



Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Alt Empordà

Alt Empordà is the county in Catalonia with the most municipalities (68), of which 8 are large and 60 have less than 2,000 inhabitants. There is a big difference between the large coastal towns and those located inland. The capital, Figueres, has one of the most important resources of the destination, the Casa Museu Dalí.



Evaluation carried out through the project RESTART MED! in dialogue with representatives of the County Council.

Checklist to evaluate sustainability in tourism policies

PILLARS	TO DO - Does this policy...	YES	In Progress	NO
Governance	...integrate the concept of sustainable tourism?	<input type="radio"/>		
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	...establish a monitoring system with specific indicators?	<input type="radio"/>		
Environmental	...take into account climate change mitigation and adaptation actions?	<input type="radio"/>		
	...integrate biodiversity conservation and restoration programmes?			<input type="radio"/>
	...consider a sustainable mobility development?			
	...tackle specific waste management strategies?	<input type="radio"/>		
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Socio-cultural	...integrate actions to allow community access to material and immaterial resources?			<input type="radio"/>
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	...inform on available funding programmes?	<input type="radio"/>		



Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Alt Penedès

The county of Alt Penedès is located halfway between the cities of Barcelona and Tarragona.

It is an inland county bordered by Anoia (N), Baix Penedès (O), Alt Camp (O), Garraf (S) and Baix Llobregat (E). It is bordered on both sides by the mountains of the coastal and pre-coastal ranges, and the inland plain opens to the northeast towards Barcelona and to the southwest towards Tarragona.

The region is made up of 27 municipalities and Vilafranca del Penedès is its capital. Most of the municipalities are made up of several nuclei (small villages, hamlets, farms and isolated houses).



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Checklist to evaluate sustainability in tourism policies

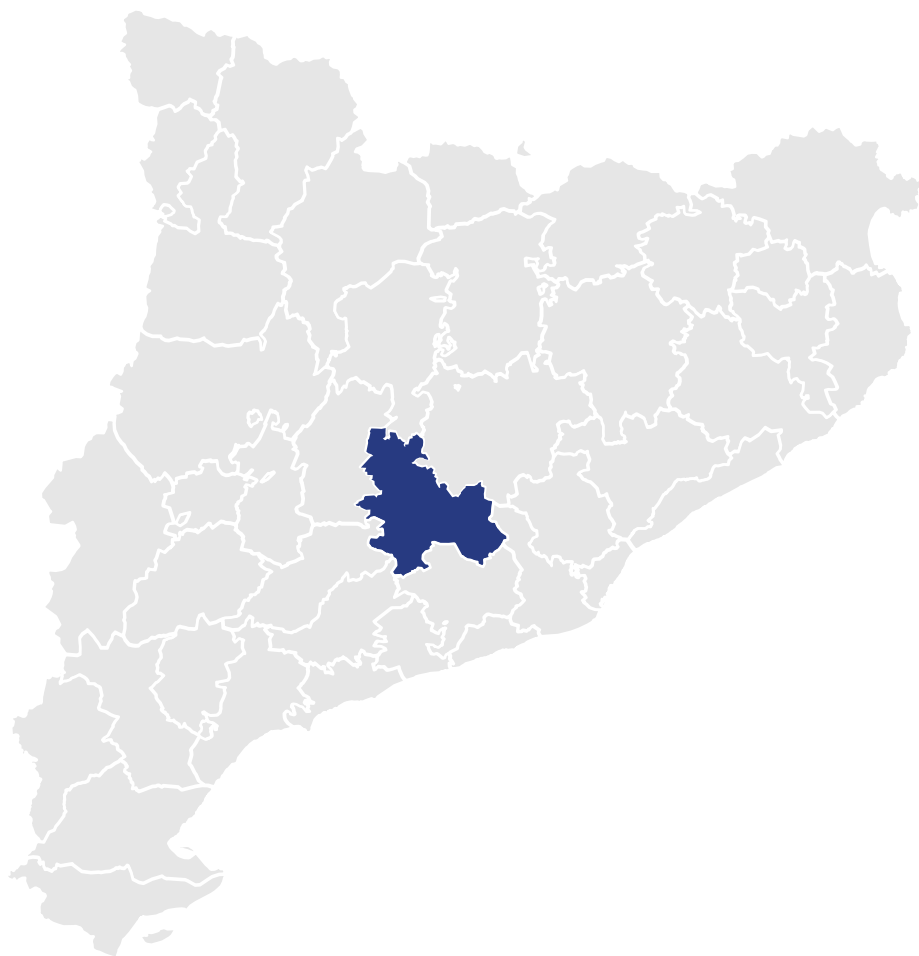
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Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Anoia

Anoia is a region in Catalonia, located in the territorial areas of Penedès and the Comarques Centrals. It has a surface area of 866.3 km² and is made up of 33 municipalities, the capital of which is Igualada.

Anoia has a population of 120,738 inhabitants in 2019. More than half of its population lives in the centre and south, the Òdena basin area, while the northern area, known as Alta Anoia, is the most depopulated and mountainous.



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Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Baix Ebre

The Baix Ebre region is made up of 14 municipalities and 3 decentralised municipal entities.

The largest municipalities are the county capital, Tortosa (33,890 inhabitants), Deltebre (11,656 inhabitants), Roquetes (8,193 inhabitants), L'Ametlla de Mar (7,209 inhabitants) and L'Ampolla (3,563 inhabitants).

Its main tourist resources are the natural parks of the Ebro Delta and Els Ports and the greenway of the Zafán Valley, the Carrilet de la Cava route and the natural path of the Ebro, the Ebro River and the Mediterranean Sea. The region is part of the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve.



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Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Berguedà

Berguedà is a county located in the interior of Catalonia, halfway between the mountains and the plain, between the Pyrenees and the Central Depression, crossed from north to south by the Llobregat river.

It is made up of 31 municipalities and a population of approximately 40,000 inhabitants. Of the 31 municipalities, only 3 have more than 3,000 inhabitants.



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RESTART MED!

Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in Les Garrigues

Les Garrigues is an eminently dry farming region (olive trees, cereals and vineyards). From the 60s and 70s, intensive pig farming began (Arbeca, Juneda and Borges have large farms). There are also some poultry farms (Juneda: picantó, quail and partridge and Castellanos and Arbeca: egg and poultry production).

Les Garrigues is made up of 24 municipalities (19,000 inhabitants); 19 of the 24 municipalities have less than 500 inhabitants.

Tourism is gradually developing. The main resources are the Cave of the Moors of Cogul, the Vilars d'Arbeca, the flowering almond trees, the olive oil route and the gastronomic exhibition. In the last 5 years, the number of rural tourism establishments has tripled (mainly holiday homes). At present there are 50 rural tourism houses and 9 areas for motorhomes. Walking and cycling routes have also been created and "Les Garrigues in flower" is promoted in spring. There are quite a few second homes in several villages, especially Poble de Cérvoles, Tarrés and Vilosell.

People who visit the region for tourism are looking for peace and quiet, charming villages (e.g. Vilosell), heritage, olive oil culture, etc. The main problems of the region are: lack of water, lack of communication (both terrestrial and digital) and a high level of ignorance about the region.



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Evaluation of the sustainability of tourist policies in La Ribera d'Ebre

Ribera d'Ebre is one of the regions of the Terres de l'Ebre, which extends on both sides of the Ebre river. It belongs to the province of Tarragona and its capital is Móra d'Ebre. It covers an area of 827.3 km² that extends through 14 municipalities.



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RESTART MED!

REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism across Regions in
the MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies
ALT EMPORDÀ

Details of working meeting:

Date: 20 April 2023.

Place: Alt Empordà Regional Council, Figueres.

Participants and positions held: Agustí Badosa (Tourism Advisor for the Alt Empordà Regional Council), Olga Sabater (Tourism Technician for the Alt Empordà Regional Council), Cristina Bajet (Catalan Tourism Agency), and Anna Parcerisa and Imma Espel (BiternaTourism & Culture).

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

Alt Empordà is the region of Catalonia with the most municipalities (68), of which eight are large and 60 have fewer than 2,000 inhabitants. There is a big difference between the large municipalities on the coast and the others inland. The capital, Figueres, boasts one of the most important resources of the destination, the Dalí House Museum.

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Alt Empordà Regional Council has been focusing on tourism since 2001. Since then, the Regional Council and Adrinoc (manager of the Leader program) have created working groups to define what kind of tourism is wanted in the destination. The destination's first Strategic Tourist Plan and the first public-private partnership is aimed at boosting tourism are a result of these collaborations.

Empordà Turisme was created in 2004, bringing together local public and private agents working in tourism. Quality and sustainability have been the association's key values from the outset.

From its creation until 2021, Olga Sabater, the manager of the association, was also responsible for the Regional Council's tourism provision. Likewise, the duties of the honorary president of the association coincide with those of the Regional Council's tourism advisor.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public-private and public-public relations

The Tourism Steering Committee, a dedicated working group, meets every two to three months with representatives from local tourism offices, namely Empordà Tourism and the Hospitality Association (guild) and Adrinoc, with the objective of coordinating initiatives, planning, strategies, etc.

The Regional Council mainly works on planning and strategy and seeks funding and carries out projects while Empordà Turisme deals more with product creation and promotion (in coordination with the Regional Council).

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

Alt Empordà has a Strategic Plan for Economic Promotion at the level of the Regional Council and a Sectoral Tourism Plan. Three Sectoral Plans have already been approved. Currently, the one corresponding to the period 2021–2027 is being implemented. Projects to request funding at various levels are drawn up based on these plans.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

The technical team consists of the tourism technician and an assistant. When there are projects that require more human resources, they hire staff to carry them out.

(5) Forms of financing

The Regional Council's funding comes from various national/European subsidies: the Territorial Specialization and Competitiveness Project (PECT), the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), the Interreg V-A Spain-France-Andorra Program (POCTEFA), Development Plan, etc. They also have a budget for promotional purposes of around €50,000 per annum, which comes from tourist tax.

Empordà Turisme has its own budget made up of members' contributions.

(6) Major projects

The Council hopes to take part in the Local Sustainable Tourism Plans in order to improve the sustainability of the region's tourism (e.g. creation of cycle paths, installation of charging points for electric bicycles and cars, development of intermodal platforms between bike and train, etc.).

Other pending projects that could also be included: map of seagrass meadows, blue-zone marine parking (digital buoys).

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

Empordà Turisme's mission statement already mentions that members must ensure the quality and sustainability of Alt Empordà as a tourist destination, but they do not possess any specific seal or certification in terms of sustainability.

The region belongs to the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST) and they also hold the Empordà Product Guarantee Mark. They also work with Baix Empordà on "Empordà", a collaborative regional brand which covers tourism and other areas, all under the premise of quality and sustainability.

The Tourism Work Plan already promotes enhancing hiking and cycling tourism to improve mobility and reduce travellers' carbon footprint.

As an example of good practice at a private level, the Peralada winery has made a move towards sustainability and has changed from coach parties to 15-person tours.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

The tourism advisor is also the environment advisor. There is a Strategic Plan that deals with issues of waste, drought, energy, etc.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

There are four local Natural Parks (Aiguamolls de l'Empordà, Montgrí, the Medes Islands and Baix Ter, Cap de Creus, and Albera), two of which are run by ECST with the involvement of the Regional Council.

An ECST was attempted at county level but without success.

Biodiversity conservation and restoration initiatives are the responsibility of the Natural Parks themselves.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

The Regional Council is working to promote hiking and cycling in the region.

(4) Waste management

There is a Strategic Waste Plan at Regional Council level.

Currently, there are two models in operation: large municipalities are in charge of their own waste management while small ones leave the task to the Regional Council who have begun to implement door-to-door collection. An invitation to tender has been issued for different methods following an assessment of the needs of each village.

Seasonality plays a great part in the generation of waste, with a significant increase in the summer months. This does not pose a problem, however, as the system was designed to cope with this happening.

(5) Use of water

The area is to be included in the Generalitat de Catalunya's Water Management Plan. The Regional Council supplies only a few municipalities. Additionally, the Costa Brava Consortium, which depends on the Provincial Council of Girona, is responsible for water purification in coastal municipalities and has been supplying water for some time.

(6) Use of energy

A Regional Energy and Climate Agency has existed since 2012.

The Regional Agency is an active participant in the Generalitat's Energy Transition Plan. They help the municipalities and, before the pandemic, a diagnosis was made to ascertain the levels of energy consumption.

They are aware that they generate less than 1% of renewable energy. There is a (participatory) Regional Plan that indicates what needs to be done to promote the use of renewable energy. They are working with the Generalitat de Catalunya's Energy Transformation Plan.

At a private level, there is a lack of awareness among businesses regarding the shift towards renewable energies. The Regional Council and the municipalities are therefore offering a subsidy of 50% on the property tax (IBI) for five years and building costs at a reduced rate if renewable energy is used.

A project has been drawn up to install solar panels in the landfill (in closed areas) with the aim of promoting clean energy.

A project has been approved, and is currently in its first phase, to install eight wind turbines in the Alberes area. There is also a more controversial project to install further wind turbines in the sea.

The sector is working closely with the Energy Transition Office to advise and connect its suppliers and customers. Initiatives have also been undertaken to change public lighting.

(8) Pollution

No comments.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

Widespread accessibility for local residents and for visitors is being worked on at a municipal level.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

Funds from a 3D-360° ERDF have been used to provide spoken, photographic, and written information in Catalan, Spanish, English, and French about the closed churches spread over the area. Visitors can use a QR code to get an idea of what is inside the church and learn about its principal characteristics. This initiative is designed to encourage interest in the region's cultural heritage combined with cycling and hiking.

A dry-stone walling project is also being worked on. This is a collaborative PECT between the Provincial Council of Girona, the Regional Council of Alt Empordà, and several local municipalities. As a result of the project, proposals for regenerative tourism linked to dry-stone walling are appearing for people who want to learn the technique.

The municipalities of Roses and Figueres have invested heavily in their cultural heritage. The Regional Council is dedicated to helping these smaller ones as they have the fewest possibilities.

(3) Community engagement

There is a vast amount of accommodation licensed as Housing for Tourism Use (HUTs), but it tends to be used for holiday lets without adhering to the terms of its licence. Some municipalities, such as Viladamat and Capmany, have already decided to limit the number of HUTs.

T

here are also problems with the number of second residences, which cause a significant increase in the floating population, even though the region is prepared to accept this.

In general terms, there are no problems of coexistence between tourists and local residents. There are no significant problems regarding the cost of rented accommodation for staff working in the tourism sector, as they tend to live in areas less frequented by tourists.

It should be noted that some inland areas of the county have had to regulate access to some – mainly aquatic – areas of the natural environment. They have also closed off access to Cap de Creus, creating a shuttle service to limit motorized entry.

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

The Regional Council has a general, all-area Equality Plan.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

There are no significant problems regarding the cost of rented accommodation for staff working in the tourism sector, as they tend to live in areas less frequented by tourists.

(2) Equal opportunities

No comments.

(3) Local employment

No comments.

(4) Competition

No comments.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

See “Governance” section.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and their provenance. A project has been carried out by phone with the Pyrenees and Costa Brava Girona Tourist Board to ascertain how many visitors the area receives.

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc. No data.

Economic data regarding the sector's economic importance in the area. No data.

Monitoring indicators. There are monitoring indicators regarding the working plan.

(7) Quality of service

No comments.



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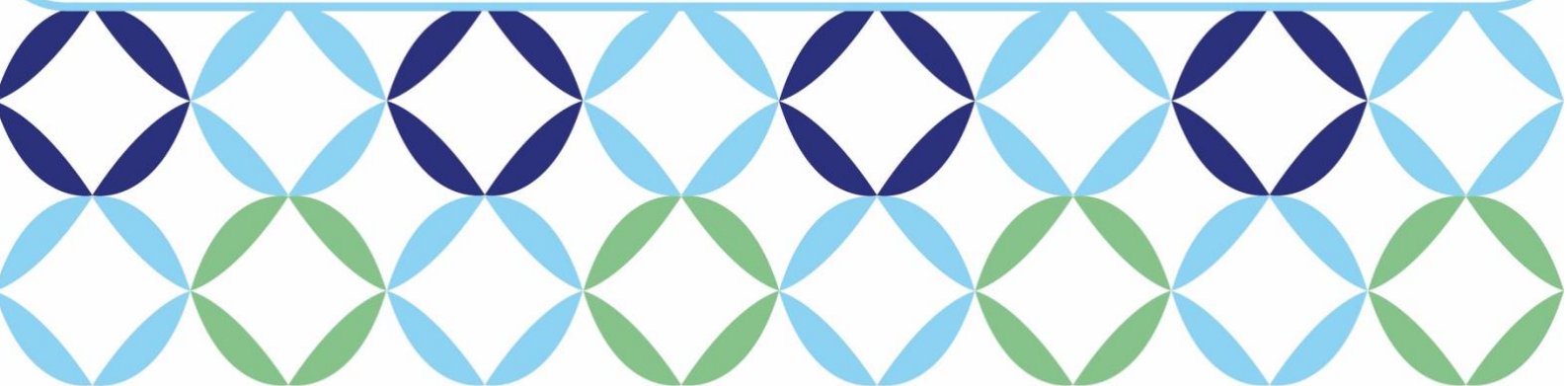
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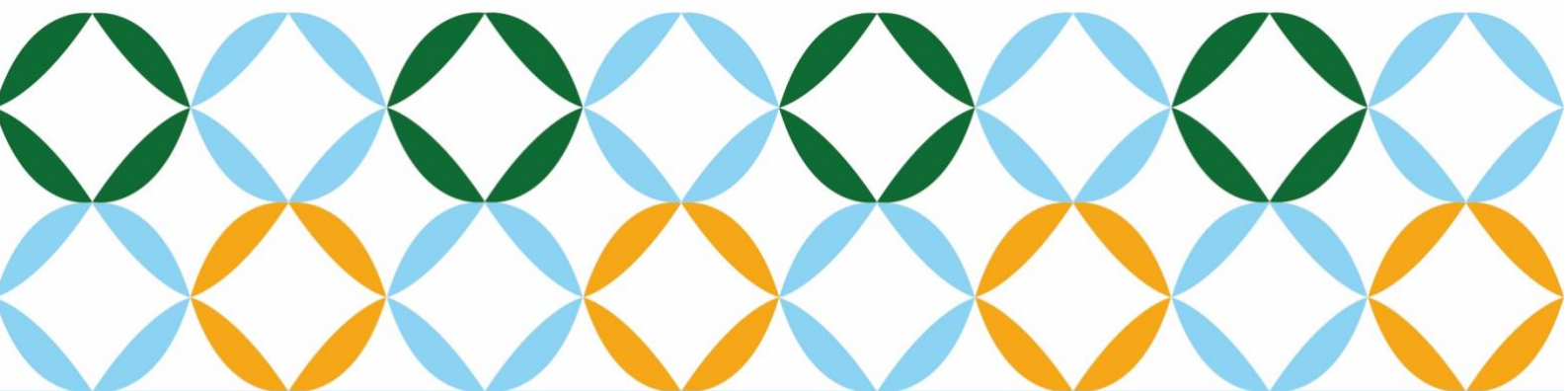


RESTART MED!



REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism across Regions in the MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies ANOIA



Details of working meeting:

Date: 13 April 2023

Place: Regional Council of Anioia, Igualada

Participants and positions held: Daniel Gutiérrez (Tourism Councillor for the Anioia Regional Council), Susana Llopart (Technician for the Anioia Regional Council), Bet Andreu (Technician and Head of Tourism for the Anioia Regional Council), and Sandra Jurado (Technician for the Anioia Regional Council).

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

At a tourist level, Anioia offers a good location, good communication, and it is close to Montserrat, Montblanc, and the Pyrenees. Anioia itself does not have any spectacular resources but it does have an interesting range of things to do. Its main appeal is its rurality and tranquillity. It is a small, emerging destination where the private sector is rapidly becoming more professional with regard to the quality of its tourism provisions.

The region is made up of 33 municipalities. The five largest are Igualada (40,875 inhabitants), Piera (16,787 inhabitants), Vilanova del Camí (12,699 inhabitants), Santa Margarida de Montbui (10,294 inhabitants), and Masquefa (9,744 inhabitants).

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Anioia Regional Council is responsible for tourism and collaborates on specific projects with any interested local municipalities. It offers relevant technical support to the municipalities affiliated to Anioia Turisme. Some municipalities, such as Calaf, are not included as they consider themselves to be closely linked with Alta Segarra. Half of the region is part of the DO Penedès (indeed, for the purpose of tourism, they could operate under the Penedès brand), but the other half of the territory has no connection with it, which complicates matters.

Anioia is a created, man-made, piecemeal county and this means that it has no true, all-inclusive regional identity.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public–private and public–public relations

Being part of the Anioia Regional Council is a formality, that is to say, everyone is included. Being part of the Anioia Tourism organization is voluntary and members must pay a fee.

There is a tourism sector within the Business Union of Anioia. It has a president, a board, and a technician. They work, however, exclusively for those companies that pay a fee to the Union. Their business-based vision differs in some regards from the more territorial institutional one. In some cases, actions overlap (for example, the tourism promotion website).

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

There is no Regional Tourism Strategic Plan, but there is a Tourism Action Plan, which is validated annually by the Regional Council Plenary.

The area responsible for tourism works on different projects, mostly for economic promotion, but which can be linked, directly or indirectly, to tourism. For example, the Agricultural Park of the Ódena Basin (PACO) and Anogia in Transition both work in rural environments linked to contemporary crafts.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

Four tourism, trade and municipal support technicians work in this area. Their work is shared among the municipalities of the region, and not only in tourism, but also in commerce and citizen participation. This makes it easier for the team to get to know the many small municipalities in the territory and thus be able to carry out collaborative projects.

(5) Forms of financing

Anogia Turisme's financing comes from the Regional Council itself, Barcelona Provincial Council, and the municipalities that are members.

(6) Major projects

A Local Sustainable Tourism Plan is being worked on to link the blue routes (€4.5M) and oil tourism.

The sustainable mobility network E-bike Land's strategic project is still waiting to receive funding. The project has already been drawn up.

PACO: Conca d'Ódena Agricultural Park (comprising 15 municipalities).

Anogia in transition: contemporary non-food, craft project. Four municipalities are participating in creating suitable spaces in closed shops in order to revitalize rural environments.

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

Regional Councils have few powers in this regard as most are municipal.

The different areas of Barcelona are working with the Provincial Council of Barcelona on the Biosphere Program. A checklist linked to sustainability is also being implemented. Twenty-four businesses and entities already have the Biosphere label, and five are in the process of acquiring it.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

Specific training schemes have been organized within the framework of the Biosphere Program (e.g. to reduce the carbon footprint). These are the courses that cost the most to fill. Since there is no obligation, the sector does not see them as a priority.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

Not the Regional Council's responsibility.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

The region has connectivity problems, which could be solved if the existing railway line were enhanced. This line currently presents practical problems: pointless division of zones by territory, infrequent services, etc.

(4) Waste management

Door-to-door waste collection takes place in 27 of the 33 municipalities in the region. The five large municipalities are excluded. The Regional Council is responsible for this door-to-door system. Tourism and Environment representatives have agreed to carry out an awareness-raising campaign to get more visitors to separate their waste products.

(5) Use of water

The County Council is not responsible for water management.

In terms of tourism promotion, there is no plan to create an awareness campaign for the use of water beyond joining the general one operational throughout Catalonia.

(6) Use of energy

The regional Energy Transition Office provides helplines for companies wishing to install renewable energy in their businesses.

There is a serious problem between schemes linked to renewable energies (wind farms, solar farms, etc.) and the tourism sector, as the former are projects that change the landscape and have a high visual impact. Extra high voltage (EHV) transmission lines across the whole of the region are also planned.

(7) Pollution

No work is being done in this area.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

Not the Regional Council's responsibility.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

Not the Regional Council's responsibility.

(3) Community engagement

Some coexistence problems between the local population and visitors have been detected, especially after the pandemic, due to overcrowded streams, gorges, etc.

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

No comments.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

No comments.

(2) Equal opportunities

No comments.

(3) Local employment

The tourism sector represents 5.3% of Anogia's total employment.

(4) Competition

Private provision and professionalization of the sector have increased in recent years.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

No comments.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and their provenance. Data is provided by the Provincial Council of Barcelona's tourism laboratory (LabTourisme).

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc. Data is provided by the Provincial Council of Barcelona's tourism laboratory (LabTourisme).

Economic data regarding the sector's economic importance in the area. The tourism sector turnover represents 1.7% of the total turnover of companies in Anioia.

(7) Quality of service

Private provision and professionalization of the sector have increased in recent years.

(8) Other points

Have they drafted any relevant document that has not been mentioned in any of the previous sections?

The Regional Council is working on a regional economic reactivation plan.



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RESTART MED!

REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism Across Regions in The MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies **BAIX EBRE**

CISP
COMITATO INTERNAZIONALE
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Cambra de Comerç
de Barcelona



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board

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الجامعة الأمريكية في بيروت



Details of working meeting:

Date: 24 April 2023

Place: Baix Ebre Regional Council, Tortosa

Participants and positions held: Paco Vallesí (Tourism Advisor for the Baix Ebre Regional Council), Roser Anguera (Tourism Technician for the Baix Ebre Regional Council), Cristina Bajet (Catalan Tourism Agency), and Anna Parcerisa and Imma Espel (Biterna Tourism & Culture).

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

The Baix Ebre region is made up of 14 municipalities and 3 decentralized municipal entities. The largest municipalities are the county capital, Tortosa (33,890 inhabitants), Deltebre (11,656 inhabitants), Roquetes (8,193 inhabitants), l'Ametlla de Mar (7,209 inhabitants), and l'Ampolla (3,563 inhabitants).

Its main tourist resources are the natural parks of the Delta de l'Ebre and the Ports and the Zafán Valley greenway, Carrilet de la Cava greenway, a natural pathway along the River Ebre, the River Ebre itself, and the Mediterranean Sea. The region forms part of the Terres de l'Ebre Biosphere Reserve.

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Regional Council is a non-departmental agency. It has no responsibility for tourism and receives no funding for it. This means that it is necessary to look to other organizations for projects and aid in order to be able to carry out initiatives and promotional tasks related to local tourism.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public-private and public-public relations

There is a relationship between the Regional Council and businesses, but no official body has been created. The relationship is a close one due to familiarity and because information is often sent to them about news, help, projects, etc. Communication is fluid with the municipalities of the region itself, but there is no formal meeting space either.

On a public level, collaboration is mainly with the regions with which tourist projects are shared: Terra Alta, Ribera d'Ebre, and Montsià.

There is also a lot of contact with supra-regional bodies regarding the projects that affect them: the Catalan Tourist Board (ACT) and Turespaña for promotional issues, and the Provincial Deputation of Tarragona, the Greenway Federation, the Ministry of Agriculture-Natural Pathways for aid to and management of greenways and natural pathways.

Locally, the need for an updated census of tourist companies throughout Catalonia has been voiced, a task that is believed should be carried out by the General Directorate of Tourism.

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

There is no Strategic Plan or Action Plan, but related promotional activities are carried out according to budget. The main tasks of the Regional Council's tourism team are the management and promotion of greenways and the Ebre nature trail.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

Currently, there is one adviser for tourism and another for Ebreterra. In the tourism department, there are a technician, a caretaker assigned to the Ebreterra centre, and job-creation schemes also assigned to the Ebreterra Tourist Inspiration Centre in Deltebre.

(5) Forms of financing

The financing available to the Regional Council for tourism comes from its own funds and tourist taxes. They seek funding for projects from supra-regional administrations: the Provincial Council of Tarragona, the Generalitat, or the Spanish Government.

Thus, for example, the Provincial Council of Tarragona finances a work party that carries out annual maintenance tasks on the greenway (replacement of railings, improvements to the road surface, etc.).

(6) Major projects

The Zafán Valley greenway: from Aragon it crosses the Terra Alta to the Baix Ebre. The Railway Infrastructure Administration (ADIF) has assigned to the Regional Council the management of the greenway and two stations (Aldover and Benifallet). The stations offer tourist services (licensed to private companies). The first offers catering services and the second accommodation of different types.

The Carrilet de la Cava greenway, from Tortosa to the municipality of Aldea (6.9 km), allows the two greenways to come together in Tortosa

The GR99, water way, or natural path of the Ebre. It connects with the Zafán Valley greenway at the Benifallet station, leading to the mouth of the river.

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

The Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park and the Ports Natural Park have been awarded the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECTS) and the Regional Council is part of it. In addition, the entire territory is part of the Biosphere Reserve.

For their part, local companies also form part of the ECTS and/or the Biosphere Reserve. This link means that the idea of sustainable tourism is being worked on globally and with a focus on proposals enhancing knowledge of the flora and fauna and promoting tourism based on activities like hiking and cycling.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

No comments.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

No comments.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

The Baix Ebre has been awarded seals of approval by the ACT for both its cycling and hiking tourism provisions, as these are the products that it is currently promoting and working on the most.

In addition, a project is being worked on to connect all the towns within the Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park via cycle paths (often shared with vehicles) in order to promote more regular use of bicycles by both visitors and the local population. The Council is part of the Cycling Tourism Commission of the Ebre Delta ECTS and hopes to establish a network of cycle paths throughout the entire natural park.

Right now, there is no data available regarding the number of users of these infrastructures for ordinary, non-holiday use. There is a bicycle counter in Tortosa, which makes it possible to discriminate between hikers and cyclists and, by analysing dates and times, the importance it has for the local population as an alternative means of transport to private vehicles can be estimated.

(4) Waste management

Local waste management is carried out by the Consortium for Environmental Policies of the Terres de l'Ebre (COPATE). This Consortium deals with various issues in addition to waste management, such as sanitation, territorial issues, energy, health concerns (mosquitoes, flies, other pests) in the Baix Ebre, Terra Alta, Ribera d'Ebre, and Montsià. It is also COPATE that manages the Biosphere Reserve (adherences and operations).

(5) Use of water

Managed by COPATE.

(6) Use of energy

The Regional Council has an Energy Transition Office, which advises businesses and entities that want to make improvements in terms of renewable energy.

(7) Pollution

No comments.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

No comments.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

Within the biosphere reserve, a lot of work is being done to preserve and enhance local food products and traditional cuisine.

(3) Community engagement

No problems have been detected between visitors and the local population. There had been some friction during the pandemic in certain areas of the Delta de l'Ebre Natural Park and in some water points in the Ports Natural Park, but regulations were subsequently drawn up to regulate access.

There is also a public ordinance for the county's two greenways with the aim of establishing more harmonious coexistence between hikers and cyclists.

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

No comments.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

No comments.

(2) Equal opportunities

No comments.

(3) Local employment

No information.

(4) Competition

No comments.

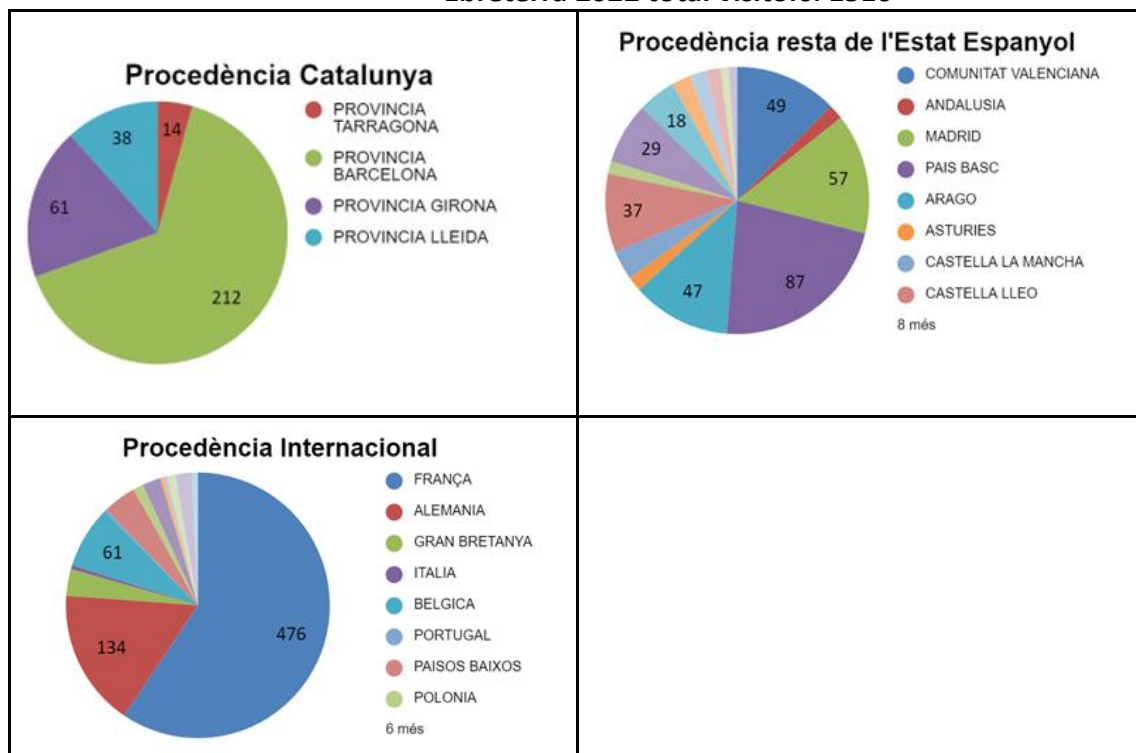
(5) Cooperation between interest groups

See 'Governance' section.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and where they come from. Visitor data available from the Regional Tourism Office, located in Deltebre, and Ebreterra Tourist Inspiration Centre:

Ebreterra 2022 total visitors: 1516



- (i) Visitors from other parts of Catalonia
- (ii) Visitors from the rest of Spain
- (iii) International visitors

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc.: no data.

Importance of the sector for the local economy: no data

Monitoring indicators. Indicator of the volume of greenway users.

(7) Quality of service

No comments.



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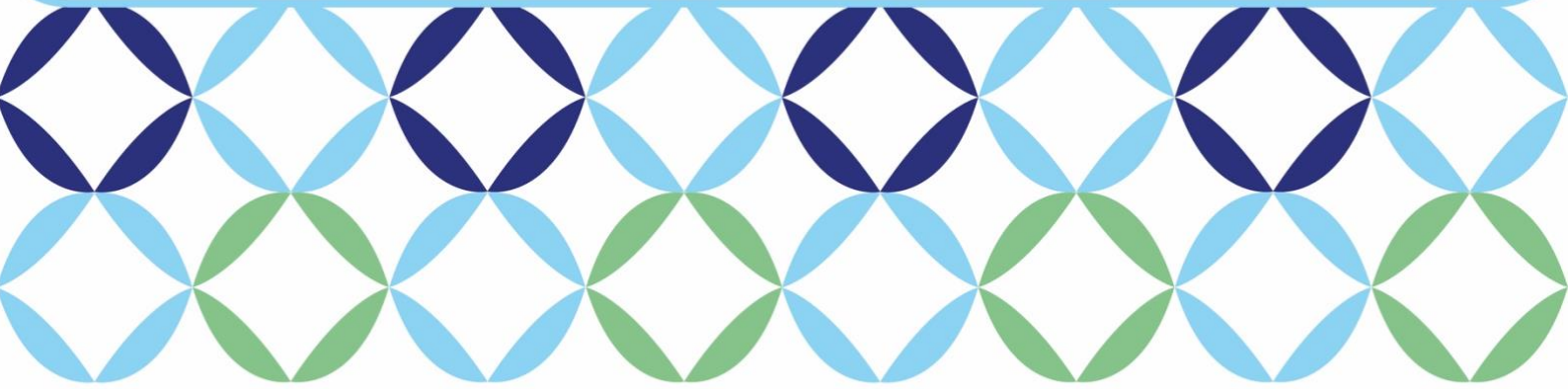
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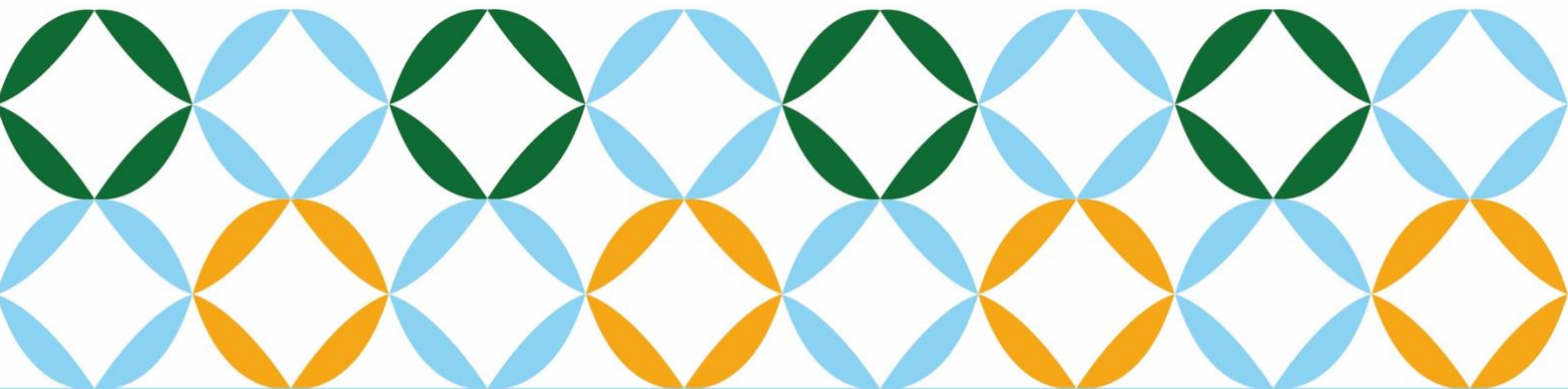


RESTART MED!



REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism across Regions in the MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies **BERGUEDÀ**



Details of working meeting:

Date: 12 April 2023

Place: Berguedà Regional Council, Berga.

Participants and positions held: Josep Lara (President of the Berguedà Regional Council), Lluís Vall (Tourism Councillor for the Berguedà Regional Council and President of the Berguedà Development Agency), Abel Garcia (Mobility, Youth, Sport, and Sports Tourism Councillor for the Berguedà Regional Council), Rosa Pujols (Manager of the Berguedà Regional Council), Cristina Bajet (Catalan Tourism Agency), and Anna Parcerisa and Imma Espel (Biterna Tourism & Culture).

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

The Berguedà region is located in the interior of Catalonia, halfway between the mountains and the flatland, between the Pyrenees and the Central Depression, crossed from north to south by the Llobregat river.

It consists of 31 municipalities and has a population of approximately 40,000 inhabitants. Of the 31 municipalities, only three have more than 3,000 inhabitants.

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Berguedà Regional Council deals with several areas, but not tourism, which is the responsibility of the Berguedà Development Agency (ADB), an organization that focuses on the economic promotion of the region. The technical tourism team and the management of the regional tourism office are the responsibility of the ADB, which mainly promotes tourism and its relationship with the private sector.

The Regional Council does however deal with several projects linked to sports tourism (e.g. trail-running station, management of the Baells reservoir, road network maintenance, etc.).

(2) Coordination of active participants: public–private and public–public relations

The Regional Council has a relationship with all the municipalities, both via the services it offers as well as via government and management bodies.

There are several private business associations linked to tourism.

There is no regular work with the private sector; rather collaboration is on a project-by-project basis (from the ADB tourism team as well as from the Regional Council).

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

The ADB has a Tourism Marketing Plan (2020–2025) as well as an annual Action Plan, which is agreed between the private sector and the Provincial Council of Barcelona.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

The technical tourism team of the ADB is made up of three people who are in charge of promoting the area, coordinating with the tourist sector, and managing the regional tourism office. There is also private support in the management of the tourism office.

(5) Forms of financing

The Regional Council is a non-departmental agency that receives funding from the Generalitat de Catalunya to carry out specific tasks. Also, projects with regional, state, or European funding are requested through calls for proposals and projects such as Local Sustainable Tourism Plans, the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF), Tourism Promotion Plan, etc.

The tourism area of the ADB receives funding from the Provincial Council of Barcelona and, likewise, they request and manage European projects.

(6) Major projects

Local Sustainable Tourism Plan, based on a budget of €2.5M, to include:

- a. Sustainable and green transition:
 - i. Adapting equipment as reception points for itineraries
 - ii. Creating a reception centre for athletes in general, and cyclists in particular.
 - iii. Improving sustainable road connectivity in certain sections of the River Llobregat
- b. Improvement of energy efficiency:
 - i. Promoting schemes to enhance mobility and accessibility on the River Llobregat
 - ii. Drafting and implementing a local mobility plan
 - iii. Transforming the region into a bike-friendly destination
 - iv. Modifying and enhancing the Ruta del Carrilet
 - v. Expanding and promoting the on-demand transport system
 - vi. Transforming public tourist facilities into sustainable ones
- c. Digital transformation:
 - i. Creating an immersive experience focusing on the Llobregat's industrial and cultural heritage
 - ii. Developing connectivity infrastructures
 - iii. Analysing means of making the Berguedà into a Smart Tourism Destination
 - iv. Implementing the findings of that analysis
 - v. Preparing and implementing a digital Marketing Plan
- d. Competitiveness:
 - i. Conceptualizing and creating the River Llobregat Ecopark
 - ii. Creating work opportunities within the local sector
 - iii. Overseeing the Plan

Development Plan and ERDFs. Various cultural and natural resources have been improved and a camping project has been carried out: 12 areas with electric chargers and space for motorhomes.

- 2018 Tourism Promotion Plan: Around the Via Blava
- 2019 Tourism Promotion Plan: Culture in the Berguedà
- Eix 6: 1st call: Added value of the Berguedà's industrial heritage
- Eix 6: 2nd call: Boost to the Berguedà's Vies Blaves

With these projects, investments and improvements have been made. These include the Camí dels jornalers, Historical Interpretation Centre, improvements to the water route, stabilization and maintenance of the Riutort oil mine, lighting of various cultural buildings, Berga green ring itinerary, Slaughterhouse Park, improving and remodelling Berga Castle and Palace Castle, Circular route of the fountains, Cretaceous Route, Picasso Route, Tourist signage at the Pedraforca Astronomical Observation Centre, improvements to Torre de l'Amo de Viladomiu Nou, Torre Nova de Cal Pons, among others.

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

Work with the Biosphere seal at a local level. The scheme is coordinated by the ADB. There are 50 companies and organizations with the seal throughout the region.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

The Berguedà Regional Council has set up an Energy Transition Office and is working on a Regional Climate Change Resilience and Circular Economy Plan, promoted by the Barcelona Provincial Council. The objectives of this Plan are to identify:

- the main vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change in the study area;
- the capacity to move towards resilience at a county and municipal level;
- ways to reduce the impacts of climate change at a county and municipal level and move towards a circular economy, thus becoming more resilient.

This Plan will include a series of initiatives at a county and municipal level, including an action sheet for each municipality. Based on this Action Plan, funding for these initiatives can be requested from the Provincial Council of Barcelona. The Energy Transition Office is also informing councils and citizens about the Global Plan against drought, heat waves, etc.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

The Berguedà has several protected natural areas including the Cadí–Moixeró Natural Park. The individual municipalities and/or the Generalitat de Catalunya are responsible for the upkeep of these spaces.

Several tourism projects are in progress to increase sustainability. For example, the Ultrapirineu race (zero waste, selective collection at controls, etc.), access control and limited motorized access at the request of the municipalities to certain areas such as the Baells Reservoir, the Riera de Merlès, the Rasos de Peguera, Pedraforca, Pedret, etc.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

The area has an on-demand transport system with three routes (Gósol–Salades–Vallcebre–Guardiola; La Pobla de Lillet–Sant Jaume de Frontanyà–Borredà; Castellar de n’Hug–La Pobla de Lillet–Guardiola de Berguedà). It operates from Monday to Sunday through an online booking platform. Some routes are covered by bus and others by taxi. Although the service has been around for a long time, it needs to be promoted more actively because many people, especially visitors, are unaware of its existence.

There is a network of more than 2,000 km of signposted paths suitable for encouraging mobility on foot and by bike, both for visitors and the local population.

Public transport (bus) from the Berguedà to the Barcelona metropolitan area has been successfully included in the “setena corona” (*one of the areas of the metropolitan transport system*), so that the prices are very competitive.

There are other experiences such as the “bike days”, which promote cycling by closing motorized access to mountain roads.

(4) Waste management

The door-to-door collection system has been implemented in 12 villages in the region. It is managed by the Regional Council. Work is underway to implement a new selective waste collection system in the other 19 municipalities. This also includes improving low-intensity collection in rural tourism, restaurants, and activity businesses located in isolated areas.

Some regional accommodation-providers are collaborating on a pilot project of zero-residue picnics.

(5) Use of water

The Berguedà Regional Council manages nine of the county’s sewage treatment plants. The municipality is responsible for and oversees the use of drinking water.

(6) Use of energy

There is an energy community (biomass and solar panels) in the municipality of Salades. There is also the Berguedà Association of Municipalities for Biomass (MMBB) which oversees public forests, owned by the local councils, and aims to ensure the sustainable use of wood and biomass and the generation of renewable energy.

The Regional Council has cohesively coordinated and petitioned for the change of public lighting to LEDs in several small municipalities.

(7) Pollution

An information space has been set up on the Regional Council's website in order to share air pollution warnings issued by the Generalitat de Catalunya.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

No comments.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

The Provincial Council of Barcelona provides financial support in order to facilitate the management of visits to five Romanesque churches. The ADB deals with the promotion of cultural resources, but not with their management.

(3) Community engagement

In general, there are no serious coexistence problems between visitors and residents, although in some upper Berguedà municipalities there are problems finding flats to rent, as they are occupied by seasonal visitors (second residences).

There are also problems due to the number of visitors in some areas, especially in summer and in places with water (Riera de Merlès, Pedret, Empedrats) or special significance (Pedraforca). Attempts are being made to close and control access to these locations or to set up a shuttle service.

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

No comments.

(7) Other points

In the social field, with the powers delegated by the Generalitat de Catalunya, the Regional Council manages the various Social Affairs and Citizen Care Services, from overseeing Basic Social Services to Specialized Services (social aid, family services, young people and children, independent living, elder and dependent care, etc., as well as mediation services, community action, equality and inclusion).

<https://www.bergueda.cat/serveis/serveis-socials/>

<https://www.bergueda.cat/serveis/igualtat/>

<https://www.bergueda.cat/serveis/inclusio/>

-**Citizen Mediation.** Service to facilitate spaces for dialogue to promote mediator-assisted, people-led conflict-management.

-**Community action and inclusion.** County-wide strategy drawing upon the agents and resources of the region to improve independent living conditions for those affected by exclusion in the areas of work, training, relationships, residence, citizenship, and social health.

-**Equality.** Energizing gender equality policies with the aim of promoting equal opportunities for men and women.

-**Migrations.** Promoting initiatives to welcome and acknowledge diversity and enhance cohesion in the region through local services and schemes.

With the objective of:

Improving social cohesion and people's quality of life, working to create community action and inclusion projects, promoting equal treatment of men and women, and preventing discrimination based on individuals' gender, age, ethnicity, and/or socio-economic situation.

Raising awareness and visibility of all forms of diversity in the field of social intervention.

Promoting networking and intersectionality between the agents involved in the different areas and encouraging citizen participation in disseminating and informing social policies stemming from the public sphere.

Establishing a system for evaluating and monitoring processes, services, and initiatives.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

No comments.

(2) Equal opportunities

The Regional Council has a half-time accessibility technician. Work has been undertaken in this field, but many resources need to be adapted. The intention is to promote and work on accessibility plans in the various municipalities.

The Ultrapirineu race, which is held in the region, is working with the Johann Cruyff Foundation in this regard.

(3) Local employment

No comments.

(4) Competition

No comments.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

See “Govenance” section.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and their provenance. Data is provided by the DIBA (LAB) Observatory for Decentralized Cooperation and the Tourist Data System.

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc. Data is provided by the DIBA (LAB) Observatory for Decentralized Cooperation and the Tourist Data System.

Economic data regarding the sector’s economic importance in the area. No data.

Follow-up indicators. No data.

(7) Quality of service

No comments.

(8) Other points

Have they drafted any relevant document that has not been mentioned in any of the previous sections?

The economic impact of the Ultrapirineu race.



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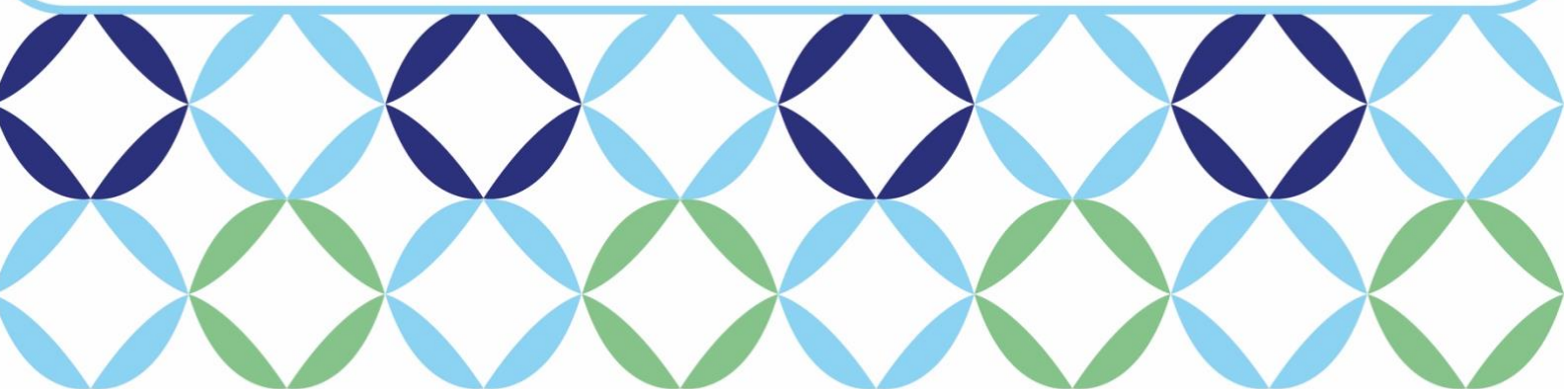
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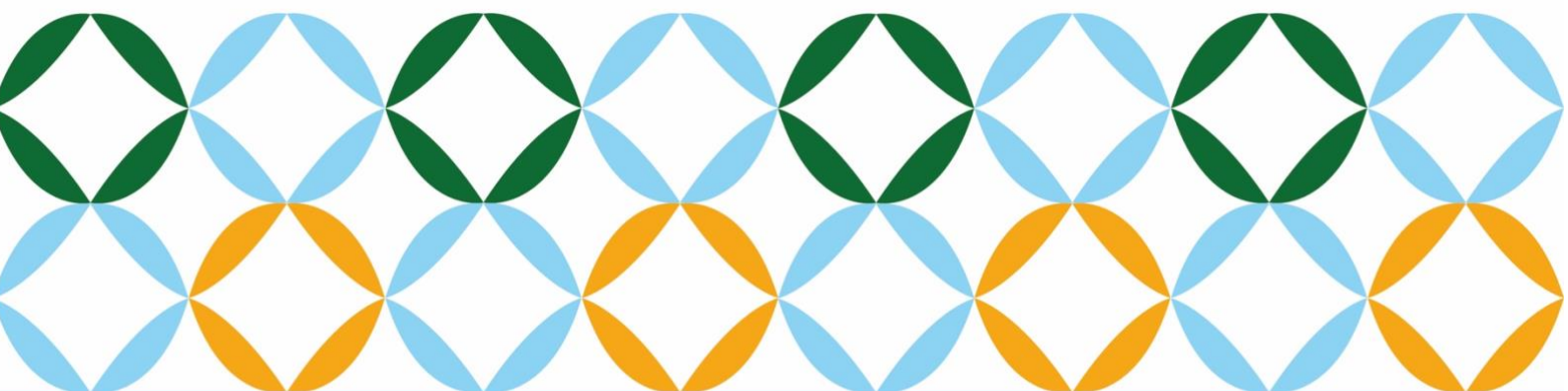


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REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism across Regions in the MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies ALT PENEDEès



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board



Details of working meeting:

Date: 10 May 2023

Place: Penedès Tourist Promotion Consortium, Vilafranca del Penedès

Participants and positions held: Núria Sala (Manager of the Penedès Tourism Promotion Consortium), Marta Salamé (Regional Technical Environmental Office (OTAC) Technician, Alt Penedès Regional Council), Cristina Bajet (Catalan Tourism Agency), and Imma Espel (Biterna Tourism & Culture).

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

The region of Alt Penedès is located halfway between the cities of Barcelona and Tarragona.

This inland region borders Anoia to the north, the Baix Penedès and Alt Camp to the west, Garraf to the south, and the Baix Llobregat to the east. It is delimited, on both sides, by the Catalan coastal and pre-coastal range mountains, and the interior plain extends in a north-easterly direction towards Barcelona and in a south-westerly direction towards Tarragona.

The region is made up of 27 municipalities and Vilafranca del Penedès is the capital. Most municipalities comprise a mixture of small villages, hamlets, isolated farmhouses, and rural dwellings.

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Penedès Tourism Promotion Consortium is a public–private consortium. Its objectives are to promote local tourism, but it also deals with development tasks in the area and, therefore, is responsible for requesting aid to implement projects. The areas of work include territory management and planning, territorial projects and tourist infrastructure, improvements and competitiveness, promotion, marketing, and communication.

Many of the projects they undertake are done in collaboration with the Regional Council with whom they share presidency.

The Regional Council of the Alt Penedès is involved in several areas of local tourism management, but especially in the Regional Technical Environmental Office (OTAC). The implementation of the Biosphere seal, for example, is carried out by Marta Salamé who also liaises between the Consortium and the Regional Council regarding projects that link various areas of this organization.

The OTAC is made up of environmentalists, engineers, and architects. They assess local projects and compile reports for the politicians to consider/endorse.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public–private and publi–public relations

The Regional Council has a relationship with all the municipalities, both via the services it offers as well as via government and management bodies.

Within the Consortium, private companies from the tourism sector and wineries participate in the different promotional schemes that are offered to them.

The Consortium also offers a technical advisory service to councils that request it (shared technicians who provide weekly support in tourism-related matters). There are 200 associated companies on the wine route.

The Council also supports municipalities in various non-tourist areas.

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

The Consortium draws up an annual Action Plan (a technical proposal that is then validated by the assembly or the governing board). These Action Plans are always aligned with the Provincial Council of Barcelona and the Catalan Tourism Agency's tourism strategy.

There is no Strategic Plan or Marketing Plan; they work with the annual Action Plan.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

The Consortium team is made up of four people (a manager and three technicians). The Regional Council has a person, as already mentioned, whose role is in part dedicated to tourism. This person collaborates with the Consortium team and takes part in some of the projects/schemes that are implemented.

(5) Forms of financing

The Regional Council is a non-departmental agency that receives funding from the Generalitat de Catalunya to carry out specific tasks and also requests projects with regional, state, or European funding

The Consortium has funding that comes from membership fees and the Provincial Council of Barcelona, and they too request projects with regional, state, or European funding.

(6) Major projects

- Reconversion of the DO Penedès to an organic product with the aim of making it 100% organic by 2025. (This project is overseen by the DO Penedès; the Consortium and the Council have no direct involvement).
- Localized Sustainable Tourism Plan (Regional Council and Consortium) with mobility initiatives (network of paths for walking and cycling). Budget €2M
- Project LIFE linked to water issues and climate-change adaptation initiatives. Budget €2M over the next eight years. Thematic tourism (river path and improvements to the Foix reservoir) and agroforestry (drought observatory, forest and livestock management).

- Management of a European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) for small municipalities that have not joined the Localized Sustainable Tourism Plan (improvements to 14 cultural assets, tourist signage, Penedès 360° route). This has been completed.
- Territorial Specialization and Competitiveness Project (PECT) in the Penedès wine territory: sustainable and healthy innovation.
- Experiences Spanish Tourism, Next Generation fund.

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

Working locally with the Biosphere seal. There are 75 businesses and entities accredited with the seal.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

There are several relevant elements within the area's Project LIFE.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

There are several relevant elements within the area's Project LIFE.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

The region has six train stops.

A lot of work is being done to create cycling opportunities for both visitors and the local population. A road network currently exists.

(4) Waste management

It is not the responsibility of either the Consortium or the Council. A door-to-door collection system has been implemented in small municipalities.

(5) Use of water

No responsibility.

(6) Use of energy

The Regional Council has a Technical Energy Office and an Energy Transformation Plan (PLATER).

(7) Pollution

No responsibility.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

No comments.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

An ERDF has permitted 14 initiatives to be implemented in spaces of cultural interest in 14 small municipalities. Apart from this, nothing is being done as it falls outside the Council's remit.

(3) Community engagement

There are no coexistence problems. Tourism does not generate economic problems (rent, prices, etc).

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

No comments.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

No comments.

(2) Equal opportunities

No comments.

(3) Local employment

No comments.

(4) Competition

No comments.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

See 'Governance' section.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and their provenance. Data available from the DIBA (LAB) Observatory for Decentralized Cooperation and the Tourist Data System.

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc. Data available from the DIBA (LAB) Observatory for Decentralized Cooperation and the Tourist Data System.

(7) Quality of service

No comments.



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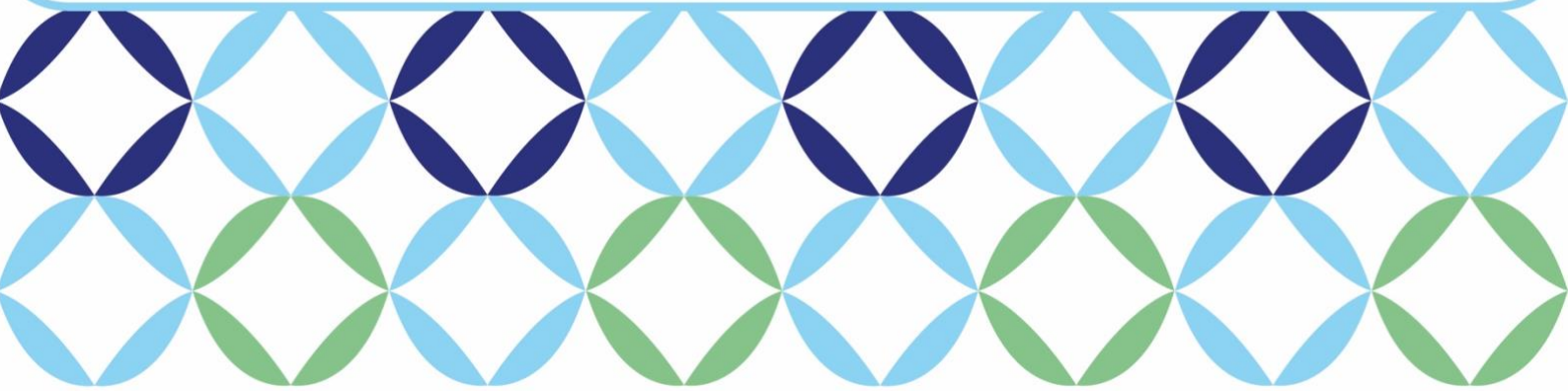
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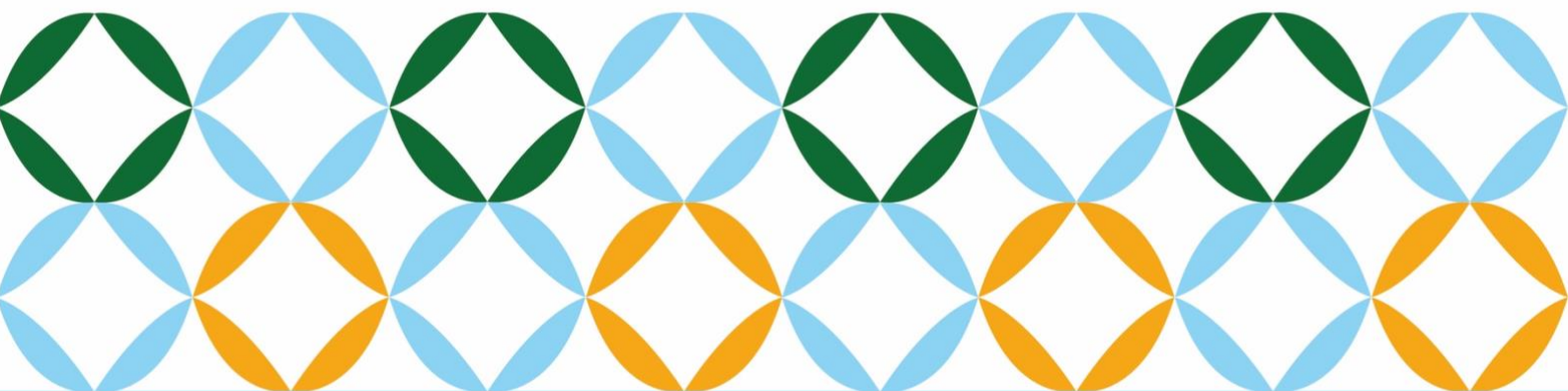


RESTART MED!



REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism across Regions in the MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies RIBERA D'EBRE



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board



Details of working meeting:

Date: 24 April 2023

Place: Ribera d'Ebre Regional Council, Mora d'Ebre

Participants and positions held: Gemma Carim (President of the Ribera d'Ebre Regional Council), Mònica Sabaté (Tourism Technician for the Regional Council), Cristina Bajet (Catalan Tourism Agency), and Anna Parcerisa and Imma Espel (Biterna Tourism & Culture).

Summary of acronyms:

COPATE: Consortium of Environmental Policies of the Terres de l'Ebre

Aspects discussed during the working meeting

The region consists of 14 municipalities, with only the capital, Mora d'Ebre, having more than 5,000 inhabitants.

The Ribera d'Ebre is a predominantly industrial (mainly linked to energy production) and agricultural (olives, soft fruits) region. Tourism is secondary. As far as tourism is concerned, the range of accommodation is very limited (some rural tourism, two campsites, and a few small hotels) as are tourist service companies (Kayak al Riu and Guiatges Culturals). Work has been going on for a few years to create greater cycling and hiking tourism provision. Ascó and Flix are working to create a product linked to the industry itself.

It is a very important county in terms of energy production (it has the greatest output of all the counties in Catalonia).

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

The Regional Council is a non-departmental agency and receives no direct financial aid for tourism. The number of projects that can be undertaken depends on the funding available at any given time.

There is an informal work space (Taula Marcal de Turisme), where the region's seven municipalities with a tourist information point are represented. There are about five representatives from the rural tourism sector, one from the artisan sector, one from the Sebes Nature Reserve, one from Miravet Castle, and one from the Aube naturalist association. They hold three meetings a year and together define the Action Plan to be executed. The members of this working group contribute funding which is shared between the public and private sectors. This is why only the municipalities with a genuine interest in tourism are involved.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public-private and public-public relations

There is a public-private collaborative project called “Treball a les comarques” (Work in the counties), financed by the Generalitat de Catalunya and given to counties with specific socio-economic characteristics.

Tourism development techniques are financed by this “Work in the counties” project. This has been in operation for 11 years and must be renewed every year. Within the framework of this project, initiatives to be worked on are defined: studies and support for businesses (professionalization seminars) and also support in the creation of business products and networking.

In the Work Plan for the regions, there are indicators of how to monitor that the assigned tasks are carried out as planned.

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

There is a 2011 starting document, in which the regional situation was diagnosed and from which a strategic planning document emerged. Annually, Action Plans are drawn up in accordance with this strategy.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

There is a tourism technician who coordinates the working group and implements the resultant actions.

(5) Forms of financing

Members of the working group provide financial resources to carry out the Action Plan, which in turn is financed by the “Work in the counties” project.

(6) Major projects

- Industrial tourism: Flix and Ascó (Energy Interpretation Centre).
- Local Sustainable Tourism Plan in the Biosphere Reserve

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

There is no specific sustainability scheme contained in the Annual Action Plan, although the concept is always included in the creation of any product or professionalization sessions. Businesses that have collaborated from the beginning (Decaba, David Estellé, Xavier Font, etc.) in creating the strategy are very aware of this. More and more businesses are coming to recognize the importance of sustainability.

The tourist sector is mainly made up of businesses offering accommodation (rural tourism, two campsites, and some small hotels). There are some tourist service companies, but they are few in number. When businesses approach the Regional Council to request aid, the region’s tourism

strategy, which centres on sustainability, is explained to them in detail, as is its focus on sustainable hiking and cycle tourism mobility.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

The Aube naturalist group carries out environmental education activities to raise awareness about climate change. There is a series of subsidies for climate change adaptation and proposals are expected from several councils.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

No comments.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

No comments.

(4) Waste management

Most towns have had a door-to-door collection system for about eight years. The Ribera d'Ebre Regional Council deals with a consortium that manages the waste of the regions of Ribera d'Ebre, Terra Alta, and Priorat. There is a landfill site in Tivissa and a composting plant in Botarell. The capital, Mora la Nova, is not part of this consortium and manages its own waste.

No specific action is currently being taken with the tourism sector, but some town councils are considering implementing training initiatives. If a municipality has establishments offering accommodation which do poorly in regard to the separation of waste products, the municipality's overall percentage is affected and, for this reason, initiatives have been suggested whereby accommodation businesses become involved in helping to improve separating and recycling.

(5) Use of water

No responsibility. Any energy transition aid and/or information received is passed on to the tourism sector.

Agriculture is linked to sweet fruit and olives, both of which require irrigated land. Although the river is nearby, there can be problems due to drought.

(6) Use of energy

No responsibility. Any energy transition aid and/or information received is passed on to the tourism sector. Support to help companies and establish trust is provided.

Many proposals to implement large renewable energy projects have been received from large national and multinational companies because of the Ascó nuclear power plant and energy evacuation routes. The councils are very busy defending themselves from these large projects and attempting to implement smaller ones that they can oversee independently.

The Regional Council's energy transition technician is helping local councils fight against the more aggressive and damaging projects they receive.

The problem with these projects is that, apart from not respecting the territory, they do not add value; they do not create employment or assist the municipalities or their inhabitants in any way.

(8) Pollution

No comments.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

No comments.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

An analysis of typical visitors to Miravet is being carried out (where they come from, their reason for visiting, etc.) with the aim of getting them to explore further afield, to spend more, etc. Miravet Castle is a monument which belongs to the Generalitat de Catalunya.

Funding from an ERDF, a promotion plan, etc. has been requested, but ultimately it is down to the municipalities to make the investment. The Regional Council does not manage heritage assets.

A Local Sustainable Tourism Plan was requested from COPATE for the Biosphere Reserve. The Ribera d'Ebre will receive €1M, which will be used to improve the road network and also to invest in the area's heritage.

(3) Community engagement

There are problems in Miravet because it has a population of only 800 residents and the castle is visited annually by around 66,000 people, who take up the town's limited parking spaces, but add no value to the municipality as there is very little tourism provision.

(4) Local capacity development

No comments.

(5) Safe living conditions

No comments.

(6) Discrimination

The Regional Council has two technicians working on plans to improve equality (creating purple points (safe spaces), implementing gender policies, etc.).

In terms of accessibility, the regulations are fulfilled and full inclusivity is incorporated into all the new projects. There is no specific Regional Council technician in charge of this area, but the Council prioritizes accessibility at a technical level in all its projects.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

No comments.

(2) Equal opportunities

No comments.

(3) Local employment

No comments.

(4) Competition

No comments.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

See “Governance” section.

(6) Economic profitability

Volume of tourists and their provenance. There are some business visitors but there is no region-by-region data breakdown. Information is available from Terres de l’Ebre, but Ribera d’Ebre is very different from Baix Ebre, for example.

Average expenditure per tourist/average stay, etc. There are some business visitors but there is no region-by-region data breakdown. Information is available from Terres de l’Ebre, but Ribera d’Ebre is very different from Baix Ebre, for example.

Economic data regarding the sector’s economic importance in the area. Training is in progress to examine this indicator.

Follow-up indicators. Indicators for monitoring the fulfilment of the Action Plan.

(7) Quality of service

No comments.

(8) Other points

Have they drafted any relevant document that has not been mentioned in any of the previous sections?

Reactivation plan at Regional Council level, not only for tourism but across the board.



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RESTART MED!

REvitalization of Sustainable Tourism Across Regions in The MEDiterranean

Analysis of sustainability in public tourism policies

GENERAL CONCLUSIONS



Generalitat de Catalunya
Government of Catalonia
Catalan Tourist Board



Context:

As part of the European project RESTART MED! seven working meetings have been held with seven Regional Councils in Catalonia using a tool created to analyse the sustainability of tourism policies (binding or otherwise).

Below is a summary of the main conclusions reached after these seven working meetings.

Counties:

- Alt Empordà
- Alt Penedès
- Anoia
- Baix Ebre
- Berguedà
- Les Garrigues
- Ribera d'Ebre

Study period: April–May 2023

Participating bodies: Regional Councils

MAIN CONCLUSIONS

- In the context of this project, **“public policy” is understood to mean any document, binding or otherwise, that includes measures to regulate the territory or any activity that is being worked on by a public administration.** This includes Action Plans, Strategic Plans, Marketing Plans, etc.
- In general, **the Regional Councils interviewed do not have specific documentation linked to sustainable tourism.** They do not all follow a strategic written document, but rely on the experience of the technical team, and are always dependent on existing resources (which, in many cases, are very scarce). There is a consistent focus on sustainability although it is not explicitly included.
- **When we talk about sustainability in tourism, we include many areas for whose activities and management the Regional Councils are either not responsible or only partially responsible.** Much of this responsibility for tourism falls to the municipalities. This means that their power to influence public policy is limited.
- **County Councils are non-departmental agencies that receive financial contributions from supra-county bodies to manage certain areas and services.** They do not have their own income since they do not collect taxes and this means that their powers are defined externally rather than by the entity itself.
- **Occasionally, they oversee services for which they receive financial compensation, but this does not provide sufficient funding for the generation of projects other than those**

commissioned out-of-county or by agreement with the local municipalities. For example, some Regional Councils oversee waste collection and manage the county landfill for which they charge local residents a fee.

- **In order to fund tourism-development projects, they opt for European or national funding** linked to projects with transformative intent: ERDFs, PECT, POCTEFAs, LIFEs, etc. This helps ensure that any sustainability requirements linked to this type of project filter down and are implemented at county level.
- Since around 2022, the **Regional Councils have had a climate change and/or energy efficiency office** which aims to help local municipalities and businesses that want to improve their facilities and/or make them more efficient. These figures can be a gateway to aspects linked to sustainability, mainly environmental and economic, in public policies.
- In general, **Regional Councils are not responsible for water management; rather this is managed by the municipalities**, which tend to outsource it to private companies.
- All the counties that have participated in the project include tourism as an important activity for economic and social development, but the relevance of the sector is very different in each area. Thus, the region of Alt Empordà has a significant percentage of its GDP linked to this economic activity and has a wide range of provision and services (accommodation, restaurants, activity businesses, etc.) while Les Garrigues is the opposite, with little (albeit increasing) in the way of accommodation and activity businesses.
- All the counties recognize **the need to improve mobility systems for both the local population and visitors**, and are working on creating walking and cycling routes and on various ways of improving public transport. Despite being aware that mobility is the great challenge to sustainability, tourism is not currently equipped to meet it.
- Many counties are receiving **large energy projects from very large and often foreign companies that are seen as a threat to the territory** (for example, EHV's). There is consensus that adopting green energy is necessary, but not via these large projects that only seek economic profitability. No nationwide strategy is perceived.

GOVERNANCE

(1) Active participants in tourism management and sustainability

In general, the Regional Councils are responsible for tourism, unless there is some other body (County Development Agencies, Consortiums) that deals with this task in collaboration with the Regional Council. Nevertheless, given that sustainability is transversal, the tourism department itself is not always fully responsible for the region's sustainable tourism.

When a second entity is involved, this usually includes the private sector, either in the form of business associations or in the form of private participation in specific projects or clubs.

(2) Coordination of active participants: public–private and public–public relations

The Regional Council has a relationship with all the municipalities, either via the services it offers or via the government and management bodies in which they participate.

The relationship with private companies varies depending on the organization that deals with tourism management (see point 1).

(3) Local working framework documents (strategic, marketing, and action plans, etc.)

Normally, annual Action Plans are carried out, in most cases in whole or partial agreement with the local private and public sectors. In the case of areas within the province of Barcelona, the Action Plans are also validated by the out-of-county body that provides funding (Provincial Council of Barcelona).

Some regions have Strategic Plans or Marketing Plans with a five-year horizon, which define which aspects of work in tourism should be prioritized and which are periodically reviewed and updated. This does not happen in all counties, however, since many work only with the annual Action Plan.

The regions' promotional strategies are coordinated with those of the councils to which they are affiliated and of the Catalan Tourism Agency.

(4) Local technical/political tourism management team

The technical tourism team depends on each county, the importance of the sector, and also the number of projects linked to tourism that are being overseen. In general, fixed teams are made up of two or three people. If the Regional Council also manages one or more tourist information points, this number can be higher, although the tendency is to subcontract the service to an external company through an invitation to tender rather than increasing staff numbers.

Some regions have tourism technicians shared among several municipalities with an interest in tourism and provide them with technical hours to develop a municipal tourism strategy. In the counties where this occurs (Alt Penedès, Anoia), the tourism teams are larger and the financing of these technicians is shared with the municipalities that receive the service.

At a political level, there is usually a councillor responsible for tourism (sometimes in conjunction with other areas such as culture, sport, or economic promotion).

(5) Forms of financing

The Regional Council is a non-departmental agency that receives funding from the Generalitat de Catalunya and the provincial council to carry out specific tasks. They also receive various Catalan, Spanish, and European grants for specific projects.

If the tourism departments depend directly on the Regional Council, there is usually no significant funding and they have to find other resources to undertake specific projects (with regional, state, or European funding). If a consortium or agency-type body oversees tourism, membership fees usually represent a significant economic contribution. Funding is also sought to carry out projects and/or improve the destination and the promotion and marketing strategy employed.

(6) Major projects

All the regions are working on projects to create products, to improve the tourist infrastructure (paths, greenways, tourist offices, electric chargers, areas for motorhomes, interpretation centres,

tourist resources, etc.), and to enhance promotion and communication (advertising campaigns, videos, websites, brochures, guides, apps, etc.).

In recent years, the sustainability of the destination (along with other grant requirements) has been highlighted in all major projects.

(7) Sustainable tourism promotion schemes

All regions of the province of Barcelona are working on the Biosphere seal at a local level, and work with this seal is also beginning in the province of Lleida.

Most natural parks in Catalonia are developing the European Charter for Sustainable Tourism (ECST). Counties with a natural park in their territory often also adhere to the ECST and, in several cases, even extend it to the entire county.

In the last three years, both Town and Regional Councils have requested projects in the Local Sustainable Tourism Plans (Next Generation) to obtain funding linked to improving the destination from a sustainability perspective. If the county or municipality has been able to obtain funding, it consequently has many resources to implement these improvements. Whether this will have an impact on the structuring and ordering of sustainability-linked public policies remains to be seen.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Mitigation and adaptation to climate change

In general, although the problem is taken into account, little is being done to address it. Regional Councils with a specific climate change office are beginning to take some action in this regard but, for the moment, without much enthusiasm.

(2) Conservation and restoration of biodiversity/natural resources

This is generally not considered to be the responsibility of the Regional Council and it is left to the overseeing parks and/or natural spaces.

(3) Development of sustainable mobility

Several regions have a system of transport on demand, but in general, it is seen as insufficient and failing to cover the needs of both local residents and visitors.

Conversely, all the counties are working on proposals for slow mobility (hiking, cycling, etc.) and are creating and promoting various routes for the local residents and visitors.

(4) Waste management

More and more counties are implementing a door-to-door waste collection system, especially in small municipalities. This system works well, although it creates some problems with day visitors and, in busy times, there are frequent malfunctions.

(5) Use of water

The responsibility for water management is at a municipal level.

Coastal regions with the greatest tourist activity are the most actively engaged in creating water-saving strategies, but no specific action is being taken by the Regional Councils, other than reinforcing campaigns the Generalitat de Catalunya or provincial councils send them.

(6) Use of energy

Normally, clean-energy-generation projects are sent to the municipalities and, in many cases, the Regional Council's Energy Efficiency Office studies these projects and gives technical support to the town councils. These types of projects are generally perceived as a threat as the territory can have little say in them even though they significantly affect the local landscape and tourism.

(7) Pollution

The Regional Councils are not responsible for this.

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Community access to material and non-material resources

Some Regional Councils have schemes to encourage schoolchildren to visit local cultural resources, which they fund.

(2) Protection of cultural heritage

Cultural heritage belongs to the municipalities and bishoprics; accordingly, the Regional Councils are limited to promoting it from a tourism standpoint and do not intervene in either its management or its financing.

(3) Community engagement

The Regional Councils' tourism departments have some initiatives to connect tourism with the local population, promoting local products, traditions, festivals, etc.

In general, no coexistence problems have been detected between the local population and visitors.

(4) Local capacity development

All regions provide training aimed at helping people at risk of exclusion and promoting the employment of people with special needs. Different entities (councils, consortiums, agencies, and (usually) Regional Councils' social services departments) carry out this training.

(5) Safe living conditions

Although in some counties (those with most tourist activity), tourism makes access to housing problematic for the local population, the Regional Councils have no specific policy or initiative in this regard. If any action is taken, it is at a municipal level, as it is not the Regional Council's responsibility.

(6) Discrimination

All regions have initiatives to make tourism an inclusive activity, but there is still a lot of work to be done. The municipalities are implementing measures to make towns and cities more inclusive for people with reduced mobility. Also, Natural Parks and other tourist resources are working to create more inclusive tourism provisions.

These initiatives are not necessarily being promoted by the Regional Councils but by various entities (private and public) involved in tourism.

ECONOMIC SUSTAINABILITY

(1) Working conditions

The Regional Councils do not have initiatives aimed at stabilizing the workforce in businesses nor do they have any impact on working conditions. Companies are helped with training at a superficial level about topics such as sustainability, including working conditions.

(2) Equal opportunities

The Regional Councils have equality plans, but they are internal; no action is being taken with regard to the tourism sector.

(3) Local employment

The Regional Councils take no action to promote local employment, although the Generalitat de Catalunya has some job-creation schemes for segments of the population that might have difficulty finding a job. For example, bonuses are given for hiring people over a certain age, etc. They are not county-wide initiatives but come from out-of-county bodies and the counties apply them.

(4) Competition

Tourism management bodies (Regional Councils, consortiums, etc.) offer training aimed at the sector to make it more competitive. Some training schemes are organized locally, but normally the provincial councils or the Generalitat de Catalunya itself organizes them and the region offers them to the tourism sector. At most, it manages the registrations and holds the sessions in the territory. Also, training is generated to improve the sector's competitiveness among business groups, unions, etc.

(5) Cooperation between interest groups

There are several areas where synergy is created between entities and companies in the tourism sector. Regional Councils or tourism management bodies facilitate these meetings in different areas. Each region has its own strategy for creating this knowledge and networking. For example, in the province of Barcelona there is the TIP scheme (Tourist Information Points), in the province of Girona there are the Product Clubs, and in Tarragona and Lleida there are tourism-project work groups.

(6) Economic profitability

In general, there is little data and any that exist are generated by the province and, for the most part, are not divided according to county. Where there is data, it is usually based on type of visitor, but not on employment, expenditure, or percentage of wealth of the activity at county level. Some study of the economic impact of tourism at county level has been carried out, but it is now out of date and only relates to some counties.

In terms of indicators, each region has different data, which depends, above all, on the province where it is located, as these indicators and data come either from a provincial level or from the Generalitat de Catalunya itself (idescat). There is no generation of data and/or indicators at county level.

(7) Quality of service

Surveys are carried out in the different districts of the province of Barcelona to assess the degree of visitor satisfaction, motivation, number of days spent in the destination, etc.

In other provincial counties, this information is not divided; rather it remains grouped at provincial level.