

# Sustainable Urban Tourism

Involving Local Agents and Partnerships for New Forms of Governance  
(SUT-GOVERNANCE)



## EU 'SUT-GOVERNANCE' PROJECT Final Report

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## Highlights

The Final Technical Report provides information about the overall scientific achievements and deliverables of the European Union's 'SUT-Governance' Project. **PART 1** is an executive summary of the overall achievements including also the strategic aspects, e.g. contribution to EU policy trusts. This abstract, covering the whole duration of the project, serves to inform all interested parties about the outcomes of the project and can be published by the Commission, i.e. on CORDIS. **PART 2** of the report provides more detailed information on the final scientific achievements including also dissemination and exploitation of results, and conclusions including socio-economic relevance, strategic aspects and policy implications. This publishable Final Report is to be used by the coordinator and by the whole consortium, as well as by the Commission services, as a tool to judge the overall success of the project.

The views expressed in this report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the European Commission.

## Part 1: Executive Summary

Contract n°	EVK4-CT-1999-0001	Reporting period:	01/03/00 – 30/06/03
Title	<b>Sustainable Urban Tourism: Involving Local Agents and Partnerships for New Forms of Governance (SUT-GOVERNANCE)</b>		
<b>PROJECT OBJECTIVES</b>			
<p>The principal aim of the European R&amp;D project 'Sustainable Urban Tourism: Involving local Agents and Partnerships for New Forms of Governance' (SUT-Governance) is to develop, validate, and deploy a general framework for urban sustainable tourism partnerships that is applicable to a variety of urban municipal contexts. The broader goal of the project is to elaborate and promote innovative forms and instruments of local governance to improve urban tourism development involving the principles of Sustainability and Participatory Decision-making.</p> <p>The project's national and case study research focuses in Germany, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria. Within these countries, case study work centred around selected tourism cities: Heidelberg (Germany), Graz (Austria), Thessaloniki (Greece), and Veliko Turnovo (Bulgaria) where 'Best Practice' multi-stakeholder partnerships are examined to identify factors and agents determining the success of joint collaborative actions aiming sustainable urban tourism.</p> <p>This three-year initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe GmbH (Ge) (Coordinator), The University of Economics and Business Administration and Regional Consulting Ziviltechniker, GmbH in Vienna (Au), The Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Gr), and The Veliko Turnovo University in Bulgaria. The success of the project, however, has depended on the close cooperation between the researchers, city officials, tourism stakeholders, and community representatives from the participating countries, cities and the partnership initiatives.</p> <p>This international research study is part of the Key Action 4 'City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage' of the 'Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development' Program within the 'Fifth Framework Program' of the European Union. The project commenced March 1, 2000 and concluded in August 2003.</p>			
<b>SCIENTIFIC RESULTS</b>			
<b>Tangible outputs:</b>			
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Framework report: influences on decision-making (Enhanced research and policy approach of sustainable urban tourism)</li> <li>2. Country context assessment report (New systematic knowledge of policy and practice in SUT on different levels and actor institutions in the study countries)</li> <li>3. Partnership cases: cross-case analysis and indicators of success (Innovative management and development tool for SUT)</li> <li>4. 'Best practice' report (Systematic knowledge of factors and agents of partnership success)</li> <li>5. Unified framework model (Innovative systematic model for catalysing and sustaining effective urban partnerships for sustainable tourism)</li> <li>6. Benchmarking protocol and method (Key parameters of establishment, management, and monitoring the success of SUT partnerships)</li> <li>7. Final project conference (Broad technology transfer of project results through a large number of representatives of local, national, and European stakeholders of tourism and urban development)</li> <li>8. Final project report (Dissemination of hard copies of project report to stakeholders with policy and development methodology and benchmarking technique (basic steps of success) divided into specific steps with key indicators of starting and implementing successful multi-stakeholder partnerships for SUT).</li> </ol>			
<b>Study outcomes:</b>			
<p>The European dimensions of the project are evident with respect to the five fold European concerns for <b>Sustainability, Competitiveness, Governance, Institutional Innovation and Enlargement</b>. Four project deliverables can have a direct influence on future policies: (1) The Set of European 'Best Practice' Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism for others to learn and improve practice (2) The Unified Framework Model for Effective SUT Partnerships for improving tourism management and promoting local governance (3) The SUT Partnership Benchmarking</p>			

Method and Tool for assessing practice, measuring success and improving performance of existing or planned collaborative initiatives in tourism and (4) The endorsed European Platform and Forum for enforcing further governance for sustainable urban tourism in our cities.

A set of systematic concepts, methodological approaches and policy recommendations can also be used by tourism decision-makers and stakeholders:

**Sustainable urban tourism (SUT)** is a holistic, equitable, and future-oriented development strategy, part of the wider Urban Sustainable Development Agenda.

**Operationalisation of SUT requires** recognition of two fundamental principles imbedded in the sustainability-induced 'integrated development' paradigm: (i) Sustainable tourism implies sustainable ends (outcomes and impacts of tourism products and services) and (ii) Sustainable tourism involves effective delivery means (strategic policymaking and implementation).

**Policy for sustainable urban tourism demands** working approaches, i.e. SUT must be viewed as a consistent and continuous development strategy ensuring the balance of the present benefits of tourism with the future opportunities of the host community. Therefore, SUT must be taken as a (i) policy option with community-centred objectives and (ii) process of governing which has to be sustained in the life of the community. As such, SUT must (i) affect urban policy and development, considering both, industry and community long-term progress and (ii) account for both tourism product and its sustainability implications (direct and indirect).

**Implementation of SUT calls for a multi-stakeholder approach** to deal with the multifunctional nature of policies and actions, build consensus and share the responsibilities, risks and benefits from urban tourism in context of Urban Governance (taken as relationships and collaborative actions between urban actors to plan and manage the city affairs aiming fostering democracy and community prosperity and involving government, private sector, and civil society).

**Effective facilitation of multi-actor collaboration in SUT requires public-private partnerships.** The latter can provide for, among others, enhanced tourism resources and services responsive to human needs; broad based sustainability gains; utilisation of community and business links and capacities; increased effectiveness and efficiency of local organisations; reduced conflicts, boosted trust and actor confidence; improved public policy and greater policy legitimacy; collective responsibility for planning, decision-making, problem solving, and project implementation and evaluation; community dialogue; responsible, engaged and involved locals and tourists; and combating local inequalities and social inclusion. Therefore, partnerships must become a key principle of quality management of public services in city tourism towards urban sustainability and more local democracy.

**Success of SUT partnerships depends** on the efficacy of the (i) partnership process (ii) tourism activity and its implementation and (iii) activity resolutions for a long term and far reaching community sustainability

**Both, 'development' and 'marketing' tourism partnerships** can promote sustainable community development, one, by increasing and effectively managing the use and increase of the local tourism 'stock', and two, by sustaining and enhancing the partnership process and culture in the locality.

**Implementation opportunities for SUT partnerships** are multiple and can improve the urban built, natural environment, social fabric, human behaviour, and the overall local capacities.

Benchmarking SUT partnerships is key to improving collaborative practices and must become a consistent part of tourism quality management in the cities.

## **SOCIO-ECONOMIC RELEVANCE AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The project's work will contribute to an enhanced understanding of sustainable urban tourism and its practical applications and create knowledge that can help foster improvements in urban governance and sustainability. It will assist a number of important strategic areas of concerns of the European cities and the Community such as Promoting European-wide Sustainable Development, Endorsing Governance, Achieving a Balanced Spatial Development, and Developing Citizens' Networks and Participation.

## **KEY WORDS**

Partnerships, sustainable urban tourism, governance, participatory decision-making.

## Part 2: Detailed Final Report

### 2.1. Project Objectives and Strategic Aspects

#### PARTNERSHIPS AND EFFECTIVE GOVERNANCE OF SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM

Europe's cities and towns contain a rich cultural heritage. Yet, maintaining this heritage presents many challenges, including dealing with the adverse environmental and social impacts of mass tourism. Demands from urban tourism alike are high and growing, hence the pressures and problems associated with the management of the sector have to be systematically tackled by all parties concerned. In their quest to further foster democracy and community prosperity, local authorities must seek tighter relations with a wide range of actors so the necessary political and operational consensus can be achieved to tackle problems successfully in benefit of all residents. Developing and operating public-private cooperations between the concerned parties is thus fundamental to effective urban governance of sustainable tourism. Achieving this involves advancing knowledge and practice about the types of partnerships that can be formed to promote urban sustainable tourism; the roles of government and other stakeholders; how local governments can apply such partnerships to long-term local tourism management and development; and the critical issues and challenges to local governments seeking to create such partnerships.

#### WHAT IS THE 'SUT-GOVERNANCE' PROJECT?

The SUT-GOVERNANCE project presents an effort to work with public-private partnerships and urban governments in Europe to develop, validate, and deploy a general framework for sustainable urban tourism (SUT) partnerships that is applicable to a variety of urban municipal and development contexts. The overall goal of the project is to elaborate and promote innovative forms and instruments of local governance to improve urban tourism development involving the principles of sustainability and participatory decision-making.

Within the overall project goal, the project employs the following specific objectives:

- Identify framework conditions, agents and factors influencing participatory decision-making for sustainable tourism
- Identify, elaborate, and validate a set of 'Best Practice' Partnerships for SUT
- Develop a unified framework model of effective partnerships for SUT
- Build & implement a benchmarking tool for multiple localities to assess performance in developing participatory SUT
- Disseminate the methods, results, and recommendations of the project to participating localities and partnerships and publicly to the wider set of stakeholders and interested parties.

#### GEOGRAPHICAL FOCUS

The project's national and case study research is focused in Germany, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria. Within these countries, case study efforts focus on selected cities: Heidelberg (DE), Graz (A), Thessaloniki (Gr), and Veliko Turnovo (BG) where 'Best Practice' multi-stakeholder partnerships are examined to identify factors and agents determining the success of joint collaborative actions aiming sustainable urban tourism. Nomination is based on four main criteria:

- Tourism
- Partnership
- Sustainability
- Impact

#### WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM SUT-GOVERNANCE?

This project is designed to advance knowledge, tools, and practices to assist decision-makers, governments, and other stakeholders in urban tourism development, including the private sector and non-governmental groups, to implement more sustainable tourist practices. Key end-user groups include:

- European and national decision-makers
- Local and urban administrations
- Tourism and urban developers
- Research and development agencies
- NGOs, community and citizens groups
- 'Best practice', urban and professional networks and databases

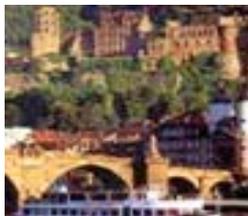
### SUT-GOVERNANCE PROJECT PARTNERS

This three-year initiative is a collaborative effort involving the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe GmbH (Germany) (Coordinator), The University of Economics and Business Administration and Regional Consulting Ziviltechniker, GmbH in Vienna (Austria), the Aristotle University of Thessaloniki (Greece), and the Veliko Turnovo University in Bulgaria. It is part of the Key Action 4 "City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage" of the "Energy, Environment and Sustainable Development" Program within the "Fifth Framework Program" of the European Union. The project commenced March 1, 2000 and was concluded in June 2003.

### PARTICIPATING CITIES

The success of the SUT-GOVERNANCE Project has depended on close cooperation between the researchers, city officials, tourism stakeholders, and community representatives from the participating countries, cities and partnership initiatives aiming sustainable urban tourism.

#### ■ 'Best Practice' Cases



Heidelberg (Ge)



Graz (Au)



Thessaloniki (Gr)



Veliko Turnovo (Bg)

- Case study research is preceded by twelve pilot partnership cases from eleven cities and regions in the study countries:
  - Berlin Köpenick-Treptow, Trier, Lübeck (Germany)
  - Vienna, Vorarlberg (Austria)
  - Corfu, Crete, Rhodes (Greece)
  - Burgas, Veliko Turnovo, Blagoevgrad (Bulgaria)

The cases demonstrate the practical ways in which communities, governments and the private sector are working together to improve tourism practices towards a better urban governance and long-term community prosperity. Other cities and communities in Europe and around the globe can learn from these successful solutions for sustainable tourism development of the urbanising world. This database and the analytical summary reports can be used for:

- Providing analytical and policy framework
- Assessing current trends
- Benchmarking practices
- Enhancing performance
- Capacity building
- Networking
- Technical cooperation

## 2.2. Socio-Economic Relevance

### 2.2.1. Strategic aspects

Tourism figures among the industries with major growth in Europe contributing with a 6 percent of GNP and generating 5 percent of all jobs in the European Union. Urban tourism alone represents 30 percent of the journeys and 20 of the overnight stays, ranking respectively second and third among all tourist destinations. Some twenty five per cent of the top forty-five tourist attractions in Europe, each one attracting more than 750 000 visitors annually, are sites, museums and historic building in cities. Another large number of European towns and urban areas is seen as potential tourist destinations. Steadily increasing investments in urban regeneration, heritage conservation and improving the quality of urban life to adapt the city to the needs of visitors of attractive facilities, comfortable transport, diverse events, and capitalisation of historical sites, among other activities, create new prospects for the industry and the urban communities. These developments, however, give birth to complex decision-making problems for the key stakeholders – city officials, planners and economic leaders, industry and the public. Involving sustainability considerations and long-term community advancement goals poses even greater challenges to urban policy makers and tourism developers. On the other hand, the growth of tourism activities in urban areas presents serious challenges to environmental protection and sustained community development, if managed inadequately.

In this context, contributions of this project to the socio-economic objectives of the Community occur under several dimensions of tourism and urban development, at both policy-making and the political levels. Most importantly it can promote social development in urban tourist destinations along with enhancement of the natural environment.

It is recognised that urban tourism can introduce significant social and cultural change in host destinations. In many ways, tourism is an important "change agent" in society, whether for better or worse. Tourism has received special attention in this regard largely because of the high visibility of tourists and their economic, social and cultural interactions with host communities. Tourism can promote social development through its impact on employment creation, income redistribution and poverty alleviation. Additionally, the improvements in physical and social infrastructure that usually accompany tourism development often spill over into the rest of the economy, leading to more widespread social improvements, for example, in health and social welfare. At the same time, tourism development can also promote negative social and cultural change as a result of economic development or a social demonstration effect when local residents imitate what foreign visitors do, wear and eat. For example, shift working can disrupt family life and religious observance. Low-wage or short-term jobs may also fail to support the desired quality of life for workers in tourism communities. Other negative social costs such as drug abuse, child labour and prostitution not only impact upon the local population but also may damage the image of the destination itself (SUT-Governance project proposal, EU 5FP, EESD 1999).

The European Community acknowledges tourism as one of the key sectors of the economy that could make a positive contribution to achieving sustainable development<sup>1</sup>. There is no disputing that the industry has a substantial and growing environmental impact. However, it is an industry that has the potential to manage its growth and resource utilisation patterns. In Europe, there has been greater awareness in recent years of the need for good practice in the tourism industry. Yet, to extend this trend, changes in tourism need to be linked with parallel developments in urban governance and the spread of information and experience related to best practices. The project contributes to this, both through advancement of knowledge, the careful validation of best practices, and the implementation of a benchmarking tool with customised feedback in large number of European cities.

Tourism is also important from an economic growth perspective. Unemployment is a principle social and economic challenge facing many EU Member States and the Eastern European accession countries. Tourism can address this economic and social challenge by creating jobs and boosting economic growth. Tourism is composed of many different products and services, which are woven into local, national, and transitional economies: its scale and scope and parti-

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<sup>1</sup> European Union 1999. *Travel and Tourism: Creating Jobs*.

cularly its flow-through effects are often underestimated by traditional economic development approaches. Tourism can create a wide-range of jobs from hi-tech to dish washing, generate many entry-level jobs for young people, part-time or seasonable jobs, and support the development of small and mid-sized enterprises. There are currently 19 million direct and indirect jobs in tourism generated in the EU and the potential for another 2 million in the next 10 years, with perhaps several million more tourism and travel-related jobs in Eastern Europe over the coming decade. But it will be a major challenge not only to realise this growth, but also to do so in ways that are sustainable from economic, social, institutional, and environmental perspective. The project confronts this challenge, and informs local level strategies and partnerships, as well as makes recommendations for national and European level action to support sustainable tourism.

By providing local governments with a framework to catalyse partnerships, it helps them engage the principle stakeholders from the private and public sectors to address sustainability issues, challenges, and opportunities. The frameworks and benchmark tools developed by the project will help them realise linkages between tourism and sustainable development, including using the principles of Agenda 21 for tourism decision-making and improving management, planning, and implementation practices.

### 2.2.2. Contribution to EU policy trusts

The European dimensions of the project are also evident with respect to the five fold European concerns for sustainability, competitiveness, governance, innovation, and enlargement.

## **SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

Sustainability is a global concern that attracts significant efforts for the co-ordination of the various national and international policies towards the achievement of some core sustainability objectives. The European Union has already shown an active interest to play one of the leading roles in this planetary effort: Sustainability is a central goal of the 'Fifth EC Environmental Action Program' launched in 1992 where tourism is a 'key target sector'. The 2001 Communication of the Commission 'A Sustainable Europe for a Better World: A EU Strategy for Sustainable Development' asserts sustainable development as a 'broad, long term, positive and stable vision', 'catalyst for policy makers and public opinion', where 'economic growth, social cohesion and environmental protection should go hand by hand while strategies and actions focus on resolving priority small number of problems gradually'. The latest 'Sixth Framework Program' of the European Union (2003-2008) ranks sustainable development as one of the seven priority areas of research and development at the beginning of the new Century. The project explores many aspects of this need to formulate comprehensive policy approaches that combine different aspects of sustainable development (i.e., tourism context) on a local (urban) basis.

## **URBAN SUSTAINABILITY**

The SUT-Governance Project's results, and particularly the establishment of a Framework and a Benchmarking Tool for the development and assessment of multi-stakeholder SUT partnerships, can serve as guidelines for sustainable management of future urban tourism practices in respect to the EU Urban Sustainability and LA 21 impetus (referred to in the 1990 'Green Paper on Urban Environment', 1993 'Sustainable cities project', 1994 'Sustainable Cities and Towns Campaign', 1998 Communication 'Towards Sustainable Urban Development (SUD)' and the 'City of Tomorrow and Cultural Heritage' Program). In particular, the project will contribute to 'improving urban sustainability by new approaches to urban governance, planning, and management by 'ensuring inclusion, cohesion, sustainability, governance and local empowerment via access to benefits, and innovative decision-making and processes'.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> European Commission 1998. 'Sustainable Urban Development in the EU: A Framework for action'.

## TOURISM

By focusing on the creation of partnerships to mobilise urban resources and agents, the project provides new information and a better understanding of implementation possibilities for European tourism policies. In particular, the project will support these EU initiatives: (1) Building bridges through decentralised co-operation involving the public and all actors and the call for recognition of local government and their role in promoting sustainable tourism practices (Mediterranean Cities and Towns - Call for Action, Rome 1995); (2) Decreasing the environmental impacts of tourism (The 5<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Program) (3) Promoting visitor-friendliness in European tourist towns (Lisbon Action Plan 1996); (4) Raising the sector's significance in the European economy in the 'Great European Market' from the perspectives of sustainability (a series of policy acts already mentioned); (5) Foreseeing future problems of tourism enterprises and providing sound development recommendations (DG Enterprise -Tourism Unit); and (6) Promoting planning and policy for tourism and empowering local authorities in tourism (Lisbon Action Plan 1996). In more recent years, the objectives of the project are in line with the EC 'Green Paper on The Role of the Union in the Field of Tourism' (1995), The Tourism Policy Paper 'Working together for the future of European Tourism' (2001) and 'The Council Resolution on the future of European tourism' (2002).

Most importantly, the project is consistent with the Strategic Tourism Development impetus of the Union in the 21 Century consisting of five main emphases: information, new technologies, quality of services and products, and sustainable development. In policy, 'SUT-Governance' will specifically compliment the key Community pursuits elaborated in the 2001 EC Communication 'Working together for the future of European tourism' to:

- 'Exchange more information and experience among interested parties to assist action implementation' and 'improving co-operation and co-ordination, promoting dialogue, and fostering networking services at all levels';
- To consolidate 'co-operative approach and partnerships between stakeholders based on operational collaborative framework established by The Lisbon European Council and the EU 'White paper on European Governance' (2001);
- Towards increased awareness and knowledge, integrated approach, competitiveness, sustainable development and job creation.

## GOVERNANCE

By focusing on promoting Governance for Sustainable Urban Tourism, the results of the project will be of specific value to the EU Governance strategic objective established in 2000 and particularly, to the key pursuit of the 2001 'White Paper on European Governance' – 'to increase democracy and legitimacy of institutions and connect government with citizens for more effective and just polices to facilitate a reform to:

- Better involvement and more openness of policy-making processes;
- Greater accountability and responsibilities of all parties involved;
- Better polices, regulations and their delivery.

## LOCAL AGENDA 21

Furthermore, the project is also along the lines the Community trust on promoting Local Agenda 21 and the call of the 5<sup>th</sup> Action Plan that 'implementation be shared by all interested parties through new partnership mechanisms' (EU Environment DGXI). It will add to the process of engaging into the Local Agenda process of local governments and institutions and the development of local horizontal co-operation to develop new practices and share experience – i.e., to catalyse partnerships with other organisations to impact sustainable community development. The outcomes of the project can serve European community's polices and agenda towards sustainable urban development (The '5<sup>th</sup> Environmental Action Programme' and the 'Sustainable Cities Project') from the perspectives of an innovative and multiple resource-utilisation and stakeholder-participation viewpoint. Thus, the outcomes of this project are consistent with EU's objectives to implement Agenda 21 in local development planning practices and grant local governments with the key responsibility in the process of changing lifestyles, production, consumption and spatial patterns and integrate the principles of sustainability into all areas of decision-making (The 1994

Aalborg Charter). This initiative will also provide a valuable contribution to the European Local Agenda 21 Roundtables and particularly to their Tourism ('The European Union Agenda 21: Sustainability in the European Tourism Sector' (2002) and Urban Governance and Management sections.

## INNOVATION

On the innovation side, it is important that the promotion of institutional innovation is considered as both, key to the success of the European economy in the global competition and the major factor for the achievement of a more balanced European development through increasing the chances of the weaker economies to converge towards the more developed ones. In this respect, the main attribute of project is the formulation of new forms of urban governance (multi-sector partnerships) for sustainable tourism. This project will assess and diffuse knowledge about new models for sustainable management of tourism in European cities and city regions. Through its benchmarking element, it will also encourage local authorities to rise to the challenge that sustainability problems pose today to European cities (DG XI – The 'Sustainable Cities Project'). Notwithstanding the primacy of the locality-specific perspectives, the trans-national nature of tourism requires trans-national approaches to support learning and sustainable tourism planning activities at the local level. We advance the 'vocabulary and grammar' of a common language for 'sustainable urban tourism governance' by presenting a Framework of interrelated concepts definitions, and factors for partnership formation and implementation.

## EUROPEAN ENLARGEMENT

On a different scale, this international collaborative initiative will contribute to the development of other EU policies affecting tourism and sustainable development policies that concern all European countries, and particularly EU Community policies to assist the economies in transition, through financial and technical assistance to governments at all levels to develop a range of meaningful and effective planning guidelines, codes of good practice, regulatory frameworks and policy provisions aimed at achieving sustainable development, i.e. the Community's Enlargement Mission. Knowledge generated through collaborative research involving partners from an Associated Member State is essential for addressing the issue of sustainable development facing all Europe. The project has a wide European coverage in terms of the case studies pursued in relation to its main objectives and parallel to the elaboration of its theoretical themes. This wide coverage is strengthened by the fact that its central theoretical and methodological choices are specifically designed with significant generalisation potential in order to increase the practical usefulness of its results and the applicability of its proposals concerning policy integration in order to achieve sustainable urban tourism development. Thus the initiative has a common European dimension by contributing to problem solving of unsustainable tourism practices at the EU level where impacts will be greater as to addressing the relevant issues at the local/national level. The new knowledge generated through this collaborative research and development project will be essential to addressing the issues of sustainable integrated development facing all Europe at the threshold of the new century.

## 2.3. Scientific and Technical Descriptions of the Results

### 2.3.1. Work package 1: Framework conditions: Influences on participatory decision-making

#### 2.3.1.1. Conceptual approach

## THE CHALLENGE

Sustainable urban tourism requires attention to varied elements, including (a) maintaining physical heritage in the context of living, developing cities; (b) allowing maximum access to available infrastructure, tourist sites, parks, and other green spaces; (c) strengthening the cultural and social viability of local community; (d) balancing interests of residents and visitors; (e) economic viability (providing sound long-term development and high quality employment opportunities); (f) minimising adverse ecological impacts on sites from transportation, and (g) unsustainable consumption

patterns. Achieving this, however, involves advancing knowledge and practice about the types of partnerships that can be formed to promote urban sustainable tourism; the roles of government and other stakeholders; how local governments can apply such partnerships to local tourism development; and the critical issues and challenges to local governments and other stakeholders seeking to create such partnerships.

### **THE LACK OF SUFFICIENT PRACTICE AND EXPERIENCE**

Sustainable tourism is a strategic policy pursuit of the European Union at the onset of the New Century. The impetus, as mentioned earlier, is on 'promoting further progress towards the sustainability of the sector by stimulating multi-stakeholder efforts spanning across all territorial and administrative levels'<sup>3</sup>. Yet, the overall community prosperity perspectives are still to be considered. Furthermore, while much research has been undertaken on how to progress towards a more sustainable kind of tourism, much needs to be done to encourage the practical application of the concept in various settings and levels. Issues regarding integrated sustainability are yet to be taken into a consideration in integrated local and regional development and policy.

In the development and management of city tourism, despite the strong political trust and wide recognition of the long-term benefits of governance and sustainability in Europe, real life success stories are few. In today's volatile market conditions and after decades of unprecedented growth in mass city tourism, urban destinations must re-evaluate their futures. Re-engineering of city economies and administrations and managing risks and opportunities are becoming present challenges and opportunities for urban tourism. Gearing strategies towards sustainable community development by engaging all stakeholders – politicians, administrators, city planners, investors, residents, hospitality businesses, transport, culture, sports and entertainment providers, and tourists is now an ever-important challenge for both urban policy and action.

Forming public-private partnerships proves to be an effective and rewarding way to go. Some progress has been already made, but important challenges need to facilities broader and more in depth debates about new forms of urban governance. In light of the recently adopted EU 'Sixth Framework Programme' aiming sustainable development in Europe through the adoption of innovative polices and interdisciplinary approaches involving all stakeholders, using partnerships as an innovative and efficient policy implementation mechanism towards broad-based community sustainability is a call to be pursued by all.

### **OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 1**

- To identify framework conditions, agents and factors influencing participatory decision-making for sustainable tourism.

### **WORK DESIGN**

This work package examined agents and factors influencing participatory decision making for sustainable urban tourism, drawing on existing sources and available case databases. Analysis probed:

- The key European and international and national policies and initiatives guiding the process of partnership formation and their impacts on relevant national policies and processes;
- The types of partnerships being formed for sustainable urban sustainable tourism considering (a) the urban context, and (b) type of tourist related-activity;
- The main agents involved in and the role of the local governments in catalysing those partnerships;
- Factors that may have promoted the formation of successful partnership-based decision-making processes.

#### 2.3.1.2. Description of work

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<sup>3</sup> EC DG Enterprise 2003. Preparation of a communication: 'Basic orientation for the sustainability of European tourism'.

The first stage of the project involved an assessment of determining agents and factors influencing successful participatory decision-making for sustainable tourism development in Europe. This stage established an overall framework of information and policy analysis to be used in subsequent steps. The work aggregated data and information relevant to the issue of urban governance, participatory decision-making and sustainable tourism in international and national contexts. To assist in identifying key factors influencing the development of partnerships, existing databases of 'success stories' in the sphere of urban governance for sustainable tourism<sup>4</sup> were also explored. Together, we identified the overriding concepts, key characteristics and issues, forms and classifications, and mechanisms for urban participatory governance of sustainable tourism. Some of the distinctive approaches and schemes were delineated to show how cities had followed similar principles in distinctive patterns and fundamental approaches to participation and partnerships even though they were applied in distinctive patterns and with varying level of success.

Research involved three consecutive steps: (a) Literature review (b) Review of framework factors and information needs (c) Study context framework development.

As a results, (1) The framework conditions, agents and factors influencing participatory decision-making and practice for sustainable tourism involving partnership collaboration were identified (2) A preliminary framework model of effective partnerships for sustainable tourism was developed, and (3) Eight 'Best Practice' multi-stakeholder initiatives for sustainable urban tourism in the case study cities of Heidelberg (Germany), Thessaloniki (Greece), Graz (Austria), and Veliko Turnovo (Bulgaria) were identified and engaged in the study.

### 2.3.1.3. Study advance

In the course of the study, advance was made in several research and policy areas: (1) Assessment of contemporary literature in science and policy of 'sustainable urban tourism', 'governance' and 'effective and successful multi-stakeholder partnerships' from the perspectives of the project needs (2) Evaluation of key European, international and national policies and initiatives guiding the process of partnership formation for sustainable tourism on multiple spatial and institutional levels (3) Assessment of underlying tourism trends in Germany, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria (4) Identification of policy, regulatory, and institutional frameworks for sustainable tourism and the promotion of urban partnerships in these countries (5) Identification of the types of partnerships being formed for sustainable urban tourism considering (a) the urban context, and the (b) types of tourist related-activities (6) Identification of the main agents involved in participatory urban governance for sustainable tourism and the role of the local (urban) governments in catalysing public-private partnerships, and (7) Analysis of the stakeholders' perceptions on the factors of success (and failure) of partnerships for sustainable tourism in European urban environments.

Extensive literature review described the evolution of theory related to the specific topics in the study of partnerships for sustainable urban tourism. The examination confirmed the project's initial observations that though the concept of 'sustainable tourism', 'governance' and 'multi-stakeholder partnerships' as means of participatory decision-making' are well supported in literature, across all three areas, existing theories and practice are weak on specific challenges of how to establish and sustain an effective decentralised decision-making and management for sustainable urban tourism. It was therefore strongly argued that a comprehensive framework is necessary for the analysis and implementation of effective multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable urban tourism (SUT Partnerships) in European and other environments.

Thus, after exploring the key theoretical and policy issues concerning the reasons and benefits of promoting and operating partnerships for urban sustainable tourism, a holistic framework was advanced to link governance and stakeholder participation, integrated community development and sustainable tourism principles into an operational management mechanism which takes into

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<sup>4</sup> Sources that we tapped include the UN CSD Agenda 21 Success Stories, the UN CHS's Best Practices for Human Settlements Collection, the UN SCD3 collections of Success Stories in Tourism and Sustainable Development, the key EU's networks for municipalities and regions, information from the European Forum for Sustainable Development, the ICLEI's Case Studies Collection for Local Environmental Initiatives, the Good Practices Guide of the EU's Expert Group in the Urban Environment, and the EU Good Practices on Sustainable Cities.

account (a) the framework conditions, (b) the partnership and the co-operation process, (c) the tourism activity and its resolution, and (d) the implications for sustainability on the host community.

In theoretical terms, the first phase of the project was crucial for setting up the conceptual framework of the study, which involves three main categories: (1) Sustainable tourism (2) Tourism and community development (Agenda 21), and (3) Participatory governance (involving multi-stakeholder partnerships for achieving sustainable long-term solutions to existing local problems). The following principal visions evolved:

**Sustainable tourism** combines and must seek a balance between (a) present benefits with (b) the protection and enhancement of future opportunities (in context of natural resources, natural and cultural heritage and socio-economic prosperity) for the population of the host community while (3) maintaining its cultural, environmental, and biological quality, diversity, integrity, and viability. Moreover, sustainable tourism should benefit all citizens, regions, and tourism industries involving participation of the host communities. On a large scale, sustainable tourism must serve broad community goals, such as maintaining socio-economic welfare or a positive level of residents' attitude, while reinforcing cultural integrity, and the social, historic and cultural norms of the society at large.

**(Urban) Governance** may be conceived as relationships and collaborative actions between actors to foster democracy and overall societal and community prosperity pertaining three key aspects (1) governance is not only government but involves recognition that power exists inside and outside the formal authority of government (2) governance is a neutral concept employing various forms, and (3) governance also emphasises 'process'. "City governance" could be taken as the sum of the many ways individuals and institutions, public and private, plan and manage the common affairs of the city, a continuing process through which conflicting or diverse interests may be accommodated and co-operative action can be taken to increase the welfare of the citizenry. "Good urban governance" is characterised by sustainability, decentralisation, equity, efficiency, transparency and accountability, civic engagement and citizenship, and security, norms that are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

**(Urban) Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships** form the core of the approach of innovative participatory (urban) governance which allows the mobilisation and co-operation of a great number of actors in order to mould the necessary political and operational consensus to affect directly the every day life of all members of society. Partnerships are viewed as effective forms of governance because they can build collective responsibility for planning, decision-making, problem solving, project implementation and evaluation. Furthermore, they can also create network to share knowledge, resources, and common goals. Finally, they can be catalysts of sustainable dialogue, solutions, and long-term change. Fundamental to effective urban governance for sustainable tourism development is considered the establishment of public-private partnerships, involving the principles of sustainability and Agenda 21. Evidence from existing frameworks and successful partnership cases of sustainable tourism across Europe (and globally) demonstrate the merits of the approach, while emphasising its, yet limited, utilisation in policy and management of sustainable urban tourism (Paskaleva-Shapira 2001)<sup>5</sup>.

#### 2.3.1.4. Main results (deliverables)

### **D2. Framework report: Influences on decision-making<sup>6</sup>**

<sup>5</sup> Paskaleva-Shapira, K. 2001, 'Innovative Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: Framework Approach', SUT-Governance project deliverable 2, <http://www.sut.itas.fzk.de>.

## 2.3.2. Work package 2: Country framework assessment

### 2.3.2.1. Conceptual approach

Participatory governance arrangements have emerged as new innovative tools in promoting the objectives of sustainability in many policy areas in Europe and across the world. Their effectiveness in the field of urban tourism depends upon both national frameworks and local context. Urban tourism is a cluster of economic activities with significant socio-economic and environmental consequences on the individual cities. This applies especially in tourism intensive cities generating a substantial part of their employment and income opportunities from tourism. The need to provide sustainable solutions to tourism related problems triggers the formation of participatory governance arrangements combining efficiency and democracy in innovative ways. The effectiveness of the latter in the area of urban tourism depends upon and varies according to the political culture and the specific socio-economic characteristics of the cities. However, the general trends are embedded in the specific national and local frameworks favouring particular combinations of actors and activities and forming country-specific and city-specific trajectories of sustainable tourism. As the interrelations at the European, the national and regional and/or local scale are being restructured under the strong pressure of globalisation, individual cities emerge as the most appropriate level for the implementation of the new ideas of participatory governance involving the networking of actors and the participation of a variety of stakeholders in specific types of partnerships, initiatives and policy making processes. Thus, we argue, the similarity of scope behind this mosaic of cultural diversity will strengthen the overall prospects of European cohesion (Kafkalas 2003)<sup>7</sup>.

### OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 2

- To provide an overall assessment of framework conditions in the countries chosen for case study sites. WP 1, which ran in parallel, informed this work package.

### STUDY DESIGN

This work package was concerned with:

- Assessment of underlying tourism trends, drawing on an array of detailed statistical series and data reports on tourism development in Germany, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria;
- Collection and assessment of policy, regulatory, and institutional framework for sustainable tourism development and the promotion of urban partnerships, using information obtained from public agencies, researchers, private sector, and non-profit organisations;
- Examination whether Local Agenda 21 principles and participatory decision-making have been adapted and used for urban tourism development and how they relate to different private and public organisational forms;
- Conduct of 60 structured interviews with key stakeholders from all sectors concerned to obtain stakeholder perspectives on framework conditions for sustainable urban tourism development in the selected countries, the activities or local partnerships, challenges and insights, and additional data sources (especially available 'grey' documentation).

### 2.3.2.2. Description of work

This involved a detailed fieldwork in four European countries – Germany, Austria, Greece, and Bulgaria, which present a mix of conditions for the analysis of urban sustainable tourism partnerships. Several steps were undertaken jointly and by the partner teams (a) Literature assessment (b) Country information collection (c) Review of country framework factors and information needs (d) Stakeholder interviews (15 in each country), and (f) Inventory and analysis of existing partnership cases for sustainable local (urban) tourism.

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<sup>7</sup> Kafkalas, G. 2003. 'National frameworks for participatory sustainable tourism: Cultural diversity and European cohesion', Paper presented at the SUT Governance Project Final Conference, Heidelberg, Germany, 23-24 June, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

The core efforts were placed on the national policies for sustainable tourism development on various spatial and institutional levels in issues relevant to 'sustainable tourism', 'participatory governance' and 'innovative multi-stakeholder partnerships'. The work drew on available national and international data, published and 'grey' literature, and country-specific information sources.

Three study protocols were developed to guide parallel research in the study countries (1) Structured Checklist of Country Framework Assessment (2) Stakeholder Interview Protocol, and (3) Structured Checklist for Focused Analysis of Pilot Partnership Initiatives.

The findings were summarised in a set of study reports: (1) Written Reports of Stakeholder Interviews (sixty) (2) National Summary Reports of Stakeholders Perspectives of Framework Conditions (3) Country Framework Assessment Reports (four) (4) Cross-Country Synthesis Report (5) International Report on Stakeholder Perspectives and (6) A Set of 'Good Practice' Pilot Cases of Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism (twelve)

### 2.3.2.3. Study advance

During the second project phase, a range of processes and developments were observed in contemporary European policy, theory, and practices in 'sustainable urban tourism' and 'participatory governance'. It was revealed that the role of tourism in the European cities is rapidly increasing parallel to the growing attention of the European Union towards sustainable tourism, urban renovation, local revitalisation, and decentralisation of government towards a broad-based governance involving the stakeholders. Despite this fact, however, real life collaborative initiatives in tourism promoted by government towards broad-based strategies in the area have been rare.

Among the existing few partnership activities on various levels of policy and action, those were predominantly in the area of tourism marketing. Only on local (city) level, there were cases where partnerships aimed broader societal (community) development<sup>8</sup>. However, these multi-stakeholder partnerships in tourism had a little impact on innovating policies towards participatory governance for sustainable tourism<sup>9</sup>. Majority of the existing cases lacked the political support and the necessary financial resources although there was strong evidence that the structure of the state and the public sector impacts seriously tourism policies and their implementation. Though countries of more central control such as Greece and Bulgaria have national tourism programs (while, at the same time, Germany and Austria have granted responsibilities in tourism to the federal states), in all four countries national pursuits did not consider issues of governance and partnerships (Kafkalas *et al* 2001)<sup>10</sup>. To improve tourism practices in light of sustainability, participation, and in the context of integrated urban development in particular, government must assume a greater role in policy development and implementation on both spatial and institutional level. Promoting the motivation of the City and the other stakeholders to share goals, costs and benefits in tourism actions is equally important (Paskaleva-Shapira 2003). The elaboration of more comprehensive and goal-oriented national programs and strategies and their harmonisation with international guidelines is considered essential for increasing the number and role of collaborative arrangements in the future of European urban tourism. As the few existing cases demonstrate the potentials of the multi-stakeholder partnerships for improving tourism practices towards a more sustainable path of development in the host urban communities. There is thus an apparent need to disseminate this practice so others can learn to improve performance and results.

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<sup>8</sup> In Germany, for example, collaborative local stakeholder actions promote environmentally friendly tourism transportation (Munich), reducing usage of packaging in hotels and catering (Freiburg), promoting organic farming to provide healthy foods to local restaurants (Leutenberg), or reviving local traditions and arts (Worbis). In the other study countries partnerships aimed improving tourism performance towards sustainability (ECO-LABEL in Vienna and Graz, Austria), or transforming derelict harbour areas into attractive gourmet eating urban districts (Thessaloniki, Greece). In Bulgaria, the newly formed local and regional tourism associations encouraged participation of the stakeholders in an effort supported by both national and local government to promote sustainable forms of community tourism across the country.

<sup>9</sup> Even in Germany, where stakeholders usually are heavily involved in the decision-making processes of the specific partnership projects, policy influence was not apparent.

<sup>10</sup> Kafkalas, G., K. Paskaleva-Shapira, L. Demetropoulou and M. Voultsaki (Ed.), "Country Framework Assessment Report" (Part A, B, C), (SUT-Governance project deliverable 2, <http://www.sut.itas.fzk.de>).

#### 2.3.2.4. Main results (deliverables)

### **D3. Country Framework Assessment Report<sup>11</sup>**

Part a: National profiles and comparative synopsis;  
 Part b: Data appendices;  
 Part c: Stakeholders perspectives and comparative analysis.

#### 2.3.3. Work package 3: Partnership case studies

##### 2.3.3.1. Conceptual approach

In tourism, the social, economic and environmental impacts on the local communities are inter-related, overlapping and mutually reinforcing. Partnerships therefore appear essential in order to tackle the problems of local tourism, their causes and the externalities. This view must underpin urban policy for sustainable tourism as it has been done in urban regeneration, employment and social inclusion programs in the 1980s and more recently, in EU policies in support of local and regional development.

City authorities logically have a central role to play in promoting and sustaining collaborative partnerships. In view of the growing complexity of urban development today, it is becoming increasingly necessary to make all active participants in the urban environment, i.e. the urban decision makers, face up to their responsibilities and allow the citizens they represent have a say in the running of cities. Furthermore, in the cities, where local governments have usually strong influence and power, tourism industry is less fragmented and disunited, and community groups are more influential, the role of public administrations in uniting the stakeholders for the establishment of a long-term local development framework in which collaboration is a cornerstone to success, appears an ultimate necessity (Paskaleva-Shapira 2001).

### **OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 3**

- To identify, elaborate, and validate a set of best practices for sustainable urban tourism, with an understanding of the conditions in which those practices were established.

### **WORK DESIGN**

Building on results of WP 1 and WP 2, 12 Pilot and 8 detailed SUT Partnership case studies were undertaken in diverse European cities in the pursuit of four main objectives:

- To conduct and report eight detailed sustainable tourism partnership cases in four European cities that offer a mix of underlying developmental conditions and opportunities for success;
- To elaborate a set of partnership insights and initial best practices report in support of the final SUT Partnership Framework Model;
- To develop an initial framework model, informed by assessments of literature, cross-case analysis of available written cases in secondary sources.

##### 2.3.3.2. Description of work

Central to the research efforts in this third phase were the 'Best Practice' Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism, involving two detailed case studies in each of the four collaborating cities – Graz, Heidelberg, Thessaloniki and Veliko Turnovo:

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<sup>11</sup> Kafkalas, G., K. Paskaleva-Shapira, L. Demetropoulou and M. Voultaki (Ed.), "Country Framework Assessment Report" (Part A, B, C), SUT-Governance project deliverable 2, <http://www.sut.itas.fzk.de>

	<b>SUT Partnership 'Best Practices'</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Core Objectives</b>
1.	Strategy Forum Tourism	Austria	Effective tourism marketing and sustainable tourism
2.	OeKOPROFIT for Tourist Companies		Sustainable management of tourism businesses
3.	Beautiful Veliko Turnovo	Bulgaria	Social progress and improving community capacity and value
4.	V. Turnovo Tourism Council		Sustained tourism marketing
5.	Healthy Food in Heidelberg's Restaurants	Germany	Sustainable provision of healthy foods and regional integration
6.	Heidelberg City Card		Sustainable long-term tourism marketing
7.	Pilot Project for the Renewal and Development of the Historical and Commercial Centre of Thessaloniki	Greece	Urban renewal and city-centre regeneration
8.	Inter-Municipal Co-operation: Linking Places of Natural Beauty		Recreational development in suburban areas

The tourism partnerships were selected with view of (a) their relevance to a better understanding of sustainable tourism, multi-stakeholder participation, and urban governance and (b) the identification of the driving actors, factors and key indicators of SUT partnership success. Four main criteria for a 'Best Practice' SUT Partnership were established by the project framework (a) Tourism (b) Partnership (c) Sustainability and (d) Impact.

In the course of the work, the following milestones were accomplished: (1) 'Good practice' SUT Partnerships (twelve Case Reports) (2) Pilot Partnerships for Sustainable Tourism: Factors contributing to success (four National Synthesis Reports) (3) Pilot Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: Factors contributing to success – Cross-Country Report (4) City Case Studies (four City Reports) (5) 8 Detailed 'Best Practice' Partnership Cases (6) Best Practice SUT Partnerships Reports (eight) and (7) 'Best Practice' SUT Partnerships: Cross-Case Synthesis Report. Three study protocols facilitated the work in this phase: (1) 'Good practice SUT Partnership Study Protocol (2) City Study Checklist and (3) Comprehensive 'Best practice' SUT Partnership Study Protocol.

Cross analysis of the cases allowed the team to (1) Identify the factors that have influenced decision-making practices and promote successful and durable in time partnerships of sustainable urban tourism (2) Determine how Local Agenda 21 principles have been adapted and used for urban tourism development (3) Identify the mechanisms of establishment, function, co-ordination, implementation and feed backs of multi-sectors partnerships in urban tourism (4) Assess the role of urban authorities in catalysing and facilitating such partnerships, including the effectiveness of current and emerging participatory approaches of urban governance of tourism, and the different impacts, benefits and costs of participatory decision-making at the local urban level (5) Identify and collate a set of 'Best Practices' of Urban Governance for Sustainable Tourism and design a Framework of effective stakeholders' participation in urban design-making for sustainable tourism and (6) Explore policy implications, including the feasibility of the participatory approach of tourism development which can make tourism strategies more effective in reinforcing sustainable urban development.

Finally, using the conceptual framework model of phase 1, the key indicators of SUT-partnership success were identified, both quantitatively and qualitatively. Each indicator was given a short definition supported by the relevant data and information sources. Additionally, the driving agents and factors of partnership success were further identified and elaborated.

### 2.3.3.3. Study advance

The detailed case studies reinforced the project's original conceptual model emphasising the importance of the integration of the partnership process, activity and its results with the influences on the long-term sustainability of the host community where the processes of partnership establishment, maintenance and implementation must become an essential component of local multi-stakeholder decision-making and urban governance. Based on this concept, the study was able to assert that it is possible to define a set of attributes and key components, which embrace the interrelated nature of the different factors influencing the success of partnerships for sustainable urban tourism. This holistic theme is what brings together the examined cases, which otherwise represent a wide spectrum of forms and types of tourism partnerships, establishment mechanisms, functions, objectives, co-ordination, implementation and feedback arrangements (Gindl *et al* 2002).<sup>12</sup>

Regardless their uniqueness, however, as the study revealed, tourism partnerships between the public and private sectors exist in two main forms: (1) where the public sector dominates as initiator or resource provider or (2) where the different private or non-government stakeholders unite to recruit the local authorities to support their interests and initiatives. The study also showed the multi-faceted nature of the 'partnership-content' in regard to sustainable urban tourism: some partnerships aim sustainable long-term tourism marketing, others - sustainable management of tourism businesses, or sustainable long-term tourism development, urban renewal, regional integration, etc. It also became apparent that public and private actors enter cooperative arrangements towards sustainable tourism for a variety of reasons, some of which are broadly based in the general local conditions, while others are relevant to the specific demands of the local economy. In most cases, however, the partnerships emerged as intent of the local (urban) administrations to seek collaborative opportunities with other stakeholders, and the private sector in particular, to promote policy and development areas in urban tourism using formal public-private partnership arrangements. In many cases too, partnership originated as a result of the willingness of the local communities to overcome pressing economic difficulties where tourism is seen as mean of increasing the overall community prosperity.

Despite the fact that each partnership case remained generally unique, based on the local specific conditions, the case study work allowed to formulate a set of key factors of partnership success supported by a comprehensive set of indicators, the leading of which include: (1) Framework conditions (adequate funding and public support, favourable tourism development and capacity, adequate urban infrastructure, commitment to integrated sustainability and local governance) (2) The partnership and the cooperation process (effective division of roles, contractual agreements, planning, transparency, efficient management) (3) The partnership activity and its resolution (fruitful target area, assessment arrangements, outreach activities and (4) Implications for sustainability (sustainability background, potentials for eco-business, preservation/improvement of physical environment, job creation for social inclusion, self-organisation, networking, and new forms of governance).

Notwithstanding the diversity, ultimate to the success of the SUT partnerships, however, appeared the strong commitment and trust between the participating agents and institutions as well as the transparency and clarity of the partnership arrangements and agreements during the life of the cooperation. The role of the urban authorities in catalysing and facilitating these partnerships appeared generally central to the success. In terms of their participation, the adaptation and use of the Local Agenda 21 principles and programs for urban tourism were particularly prominent. Finally, despite the fact that the study cases represented different levels of integration of the principles of 'sustainability' and 'governance', efforts under way along these lines were clearly evident and on the rise. Moreover, it could be concluded that while 'development tourism partnerships' achieve sustainability by sustaining the sector 'stock enhancement', the 'marketing partnerships' reach sustainability goals by sustaining the 'partnership process', which brings broad-based community benefits in the long run (Gindl *et al* 2002).

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<sup>12</sup> M. Gindl, K. Paskaleva-Shapira, S. Stuppäck, U. Schubert, F. Wukovitsch 2002.'Best Practice Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: International Cross-Case Synthesis and Success Indicators', SUT-Governance Deliverable 4, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

Finally, the lead role of the urban authorities in SUT Partnerships became obvious. The study identified some of the key motivations of the public sector to participate in the partnerships: sustaining long-term community development; bringing external resources (funding, expertise, links to other development schemes); avoiding overlapping of efforts; replication of good practices; or, ultimately, more effective and efficient policy development and implementation.

In terms of policy development, the study promoted these main reasons why urban authorities should involve in tourism partnerships: (a) Economic benefits (aid local economies, diversify the economy, increase employment and local revenues from taxes); (b) Social and cultural enhancement (ensure well being and health of individuals; promote cultural awareness of the area and its people; preserve local traditions, moral, and value of place); (c) Environmental preservation and improvement (undertake a stewardship of the environment and tourism resources so the agents of development do not destroy the future basis for sustainable tourism development); (d) Political stability and legitimacy (sustained political objectives and broader political acceptance of the local administration). In this complex process, urban authorities must transcend beyond present rhetoric of urban development and introduce sustainable tourism planning in both policy and implementation of local initiatives.

Thus, at the end of phase 3, the project results called for the reinforcement of multi-stakeholder partnerships towards sustainability and governance of urban tourism. Two key messages evolved: One, that multi-stakeholder partnerships are effective means of promoting sustainable urban tourism and governance, i.e. the ways and actions where individuals and institutions, public and private, steer, plan and manage the common affairs of the city to foster democracy and the overall community prosperity, and: Two, that the success of the partnerships depend of the efficacy of the partnership process, the tourism activity and its implementation as well as the resolutions for a long-term and far reaching community sustainability (Paskaleva-Shapira 2003)<sup>13</sup>. Multi-stakeholder partnerships can indeed boost urban sustainable development but they can rarely substitute the missing prerequisites (Gindl *et al* 2001). Therefore, businesses and policy groups should work together for promoting the culture and practice of collaboration, which in return will lead to new and more successful endeavours in the area. Key to success is a strong and motivated public sector<sup>14</sup>.

#### 2.3.3.4. Main results (deliverables)

### **D4. Partnership cases: Cross-case analysis and initial Best Practices report**

#### 2.3.4. Work package 4: Integrated model for multi-sector partnerships

##### 2.3.4.1. Conceptual approach

Stakeholder involvement in sustainable tourism development can foster a sense of attachment and ownership to local initiatives and help maintain the socio-cultural, natural, and built environment. As the study has proved evident, to deal with the complexity and the relationships, which co-exist within urban tourism, a comprehensive framework is needed, which can synthesise the multiplicity of factors, processes, and issues affecting the process of participatory governance and sustainable urban tourism in different contexts. The objective of developing such framework is to encompass a range of multi-disciplinary perspectives, the total experience of urban tourism and its impacts on the host community.

Whilst sustainable tourism practices are increasing, partnerships, as policy mechanisms for achieving a shift towards broad-based sustainable development of the tourism destination as a

<sup>13</sup> Paskaleva, K. 2003. 'Innovative partnerships for sustainable urban tourism: Conceptual approach and application', presentation at the SUT-Governance Final Project Conference, Heidelberg, Germany. June 23-24.

<sup>14</sup> Despite the apparent central role, as D. Pearce rightfully acknowledges, 'the public sector is by no means a single entity with clear cut responsibilities and single policies for tourism development' (*Tourism Development*, Second edition, Longman: London 1989: 44). Rather, it becomes involved in a variety of forms at different levels and through many agencies and institutions.

locality, which is the vision of many initiatives, is not yet being adequately used. Principal among the causes has been the lack of integrative approach to community sustainable development. While any specific strategies may draw on situational and local factors, which are equally unique, and which will not immediately generalise to common situations, this research asserts that it is possible to define a set of main attributes and certain components which highlight the interrelated nature of the different factors affecting the effectiveness and success of partnerships for urban sustainable tourism and reduce the complexity of the holistic approach. This research offers a framework model of multi-stakeholder partnerships at the local level involving the factors that are useful in understanding partnerships in different circumstances but particularly for sustainable tourism practices in urban contexts.

The SUT multi-stakeholder partnership scheme involves a conceptual approach building on three classes of attributes and the interfaces between and among them. The three attributes are 'context', 'activity', and 'resolution'. The interfaces between and among these attributes are 'public involvement' and 'multi-stakeholder partnerships'. Establishing effective partnerships is identified as second and key to the issue of 'effective governance' of local sustainable tourism, which includes features among which core is the issue of establishing an institutionalised (government) approach to involving partnerships in the decision-making process for tourism development. While extensive knowledge exists about the subsets of the attributes, to date no integrated approach has been established to reflect the relationships between all attribute classes to show their relative and/or collective influence on the success of a sustainable tourism-focused urban partnership project.

#### OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 4

- To develop a unified framework model of effective partnerships for urban sustainable tourism that can be used to inform future efforts.

#### WORK DESIGN

- Results from information collection, case studies, and analysis in WP 1, WP 2 and WP3 served to support the elaboration of a framework model of success for stakeholders' partnerships in sustainable urban tourism;
- To complement and verify research results, stakeholders' perceptions of partnership success were examined using a concept mapping technique.

#### 2.3.4.2. Description of work

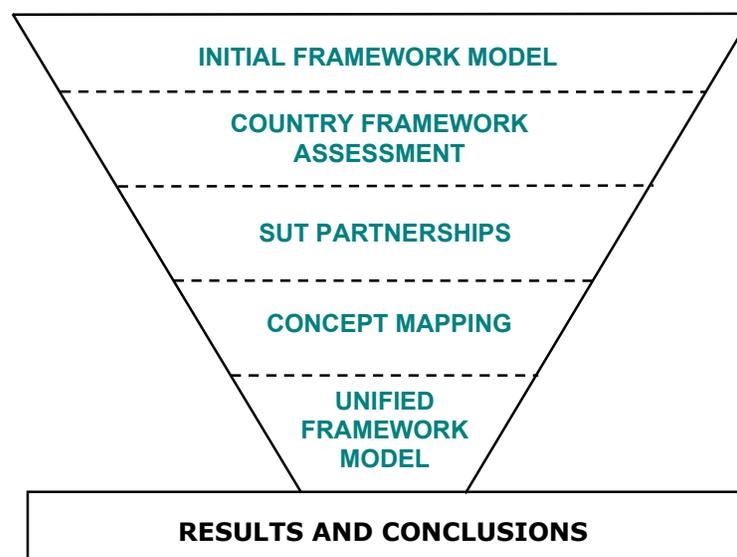
The established multi-stakeholder partnership scheme allowed clustering the highly heterogeneous study material and uniting the key concepts of partnership building, maintenance, and sustainability. It assisted the in-depth analysis and evaluation of the indicators and agents of partnership success in the selected eight partnership cases and helped developing the Final Framework Model of Effective SUT Partnerships.

Initially, the Model was built using the results of the eight 'Best Practice' European partnership projects that were most demonstrative of effective partnerships of urban tourism. Specifically, the findings were used to test and revise the original conceptual scheme and the indicative factors of multi-sector partnerships success identified in the previous project phases.

The 'Explorative Funnel' method illustrated below was employed to operationalise and validate the theoretical hypothesis with the empirical findings (Gindl and Schubert 2003)<sup>15</sup>.

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<sup>15</sup> Gindl, M. and U. Schubert 2003, 'Assessing partnership success for sustainable urban tourism: Unified framework approach', Paper presented at the SUT-Governance Project Final Conference, Heidelberg, Germany, June 23-24, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.



The assessment of the 'Best Practice' cases followed the logic described in this table:

Categorisation of the partnerships in relation to sustainable urban tourism	Systematisation of the main facts	Assessment of strengths and potentials in the 4 framework dimensions	Identification of the factors of success in the 4 framework dimensions
– Community image	– Key dates	<i>i. General Framework Conditions</i>	<i>i. General Framework Conditions</i>
– Urban planning	– Life span	<i>ii. Partnership Objectives and the Co-operation Process</i>	<i>ii. Partnership Objectives and the Co-operation Process</i>
– Sustainable urban management		<i>iii. Partnership Activity and Stakeholder Participation</i>	<i>iii. Partnership Activity and Stakeholder Participation</i>
– Economic revival		<i>iv. Impacts on Sustainability</i>	<i>iv. Impacts on Sustainability</i>

To complement and verify the research results, along side the information of how each study partnership was designed, implemented, and maintained and the institutional arrangements involved, the 'stakeholders' perceptions of partnerships' success' were also examined using the Concept Mapping Technique: During a one-day facilitated group session for each city case, project stakeholders (34 representatives of government representatives, funding agents, NGOs and others involved in the project) were invited to participate in a series of brainstorming, rating, sorting, and group decision exercises to extract stakeholder perceptions about the attributes important for project success and the specific lessons learned from their tourist activities. These were used to consolidate the Final Framework Model of Effective Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism.

The Unified Framework Model presented below combines a range of dimensions, factors and indicators of SUT Partnership success, combining the systematic assessment of the framework conditions, the effectiveness of the co-operation process, the sustainability of the outcomes and the long-term impacts of the tourism activity on the prosperity of the urban locality.

The Model served as a basis for the development and implementation of the final project output 'Benchmarking tool on sustainable urban tourism partnerships'.

**EFFECTIVE PARTNERSHIPS FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM: Unified Framework Model**

Dimensions and Components	Factors of SUT Partnership Success	Indicators of SUT Partnership Success
<b>1. Framework Conditions</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>National and supra-national: important tourism sector; policies for sustainable development, governance and partnerships</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Locally (urban and regional) significant tourism sector; public commitment to stakeholder involvement; policies for sustainability and partnerships; actor networking</b></li> </ul>	1.1. Funding availability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Start up money for partnership formation</li> </ul>
	1.2. Tourism potentials and strategic development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tourism's importance in national and urban economy</li> <li>▪ Growing tourism sector</li> <li>▪ Favourable location factors and resources;</li> <li>▪ Sufficient tourist infrastructure</li> <li>▪ Variety of tourist attractions</li> <li>▪ National and local tourism development plans and far reaching strategies</li> </ul>
	1.3. Policy and commitment to sustainability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Long-term strategic planning for integrated sustainable development</li> <li>▪ Consideration of sustainability in tourism development</li> </ul>
	1.4. New forms of governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Adoption of bottom-up approaches to urban management and stakeholder involvement in decision-making and policy</li> <li>▪ Political and stakeholder recognition of partnerships' advantages towards sustainable tourism sector and prosperous community</li> </ul>
	1.5. Culture and tradition of partnering	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tradition of multi-stakeholder collaboration in the urban affairs</li> <li>▪ Effective leadership towards partnership co-operation</li> <li>▪ Established mechanisms for partnership promotion and safeguarding</li> </ul>
<b>2. Partnership Process and Activity</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Setting the objectives</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Building the foundation of agreement and consensus</b></li> </ul>	2.1. Commitment and experience in co-operative action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Recognition of mutual benefits from partnership participation</li> <li>▪ Ambitious partners and personal commitment of participating actors</li> <li>▪ Previous experience in co-operative projects and partnerships</li> </ul>
	2.2. Effective division of roles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Fair share of benefits</li> <li>▪ Clear, reasonable and efficient division of partner roles</li> <li>▪ Actors with individual excellence in own core area of activity</li> <li>▪ Productive personal relations among partners</li> </ul>
	2.3. Contractual agreements: Shared strategy for action	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Synergy of definition of roles and responsibilities</li> <li>▪ Contractual agreements regulating responsibilities and liabilities</li> </ul>

Dimensions and Components	Factors of SUT Partnership Success	Indicators of SUT Partnership Success
<b>Partnership Process and Activity (continuation)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Maintaining an effective partnership process</b></li>   <li>▪ <b>Robust tourism activity</b></li>   <li>▪ <b>Successful implementation of tourism activity</b></li> </ul>	2.4. Competence to plan the co-operation process and the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Clear objectives, adjustable to changes of conditions</li> <li>▪ Well planned strategies to achieve the objectives inclusive of flexibility for adjustments</li> <li>▪ Adequate and feasible implementation mechanism</li> </ul>
	2.5. Transparency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activity and co-operation process transparent to partners and the local community</li> <li>▪ Constructive teamwork based on mutual trust and consensus</li> </ul>
	2.6. Management efficiency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Institutionalised and competent management team and mechanism</li> <li>▪ Robust marketing and public outreach activities</li> <li>▪ Co-ordination and networking between the partners</li> <li>▪ Competent leadership</li> <li>▪ Flexible organisational structures</li> <li>▪ Monitoring and evaluation of management efficiency</li> </ul>
	2.7. Target areas	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understanding the complexity and nature of the target area</li> <li>▪ Partnership activities responsive to local needs and expectations</li> </ul>
	2.8. Implementation of the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Well defined plans or programmes defining the specific steps and actions and open to adjustments and improvements</li> <li>▪ Use of adequate and working implementation mechanisms</li> </ul>
	2.9. Monitoring and evaluation of the process and the activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ On-going monitoring of goal achievement</li> <li>▪ Impact assessment of the partnership and the activity and provision of continuous feed-back</li> <li>▪ Professional support by experts and experienced personnel</li> <li>▪ External evaluation for quality assurance and benchmarking</li> </ul>
	2.10. Public participation and outreach	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Public awareness and support of the activity</li> <li>▪ Citizens' involvement and public participation in the activity</li> <li>▪ Public outreach activities and broad dissemination</li> </ul>
<b>3. Implications for Sustainability</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ecological sustainability</b></li> </ul>	3.1. Sustainability background	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Explicit consideration of sustainability in partnership's objectives</li> <li>▪ Contribution to Local Agenda 21 pursuits</li> <li>▪ Ecological awareness</li> </ul>

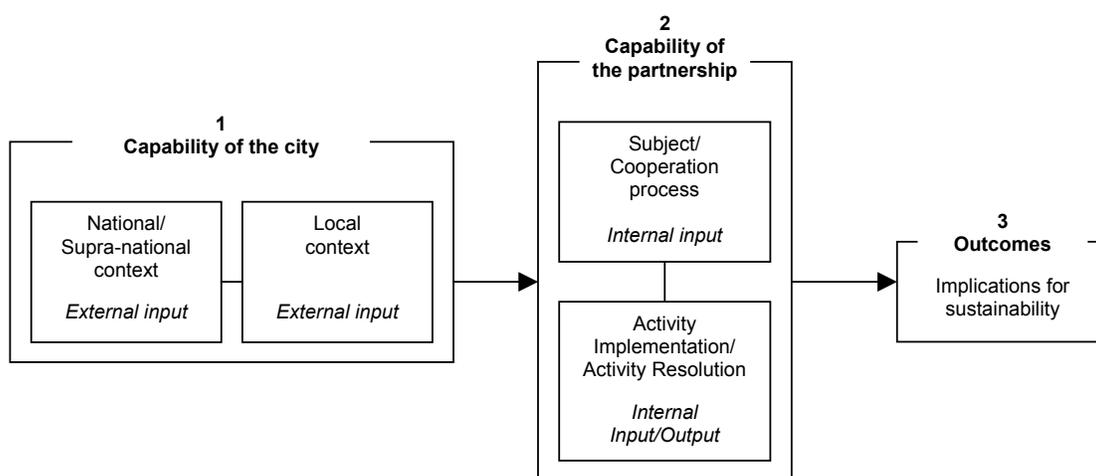
Dimensions and Components	Factors of SUT Partnership Success	Indicators of SUT Partnership Success
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Economic viability</b></li>   <li>▪ <b>Social progress</b></li>   <li>▪ <b>Long-term community prosperity</b></li>   <li>▪ <b>Urban governance</b></li> </ul>	3.2. Ecological sustainability: Urban eco-system; environmental management; built environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhanced urban ecology</li> <li>▪ Improvements in townscape and protection of the historic heritage</li> <li>▪ Preservation or improvement of the built environment</li> </ul>
	3.3. Economic viability (urban economy level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Viable and sustainable tourism sector</li> <li>▪ Enhanced urban economy and potentials through tourism development</li> <li>▪ New business and job creation</li> </ul>
	3.4. Economic viability (individual business level)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ecological management</li> <li>▪ Fostered and sustained business reorganisation and innovation</li> <li>▪ Cost-effective tourism businesses via eco-management systems</li> </ul>
	3.5. Social progress: Social inclusion	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Job creation for marginalised groups</li> <li>▪ Greater equity in distribution of social wealth and opportunities</li> </ul>
	3.6. Long-term community benefits and quality of urban life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Increased quality of life for the urban residents</li> <li>▪ Positive level of resident's attitudes</li> <li>▪ Social paradigm relevant to sustainable living</li> <li>▪ Sustainable consumption and attitude</li> <li>▪ Locality safeguarding, appreciation and endearment of place</li> </ul>
	3.7. New form of urban governance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partnership activities and stakeholder collaboration</li> <li>▪ Decentralisation of public policy and management</li> <li>▪ Enhanced public policy for sustainability involving multiple urban actors</li> <li>▪ Facilitation of LA21 principles</li> <li>▪ Community self organisation and networking</li> </ul>
3.8. Impact assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Systematic assessment of target achievement and impact of outcomes</li> <li>▪ Exposure to outside evaluation</li> <li>▪ 'Best Practice' benchmarking</li> </ul>	

### 2.3.4.3. Study advance

The work undertaken in the fourth project phase could be regarded as an operationalisation of the main findings of all preceding work packages and particularly Work package 3 'Best Practice' Partnerships. The set of indicators promoted by the project should not be regarded as conclusive. Rather, they can be used as indicative and guiding in any current or future SUT-partnership activities seeking success in context of urban governance and community sustainability. The Model:

- Allows understanding the links between these policy pursuits;
- Helps streamline the diverse concepts involved in integrated urban development via tourism;
- Highlights the key factors leading to the success of the tourism activities (Kafkalas, Yiannakou and Tasopoulou 2002)<sup>16</sup>.

The diagram below demonstrates the co-relations between the key groups of the Factors of Success:



Whilst building the SUT Partnership Model, the study also laid down the core elements and factors determining the success of a partner initiative in tourism. Understanding the reasons for forming partnerships, the nature and goals of public-private co-operation, the institutional characteristics, components, the process of partnership, its management and implementation, the sustainability of the partnership as well as partnership sustainability should be key to understanding the role of partnerships in enhancing governance for sustainable urban tourism. Although the process of starting the partnership is essential, our inquiries showed that once a participatory stance is taken, getting the right stakeholders becomes essential to producing good results. Involving the stakeholders in participatory planning and decision-making are the next main steps to be involved in the process. We also underlined some factors likely to assist the development of effective partnerships. Certainly success must be viewed in terms of what partnerships bring, how legitimate their legitimacy is, the resources used, the issues that are dealt with, the time span of the impacts, their management and evaluation. But although we argue that all stakeholders must work collaboratively to advance development projects, we recognise that different stakeholders have different levels of power, different interests, and different resources. For these reasons, we also recognise that arrangements are needed to level the playing field and enable different stakeholders to interact on an equitable and genuinely collaborative basis. Achieving consensus and reconciling key stakeholder differences is not always easy; it may entail risks, such as generating or aggravating conflicts among groups with competing interests and priorities. Dealing with conflict often requires an understanding of the underlying societal interests inhibiting consensus and putting into place mechanisms for dispute resolution and negotiation.

<sup>16</sup> Kafkalas, G., A. Yiannakou, and A. Tasopoulou (with the SUT-Governance team) 2002. "Successful partnerships for sustainable urban tourism: Unified Framework Model", SUT-Governance project deliverable 7, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

The proposed SUT Partnership Model can be used in developing partnerships in the context of local (urban) tourism development despite the richness of places and forms of tourism. The framework combines a range of parameters, which allow a uniform assessment of the (1) partnership success (2) effectiveness of co-operation, and (3) sustainability of the outcomes and the long-term impacts on the prosperity of the locality, provided the appropriate activity specific indicators are identified.

The analysis revealed that a successful partnership can lead to a range of merits in the context of (a) enhancing local tourism policy and (b) broad-based sustainability gains, among which enhanced resources, increased effectiveness and efficiency of organisations, improved public policy utilising community and business links, increased local capacity of action and control, greater legitimacy of policy involving all stakeholders, reduced conflicts, boosted trust and confidence, combating local inequalities, social inclusion, reformed services responsive to human needs, are those which stand alone.

Private-public partnerships for sustainable tourism can help the establishment of sustainable tourist facilities in urban areas, develop attractions and activities related to cultural heritage of the built environment, historic districts, promote environmentally friendly modes of transportation and reduce tourism-related traffic, develop projects to mitigate damage to destroyed environment, provide information to tourist on appropriate behaviour and risks, integrate sustainable development education in local universities and schools and tourism into curriculum, promote networks for information, and research on sustainable tourism. To accomplish this, however, requires policy institutions, the tourist industry, and the civil society as a whole to work together so far-reaching solutions are reached.

To conclude, there are several points of advocacy here. Most importantly, partnerships should become a substantial element of urban management of sustainable tourism. In tourist cities they should become a key factor in sustaining the local economy, the social fabric, and the urban environment. Multi-stakeholder partnerships, which in tourism are much more in embryonic stage than in other sectors of the economy, deserve greater recognition by the urban authorities and the other stakeholders, despite the difficulties of sustaining effective and successful collaborations. They employ the potential to embrace a wide range of complex problems and provide opportunities for reaching long-term community solutions. Public-private partnership in particular can be effective policy vehicles for urban sustainable tourism and more convergence of local authority interests with other stakeholders' should be seen than have been evident to date. Moreover, as this study suggests, partnerships are neither logistically complex nor as worthless as feared providing they are comprehensively embraced, well managed and reasonably resourced.

To implement partnerships at the local level faces many challenges. For governments, the challenge is to find ways to fulfil their responsibility for ensuring that tourism development benefits all citizens and the community in the long run while meeting the needs of the private investors and entrepreneurs. This implies a new and often difficult transition for many urban governments, from provider and manager of basic services, to enabler, regulator, and collaborator. Self-examination of the present legal, structural, financial, and political underpinnings of those policy areas of domestic urban government appear most critical. It is also important to review and alter current and emerging agendas of state and local governments to embrace sustainability and governance principles. Involving the growing number of private profit and not-for-profit organisations that are assuming increasing responsibility for leadership and performance in state and local tourism affairs is key to the success.

Government offices have to facilitate an effective co-ordination and collaboration with other bilateral and multilateral actors to ensure harmonisation of policies and actions so resources can be pooled together through joint programming and cost, responsibility, and benefits sharing. Public-private partnerships must not only be used solely as a policy implementation tool, rather they have to assume an important role in the design of policy initiatives, i.e. partnerships must drive tourism policy enhancement. At the end, partnerships must impact the policy-making process towards participatory urban governance.

For private tourist firms, the challenge is to recognise that investing in any particular partnership project offers more attractive returns than other available investment opportunities. Most importantly, entrepreneurs must be encouraged by the long-term benefits that sustainability considera-

tions will bring into their businesses and the community. Drawing that conclusion depends on the firm's competent comparison of the potential returns against the potential risks, considering not just the economic but also social, cultural, and environmental outcomes.

Overcoming these challenges could be complicated, however, by a range of gaps in the capacity of both public and private actors. Major gaps may include: (a) the reciprocal mistrust and lack of understanding of each other's interests and needs across the public and private sectors; (b) the absence of locally available information on, and experience with, arranging sustainable partnerships; and (c) the underlying legal, political, and institutional obstacles to forming effective public-private relationships. Lack of trust, motivations, and capacities can also jeopardise partnering. These gaps may lead to lengthy negotiations and increased costs making such partnership projects less attractive to potential interest parties.

The challenge for solutions is to tackle these bottlenecks and lay the groundwork for more effective collaboration at the local level. Local governments must implement the necessary sector reforms and develop integrated strategies for multi-stakeholder participation. We can specify four sets of strategic dilemmas to be addressed: (1) Trust building (2) Effective structure building (3) Policy development (remove legal and political bottlenecks which hinder partnership development at the local level and, if necessary, carry out policy or legislative reform) and (4) Capacity building for local governments, local business and community organisations aimed at overcoming misunderstanding and mistrust between public and private actors, and building the minimum capacities to design and negotiate effectively sustainable partnerships.

#### 2.3.4.4. Main results (deliverables)

**D6. Concept mapping and revised 'Best Practices' report**

**D7. Unified framework paper**

#### 2.3.5. Work package 5: Development and implementation of benchmarking procedures and tool

##### 2.3.5.1. Conceptual approach

Benchmarking, taken as 'comparative analysis of performance of organisations, processes and policies against 'best practice' cases' (Coenen 2003)<sup>17</sup> is a key concluding objective of the project.

#### OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 5

- To build and implement a benchmarking tool through which multiple localities can assess their performance in developing participatory sustainable tourism;
- To develop an on-line version of the Tool for public use and dissemination of results.

#### WORK DESIGN

- In this phase, work focused on developing the SUT Partnership Benchmarking Tool to assist urban authorities and other stakeholders measure the strength and/or long-term viability of their processes and projects for sustainable tourism.
- The revised best practices and other lessons gained by the end of WP4 were fed into this work package.

##### 2.3.5.2. Description of work

Using results from WP 4, a Benchmarking Survey Questionnaire was developed through which key parameters of establishment, management, and monitoring of SUT partnerships could be assessed. A pilot test was conducted and the procedures and the results reviewed by participating

<sup>17</sup> Coenen, R. 2003. 'Benchmarking SUT Partnerships: The SUT-Governance project approach and the tool', Presentation made at the Final 'SUT-Governance' Project Conference, Heidelberg, Germany, June 23-24, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

project partners to ensure its usability and applicability. Subsequently, the Survey was administered by mail to 125 cities in Europe. A customised reporting procedure and guide to interpretation was elaborated and individual reports were mailed back to all city respondents. The analysis of the benchmarking results were summarised in the Final Benchmark Report and were used to further revise and improve the Benchmarking Questionnaire. Following additional adjustments, an on-line Benchmarking Tool was built and posted on the project website for broad public use. A web site posting of all benchmark results concluded the effort.

Work was undertaken in two main stages:

### INTERNATIONAL BENCHMARKING METHOD AND TOOL

The SUT Partnership Benchmarking Method and Tool were developed by the Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis (ITAS) of the Forschungszentrum Karlsruhe (Germany) in co-operation with OGM (Brussels, Belgium)<sup>18</sup> and external experts. It aims to provide urban localities and other stakeholder groups in Europe with a tool to assess and improve performance in developing participatory sustainable tourism.

**Benchmarking Method:** A systematic methodology was used to design and implement the Tool, providing for consistency and complementarity of its content and structure:

From	<b>Unified Framework Model</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- All preceding work packages</li> <li>- Detailed case studies</li> </ul>
To	<b>Benchmarking Tool</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Introductory letter</li> <li>- General information on the SUT-Governance project</li> <li>- Survey Questionnaire</li> <li>- Glossary</li> <li>- Benchmarking Code of Conduct</li> </ul>
Applied to	<b>Pre-selected Cities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- SUT Team Cities</li> <li>- ECT Cities<sup>19</sup></li> <li>- Other Cities</li> </ul>
Aimed at	<b>DATA COLLECTION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Pre-announcement</li> <li>- Questionnaire mail</li> <li>- Follow-up calls and e-mails</li> <li>- Help desk</li> <li>- Personal meetings</li> <li>- Presentations and conferences</li> <li>- Project Website</li> <li>- Expert involvement</li> </ul> <p>Other outcomes ↓</p>
In order to	<b>Validate the Unified Framework Model</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Supplementary information on European cities with SUT Partnership</li> <li>- Feedback for improving the Survey</li> <li>- Promotion and dissemination of the 'SUT-Governance' Project and its objectives</li> </ul>
	<b>Revise and finalise the Benchmarking Tool</b>	
	<b>Design and provide individual Customised Benchmark Reports</b>	

<sup>18</sup> OGM Brussels, <http://www.ogm.be>.

<sup>19</sup> International Tourism and Congress Association (ECT).

Central to the development of the Tool was the Benchmarking Survey Questionnaire. It was built using quality management models drawing particularly on results of the 'Best Practice' SUT Partnerships. It provides a set of key factors of success, lead indicators and benchmark targets based on the Integrated Framework Model of Partnership Success promoted by the SUT-Governance project.

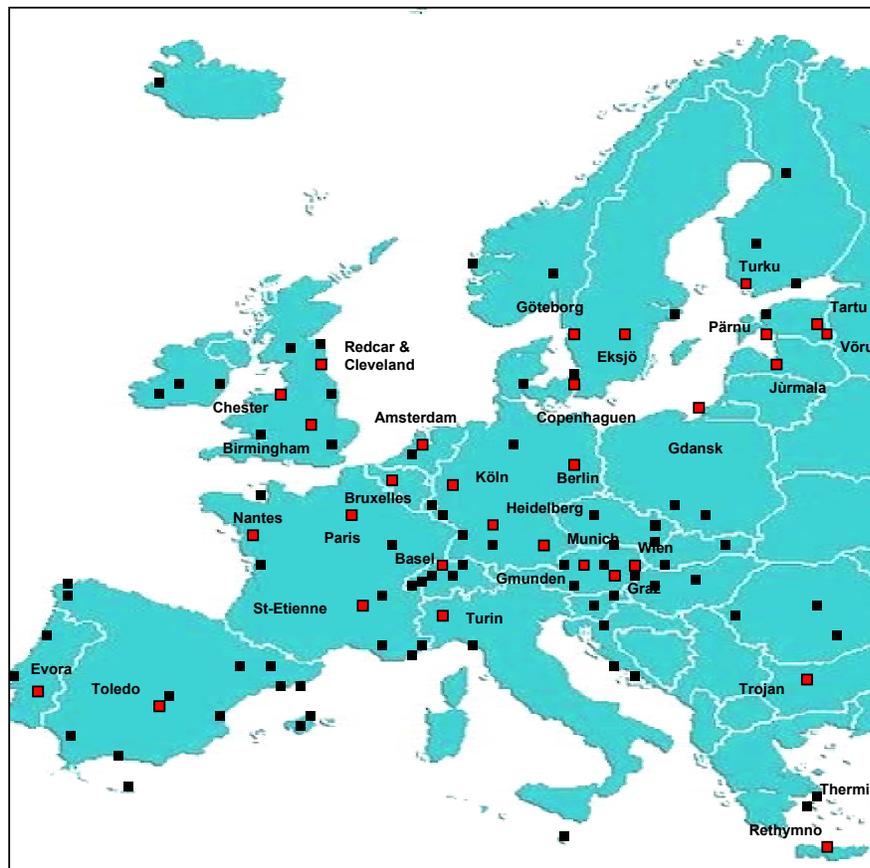
**Benchmarking survey design and implementation:** The broad objectives pursued here were:

- Assisting urban government decision-makers in benchmarking, evaluation and design of strategies to improve practice in successful partnerships of urban sustainable tourism;
- Helping other tourism stakeholders in assessing and improving practice and policy of partnership co-operation;
- And in broader terms, encouraging urban governments to put forward LA21 for tourism and motivate its supporters in fostering partnership activities.

The International SUT Partnership Benchmarking Survey was administered in 2003 in 125 European cities. It invited local administrations to self-assess their experience and success in promoting multi-stakeholder partnerships, including the different activities and processes involved in the establishment, management, implementation, evaluation and collaboration with regard to urban sustainability.

**Table 1: SUT Partnership Benchmark Cities**

(in black – cities invited to participate; in red – cities that provided responses).



The Survey Questionnaire, forwarded to priority identified contact officials, was accompanied by a set of guidelines and support information<sup>20</sup>. The Questionnaire consisted of two main parts: The first, reflecting the role of the city and the framework conditions supportive of partnership initiatives, and the second core part mirrored the central aspects of the SUT Partnership Framework Model. Uniformly, the Survey was designed to help the participating cities to:

- Analyse SUT Partnership factors of success systematically
- Compare performance with Best Practice cases
- Implement changes to overcome gaps and challenges

The Participating Cities were selected based on a set of criteria:

- Proportional geographical coverage across the continent and EU and Accession countries
- Contact officials willing to co-operate and ensure Survey completion
- Important tourism sector
- Partnership practices
- English language communication skills
- Openness to networking and innovation
- Willingness to learn and improve

Of 125 Questionnaires mailed, 33 responses were received (See table 1).

The **Survey Analysis**, using three statistical parameters (average, median, and standard deviation) was based on the four main dimensions of the SUT Governance Framework Model:

- **Urban framework conditions:** Results showed a substantial progress in SUD with activities being continuously on the rise while many of them employing SUT plans and programs (66%); Sustainable tourism issues are increasingly being considered in local policies (66 %) with around 44% of all cases involving sustainable tourism considerations; Local Agenda 21 Programs have a substantial role in urban development (66%) but only 44% of them involving sustainable tourism objectives; Urban tourism policies are predominantly formal (80%) but in only 66% of the cases sustainable tourism issues are regarded. On the less optimistic side, partnerships in urban tourism are just recently emerging and only half of the cities participate in partnership activities. Majority of these are in tourism in general (61%) and only 14% pursue sustainability objectives.

Overall, among the framework indicators, consistent with previous project findings, key to partnership success are 'partner commitment to collaborative action', 'competent and strong leadership', 'local political support' and 'availability of financial and other resources'. In this, driving are the local authorities and some lead tourism entrepreneurs<sup>21</sup>.

- **Partnership process and activity:** Results confirmed the importance of the leadership role of the public sector in forming SUT partnerships (sector provides 35% of the funding despite the fact that in most cases multiple stakeholders share the activity costs). Other factors of success include 'strong partner motivation to collaborative action', 'effective leadership' and, and again, 'political commitment of the local authorities'. In regard to the partnership arrangements, majority prefer formal partner agreements (58%), 75% evaluate the partnership effectiveness but only 40% monitor the success of the cooperation process. On the less 'rosy' side, few cities use indicator systems for evaluating partnership effectiveness. Among the success indicators of partnership effectiveness, most common are the 'partner satisfaction', and 'goal achievement'. Issues of 'mutual trust' and 'sufficiency of management capacity' do not appear to be of sufficient appreciation.
- **Implications for sustainability:** With all the cautions regarding interpretation of the Survey results (sample size, standard deviation, possible distortions) in mind, yet, it was clear that partnerships impact primarily the local urban economies. Yet, many contribute significantly to improving the urban eco-system, townscape development, and protection of historic heritage

<sup>20</sup> See 'About the Benchmarking Tool' page of the "Benchmarking partnerships for sustainable urban tourism" results of the 'SUT-Governance' project at: <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

<sup>21</sup> Based on Burhin, F., K. Paskaleva -Shapira and S. Santamaria 2003. 'European governance for sustainable urban tourism: Benchmarking Report' SUT-Governance Project Deliverable 14, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

and preservation of green spaces, areas also identified in the study of the 'Best Practice' SUT Partnerships. Sustainability, whether an explicit or implicit objective of the surveyed partnerships, is, however, an ultimate end-result of all the cases.

Overall, the Survey analysis highlighted the most significant trends in European governance for sustainable urban tourism and put forward the lessons to be learnt for improving future practice and policies.

The **Customised Back Reports** which were sent out to all survey respondents provided summary information on the city performance and success in building and maintaining effective partnerships for sustainable urban tourism in regard to the framework conditions, the partnership process and activity and the implications for urban sustainability. In particular, the partnership strategies, methods, capabilities, and performance were analysed against the whole database and against one or more specially customised city subsets with similar characteristics. In addition, the Report also underlined the strengths and weaknesses in SUT partnerships and identified the priorities for improving governance for sustainable tourism.

The **Final Benchmark Report** summarised the methodological approach, the key objectives, results and implications of the SUT Partnership Benchmarking Survey and identified the future challenges and opportunities for benchmarking in tourism in Europe.

#### **What did the participating cities benefit from the Survey?**

- Appreciated the advantages of forming and maintaining partnerships for SUT;
- Recognised the importance of considering the relations and interconnectedness between the framework conditions, the partnership process and the activities with the implications on various aspects of urban sustainability from long-term perspectives;
- Critically assessed their current practices in promoting SUT Partnerships;
- Learnt the methodology (basic steps to success) of starting and implementing a multi-sector SUT partnership;
- Received a Customised Report to position themselves in the set of participating cities
- Ultimately, develop a successful benchmarking programme for SUT.

#### **ELECTRONIC SELF-ASSESSMENT BENCHMARKING TOOL**

The electronic adaptation of the International Benchmarking Survey provides the opportunity to urban localities and other stakeholder groups in Europe and elsewhere to assess and improve performance in developing participatory sustainable tourism in urban areas and other localities. The completion of the Survey allows the participants to receive an individual Customised Back Report to consider in future practice.

Overall, the SUT-Partnership Benchmarking Tool is expected to strengthen the institutional capacity of the stakeholders to undertake and participate effectively in the further development of partnerships initiatives for sustainable tourism and urban development and to result in the increase use of governance and sustainability benchmark assessments by the decision-makers and businesses executives.

#### **2.3.5.3. Study advance**

The SUT-Governance Benchmarking Survey demonstrated the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable urban tourism, the need for exchange of information and learning from others to improve practice towards enhancing tourism actions, social fabric and the environment in the European cities. The Survey also helped identified the achievements and the gaps in the current efforts.

In particular, it became evident, that even if tourism in planning is already a practice in many tourism destinations, sustainability of the sector in context of overall and long-term community development remains an innovative phenomenon considered only in few of our tourist cities. In these cases, partnerships appear key to linking urban tourism with long-term sustainability of the local communities in context of broad-based governance and stakeholder participation. As

advanced by a large number of respondents, 'partnerships should be much more considered in the future of European urban tourism and the role of 'Best Practice' examples and implementation guidance is critical for the success.

The Survey also reaffirmed a key project notion that stakeholder participation is critical to sustainable urban tourism'. Leading in partnerships remains the public sector followed by the hotel industry and key tourism professionals. Regrettably, the local communities and the residents, however, remain largely uninvolved in the process. In the few case where the community as social organism participated in partnerships activities, its role was limited to supporting industry or government and not the interest of the society in general. Evidently, urban communities are yet to engage in action for sustainable tourism in Europe. Furthermore, Local Agenda 21 for Tourism is also a new practice. This raises the issue of further promoting the principles of the Agenda, which can provide a consistent framework for tourism in regard to sustainable urban development and governance.

The study also revealed that benchmarking in tourism, let alone in SUT partnerships, is largely a new phenomenon and practice and is yet limited to tourism destinations and sector performance only. The unfamiliarity of the respondents and, yet their willingness to participate, deserve indeed a special recognition. With more experience, benchmarking in tourism will improve and the results will become more accurate.

The Survey, thus, reinforced the need of a European-wide Tourism Benchmarking System, considering the growing importance of tourism in the Europe, the diversity of the sector activities and their interactions with other sectors and functions of the local economies and the communities. With the importance given to sustainable development in the future of Europe, the need of a European Tourism Benchmarking System becomes ever more apparent. This call becomes even stronger considering the complexity, inconsistency and the diversity of the benchmark indicators used in tourism to-date. The later has made data collection, comparisons, and evaluations difficult and results have often been inaccurate. Establishing a Unified Indicator System in Tourism where data is consistent in all countries and sectoral branches while also allowing for adjustments to the specific conditions and actions would make benchmarking of European tourism feasible and beneficial (Burhin *et al* 2003).<sup>22</sup>

In this regard, the SUT-Governance Project initiative of Benchmarking Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism can be considered an important step towards achieving a European-wide Benchmarking Model for Sustainable Tourism, which will further assist the promotion of European Governance by Sustainable Urban Tourism, the main focus of the current Project.

#### 2.3.5.4. Main results (deliverables)

##### **D9. Benchmarking tool and method**

##### **D11. Analysis and report of benchmarking results**

#### 2.3.6. Work package 6: Project conference and final report

##### 2.3.6.1. Conceptual approach

#### **OBJECTIVES AND INPUT TO WORK PACKAGE 6**

- To disseminate the methods, results, and recommendations of the project to participating localities and publicly to the wider set of stakeholders and interested parties.

<sup>22</sup> Burhin, F., K. Paskaleva -Shapira and S. Santamaria 2003. European Governance for sustainable urban tourism: Benchmarking Report', SUT-Governance Project Deliverable 14, <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

## WORK DESIGN

The objective was accomplished by:

- The enlargement of the public web site containing project information, tools, and reports
- A Final Project Conference involving about local, national, and European stakeholders
- Dissemination in hard copy of project reports and executive summaries
- Conference presentations and journal publications based on this work (to be completed after the final report).

### 2.3.6.2. Description of work

In this concluding phase, results from prior work packages WP1-5 are used as inputs to this work package. Central to project dissemination and further developments was the SUT-Governance Final Conference in 2003.

## THE SUT-GOVERNANCE PROJECT CONFERENCE

Against this background, the Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis of the Karlsruhe Research Centre, the City of Heidelberg, and a number of partners organised an 1.5-day International Conference to discuss innovative ideas of bridging science and practice in Governance for Sustainable Urban Tourism and advance the role of Multi-stakeholder Partnerships as effective means of delivering urban tourism policy in the context of integrated and sustainable community development and broad-based local governance. The Conference took place in Heidelberg, Germany, June 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> with the participation of 53 tourism and urban experts from Austria, Germany, Belgium, Bulgaria, Russia, United Kingdom, Spain, Greece, and Serbia.

The event was organised around four main topic sessions, key to the project's concerns:

- Participatory Governance for Sustainability: Building partnerships for enhancing urban tourism;
- 'Best Practice' Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: Working together for the benefit of city's all;
- Benchmarking Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: A tool for assessing, improving practice, and 'Best Practice' diffusion;
- Governance and Sustainability of Urban Tourism: Integrating research, development, and policy for meeting the long-term European Agenda.

The conference sessions featured contributions from all project partners, case city representatives and tourism partnership experts, as well as leading personalities and professionals from industry, academia and civil society from around Europe<sup>23</sup>.

Several keynote speakers addressed the latest trends and evolution of the discussed topics. Apart from the key speeches, the conference programme also featured key project reports of conceptual, methodological and implementation nature. Four European 'Best Practice' SUT partnership cases were presented underlining the key factors of their success. The results of the SUT Partnership Benchmarking Survey were summarised outlining the importance of multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable urban tourism. City representatives shared their views on the SUT Partnership Benchmarking Tool and the perceived benefits of collaborating in the project. Experienced researchers and practitioners summarised the sessions' discussions and provided the topics' key conclusions and their policy perspectives in the final conference session. At the end, the Project Director presented for adoption to the audience a Draft of the 'Conference Participants Statement', which was subsequently finalised and submitted for release to key European Union's electronic wires and press release channels.

Overall, the event provided the opportunity to learn from other experiences in sustainable partnerships development and 'best practice' benchmarking in tourism from hands-on researchers and practitioners, high profile speakers and delegates. It also assisted in meeting like-minded profes-

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<sup>23</sup> All Conference documents – the programme, presentations, and the 'Participants Statement', can be found at the project web site at: <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>.

sionals, establishing new contacts and broadening the networking capacities of the participants to seek innovative tools and techniques to improve and upgrade research, development and planning approaches and meet the future needs of tourism businesses, residents and tourists in the European cities.

In conclusion, all conference participants overwhelmingly emphasised the importance of tourism for urban sustainability and governance and the building of dynamic, competitive, quality and participatory-based urban economies in Europe. They reiterated the importance of efficient distribution of information, the coordination of activities and, in general, improved communication between the stakeholders concerned. With these notions in mind, they reiterated their personal and institutional commitment to preserve and strengthen this forum for dialogue and co-operation, in the framework of the Joint Conference Statement:

#### **'ENFORCING GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE URBAN TOURISM'**

Which states: 'Our decision to adopt this Statement follows on the Commission's strategic commitment to European Governance, Sustainable and Competitive Tourism and Integrated Urban Development. With it, we aim to further assist the process of developing European policies that have positive impact on our cities and urban municipalities. We agree to endorse the development of 'Urban Tourism Governance Platform and Forum' in which the city authorities are invited to play a major part. The working document that has been approved today sets out a number of essential principles that can guide the relations among the tourism stakeholders in the urban environments towards sustainability and participatory decision-making and defines the scope of their dialogue. It can be of particular interest to local authorities, urban and regional planners, government and tourism organisation officials, industry decision makers, academics and researchers, and civil society and consumer groups.

The Statement also called for the creation of a European-wide

#### **'URBAN GOVERNANCE PLATFORM'**

Which synthesises the key project findings and messages to the larger European audience:

**First and above all, we fully recognise** that sustainable tourism, governance and overall community prosperity are inter-linked and that these elements depend on each other for successful long-term urban sustainable development.

**We emphasise** that tourism should serve all citizens of Europe – tourists, local residents and business entrepreneurs.

**We reinforce** the notion that tourism must be sustainable to be competitive and of high quality.

**We affirm** that sustainable urban tourism depends on good local governance.

**We endorse** the vision that strategic collaborative arrangements and co-operations at the levels of development decisions and policy making, together with the technical tools – multi-stakeholder partnerships, for addressing a particular problem or need can make an important contribution to the sustainable development of tourism and a balanced urban development.

**We advocate** that multi-stakeholder partnerships must become key to achieving urban sustainable tourism and broad based local governance.

**We confirm** that, to assist delivery of sustainable urban tourism, partnerships must engage all interested parties, involve overall community prosperity considerations, and drive urban tourism policy enhancement and impact policy-making towards participatory governance.

**We assert** that by creating and sustaining effective multi-stakeholder partnerships at the urban and local levels, we can arrive at new policies that will provide for a more just, equitable and sustainable community development.

**We maintain** that implementing tourism partnerships requires that cities lay down the groundwork for effective collaboration.

**We urge** European city governments to set up the example and establish and maintain a process of concerted action and co-operation in their urban communities.

**We encourage** the local authorities to take the lead in catalysing and facilitate urban tourism partnerships and become a key player as producers, enablers, promoters, and planners of the local governance process.

**We promote** the incorporation of sustainable tourism in the integrated sustainable urban development and in context of destination management to better manage urban tourism.

**We invite** urban authorities to use partnerships as a policy design and activity implementation tool in sustainable urban tourism.

**We advance** the facilitation and use of Local Agenda 21 for tourism as both advantageous and rewarding framework of action.

**We believe**, in the implementation of the Urban Tourism Governance Platform, the contribution of industry and civil society organisations is fundamental. Therefore,

**We appeal** to all groups concerned to join and support city efforts towards governance for sustainable urban tourism.

**We believe** that all those who care about the sustainable development of our cities should look at the Tourism Governance Platform as an opportunity to reinforce the role of EU governance, sustainability and responsible tourism policies.

*Because, stakeholder involvement in policy and development foster attachment and ownership to local initiatives and helps maintain and improve the local values and amenities for the far-reaching future.*

**Overcoming the Challenges** requires the efforts of all:

- **The urban community:** To build trust and understand each other's interests and objectives; build locally available information, experience, and institutional capacities; overcome underlying legal, political, and institutional obstacles; strive for innovation.
- **Local government:** To ensure the benefits for all from urban tourism development; transition from a provider and manager to enabler, regulator and collaborator; review and improvement of policy agendas to embrace sustainability and governance; involve NGOs; facilitate collaboration; implement sector reforms and develop strategies for participation.
- **Tourism industry:** To promote collaboration, openness and sector responsibility; invest in partnerships for long term returns and benefits; share resources, risks and benefits for increasing business efficiencies and potentials; create corporate responsibility and provide satisfaction to all – customer and citizens.
- Key to Success is promoting a local culture, practice, and policy of partnerships towards sustainable urban tourism and community well being.

*These calls for joint up thinking, policy consistency, changing the mind frame and build up capacity needs.*

## URBAN TOURISM GOVERNANCE FORUM

**To fulfil the Agenda**, stepping up of Europe's tourism research and innovation capacity is necessary.

**We draw the attention** on the need to build on the results of the SUT-Governance project and further study tourism governance and relevant community development issues.

**The research** needs to be tailored to help better structure the European research and to cope with the strategic objectives set out by the European heads of states and governments in Lisbon 2002.

**The advancement of research** should enable tourism to become a more responsible industry inclusive of urban community development and aspirations in the next ten years. To accomplish this goal

**We advocate for Forum on Urban Tourism Governance** to engage all parties concerned and develops and further promote the Agenda of Sustainable Tourism in the European cities. **Focus** has to be placed on the need to enable innovation and collaborative work in the spirit of local governance and prosperity.

**We believe** that the establishment of a Forum will contribute to the consolidation of our objectives and assist in the achievement of the objectives specified in Statement. Therefore,

**We call** for ideas, allowing Europe's tourism and urban development community to propose and debate topics of common interest on-line and organise follow-up meetings and events.

**We aim** the establishment of *Urban Tourism Governance Framework* and the development of *Guidelines* for its delivery in the European cities.

**We look forward** to taking part in a constructive debate and to forming the agenda to reinforce the role of EU sustainable tourism, urban and governance policies.

**We invite** all key parties of urban tourism to join us in this Urban Tourism Governance Forum.

**For its part**, the Institute for Technology Assessment and System Analysis in Karlsruhe, will continue to support this process and the Agenda with a key goal of advancing the role of sustainable tourism for European Governance and Citizenship.

**The conference participants' commitment** is clear – and the tourism governance approach can support urban sustainable development.

**This is our contribution** to the Preparation of the Commission's DG Enterprise Communication on 'Basic orientations for the Sustainability of European Tourism', 2003.

#### 2.3.6.3. Main results (deliverables)

**D12. Final project conference**

**D13. Final technology implementation plan**

**D14. Final project report**

## 2.4. Assessment of the Results and Conclusions

### THE CHALLENGES

Sustainability figures high on the Strategic Agenda of the European Union as part of the implementation of the 2002 Lisbon process. Early this year, in her Welcome Speech at the 'Environmental Governance and Civil Society' Conference' in Brussels, Commissioner Margot Wallström, called for 'Sustainable development becoming a Governing Principle underpinning everything that the Union does' with, 'the principle of participatory democracy turning into the indispensable premise for consolidating the European agenda for sustainable development'.

On their part, tourism experts from around the world speak out that the sector has well much to offer in this regard. Urban professionals alike assert city tourism in particular, as the fastest growing sector in Europe and a new phenomenon on the cutting edge of a trend should be in the vanguard. The increasing importance of the sector as a major contributor to local and regional economies and overall community prosperity highlights the need to pay a special attention to the relationship between sustainable tourism and participatory local governance.

European cities now face high and growing demands from tourism, and the pressures and problems associated with the management of visitors have to be systematically tackled by all parties concerned. City authorities in multi-stakeholder partnerships have to deal with sustainable management and development of urban tourism for the benefits of all – tourists and locals. Addressing the varied challenges of tourism requires advancing knowledge and practice about

how municipal governments and other stakeholders can work together in sustainable tourism development to promote participatory governance and ensure long-term local development.

## THE RESULTS

The principal aim of the international research and policy project 'Sustainable Urban Tourism: Involving local Agents and Partnerships for New Forms of Governance' (SUT-Governance) is to develop, validate, and deploy a general framework for urban sustainable tourism partnerships that is applicable to a variety of urban municipal contexts by drawing on detailed field work in four European countries: Germany, Austria, Greece and Bulgaria. The broader goal of the project is to elaborate and promote innovative forms and instruments of local governance to improve urban tourism development involving the principles of sustainability and participatory decision-making.

### The tangible outputs of the project are:

- Framework report: influences on decision-making (Enhanced research and policy approach of SUT development)
- Country context assessment report (New systematic knowledge of policy and practice in S(U)T on different levels and actor institutions in the study countries)
- Partnership cases: cross-case analysis and indicators of success (Innovative management and development tool for SUT)
- 'Best practice' report (Systematic knowledge of factors and agents of partnership success)
- Unified framework model (New framework model for catalysing and sustaining effective partnerships for SUT)
- Benchmarking protocol and tool (Key parameters of establishment, management, and monitoring SUT partnerships to assist urban authorities and stakeholders to measure the strength & long-term viability of their SUT processes and activities)
- Final project workshop (Broad technology transfer of project results through a large number of representatives of local, national, and European stakeholders of tourism and urban development)
- Final project report (Dissemination of hard copies of project report and executive summaries to stakeholders with policy and development methodology and benchmarking technique (basic steps of success) divided into specific steps with key indicators towards starting and implementing successful multi-stakeholder partnerships for sustainable tourism)

It should be noted, that the SUT-Governance Project is the first of its kind to define the factors and agents of success of establishing and maintaining effective partnerships for sustainable urban development. Thanks to this study, public administrations and other interested stakeholder groups can begin making more informed choices and decisions about the opportunities and the potentials that partnership collaborations offer for improving the overall urban environment and the citizens' quality of life.

## THE OUTCOMES

The main outcomes of the project are two types:

### Study results with a potential to influence future policies in governance of sustainable tourism in Europe:

- Set of European 'Best practice' Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism
- Unified Framework Model for Effective Partnerships of Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT Partnerships)
- SUT Partnership Benchmarking Method and Tool for assessing practice, measuring success and improving performance of existing or planned collaborative initiatives in tourism
- European Platform and Forum for enforcing Governance for Sustainable Urban Tourism.

**A set of concepts, methodological approaches and policy recommendations for use by tourism decision-makers and stakeholders across Europe:**

**Sustainable Urban Tourism (SUT)**

- is a holistic, equitable, and future-oriented development strategy, part of the wider Urban Sustainable Development Agenda
- is part of the principles and objectives of urban integrated development
- is consistent with long-term community progress and prosperity
- is a tool to increase social welfare, achieve greater and more equitable distribution of local wealth and enhance the integrity of the local ecosystems

*Thus, proof of Sustainable Urban Tourism is the sustainable development of the tourist destination.*

**Operationalisation of Sustainable Urban Tourism** requires the recognition of two fundamental principles imbedded in the sustainability-induced integrated development paradigm:

- Sustainable tourism implies sustainable ends (outcomes of tourism products);
- Sustainable tourism involves effective delivery means (strategic policymaking and implementation) to deal with the complexity and the feasibility of the process and ensure the fulfilment of the desired objectives).

**Sustainable tourism depends on the endorsement of all** – suppliers, users, and hosts. To succeed:

- Tourists must demand and seek sustainable and quality services and products;
- Industry must recognise and consider the benefits;
- Tourism communities must enforce sustainable tourism practices.

**Policy for SUT** calls for the adoption of working approaches to sustainable urban tourism. In this respect, SUT must be viewed as a consistent and continuous development strategy ensuring the balance of the present benefits of tourism with the future opportunities of the host community while maintaining its cultural, environmental, and economic quality, diversity, integrity and viability.

*Thus, Sustainable Urban Tourism should be taken as a 'strategic urban decision and policy-making set of actions around a desired local goal of integrated sustainability to which all forms of tourism aspire' (Paskaleva-Shapira 2001).<sup>24</sup>*

**From a policy perspective therefore Sustainable Urban Tourism**

- is a means of
  - enhancing local development
  - promoting local identity and cultural and destination image
  - meeting the needs of quality of visitor experience and quality of life of residents
- is a policy option with community-centred objectives
- is a process of governing which has to be sustained
- must affect urban policy and development, considering both, industry and community long-term progress
- must account for both
  - tourism product and its sustainability implications
  - direct and indirect impacts

*Thus, Sustainable Urban Tourism maintains the capacity and offers potentials to the way we develop our cities.*

**Implementation of Sustainable Urban Tourism Requires a Multi-Stakeholder Approach:**

Sustainable Urban Tourism must deal with a variety of problems such as improving the urban fabric and infrastructure, conservation of historic and cultural buildings and zones, controlling pressures for development, overcrowding, pollution, quality of jobs, new technologies and innovative

<sup>24</sup> Paskaleva-Shapira, K. 2001, 'Innovative Partnerships for Sustainable Urban Tourism: Framework Approach', SUT-Governance project deliverable 2, <http://www.sut.itas.fzk.de>.

business forms. The multifunctional nature of policies and actions call for a local participatory decision-making process to build consensus and share the responsibilities, risks and benefits from urban tourism in context of

**Urban Governance**, taken as relationships and collaborative actions between urban actors to plan and manage the city affairs aiming fostering democracy and societal and community prosperity and involving government, private sector, and civil society. In its 'good' application, Urban Governance must involve sustainability, decentralisation, transparency, accountability, equity, efficiency, civic engagement, and security. To accomplish this,

**Public-Private Partnerships** are needed. They are generally considered as effective means to facilitate multi actor collaboration and development of sustainable urban tourism since they can provide for:

- enhanced tourism resources and services responsive to human needs
- broad based sustainability gains
- utilisation of community and business links
- increased effectiveness and efficiency of organisations
- reduced conflicts, boosted trust and actor confidence
- improved public policy and greater policy legitimacy
- collective responsibility for planning, decision-making, problem solving, project implementation and evaluation
- increased local capacity of action and control
- networks to share knowledge, resources, and common goals
- community dialogue, solutions, and change
- creating responsible, engaged and involved locals and tourists
- combating local inequalities and inclusion

*Thus, forming partnerships must become a key principle of quality management of public services in urban tourism towards urban sustainability and more local democracy.*

**Success of SUT Partnerships** depends on the efficacy of the

- Partnership process
- Tourism activity and its implementation
- Activity resolutions for a long term and far reaching community sustainability

**Both, 'Development' and 'Marketing' SUT Partnerships** have the potentials for promoting sustainable community development:

- The first, by increasing and effectively managing the use and increase of the local tourism 'stock'
- The second, by sustaining and enhancing the partnership process and collaborative culture in the community

**Implementation Opportunities for SUT Partnerships** are multiple. Some include:

- Sustainable tourist facilities
- Cultural heritage attractions
- Historic districts
- Environmentally friendly transportation
- Mitigating damage to destroyed environment
- Informing on behavioural and risks
- Education, research and information networks

**Benchmarking SUT Partnerships** is a key way to improve practices. It provides the

- opportunity to integrate and internationalise the common understanding of the key principles, approaches, aims and role of forming and sustaining collaborative actions for sustainable urban tourism
- lead indicators for various cities to assess their practice and improve future undertakings compared to other EU cities
- chance to cities to re-evaluate past and current experience.

*Therefore, Benchmarking should be further established as a tool for improving tourism partnerships to become a comprehensive system providing for references to best practice examples and a consistent part of urban tourism quality management practices.*

Overall, the project's work will contribute to an enhanced understanding of sustainable urban tourism and its practical applications and create knowledge that can help foster improvements in urban governance and sustainability. It will assist a number of important strategic areas of concerns of the European cities and the Community such as promoting European-wide sustainable development, endorsing governance, achieving balanced spatial development, and developing citizens' network and participation.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH AND DISSEMINATION**

A series of dissemination and public outreach activities are carried out to inform interested parties about the project results:

- National workshops
- Stakeholder involvement in research development
- Project leaflets in national languages
- Participation in experts and EC "City of Tomorrow" Cluster meetings
- Project web site containing project information, tools, and reports
- Participation in European and international networks
- Administration of benchmarking tool to 125 European cities
- Conference presentations
- Papers for submission in peer-reviewed journals
- Hard copies of final project report
- Brief executive summaries of final report, best practices, and policy recommendations
- Final project conference
- Project spin off initiatives<sup>25</sup>

## **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

All projects reports and support documentation, including the on-line Benchmark Survey can be found at the project Website at: <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>. Project partners can also be contacted for further reference (see Partner link of project web site: <http://sut.itas.fzk.de>).

## **2.5. Acknowledgements**

This Report is written by Krassimira Paskaleva-Shapira, the SUT-Governance Project Director based on key study findings and deliverables. Some of the conclusions are based on her summary project presentations at the Final Conference in Heidelberg, Germany<sup>26</sup> and presentations made by the lead project partners and participants. The results presented here, the conclusions, and the policy recommendations are consistent with the views of the entire project team whose valuable considerations and inputs are generously taken into account in all main parts of this document. These include particularly the principal national investigators Grigoris Kafkalas, Uwe Schubert, Reinhard Coenen, Theodora Kaleynska, Michaela Gindl, and Athina Yiannakou, who made this project work well. These also include our junior colleagues and Ph.D. students who worked meticulously in the field and contributed significantly in the reporting and documenting the study: Tobias Woll, Florian Wukovitsch, Anastassia Tasopoulou and Teodora Krumova. The

<sup>25</sup> These involve (1) 'Towards Intelligent Sustainable Cities (INTELCITY): EC IST RTD Roadmap (2002-03); (2) 'Towards Smart European Tourism: Intelligent Systems for Sustainability, Quality, and Competitiveness (SETIS), EC FP6 NoE Eol (June 2002); (3) 'Intelligent Cities (INTELCITIES) FP6 IST IP under contract preparation (2003-2008); (4) 'Intelligent Cultural Heritage Destinations: Strategic Roadmap for e-Tourism (Heritage e-Destinations) FP6 IST CA Bid (April 2003); and (5)FP6 bid under preparation on Tourism and European Governance and Citizenship (Dec03).

<sup>26</sup> These are focusing, among others, on the SUT-Governance project's main objectives and accomplishments, relevance of the findings and the contributions to the specific policy pursuits of the European Community, the potential impacts and the new evolving opportunities in research and practice of Governance for Sustainable European Tourism (see project Web site for full presentations).

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