole.

5. Potential risks/Errors/Solutions

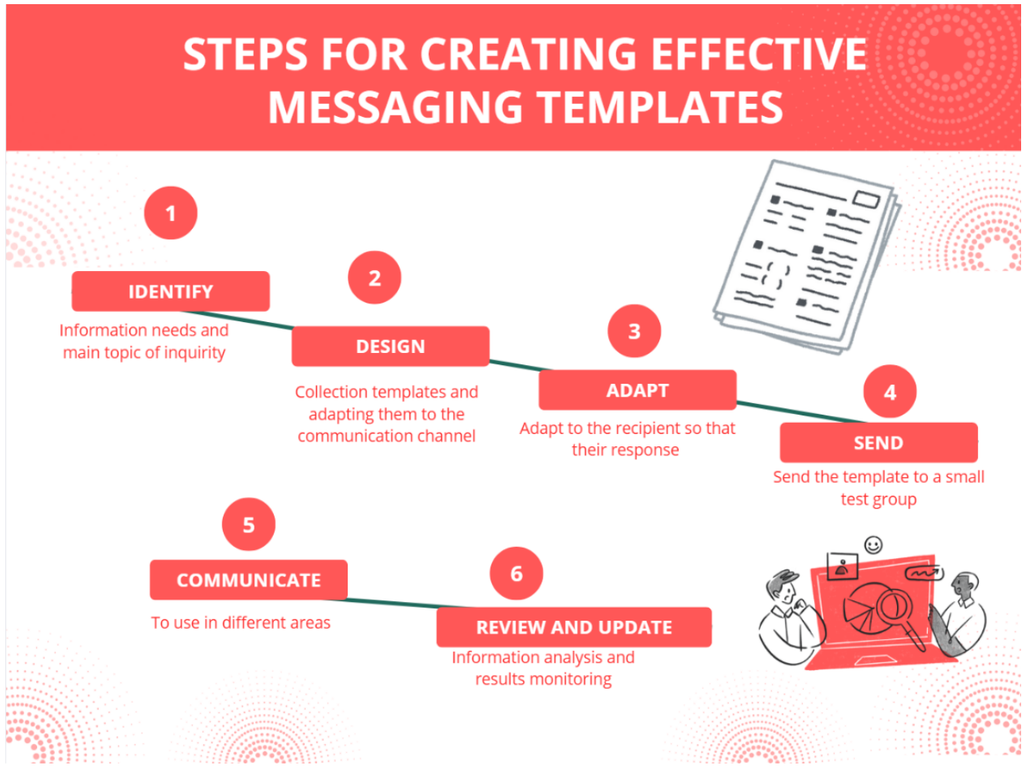
- **Lack of coordination between territories** → Establish a central coordination team to validate and approve all templates.
- **Overly generic content** → Include local examples and adaptable sections for territorial customization.
- **Loss of engagement due to repetition** → Regularly refresh template design and update content to maintain interest.
- **Insufficient evaluation** → Define clear indicators for communication reach, participation, and feedback; integrate results into future updates.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This tool supports the POST Strategy by ensuring a unified and coordinated communication approach across territories. By harmonizing messages and data collection processes, it strengthens the visibility, coherence, and efficiency of the polycentric tourism network, fostering a shared identity and promoting collaborative storytelling.

7. Responsible/Stakeholder

- **Lead:** Communication departments of provincial or local authorities, regional DMOs, or tourism management entities.
- **Collaborators:** Private sector actors (e.g., associations, media, local tourism businesses) and public institutions (e.g., tourist offices, regional agencies).
- **Facilitators:** Researchers, consultants, or marketing professionals supporting template development, validation, and data analysis.



Tool 7. Visual Assets/Graphic Kits

1. Rationale

Description:

The Visual Assets/Graphic Kits Tool establishes a shared visual identity framework to ensure coherent, recognisable, and professional communication across all territories participating in the Polycentric Tourism Strategy. By harmonising logos, colour palettes, fonts, iconography, and templates, this tool guarantees that all communication materials - both online and offline - consistently reflect the values of sustainability, cooperation, and shared Atlantic identity. It provides a modular and practical reference for partners to produce accessible and adaptable visual content aligned with POST's brand guidelines, even without advanced design expertise.

Objective:

To equip all POST partners with a harmonised and replicable methodology for maintaining visual coherence across communications.

Specific objectives include:

- Promoting a unified and recognisable brand image for the Polycentric Tourism Model.
- Supporting partners in producing their own communication materials following a shared logic and tone.
- Encouraging efficient, collaborative visual communication across different languages and cultural contexts.

Justification:

In transnational projects, visual inconsistency between partners weakens brand recognition and message clarity. This tool addresses that challenge by defining common visual standards aligned with European communication and visibility rules (Interreg, Atlantic Area, and SDG frameworks), while allowing space for local adaptation and creativity. It strengthens the project's collective image of cooperation and innovation and ensures that all visual outputs communicate a consistent and professional message.

2. When to use

- During the planning and design stages of communication campaigns and materials.
- When producing social media content, press materials, infographics, or presentations.
- To train communication officers or local staff in EU visibility standards.
- When adapting local visuals to the common POST identity.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Official POST/Interreg Atlantic Area visual identity guidelines.
- Partner and institutional logos.
- Defined colour palette and typographic references.
- Photo and video banks illustrating each pilot territory.
- Examples of previous communication materials (social media posts, banners, posters).

3.2. Implementation (5 Steps):

1. Collect existing visual elements from all partners (logos, photos, templates).
2. Define a shared visual logic - identifying common colours, fonts, and image styles.
3. Develop editable templates (e.g., PowerPoint slides, social media post frames, flyer layouts).
4. Establish usage rules - placement of logos, language zones, minimum margins, font hierarchy.
5. Share materials through a collaborative workspace (e.g., Google Drive, SharePoint, Canva) and update based on partner feedback.

3.3. Expected Results

- A clear Visual Identity Guideline summarising design rules and best practices.
- A shared collection of reusable templates accessible to all partners.
- Stronger coherence and visibility of the POST visual identity across regions.
- Improved accessibility, efficiency, and professionalism in communication outputs.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: *PETR Ouest Charente – "Fleuve Charente Hackathon 2025" Visual System*
PETR developed a consistent visual approach combining blue and green tones, modern fonts, and fluid iconography to represent collaboration and innovation. This visual logic was applied across:

- Digital banners and social media posts;
- Printed materials (posters, participant booklets);
- Presentation templates and short videos.

This example demonstrates how local initiatives can align with a transnational visual identity while maintaining authenticity and creative freedom.

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Inconsistent visuals among partners	Provide clear and easy-to-use templates for reuse.
Lack of graphic design skills	Use simple tools (PowerPoint, Canva) with pre-formatted layouts.
Language constraints	Leave flexible text areas for multilingual adaptation.
Limited access to assets	Centralise all logos and visuals in a shared online repository.
Outdated or incorrect logo use	Periodically review and refresh visual materials collectively.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Ensures coherence with Interreg Atlantic Area communication and visibility requirements.
- Reinforces the project's image of cooperation, innovation, and sustainability.
- Contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
- SDG 8 – Decent Work & Economic Growth (creative economy and communication jobs).
- SDG 11 – Sustainable Cities & Communities (promotion of local identities).
- SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals (interregional collaboration).

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- Contributors: All POST partners (providing local photos, logos, and feedback).
- Support: Communication and design consultants, EU visibility experts.

8. Others

Recommended tools and resources to support implementation:

- *Visual Identity Guideline (PDF)* – reference document on logo usage, colours, and typography.
- *Editable Templates (PPT, Canva, InDesign)* – for posters, social media, and presentations.
- *Icon and Image Library* – shared repository of licensed or free-to-use visuals.
- *Sample Layouts* – examples showing correct template usage.
- *Shared Online Folder* – centralised access point (Drive or SharePoint) for all assets.



Polycentric Tourism Communication
Visual Assets & Graphic Kits

Provide a unified visual identity across all areas

PROCESS

1 Gather visuals
Logos, photos, previous materials from partners

2 Define visual logic
Colours, fonts, image style

3 Create templates
PPT, social media frames, posters, flyers

4 Set usage rules
Logo placement, margins, typography

5 Share assets
Collaborative folder or design workspace

6 Validate & update
Partner feedback and periodic refresh

BENEFITS

- **Stronger brand coherence across regions**
- **Easy-to-use templates for all partners**
- **Accessible, multilingual communication**
- **Unified Atlantic identity + local flavour**

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Inconsistent visuals** → clear templates
- **Limited design skills** → use simple tools
- **Language constraints** → flexible text zones
- **Limited asset access** → shared online folder
- **Misuse/outdated materials** → regular visual reviews

Tool 8. Content Adaptation

1. Rationale

Description:

The Content Adaptation Toolkit provides a structured framework to support partners in translating, adapting, and localising communication content across different languages, audiences, and cultural contexts within the Polycentric Tourism Model. It ensures that messages, visuals, and storytelling remain consistent with the common POST identity, while remaining relevant and meaningful for local stakeholders and visitors. Polycentric tourism communication requires a balance between shared European narratives and local authenticity - this toolkit provides the necessary methodology and templates to achieve that balance.

Objective:

To enable partners and local communication teams to:
Adapt shared messages and visuals to diverse territorial and cultural contexts.
Maintain coherence in tone, brand identity, and visual consistency across all outputs.
Encourage efficient reuse of campaign materials, optimising time and resources.
Strengthen the visibility and accessibility of the Polycentric Tourism Model across all regions.

Justification:

In transnational projects, communication materials are often produced centrally and reused locally. Without clear adaptation rules, coherence and message integrity can easily be lost. The Content Adaptation Toolkit offers a common framework and ready-to-use templates that help all partners ensure:

Proper adaptation of shared materials while maintaining brand integrity.

Alignment with Interreg and POST communication standards.

Campaigns that reflect both shared identity and local diversity, reinforcing the project's inclusive and sustainable values.

2. When to use

- When translating or adapting shared communication materials or campaigns.
- During the launch of local activities derived from transnational content.
- For cross-border events, joint publications, or multilingual websites.
- When integrating stakeholder feedback into EU-level communication.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Original POST communication materials (texts, visuals, videos).

- Visual identity and brand guidelines (from the Visual Assets / Graphic Kits Tool).
- Local context information (target audience, language, cultural references).
- Existing translations or approved terminology lists.
- Feedback from local tourism stakeholders and communication officers.

3.2. Implementation (Steps):

- **Identify Content to Adapt:** Select the material to be localised (e.g., campaign post, brochure, article).
- **Analyse Target Audience:** Define language, demographics, motivations, and cultural expectations.
- **Localise Message:** Adjust tone, examples, and references (e.g., local attractions, events). Ensure inclusive and culturally sensitive language. Translate key phrases and hashtags faithfully.
- **Adapt Visuals and Layout:** Replace visuals to reflect local imagery while respecting the visual identity. Adjust text areas and formats (for different character lengths or layouts).
- **Validate and Review:** Conduct peer review by another partner or communication lead. Ensure alignment with POST storytelling and brand identity.
- **Publish and Evaluate:** Disseminate locally and monitor engagement (reach, feedback, interaction rates).

3.3. Expected Results:

- Locally adapted but harmonised communication outputs (digital, print, and audiovisual).
- Improved audience engagement through more relevant content.
- Enhanced cross-destination coherence and storytelling alignment.
- Reduced duplication of effort and improved workflow among partners.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: A shared European campaign promoting *"Sustainable Tourism Experiences along Atlantic Rivers"* could be adapted by each partner territory to reflect local identity and priorities:

- Translating the core message into the local language.
- Replacing visuals with local landscapes or cultural imagery.
- Updating references (contacts, events, initiatives).
- Adjusting tone and examples to match the local audience.

This approach ensures that all partners communicate under a unified visual and narrative structure while maintaining authenticity and relevance. The methodology is transferable to other initiatives, such as digital tourism tools, local events, and future cross-border campaigns.

(Note: This example is illustrative and aims to demonstrate how the tool can be applied within the POST methodology.)

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Inconsistent translations or tone	Use shared terminology and a peer-review system.
Visuals not aligned with brand identity	Refer to the Visual Assets / Graphic Kits guidelines.
Cultural misinterpretation	Validate content with local experts or stakeholders.
Lack of design or translation skills	Use simple editable templates and AI-assisted tools.
Delays in validation	Establish a shared content calendar and review deadlines.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Ensures alignment with Interreg Atlantic Area visibility and communication standards.
- Strengthens cross-border storytelling and inclusivity in communication.
- Contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
- **SDGs: 8 , 10 & 17**

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Contributors: All POST partners (providing local adaptations and feedback).

Support: Communication and translation professionals, cultural mediators.

8. Others

Recommended Tools and Resources:

- *Adaptation Guidelines (PDF)* – explaining message localisation, tone, and formatting rules.
- *Editable Templates* – for multilingual posts, press releases, and brochures.
- *Terminology and Translation Sheet* – shared glossary of key project terms.
- *Content Calendar Template* – to coordinate publication across territories.
- *Peer Review Form* – checklist for validation of adapted content.



Polycentric Tourism Communication
Content Adaptation Tool

Sharing content among tourism partners while preserving coherence

PROCESS

1. Identify content
2. Analyse audience
3. Localise messages
4. Adapt visuals
5. Validate
6. Publish & evaluate

BENEFITS

- Locally relevant messages
- Improved engagement
- Strong cross-destination coherence
- Reduced duplication of work

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Translation inconsistencies** → shared glossary
- **Cultural mismatch** → local review
- **Off-brand visuals** → graphic guidelines
- **Delays** → shared calendar

Tool 9. Tourist Information

1. Rationale

Description:

This tool encompasses the design and management of tourist information materials and channels - both physical and digital - aimed at facilitating clear, engaging, and up-to-date communication with visitors. Its implementation allows information to be structured and presented in a way that highlights the identity and distinctiveness of each territory, while maintaining coherence across all areas integrated in the POST project. Formats may include brochures, panels, digital kiosks, mobile apps, tourism websites, and generative AI applications that foster responsible and emotional engagement between tourists and the territory.

Objective:

To ensure coherent, effective, and accessible communication with visitors by reinforcing the perception of polycentric tourism and improving the overall image, loyalty, and credibility of the destination.

Justification:

Tourist Information Tools are the main interface between destinations and visitors. Ensuring accuracy, coherence, accessibility and reliability of information builds trust, enhances satisfaction, and strengthens the visitor experience. In a polycentric context, shared standards and collaborative content management are crucial to maintain consistency across territories and ensure a unified narrative of the destination.

2. How and when to use

This tool serves as a methodological guide for structuring, designing, and disseminating tourist information across territories. It should be applied primarily in digital formats but may also include printed materials when relevant. The goal is to ensure updated, synchronised communication through websites, tourist offices, and digital platforms. It can be used continuously to maintain updated information or ad hoc to promote specific initiatives, campaigns, or events.

When to use:

Tourist Information Tools are applicable throughout various stages of tourism management, particularly when:

- Assessing and diagnosing existing tourist information systems.
- Designing or launching new experiences, products, or campaigns.
- Updating and validating the accuracy of information about tourism resources.
- Coordinating communication among multiple territories.

3. Step-by-step

1. Conduct an initial diagnosis of existing information systems, identifying materials, channels, and gaps.
2. Design a general information framework, defining organisation, structure, and levels of detail.
3. Build a shared database with updated and verified tourism content.
4. Validate usability and clarity through pilot testing.
5. Disseminate materials and ensure synchronised publication across all communication channels.
6. Monitor and update regularly to maintain reliability and coherence.

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Identification of existing communication channels and materials.
- Assessment of information and communication needs by territory.
- Development of a narrative and visual style guide to ensure consistency.
- Creation of a database including key tourism assets, resources, and experiences.
- Design of templates and materials (brochures, videos, signage, digital media).
- Establishment of a shared digital platform for management and content updates.

3.2. Implementation

- Review and validate existing information systems, identifying inconsistencies.
- Develop a shared communication framework with a common narrative and visual identity for POST territories.
- Produce communication materials and templates for various formats (brochures, maps, videos, signage, AI-based content).
- Disseminate materials across physical and digital points of contact, ensuring accessibility.
- Implement monitoring indicators and periodic updates to guarantee data accuracy and information quality.

3.3. Expected results

- A consistent and integrated information system across all POST territories.
- Increased visitor confidence and satisfaction through accurate, coherent, and updated information.
- Enhanced destination image and identity.
- Reduction of duplicated or outdated information.
- Strengthened sense of belonging and emotional connection between tourists and destinations.
- Improved efficiency and innovation in tourism communication through digitalisation and AI.

4. Inspiring example / Good Practice

An innovative example of AI-enhanced tourist information is found in projects such as Cervantes Revive en Alcázar de San Juan (Spain), where generative AI guides visitors through key cultural landmarks, combining storytelling and technology to enhance visitor engagement. Similarly, destinations like Canillas de Aceituno have integrated AI to revitalise rural tourism and provide real-time, interactive information to travellers. These experiences show how technology can bridge information gaps, personalise visitor interaction, and strengthen destination appeal.

Cervantes revive en Alcázar de San Juan gracias a la Inteligencia Artificial e Imascono - Go Aragón

Llegar a Canillas de Aceituno sin saber qué es Canillas de Aceituno: cómo la IA ha impulsado el turismo rural y los pueblos más desconocidos - Infobae

5. Potential risks/Errors /Solutions

- **Risk:** Outdated or inconsistent information across territories. **Solution:** Maintain a centralised, validated content repository with scheduled reviews.
- **Risk:** Information overload reducing message clarity. **Solution:** Prioritise and structure content based on relevance and visitor needs.
- **Risk:** Limited accessibility or overly technical language. **Solution:** Use inclusive, multilingual, and user-friendly communication; ensure universal access.
- **Risk:** Mismatch between provided information and actual visitor experience. **Solution:** Collect continuous feedback from tourists and local stakeholders to align information with reality.

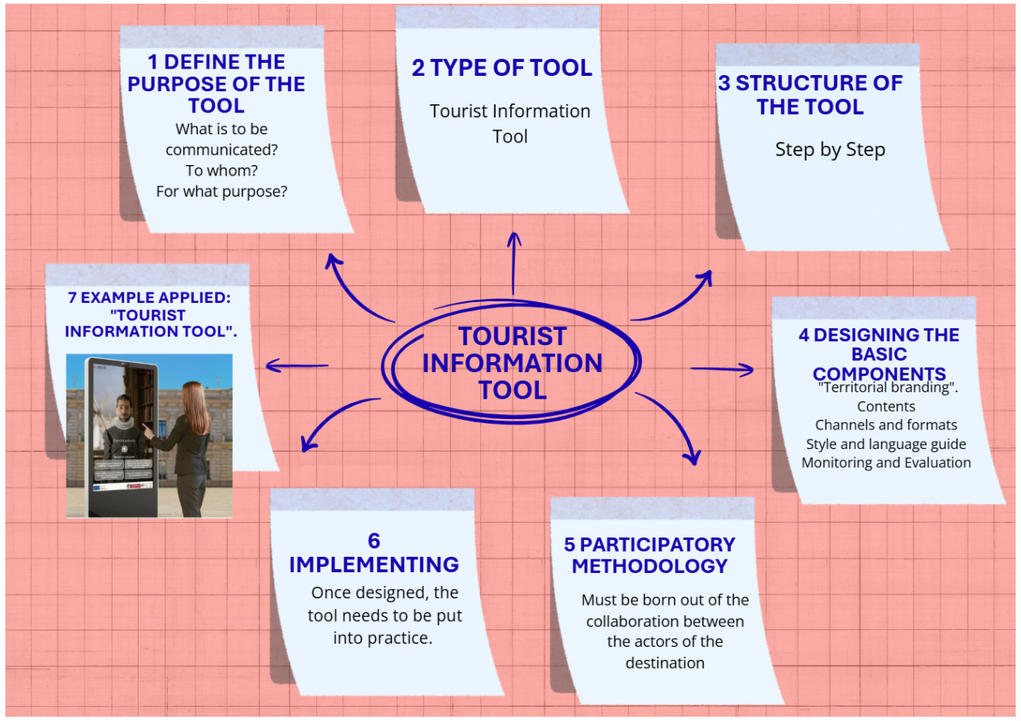
6. Connection to the Global Strategy

This tool directly supports the POST Strategy by ensuring coherent, transparent, and engaging communication across territories. It strengthens the visibility of polycentric tourism, promotes responsible visitor behaviour, and enhances the shared identity of the regions involved. By serving as the “visible face” of the project, it guarantees accurate, accessible, and participatory communication with tourists.

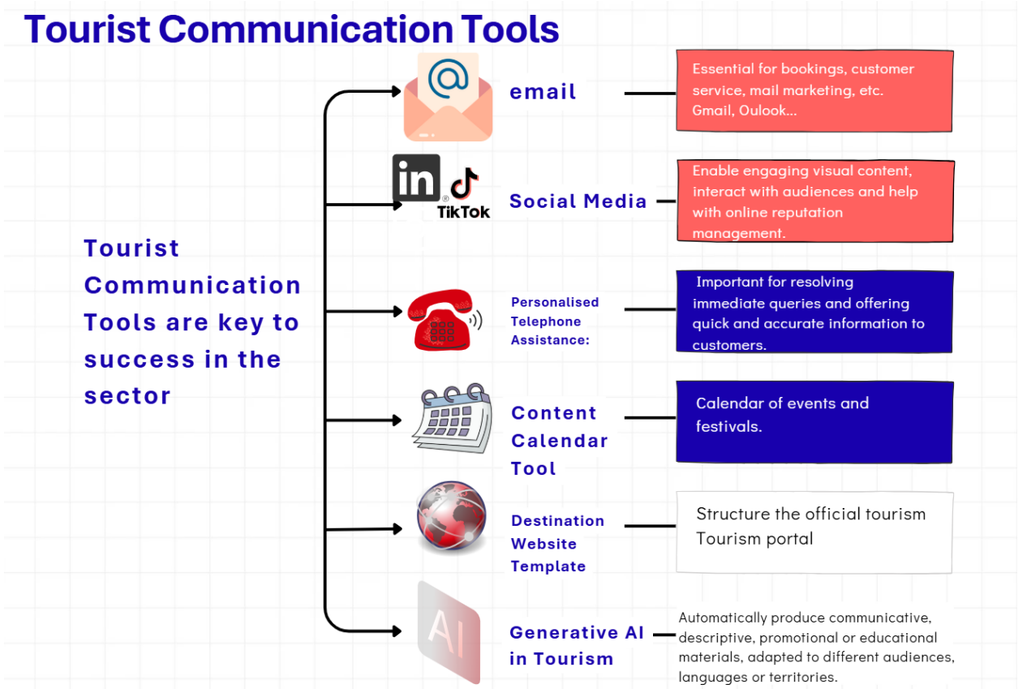
7. Responsible/Stakeholder

- **Lead:** Communication departments, provincial and local councils, and management entities responsible for coordination and validation.
- **Collaborators:** Public (tourist offices, regional administrations) and private sectors (business associations, media, local actors).
- **Facilitators:** Researchers, tourism consultants, marketing companies, and innovation partners.

PROCESS OF IMPLEMENTING A TOURIST INFORMATION TOOL



DIFFERENT TOURIST COMMUNICATION TOOLS



INDEX

Tool 10. Influencer Engagement Plan

1. Rationale

Description:

The Influencer Engagement Plan provides a shared methodological framework for managing collaborations with content creators, digital ambassadors, and online communities who can amplify the visibility of the Polycentric Tourism Strategy. It supports the creation of an authentic, credible, and sustainable online presence by connecting local experiences with a shared Atlantic identity through social media storytelling. Within the POST context, influencers are not only promoters - they act as connectors between territories, showing how diverse destinations can form a unified, responsible, and innovative tourism network.

Objective:

To equip POST partners with a structured process for identifying, engaging, and collaborating with influencers and digital creators at local, national, and transnational levels. Specific objectives include:

- Establishing a coherent methodology for influencer engagement that supports the visibility of partner destinations.
- Promoting POST's shared values - sustainability, cooperation, and innovation - through authentic, humanised storytelling.
- Fostering cross-territorial collaboration among influencers and communities across the Atlantic Area.
- Building a transnational and digital audience for polycentric tourism experiences.

Justification:

Traditional marketing campaigns often fail to reach younger, digitally active audiences. Influencer collaborations offer an opportunity to humanise destinations, showcase real local experiences, and strengthen emotional connections with audiences. However, such partnerships must remain transparent, ethical, and consistent with the project's sustainability and EU visibility standards. This tool ensures that influencer actions are aligned with POST's identity and communication goals, while promoting responsible and sustainable tourism narratives across all partner territories.

2. When to use

- During the planning phase of communication campaigns or event promotions.
- When launching new routes, products, or experiences under the POST brand.
- To reinforce cross-border digital campaigns between partner destinations.
- As part of the Digital Promotion Work Package within POST.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- POST brand and communication guidelines.
- List of potential influencers and micro-ambassadors (by theme or country).
- Social media analytics and audience data.
- Campaign goals, key messages, and hashtags.
- Ethical and sustainability communication standards (EU/Interreg).

3.2. Implementation (5 Steps):

1. **Identification:** Compile a list of influencers aligned with POST values and audience profiles (travel, culture, sustainability).
2. **Evaluation:** Assess engagement rates, authenticity, and previous collaborations.
3. **Collaboration Model:** Define cooperation formats (content creation, live events, exchanges, joint campaigns).
4. **Activation:** Launch campaigns with clear guidelines, shared assets, and unified hashtags.
5. **Monitoring:** Track performance using KPIs (reach, impressions, engagement rate, sentiment analysis).

3.3. Expected Results:

- Improved digital visibility of POST destinations and brand.
- A network of committed influencers promoting sustainable tourism.
- Enhanced engagement and reach on social media.
- Case studies of successful transnational collaborations.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Example: The Influencer Engagement Plan can connect influencers from different Atlantic territories to promote a joint campaign titled *"Atlantic Routes of Slow and Sustainable Travel."*

Each influencer would highlight a local experience - cycling in Galicia, cultural routes in Brittany, river tourism in Charente, or coastal heritage in Portugal - while using shared visual elements and the same campaign hashtag. This coordinated storytelling approach illustrates how local voices can build a transnational narrative that strengthens the POST brand and promotes sustainable travel behaviour.

(Note: This example is illustrative and aims to demonstrate how the tool could be applied within the POST methodology.)

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles/Errors/Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Misalignment between influencer and project values	Use a pre-selection checklist and ethical contract.
Low engagement or ROI	Combine micro- and mid-tier influencers for balanced reach and authenticity.
Language or cultural barriers	Use multilingual captions and local co-hosts.
Difficulties in performance tracking	Apply standard KPIs and analytics templates.
Lack of continuity	Build long-term partnerships rather than one-off collaborations.
Tourist overcrowding	Include guidelines to monitor and mitigate potential negative impacts.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Reinforces the Polycentric Tourism Communication Strategy through shared digital narratives and increased transnational visibility.
- Strengthens collaboration among partners and influencers under a unified Atlantic identity.
- Contributes to the following Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):
- SDGs: 8, 11 & 17

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Contributors:** Communication officers and tourism boards from partner territories.
- **Support:** External experts in influencer marketing, social media analytics, and EU communication compliance.

8. Others

Recommended tools and resources to support implementation:

- *Influencer Selection Grid (Excel)* – assessment of influencer relevance and engagement.
- *Campaign Brief Template (Word)* – outlining objectives, deliverables, and KPIs.
- *Ethical Guidelines Document (PDF)* – defining transparency, paid partnerships, and sustainability messaging.
- *Analytics Dashboard Template (Excel)* – monitoring influencer performance across regions.
- *Shared Media Bank* – central repository of images, logos, and video snippets for influencer use.



Polycentric Tourism Communication
Influencer Engagement Plan

Create a coordinated online presence by engaging influencers who connect local experiences to a shared Atlantic identity

PROCESS

1 Identification
Build a list aligned with POST values

2 Evaluation
Assess engagement, authenticity, and fit

3 Collaboration model
Define content formats & roles

4 Activation
Campaigns with shared assets & hashtags

5 Monitoring
Track KPIs (reach, impressions, sentiment)

BENEFITS

- **Stronger digital visibility for POST destinations**
- **Authentic storytelling from local voices**
- **Increased engagement & wider social media reach**
- **Cross-territorial digital cooperation network**

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Misaligned values** → pre-selection checklist + ethical contract
- **Low engagement** → mix micro & mid-tier influencers
- **Language/cultural gaps** → multilingual captions & local co-hosts
- **Tracking difficulties** → standard KPIs & templates
- **Lack of continuity** → long-term partnerships
- **Overcrowding** → sustainable promotion guidelines

Tool 11. Micro-Influencer/Ambassador Program Guidelines

ATLANTIC CITIES

1. Rationale

The Micro-Influencer/Ambassador Program Guidelines aim to create a network of local ambassadors and micro-influencers who promote sustainable tourism narratives within their own communities and across the Atlantic Area. While traditional influencer campaigns offer short-term visibility, this program builds authentic, long-term relationships with local voices - citizens, guides, creators, or small entrepreneurs - who embody the values of cooperation, sustainability, and innovation promoted by the POST project. It positions these ambassadors as storytellers of the territories, reinforcing the emotional and cultural connection between destinations and visitors.

Description:

A methodological framework for developing, coordinating, and sustaining a network of micro-influencers and ambassadors who actively contribute to the dissemination of the POST identity and messages.

The tool provides guidance on:

- Selection and onboarding of ambassadors;
- Capacity-building and storytelling training;
- Co-creation of content aligned with the Visual Identity Guidelines;
- Incentives and recognition mechanisms;
- Monitoring and evaluation of ambassador impact.

It can be used by DMOs, municipalities, or local tourism boards to structure community engagement in a coherent, low-cost, and participatory way.

Objective:

To establish a shared methodology for partners to:

- Build and manage local ambassador networks in each territory.
- Encourage peer-to-peer communication and authentic storytelling.
- Support citizen participation in promoting sustainable tourism.
- Strengthen the sense of belonging to the Polycentric Atlantic Tourism Network.

Justification:

Local residents and small creators are often the most credible voices for promoting their destinations. However, without coordination or guidance, their communication efforts remain fragmented.

This tool offers a replicable model that turns these spontaneous promoters into structured, trained, and connected ambassadors, fostering consistency in messaging and visual identity while preserving local authenticity.

It also supports inclusivity, as micro-influencers often represent diverse communities and younger audiences.

2. When to use

- During the digital communication phase of the project.
- When launching new tourism experiences or pilot actions.
- As a follow-up to the Influencer Engagement Plan, to ensure long-term continuity.
- For cross-regional events, cultural weeks, or exchange campaigns.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- Visual Identity and Content Adaptation guidelines.
- Database of local creators, guides, associations, and tourism professionals.
- Criteria for ambassador selection (values, audience relevance, engagement).
- Communication goals, tone, and hashtags.
- Ethical and visibility guidelines (Interreg / EU).

3.2. Implementation

1. **Identification:** select local ambassadors or micro-influencers aligned with POST values (e.g., sustainability, cooperation, creativity).
2. **Engagement:** invite them to join the POST network and provide onboarding materials.
3. **Capacity-building:** offer online training sessions or toolkits on storytelling, photography, and EU visibility rules.
4. **Activation:** launch local or transnational ambassador campaigns (e.g., “My Atlantic Story” posts).
5. **Monitoring & recognition:** measure impact (content reach, engagement, qualitative feedback) and reward active ambassadors through visibility or exchange opportunities.

3.3. Expected results

- Active community of micro-ambassadors promoting the POST brand across territories.
- Increased authenticity and credibility of digital communication.
- Enhanced sense of ownership among local actors and citizens.
- Improved visibility and long-term continuity beyond project duration.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

A POST Ambassador Network could be launched across pilot regions, engaging small creators - such as local photographers, tour guides, or artisans - to share their perspective on sustainable

tourism through photos, short videos, or personal stories. Each ambassador would post using shared hashtags (e.g., #AtlanticVoices #PolycentricTourism), while adapting messages to their local culture and language. Atlantic Cities could coordinate joint actions such as online challenges, photo exhibitions, or blog exchanges between ambassadors from different regions. This example demonstrates how the program can build a living community of authentic voices, connecting local pride with the shared Atlantic identity.

Note: This example is illustrative and aims to demonstrate how the tool could be applied within the POST methodology.

5. Potential Risks/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Uneven participation across territories	Use common activation calendar and shared incentives
Ambassadors not aligned with POST values	Establish a simple code of conduct and approval process
Lack of engagement continuity	Maintain periodic communication and recognition actions
Limited resources for coordination	Use volunteer or hybrid incentive models
Inconsistent visual identity	Provide standardised templates and creative kits

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Strengthens the Digital Promotion and Community Engagement pillars of the POST Communication Strategy.
- Builds a sustainable network of local actors reinforcing transnational cooperation.
- Contributes to SDGs 8, 11, and 17:

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Contributors:** Local communication officers, DMOs, community organisations.
- **Support:** Social media trainers, content creators, EU communication experts.

8. Others (Supporting Tools and Resources)

- **Ambassador Onboarding Kit (PDF):** values, messaging guidelines, visual templates.
- **Training Materials:** storytelling and social media basics for non-professionals.
- **Ambassador Database Template (Excel):** contact details, themes, engagement records.
- **Social Media Toolkit (Canva/Drive):** editable visuals for campaigns.
- **Recognition Framework:** example badges, certificates, or feature posts for active ambassadors.



Polycentric Tourism Communication
Micro-Influencer / Ambassador Program

Build a network of local ambassadors who share tourism stories and strengthen the Atlantic polycentric identity

PROCESS

1 **Identification**
Select ambassadors aligned with POST values

2 **Engagement**
Invite them & provide onboarding materials

3 **Capacity-building**
Training on storytelling & content creation

4 **Activation**
Run local or transnational campaigns

5 **Monitoring & recognition**
Evaluate impact & reward participation

BENEFITS

- **Community-driven digital promotion**
- **Authentic and credible storytelling**
- **Stronger local engagement & ownership**
- **Long-term continuity beyond project duration**

RISKS AND SOLUTIONS

- **Uneven participation →** activation calendar + incentives
- **Misaligned values →** code of conduct + approval process
- **Low continuity →** regular communication & recognition
- **Limited resources →** volunteer / hybrid incentive models
- **Visual inconsistency →** standard templates & creative kits

Tool 12. Visitor Experience Feedback

1. Rationale

Description:

The Visitor Experience Feedback Tool is an instrument designed to collect visitors' opinions, perceptions, and satisfaction levels regarding their experience in the destination and its communication actions. This tool supports the continuous evaluation of communication effectiveness - assessing how campaigns, channels, and messages are perceived - while providing evidence to adjust communication strategies accordingly.

Objective:

To collect and analyse visitor feedback to continuously improve destination communication strategies and actions.

Justification:

Effective communication depends on how audiences perceive and emotionally connect with the destination. Direct feedback from visitors provides authentic insights into their experience and the effectiveness of communication efforts. This evidence is key to refining messages, adjusting channels, and reinforcing engagement and trust between visitors and the destination.

2. When to use

- After communication campaigns, events, or tourism experiences.
- During ongoing visitor satisfaction monitoring processes.
- When assessing the impact of communication on destination perception.
- Before redefining communication strategies or plans.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- List of visitor touchpoints (online and onsite).
- Definition of satisfaction and perception indicators (e.g., message clarity, empathy, visual identity, emotional impact).
- Selection of feedback collection tools (digital surveys, QR codes, post-visit forms, social media polls).

3.2. Implementation

1. **Define the feedback purpose** → Clarify what is being evaluated (campaign, experience, communication channel, etc.).
2. **Design the questionnaire** → Short, visually engaging, and context-adapted (1–5 minutes).
3. **Select collection channels** → Online (websites, social media, e-mail) and offline (tourist offices, QR codes, events).
4. **Collect and consolidate data** → Aggregate responses and comments into a single database.
5. **Analyse results** → Identify satisfaction patterns, positive mentions, and improvement areas.
6. **Close the feedback loop** → Share results internally and adjust communication actions accordingly.

3.3. Expected results

- Clear understanding of visitor perceptions.
- Continuous improvement of communication strategies and messages.
- Enhanced visitor engagement and trust.
- Culture of active listening and adaptive communication.

4. Inspiring example / Good practice

After a digital campaign promoting sustainable tourism in Alto Minho, an online survey is launched via QR codes placed in key locations and social media posts. Results show that visitors appreciate the authenticity of the message but suggest more visual content featuring local communities. The communication team integrates these insights into the next campaign, focusing on storytelling and real-life imagery.

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

- **Low response rate** → Simplify the questionnaire and offer symbolic incentives (e.g., local giveaways).
- **Unrepresentative feedback** → Diversify collection points and timing (online/offline).
- **Dispersed data** → Centralize responses in a unified database for analysis.
- **Lack of practical application** → Ensure feedback results are integrated into future communication planning.
- **Negative perception of feedback** → Frame feedback as an opportunity for improvement, not as criticism.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

The *Visitor Experience Feedback Tool* strengthens the **communication monitoring dimension** of the POST Strategy by evaluating the impact of messages and campaigns on visitor perception. It contributes to more adaptive, empathetic, and evidence-based communication by transforming opinions into actionable data that inform future planning, marketing, and territorial storytelling.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

Local or regional communication teams (municipalities, DMOs), supported by observatories or academic institutions that can assist in data analysis and interpretation.

8. Others

This may include:

- Sample visitor survey templates (short, visual, and accessible).
- Key perception indicators (clarity, relevance, authenticity, emotional impact, intention to recommend).
- Digital tool suggestions (Google Forms, SurveyMonkey, Mentimeter, QR-based feedback systems).

VISITOR EXPERIENCE FEEDBACK TOOL

Collect visitor opinions and satisfaction data to support evaluation and continuous improvement of communication actions.

PROCESS

1 Define Objective

→ What communication action or experience do you want to evaluate?

2 Design the Questionnaire

→ Keep it short, visual, and engaging.

3 Select Collection Channels

→ Online (social media, email, website)
→ Offline (QR codes, visitor centers, events)

4 Collect & Analyse Feedback

→ Identify satisfaction patterns and key insights.

5 Adjust Communication

→ Use findings to improve future campaigns.

EXPECTED RESULTS

- Clear understanding of visitor perceptions
- More effective, authentic communication
- Continuous learning and adaptation

KEY ELEMENTS

- Feedback
- Analysis
- Action

INDEX

Tool 13. Campaign Analytics Dashboard

1. Rationale

Description:

The *Marketing Campaign Analytics Dashboard* provides a harmonised framework for evaluating the performance of tourism marketing campaigns across multiple territories. It uses open-source data (EU, national, regional and local) to assess reach, engagement, conversion, and impacts on visitor flows, sustainability and resident sentiment.

Objective:

To standardise campaign evaluation across destinations by using shared KPIs and data sources, enabling partners to compare results, measure effectiveness and align marketing actions with sustainability and regional development goals.

Justification:

In multi-destination strategies, campaign monitoring often varies significantly between territories, creating inconsistencies and limiting shared learning. This tool provides a unified matrix structure based on open data and comparable indicators, supporting transparency, coordinated planning and continuous improvement.

2. When to use

- During or immediately after joint or individual marketing campaigns.
- When comparing campaign performance across destinations or partner regions.
- For mid-term or final evaluations of promotional actions.
- To inform future campaign design, funding proposals and monitoring reports.

3. Step-by-step

3.1 Preparation / Inputs

- List of participating destinations and campaign scope.
- Defined campaign objectives and target audiences.
- Access to open-source datasets (EU Tourism Dashboard, national and regional statistics).
- Digital analytics (Google Analytics, Meta Insights, booking platforms).
- Local-level data: resident sentiment, surveys, municipal reports.
- Baseline metrics from previous campaigns (if available).

3.2 Implementation

1. **Define Campaign Scope** → territories, audiences, themes, timeline.
2. **Select Indicators** → prioritise 5–10 KPIs from core dimensions (reach, engagement, conversion, economic, sustainability, cultural/social).
3. **Collect Data** → obtain harmonised indicators from open data portals, analytics dashboards and partner reports.

4. **Populate the Evaluation Matrix** → organise indicators by destination/campaign period, including sources and calculation notes.
5. **Review & Interpret** → jointly analyse trends, gaps and standout strategies.
6. **Report & Refine** → produce visual summaries and recommendations; integrate results into future planning.

3.3 Expected results

- Comparable and structured evaluation across territories.
- Identification of high-performance strategies and underperforming areas.
- Evidence base to refine communication plans and allocate resources.
- Stronger coordination and shared learning in polycentric tourism promotion.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Visit Alentejo Marketing Matrix (Portugal)

A regional DMO used open data, social media analytics and GIS mapping to compare campaign results across municipalities. The matrix revealed differences in engagement and off-season performance, enabling better segmentation and targeted messaging. Outcomes included increased off-season travel and improved coordination between local DMOs.

Illustrative indicators included:

- Campaign period (Q2–Q3 2024)
- Marketing spend
- Visitor arrivals (pre/post)
- % change in arrivals
- Website traffic increase
- Social media engagement
- Conversion rate
- Resident sentiment
- Environmental impact indicators

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Inconsistent data formats	Develop shared templates and variable definitions
Limited access to analytics	Use open APIs; partner with academic/tech institutions
Attribution challenges	Use tracking links, UTM codes and visitor surveys
Overemphasis on digital KPIs	Include qualitative insights and local feedback
Lack of stakeholder buy-in	Involve partners early; highlight shared benefits
Indicator overload	Limit to 5–10 core KPIs aligned with objectives

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Supports the EU Green Deal, Smart Specialisation and the EU Transition Pathway for Tourism.
- Contributes to SDGs 8, 11, 12 and 13.
- Strengthens POST's objective of communicational permeability by providing evidence-based coordination and balanced visitor promotion.
- Encourages shared learning and joint planning across territories through comparable data.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Lead:** DMOs, municipalities or ATU (coordination).
- **Support:** Regional observatories, universities, analytics providers, media monitoring services.
- **Validation:** Stakeholders within the polycentric tourism ecosystem, including public and private partners.

8. Others

Key data sources: EU Tourism Dashboard, national tourism statistics, regional open data portals, Google Analytics, Meta Insights, booking platforms, local surveys.

Format: Evaluation Matrix (Excel), visual dashboards (Power BI/Tableau/GIS), printable summary report.

Review cycle: Annual or per campaign.

Annexes: Extended KPI definitions + sample full matrix.

Example of a Marketing Campaign Analytics Dashboard: This static matrix compares the success of a tourism marketing campaign across three regions using key performance indicators. It includes data on visitor arrivals, website traffic, social media engagement, resident sentiment, and environmental impact.

INDICATOR	ALENTEJO	SOURCE
Campaign Period	Q2–Q3 2024	Internal records
Marketing Spend (€)	€150,000	Local DMO budgets
Visitor Arrivals (Pre-Campaign)	1,100,000	National stats
Visitor Arrivals (Post-Campaign)	1,200,000	National stats
% Change in Arrivals	+9.1%	Calculated
Website Traffic Increase (%)	+22%	Google Analytics
Social Media Engagement (%)	+25%	Meta Insights
Conversion Rate (Bookings)	2.8%	Booking platforms
Average Spend per Visitor (€)	€95	EU Tourism Dashboard
Resident Sentiment (Post-Campaign)	80% positive	Local surveys
Environmental Impact (Change)	+2% waste	Local open data
Media Coverage (Mentions)	120	Media monitoring

Campaign Analytics Dashboard

Supports evidence-based decision-making, cross-regional learning, and strategic refinement of tourism promotions

1 Description

- Provides a matrix format for analysing tourism marketing campaigns across multiple destinations.
- Uses open-source data to assess reach, engagement, conversion, and impact on visitor flows and sustainability outcomes.

2 Objective

- Measure campaign performance across multiple destinations
- Identify successful strategies and underperforming areas
- Support collaborative marketing and shared learning
- Align campaign outcomes with sustainability and regional development goals

3 When to Use

- Strategic planning across multiple destinations.
- Assessing tourism impacts.
- Visualising visitor flows.
- Sustainability reporting & benchmarking.

4 Implementation Steps

1. Define Campaign Scope
2. Collect Data
3. Populate Matrix:
4. Analyse Patterns:
5. Share Insights
6. Refine Strategy:

5 Expected Outcomes

- Clear comparison of campaign performance across regions
- Identification of high-impact strategies and weak points
- Evidence base for future campaign design and funding applications
- Enhanced coordination in polycentric tourism promotion

Tool 14. Template Campaign Evaluation Indicators

1. Rationale

Description:

The Campaign Evaluation Indicators Tool provides a structured approach for evaluating the effectiveness of joint marketing campaigns across multiple destinations. It supports evidence-based analysis using open-source tourism data (EU, national, regional) and shared indicators to assess performance, impact and strategic alignment.

Objective:

To harmonise campaign evaluation across territories by providing common indicators and dimensions that allow partners to compare results, measure effectiveness, and align communication strategies with shared sustainability goals.

Justification:

In multi-destination strategies, campaign monitoring often lacks consistency and comparable indicators. This tool fills that gap by offering a standardised evaluation framework based on open data sources and agreed KPIs, enabling continuous learning, transparency, and strategic improvement across the network.

2. When to use

- During or immediately after implementation of joint marketing campaigns.
- When comparing campaign performance across destinations/partners.
- For mid-term and end-of-campaign evaluations.
- To inform reporting, funding requests, and future campaign design.

3. Step-by-step

3.1. Preparation / Inputs

- List of participating destinations and campaign scope.
- Defined campaign objectives and expected outcomes.
- Access to harmonised open-source datasets (EU Tourism Dashboard, national and regional statistics).
- Baseline metrics from previous campaigns (if available).
- Digital analytics access (Google Analytics, Meta Insights, booking platforms).
- Local surveys for resident sentiment and stakeholder feedback.

3.2. Implementation

1. **Define Campaign Scope:** identify participating destinations, target audiences and shared goals.

INDEX

2. **Select Indicators:** choose core KPIs across dimensions (see Section 4). Prioritise a limited set (5–10) aligned with objectives.
3. **Collect Data:** gather harmonised data from open sources, analytics, partner reports and local surveys.
4. **Populate Evaluation Matrix:** organise indicators by destination and campaign period; note sources and methodologies.
5. **Review & Interpret:** engage stakeholders in collaborative analysis to contextualise results and identify learnings.
6. **Report & Refine:** produce visual summaries and recommendations; use insights to adapt future campaigns.

3.3. Expected Results

- Comparable evaluations across territories.
- Evidence base for communication decisions and resource allocation.
- Improved coordination and shared learning.
- Clear inputs for strategy refinement and funding applications.

4. Inspiring Example/Good Practice

Alentejo Sustainable Tourism Observatory

Used shared KPIs and GIS tools to evaluate regional campaigns, enabling coordinated planning and targeted storytelling across municipalities. Results included better off-season targeting and improved alignment among local DMOs.

Example evaluation matrix (illustrative): Campaign Period Q2–Q3 2024 - Marketing Spend, Visitor Arrivals (Pre/Post), Website Traffic Increase, Social Media Engagement, Conversion Rate, Resident Sentiment, Environmental Impact, Media Mentions (see full matrix in annex).

5. Potential Risks/Errors/Obstacles and Solutions

RISK/OBSTACLE	PROPOSED SOLUTION
Data inconsistency across partners	Develop shared protocols, templates and variable definitions.
Limited analytics access or capacity	Partner with academic/tech institutions; use basic free tools where needed.
Low stakeholder buy-in	Use participatory evaluation, demonstrate shared benefits and quick wins.
Indicator overload	Focus on core metrics aligned with campaign objectives (5–10 KPIs).
Infrequent updates	Establish annual/biannual review cycles and responsibilities.

6. Connection to the Global Strategy

- Supports EU Green Deal, Smart Specialisation and SDG alignment.
- Contributes to SDGs: **8 (Decent Work & Economic Growth), 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities), 12 (Responsible Consumption & Production), 13 (Climate Action)**.
- Reinforces POST's communicational permeability objective by providing evidence for co-ordinated, sustainable promotion and balanced visitor flows.

7. Responsible/Implementing Entity

- **Lead:** Local or regional tourism management bodies (DMOs, municipalities) or ATU as coordinating partner.
- **Support:** Regional observatories, academic partners, media monitoring services, analytics providers.
- **Validation:** Polycentric tourism ecosystem stakeholders (public & private sector partners).

8. Others

Key data sources: EU Tourism Dashboard; national tourism statistics; regional open data portals; Google Analytics; Meta Insights; booking platforms; local surveys.

Format: Evaluation Matrix (Excel) + visual dashboards (Power BI/Tableau/GIS) + printable summary report.

Review cycle: Annual or per campaign, depending on campaign frequency.

Annexes: Expanded KPI definitions (Digital Reach, Economic & Conversion KPIs, Community & Strategic Indicators) and a sample evaluation matrix.

Campaign Evaluation Indicators

Supports Polycentric Tourism Marketing Campaigns Using Open-Source Data

1 **Description**
- Provides a structured approach for evaluating the effectiveness of joint marketing campaigns across multiple destinations.

2 **Objective**
- The support evidence-based analysis using open-source tourism data (EU, national, regional) and shared indicators to assess performance, impact, & strategic alignment.

3 **When to Use**
- Strategic planning across multiple destinations.
- Assessing tourism impacts.
- Visualising visitor flows.
- Sustainability reporting & benchmarking.
- Supporting collaboration across municipalities or DMOs.

4 **Implementation Steps**
- Define campaign scope
- Indicator selection
- Data collection
- Populate matrix
- Review & interpret
- Report & share
- Adjust strategies

5 **Expected Outcomes**
- Visitor flow maps.
- Territorial linkage opportunities.
- Evidence for joint decision-making.

INDEX

REFERENCES 5

REFERENCES 5

Austrade. (n.d.). *Sustainable tourism toolkit*. Australian Government. **https://www.austrade.gov.au/en/news-and-analysis/publications-and-reports/sustainable-tourism-toolkit**

Community4Tourism. (2023). *Tourism climate action plans: A guide for regional authorities and destination management organisations (DMOs)*. Interreg Euro-MED Programme. **https://sustainable-tourism.interreg-euro-med.eu/wp-content/uploads/sites/6/c4t/blueprint_tourism_climate_action_plans.pdf**

ETC – European Travel Commission. (2021). *Encouraging sustainable tourism practices*. **https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2021/09/ETC_SUSTAINABLE_TOURISM_HANDBOOK_vs6_FINAL.pdf**

ETC – European Travel Commission. (2021). *Marketing sustainable tourism: How marketing and communications can support your destination sustainability strategy*. **https://etc-corporate.org/uploads/2021/02/Tool-14-Knowledge-Booster-2-Marketing-Sustainability.pdf**

European Commission. (2024). *Guidelines on organising sustainable meetings and events at the European Commission*. **https://green-forum.ec.europa.eu/news/guidelines-sustainable-meetings-and-events-2024-07-15_en**

European Union. (n.d.). *Circular economy in travel and tourism*. **https://circulareconomy.europa.eu/platform/sites/default/files/circular-economy-in-travel-and-tourism.pdf**

European Commission. (n.d.). *EU communication toolkit: Sustainable EU tourism*. **https://transport.ec.europa.eu/tourism/communication-toolkit_en**

Ladeiras, A., Pardo-López, M. C., et al. (2026). *The strategy of a new tourism model: Polycentric sustainable tourism* (Policy report). Eixo Atlántico do Noroeste Peninsular (Interreg Atlantic Area). **https://www.eixoatlantico.com/en/listado-publicaciones/6077-the-strategy-of-a-new-tourism-model-polycentric-sustainable-tourism**

OECD. (2025). *Strengthening the evidence base for a sustainable tourism future in Malta: A toolkit to operationalise a tailored set of sustainability indicators*. OECD Publishing. **https://www.oecd.org/content/dam/oecd/en/publications/reports/2025/01/strengthening-the-evidence-base-for-a-sustainable-tourism-future-in-malta_11bec53c/aa270ff4-en.pdf**

One Planet Network. (2024). *Consumer information tools and climate change*. **https://www.oneplanetnetwork.org/sites/default/files/2024-01/Consumer%20information%20tools%20and%20climate%20change%20-%202024.pdf**

Pardo-López, M. C., & Ladeiras, A. L. (2022). *Turismo de autor*. Eixo Atlántico do Noroeste Peninsular. Printed version: 978-989-9060-19-7 Digital version: 978-989-9060-20-3. **https://www.eixoatlantico.com/images/documentos/turismo/turismo-de-autor.pdf**

Smart Tourism Destinations. (2023). *Mastering data: Toolkit for tourism destinations* (Version 3.1). **https://smarttourismdestinations.eu/wp-content/uploads/2023/03/Smart-Tourism-Destinations_Toolkit_v.3.1-EN.pdf**

SWITCH-Asia Programme. (n.d.). *Sustainable marketing and communications toolbox for tourism marketing organisations*. **https://www.switch-asia.eu/site/assets/files/4297/6_2f__sustainable_marketing_communications_toolbox_for_national_tourism_boards_en.pdf**

UNEP. (2005). *Communicating sustainability: How to produce effective public campaigns*. United Nations Environment Programme. **https://wedocs.unep.org/bitstream/handle/20.500.11822/8317/-Communicating%20sustainability_%20how%20to%20produce%20effective%20public%20campaigns-2005Communicatingsustainibility.pdf**

UNESCO. (n.d.). *Guide 5: Communicating with visitors and stakeholders*. UNESCO World Heritage Sustainable Tourism Toolkit. **https://whc.unesco.org/en/sustainabletourismtoolkit/guide5/**

UNWTO. (2020). *Toolkit of indicators for projects (TIPs): A guide to sustainable tourism measurement*. World Tourism Organization. **https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/9789284424344**

Visit Gippsland. (2024). *Destination Gippsland marketing toolkit*. **https://assets.visitgippsland.com.au/documents/DG_MarketingToolkit_2024-compressed.pdf**

World Bank. (2019). *Tourism diagnostic toolkit*. World Bank Group. **https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/240451562621614728/pdf/Tourism-Diagnostic-Toolkit.pdf**

ATTACHMENTS 6

ATTACHMENTS 6

ANNEX 1 - TOURISM READINESS EVALUATION - CHECKLIST

DIMENSION	CATEGORY	INDICATOR TO EVALUATE	SCORE (1-5)	COMMENT	EVIDENCE /LINK
1. Tourism Infrastructure & Services	Transport & Mobility	Functionality, frequency, and quality of public transport and road infrastructure			
	Accommodation & Dining	Availability, diversity, and quality of lodging and dining options			
	Accessibility for All	Adaptation of infrastructure and services for people with reduced mobility			
	Safety & Health	Availability and reliability of safety, emergency, and medical services			
	Tourist Information	Availability and clarity of signage and information centers for visitors			
Average (Dimension 1)					
2. Digitalization	Online Presence	Existence of an official tourism website with updated, multilingual content			
	Connectivity	Availability and quality of Wi-Fi and mobile coverage in main tourist areas			
	Digital Tools	Use of digital systems for booking, payment, and visitor information			
	Digital Communication	Active use of social media and online channels to promote the destination			
	Smart Services	Availability of smart tourism applications (e.g., e-guides, digital maps)			
Average (Dimension 2)					

INDEX

DIMENSION	CATEGORY	INDICATOR TO EVALUATE	SCORE (1-5)	COMMENT	EVIDENCE /LINK
3. Sustainability & Heritage	Environmental Management	Effective waste management, energy efficiency, and eco-certification practices			
	Heritage & Culture	Conservation and promotion of cultural and natural heritage assets			
	Economic Impact	Monitoring of tourism's contribution to local jobs, income, and equitable benefits			
	Heritage Preservation	Conservation of cultural and natural assets			
	Local Awareness	Community engagement in sustainable tourism			
Average (Dimension 3)					
4. Governance & Tourism Management	Strategic Planning	Existence of a tourism strategy			
	Stakeholder Participation	Evidence of regular stakeholder consultation, meetings etc. in developing the plan			
	Destination Management Responsability	A financial plan and budget showing current and future funding sources.			
	Data Monitoring	Availability and use of performance indicators for evidence-based decision-making			
	Visitor feedback	Existence of systems for collecting, analyzing, and responding to visitor feedback			
Average (Dimension 4)					


9 789899 141513


9 789899 141513