



**MED4REGEN**

**Interreg**  
Euro-MED



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## D.1.1.1

# Catalog of existing tools and instruments for regenerative tourism and community-based practices

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## Executive summary

The deliverable gathers 34 case studies of regenerative tourism identified by the MED4REGEN project partners, with the aim of building a shared repertoire of inspiring practices and fostering transnational dialogue. The five thematic challenges considered are: overtourism, dominant touristic narratives, enhancement of natural/scientific and landscape heritage, urban cultural centers, and suburban cultural centers.

The analysis highlights a prevalence of cases related to the transformation of touristic narratives (14) and to the enhancement of landscape and natural heritage (9). Heritage, community, participation, and sustainable/regenerative tourism emerge as the most recurrent cross-cutting themes. The most frequently used tools include placemaking, events, itineraries, and services, with a clear predominance of long-term projects (24 out of 34).

The cases were selected for their ability to combine the preservation and reinterpretation of cultural heritage with new forms of responsible tourism, rooted in local communities and oriented toward regeneration. Cultural institutions, particularly museums, emerge as central hubs for experimentation and innovation.

The overall picture shows how regenerative practices revolve around participatory narratives, community activation, and cultural valorization, outlining a diverse yet coherent landscape of strategies to address the challenges of contemporary tourism.



## 1. Methodology

At the outset of the MED4REGEN project, partners were invited to engage in a structured activity aimed at the **collective identification and documentation of good practices in regenerative tourism**, with a specific focus on the project's five thematic challenges—**overtourism, mainstream touristic narratives, naturalistic/scientific and landscape heritage, urban cultural centers, and suburban cultural centers**. The objective of this exercise was to establish a **shared repository of case studies** capable of inspiring future pilot actions and fostering a common vision of how regenerative principles could be locally operationalized. Case studies were broadly defined, encompassing policies, events, design interventions, slow tourism programs, wayfinding systems, and citizen-led initiatives, regardless of budget, timeframe, or institutional configuration. The emphasis was placed not on replicability per se, but on identifying **strategies and patterns that address one or more of the five challenges**. Partners were encouraged to extend their research beyond their immediate regional contexts, considering practices developed by municipalities, cultural institutions, civic associations, and tourism operators at national and international levels. Methodologically, each partner was required to submit **four case studies** (two per selected challenge), accompanied by descriptive documentation and visual material. This process was intended to support the **comparative analysis of diverse practices**, stimulate transnational dialogue among project partners, and lay the groundwork for the **development of regenerative tourism frameworks** that integrate cultural, social, and ecological dimensions.

The information collection method aimed to gather data on: project description; motivation for choosing it as a case study; which MED4REGEN challenge it could be linked to; a distinction between promoters, users, and beneficiaries of the project; the project's timeframe; its location and funding; the distinctive elements that characterized the project; and some keywords. The choice of these terms was intended to highlight how actions associated with regenerative tourism carry a certain complexity, often involving many stakeholders, following a specific timeline of action, and gaining substance only through elements that can make the case study perceivable to users, beneficiaries and promoters.



## Instructions given to PPs

### Case Study Collection – MED4REGEN Activity 1.1

As part of Activity 1.1 “Elaboration of the transnational methodology for the cultural change in tourism,” each partner is asked to submit **4 case studies** (by filling in 4 different forms) to support the co-design of the MED4REGEN approach to regenerative tourism.

Please select inspiring projects that reflect a regenerative vision and are relevant to the **two MED4REGEN challenges you have chosen**. These case studies will help identify meaningful practices, tools, and community-based initiatives, and will contribute to the development of our shared methodology and hyperlocal framework.

Context:

This activity is at the beginning of our project and it designed for collectively research good practices in regenerative tourism and in the 5 thematic challenges:

Overtourism; Challenging Mainstream Touristic Narratives; Naturalistic, Scientific And Landscape Heritage; Urban Cultural Centers/Contexts; Suburban Cultural Centers

What are the case studies useful to?

The case studies are meant to inspire all partners in a regenerative tourism action. We have to select the best we can find from our previous experiences or knowledge in order to expand our shared vision of what the MED4REGEN could do locally for each one of us in the pilot actions.

What are you looking for?

A case study can be a policy, an event, a regenerative design for part of a city, a particular tour, a specific program for slow tourism, a wayfinding system, a citizen initiative on residential activities... etc etc

The case study might have a different budget, different timeframe, different types of partners...but it might have introduced an interesting strategy or pattern in tackling one of our 5 challenges. We can learn from these experiences.

Where are you looking for case studies?

You might look into projects conducted by regions, city councils, museums and cultural institutions, civic associations, tour operators...etc that have tried to approach regenerative tourism. We strongly advise to expand the horizon of the research to your country, not only to your region. For now we are collecting a catalog of examples also to create meaningful bonds and research themes over the 5 challenges.

Instructions:

– Submit 2 case studies for two selected challenges (total case studies per project partner: 4)

example:

challenge 1 Overtourism: case study 1; case study 2;

challenge 4 Urban Cultural centers: case study 3; case study 4;

Remember to fill in this form 4 times, one for each case study.



**Form**

<b>Title of the case study</b>
<b>What is the case study about? (short description)</b> Please provide a short description of the main focus of the case study. What specific issue or topic does it address? (max 1.500 characters spaces included)
<b>Which Med4Regen challenge would associate to this case study?</b>
<b>Why did you choose this case study for the selected challenge?</b> Briefly explain how this case relates to the challenge and why you believe it is a valuable example of a regenerative approach. (max 1.500 characters spaces included)
<b>Who is the main promoter of this initiative?</b> Please provide the name and type of the main promoting organization (e.g., public authority, NGO, private company, community group).
<b>Who is the main user of this initiative?</b> Please indicate the main category of users or beneficiaries (e.g., local residents, tourists, cultural operators, public institutions, etc.).
<b>Who is the main beneficiary of this initiative? (This may be the same as the main user.)</b> Please indicate the category of stakeholder that gains a specific or added benefit from this regenerative action (e.g., local communities, environment, SMEs, cultural institutions, youth, etc.).
<b>What is the timeframe of the case study?</b> <b>Please indicate the duration of the initiative:</b> – Long Term (5–10 years or more) – Short Term (1–5 years) – Episode (1 season to 1 year)
<b>Where is located the case study? (Nation, region and city if possible)</b>
<b>How was the initiative financed?</b> Please indicate the main source of funding (e.g., European project, municipal or regional funds, cultural association, private initiative, other).
<b>Which are the main elements of the project?</b> Places / placemaking, Itineraries, Events, Policies, Services, Other:
<b>Please provide two images that visually represent key aspects of the case study</b> (e.g., location, activities, stakeholders, or outcomes).
<b>Please provide three keywords that best describe your case study</b> Format: <i>keyword1; keyword2; keyword3</i> (e.g., community engagement; circular economy; heritage revitalization)















## 2. Trends

The collected data is 34 case studies from all PPs, all data was then translated into a website open to all the partnership.

### Med4Regen case studies by PPs

Gallery List New

 AA Nanotourism Summer School	 Agora Tourisme – Co-constructing the future of tourism in Bordeaux Metropole	 Alghero Playful itinerary	 Archivo Atena
 ArtVision+	 Camino Croatia: Reviving Medieval Pilgrimage Routes	 Countryside reloaded	 Cultural Incubator Casa Socorro Project
 Cultural regeneration on the periphery: Transformation of the former Tobacco Factory of Málaga	 Derrière Le Hublot – Artistic regeneration of rural narratives along the Camino de Santiago	 Discover Arta	 Ecomuseum Zagori

The practices collected in the case studies show different ways of conceiving and implementing regenerative tourism, with approaches ranging from urban regeneration to the enhancement of intangible heritage, from participatory management to the creation of new territorial narratives.

### Recurring Types and Approaches

- 1. Regeneration of touristic narratives** – many cases focus on the challenge of “challenging mainstream touristic narratives.” These include initiatives such as *Agora Tourisme* (Bordeaux), which involves citizens and institutions in the co-construction of tourism strategies, or *Sarajevo’s Hidden Layers*, which creates temporary micro-museums to tell everyday stories as alternatives to dominant ones.
- 2. Enhancement of cultural and religious heritage** – emblematic examples are *Camino Croatia*, which reactivates ancient pilgrimage routes as cultural and social infrastructures, or *Derrière Le Hublot* (Camino de Santiago in France), which integrates contemporary artworks into the rural landscape to renew the experience of walkers.



3. **Rural and community regeneration** – cases such as *Archivio Atena* (Italy) and *Countryside Reloaded* (Slovenia) show how small towns can become laboratories of cultural innovation, using community archives, artistic residencies, or food and wine routes to strengthen identity and social cohesion.
4. **Actions against overtourism** – some practices, such as *ArtVision+* (Italy-Croatia) or *Málaga Soho* and *Lagunillas*, tackle the pressure of mass tourism by experimenting with the delocalization of flows and the creation of new urban centralities.
5. **Museums and cultural centers as regenerative hubs** – experiences such as *Museum in the Community* (Ljubljana) or *Urban Pop-up in Museums Quarter* (Sarajevo) transform museums and cultural spaces into platforms for co-creation with local communities.
6. **Natural and scientific heritage** – cases such as the *Musée du Pont du Gard* (France) or the *Micro Museo del Grano e del Pane* (Sicily) demonstrate how landscapes, agricultural traditions, and scientific heritage can be reinterpreted through immersive, sensorial, and participatory approaches.
7. **Gastronomy and local traditions** – the *Pasta Festival* of Žminj in Istria is a clear example of how food can become a vehicle for cultural regeneration, transmitting intergenerational knowledge and supporting small producers.

### Particularly Interesting Cases

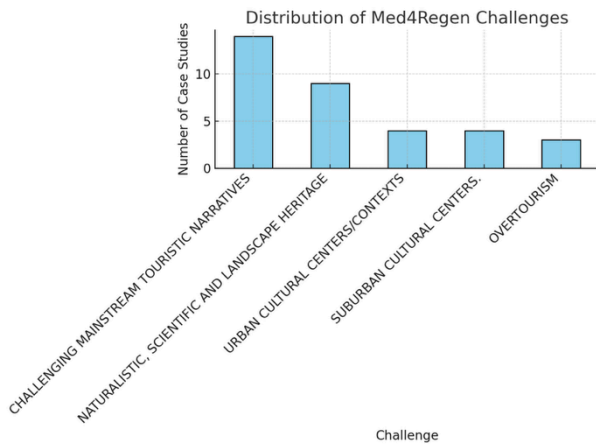
- *Archivio Atena* (Italy): a community archive project that transformed collective memory into a platform for social and economic innovation, generating local cooperatives and new forms of self-entrepreneurship.
- *Sarajevo's Hidden Layers* (Bosnia): a low-cost, high-impact format that transforms streets and courtyards into temporary museums, giving voice to residents and decentralizing tourist flows.
- *Camino Croatia*: a long-term intervention that connects local medieval heritage to a European network, enhancing marginal villages and promoting slow and reflective tourism.
- *Countryside Reloaded* (Slovenia): a temporary but significant experience, which through participatory practices and critical installations restored meaning and identity to a rural landscape considered a “non-place.”
- *Huella Positiva* (Navarra, Spain): offers concrete regenerative experiences (restoration of trails, nest building, recovery of forgotten crafts) that turn tourists into active agents of regeneration.

The catalog shows how the collected good practices move along a continuum ranging from community micro-actions to large urban and landscape processes. All converge toward the idea of tourism as a tool for cultural, social, and ecological regeneration, overcoming extractive logics and fostering the active participation of communities.

The dataset shows that most case studies are oriented toward **rethinking narratives in tourism and valuing heritage**, with **local communities as the primary beneficiaries**. Common tools include **placemaking, events, and itineraries**, while **long-term sustainability** is the dominant timeframe.

## 3. Data Analysis

1. Med4Regen challenge – distribution of themes



**Challenging mainstream touristic narratives** → 14 cases

**Naturalistic, scientific and landscape heritage** → 9 cases

**Urban cultural centers/contexts** → 4 cases

**Suburban cultural centers** → 4 cases

**Overtourism** → 3 cases

The most frequent focus is on **challenging mainstream narratives**, followed by **landscape heritage**. Overtourism remains the least represented challenge.

## 2. What is the case study about?

From the examination of the column “*What is the case study about?*” it becomes clear that most of the initiatives revolve around the intersections of **cultural heritage, local identity, and tourism practices**. Many descriptions emphasize the safeguarding, reinterpretation, or activation of **cultural assets**—ranging from museums to historical routes and traditions—while also highlighting their potential as resources for new forms of tourism. The recurrent references to **local** dimensions suggest that case studies are conceived as embedded in specific territories, drawing strength from their rootedness in place and community. At the same time, the role of **museums and cultural institutions** emerges as central, often acting as anchors for experimentation and regeneration. Tourism appears frequently, though usually framed not as mass consumption but as a vehicle for **sustainable, regenerative, or community-oriented experiences**. Overall, the case study descriptions depict projects that use **heritage and culture** as levers for innovation, combining preservation with creative reinterpretation in order to foster **local development and resilience**.

Most frequent common themes

**Cultural heritage** (tangible and intangible, museums, traditions).

**Tourism** (especially alternative, regenerative, sustainable approaches).

**Local dimension** (local identity, local communities, territories).

**Museums & cultural institutions** (recurring as project hubs).

## 3. Why did you choose this case study?

From the analysis of the column “*Why did you choose this case study?*” it emerges that partners generally selected examples that combine cultural and heritage significance. Many case studies were valued for their ability to safeguard and reinterpret cultural assets, traditions, and historical



narratives, while at the same time experimenting with forms of tourism that are regenerative, sustainable, or capable of challenging mainstream narratives. The local dimension plays a central role: projects were often chosen because they are rooted in specific places and communities, showing how regeneration can emerge from local knowledge, traditions, and identities. Equally important is the participatory aspect, as several initiatives stood out for their capacity to involve residents, associations, and civic groups, creating inclusive processes of engagement. Overall, the case studies were selected not only for their intrinsic qualities but also for their inspirational potential, offering models and strategies that can be transferred, adapted, or scaled up.

Most common themes:

**Cultural value** (heritage preservation, cultural relevance).

**Tourism transformation** (examples of regenerative or alternative models).

**Local relevance** (how it empowers local communities).

**Community dimension** (engagement, participation).

**Regeneration potential** (innovation, adaptive strategies).

Main Keywords

**Heritage**

**Community / engagement / participation**

**Tourism** (regenerative, sustainable, rural, cultural)

**Cultural**

**Regeneration / regenerative**

**Participatory design / co-creation**

**Urban / landscape / preservation**

The comparative analysis of the case studies collected within MED4REGEN provides valuable insights into how different actors interpret and respond to the five thematic challenges of regenerative tourism. By examining the distribution of challenges, project timeframes, beneficiaries, and the recurrence of specific keywords, it is possible to identify both shared patterns and distinctive orientations. The results highlight the predominance of long-term initiatives and confirm the centrality of **heritage, community, culture, and tourism** as recurring themes across the dataset. At the same time, each challenge emphasizes different dimensions—ranging from **landscape preservation** to **narrative transformation**, from **urban and suburban cultural activation** to strategies addressing **overtourism**—thus outlining a diversified yet coherent panorama of regenerative practices. The keyword “regenerative tourism”, and also “regenerative” “tourism” was excluded from the analysis.

### **Overtourism**

Urban (2), Itineraries (2), Regeneration (1), Redevelopment (1). Focus: **urban itineraries, redevelopment** to relieve pressure.

### **Challenging Mainstream Touristic Narratives**

Participatory (4), Heritage (4), Community (4), Narrative (3), Cultural (3), Engagement (2), Design (2), Local (2). Focus: **rethinking narratives** through **participatory and regenerative approaches**.

### **Naturalistic, Scientific & Landscape Heritage**

Heritage (7), Cultural (4), Engagement (3), Community (3), Rural (3), Sustainable (2), Landscape (2), Culinary (2), Preservation (2). Focus: **heritage, rural identity, sustainability, and landscape preservation**.

### **Urban Cultural Centers**



Community (3), Regenerative (2), Activation (2), Engagement (1), Co-creation (1), Empowerment (1), Craft (1), Heritage (1). Focus: **community activation, regeneration, co-creation, empowerment** in urban settings.

#### **Sub Urban Cultural Centers**

Cultural (4), Heritage (3), Community (3), Engagement (2), Suburban (1), Regeneration (1), Creative (1), Infrastructure (1), CCI (1). Focus: **community + cultural heritage in peripheral contexts**, with creative and infrastructure aspects.

In conclusion, the analysis reveals that **heritage and community** emerge as transversal priorities across most challenges, underscoring their foundational role in regenerative tourism. Efforts to **reframe mainstream narratives** consistently highlight the importance of **participation and regeneration**, while projects situated in **urban and suburban contexts** tend to focus on **community activation and cultural infrastructure**. Finally, case studies addressing **overtourism** emphasize strategies of **urban planning and spatial redistribution**, pointing to the need for systemic approaches that balance visitor flows with local well-being.

5. Beneficiaries – most common groups

**Local residents / communities** (most recurring)

**Cultural institutions** (museums, archives, heritage sites)

**Tourists / visitors**

**Students / researchers**

**SMEs and local businesses**

6. Elements

**Placemaking / places**

**Events / festivals**

**Itineraries** (routes, cultural trails)

**Services** (local services, tourism-related)

**Policies / governance tools**

7. Timeframe

**Long-term** → 24 cases

**Short-term** → 7 cases

**Episode / Temporary** → 3 cases

The majority of case studies aim for a **long-term impact**, while only a few are **short-term or episodic projects**.

## 4. Full catalog of recorded data

The catalog of all case studies coming from the project Notion database is attached to this document.