

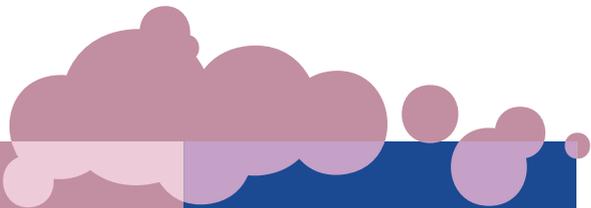
**Output 2.1. Common Strategy for the development  
of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean**

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## Abbreviations

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>AR</b>	Augmented Reality
<b>DMO</b>	Destination Management Organization
<b>ERIH</b>	European Route of Industrial Heritage
<b>IoT</b>	Internet of Things
<b>KPI</b>	Key Performance Indicator
<b>PA</b>	Public Authority
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>SDG</b>	Sustainable Development Goals
<b>SMIT</b>	Smart Industrial Tourism
<b>SME</b>	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
<b>SWOT</b>	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats
<b>TICCIH</b>	The International Committee for the Conservation of the Industrial Heritage
<b>VR</b>	Virtual Reality



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**1. Executive Summary**



## 1. Executive Summary

This document outlines a Common Strategy for the development of Smart Industrial Tourism (SMIT) across the Mediterranean. It presents a unified vision to transform the region's rich, yet often fragmented, industrial heritage into a leading global destination for innovative, sustainable, and authentic tourism.

Synthesizing insights from a transnational SWOT analysis, catalogues of best practices, and detailed regional roadmaps from Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy, this strategy addresses common challenges such as insufficient funding, low visibility, and infrastructural gaps. It repositions SMIT as a powerful tool to complement the Mediterranean's existing tourism offer, enriching visitor experiences, extending the tourist season, and fostering equitable regional development.

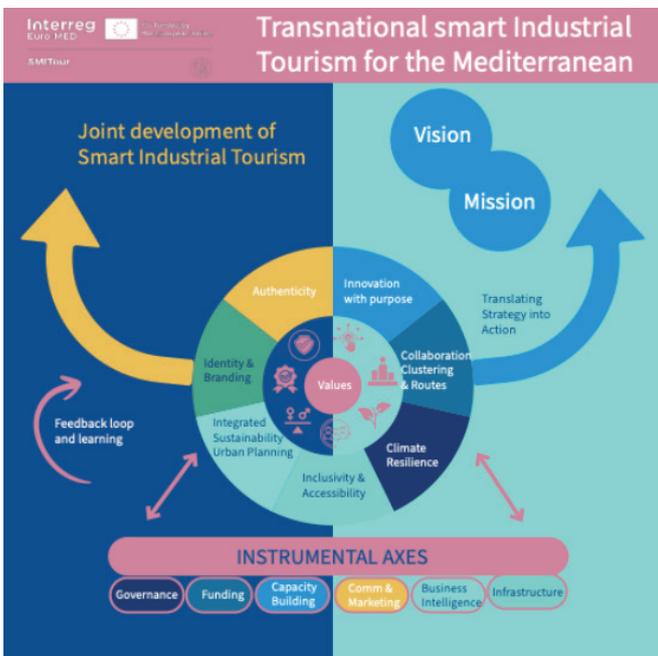
The **vision** is to establish the Mediterranean as a leading global destination for innovative, sustainable, climate change resilient, inclusive, and authentic Smart Industrial Tourism, transforming its rich industrial past into a vibrant driver for cultural identity, regional regeneration, and immersive tourism experiences.

This vision is underpinned by seven core **values**: Sustainability & Climate Resilience, Inclusivity, Innovation, Competitiveness, High Quality, Gender Equality, and Safety.

The strategy is built upon a framework of seven **Strategic Axes** that define its core priorities:

1. **Identity & Branding:** Creating a unified brand and a quality framework for a "Mediterranean SMIT Network."
2. **Authenticity:** Prioritizing genuine stories and heritage preservation.
3. **Innovation with Purpose:** Strategically using technology (AR/VR) to enhance, not replace, the visitor experience.
4. **Collaboration, Clustering, and Routes:** Building interdisciplinary ecosystems that fuse heritage with creative industries, gastronomy, and sports, marketed through branded thematic routes.
5. **Integrated Sustainability and Urban Planning:** Embedding SMIT within broader urban and territorial planning to ensure sustainable mobility and resource management.
6. **Inclusivity and Accessibility:** Committing to universal design for all visitors.
7. **Climate Resilience:** Developing all-weather attractions to reduce seasonality and adapt to climate change.

As the following image explains, these strategic priorities are supported by six **Instrumental Axes** that provide the practical mechanisms for implementation: **Governance, Funding, Capacity Building, Communication and Marketing, Business Intelligence, and Infrastructure.**





This strategy is a multi-level governance and implementation framework. While the Transnational SMIT Network (comprising national and regional Public Authorities) is the owner of the strategy and the coordinator of the brand, the primary executors and beneficiaries of this roadmap are regional/local Public Authorities (PAs), Destination Management Organizations (DMOs), and local/private SMIT Site Managers. The following table gathers the Delineation of Key Stakeholder Roles for SMIT Implementation:

Stakeholder Group	Primary Mandate & Contribution	Example Action
<b>National/Regional Public Authorities (PAs)</b>	<b>Governance &amp; Enabling:</b> Policy integration (e.g., urban planning), long-term funding mobilization (EU/National), and legal frameworks.	Lead Action I1.1: Formalize the <b>Mediterranean SMIT Network</b> and secure inter-governmental MoUs.
<b>Destination Management Organizations (DMOs)</b>	<b>Marketing &amp; Packaging:</b> Route curation, tourist flow management, branding, and selling SMIT routes to international operators.	Lead Action I4.2: Organize Thematic FAM Trips for Tour Operators & Media.
<b>SMIT Site Managers / Private SMEs</b>	<b>Product &amp; Authenticity:</b> Experience creation, digital implementation, staff training, and revenue diversification.	Lead Action A3.1: Establish <b>SMIT 'Living Labs'</b> for digital experience prototyping.
<b>Creative &amp; Technology Industries</b>	<b>Innovation &amp; Storytelling:</b> Co-creation of AR/VR content, gamified routes, and multi-sensory experiences.	Partnering on <b>Itinerary A: Palača šćerane VR Experience</b> to create 3D models and VR script.

This table formalizes the role of key groups as direct beneficiaries, focusing on the specific value and social return generated by the successful implementation of the SMIT Strategy. This explicitly addresses the need to recognize **Local Communities** beyond their role as implementers.



Beneficiary Group	Specific Value & Expected Benefit	Linked SMIT Actions / Axes
<b>Local Communities &amp; Residents</b>	<b>Social Cohesion &amp; Shared Space:</b> Access to repurposed industrial heritage spaces for <b>social events, education, volunteering, and workshops</b> . <b>Enhanced Local Identity</b> through authentic storytelling and oral history preservation (Action A2.1). <b>Improved local services</b> (e.g., sustainable mobility) (Action A5.2).	Authenticity (A2.1), Sustainability (A5.1, A5.2), Innovation (A3.1), Inclusivity (Action A6.1).
<b>Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs)</b>	<b>Economic Diversification &amp; New Revenue Streams:</b> Access to the SMIT Academy (I3.1) and <b>Funding Guide</b> (I2.1) for <b>Living Industry Transformation</b> . <b>Increased market visibility</b> through inclusion in transnational branded routes (Action A4.2).	Funding (I2.1, I2.2), Capacity Building (I3.1, I3.2), Collaboration (A4.1, A4.2).
<b>Youth &amp; Educational Institutions</b>	<b>Experiential Learning &amp; Skill Development:</b> Access to innovative digital content (VR/Gamification, e.g., Rijeka's mill route) for history, technology, and engineering education (Action A3.1). <b>New job creation</b> and capacity building in the digital/creative sectors (Action I3.1).	Innovation (A3.1, A3.2), Capacity Building (I3.1), Inclusivity (A6.2).
<b>Cultural Institutions &amp; Site Managers</b>	<b>Financial Resilience &amp; Professional Growth:</b> Access to diversified revenue models (I2.2), capacity building (I3.1), and adherence to the <b>Tiered Quality Framework</b> for funding prioritization (Action A4.3). <b>Preservation and adaptive reuse</b> of sites (Action A5.1).	Governance (I1.1), Funding (I2.2), Capacity Building (I3.1), Identity & Branding (A1.2).
<b>Transnational SMIT Network (PAs)</b>	<b>Policy Alignment &amp; Data-Driven Strategy:</b> Access to <b>Standardized KPI Data</b> (I5.1) and <b>Annual Reports</b> (I5.2) to inform future strategy and demonstrate collective impact to EU institutions and funding bodies.	Governance (I1.1), Business Intelligence (I5.1, I5.2).

Ultimately, this strategy is a call to collaborative action. It provides a clear roadmap for stakeholders to work together, leveraging the Mediterranean's unique industrial identity to create a more diverse, resilient, and prosperous tourism future.



T I P O  
TURISMO  
INDUSTRIALE  
BOZZANO

2

## 2. Introduction



## 2.1. The SMITour Project

### Context:

The Mediterranean, a region celebrated for its profound cultural history and natural beauty, stands at a pivotal moment. The SMITour (Smart Industrial Tourism) project emerges from a collective recognition that the region's rich, yet often overlooked, industrial heritage holds immense potential.

This strategy defines a shared and forward-looking vision for Smart Industrial Tourism (SMIT) across the Mediterranean, built from the collective results of WP1 and WP2 of the SMITour project. It integrates findings from:

- The SWOT Analysis of SMIT potential in MED regions (WP1)
- The Catalogues of Industrial Tourism Practices and Advanced Technologies for Tourism
- The Thematic Roadmaps co-created by partners in Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy through Innovation Camps.

This strategy, born from the collaborative work of partners across the Mediterranean, aims to unlock this potential by providing a unified framework to study, co-design, and develop a new generation of tourism experiences that are as innovative, sustainable as they are authentic and inclusive.

## 2.2. Defining Smart Industrial Tourism (SMIT)

Smart Industrial Tourism (SMIT) represents the dynamic fusion of the Mediterranean's industrial past and present with the transformative power of modern technology. It moves beyond the traditional museum model to create living heritage experiences. SMIT encompasses visits to both historic sites—decommissioned factories, mines, and shipyards—and active production facilities, from artisanal workshops to modern manufacturing plants.

The "Smart" component lies in the strategic integration of advanced and immersive technologies such as Augmented Reality (AR), Virtual Reality (VR), gamification, and the Internet

of Things (IoT). These tools are not mere novelties; they are powerful instruments for storytelling, allowing visitors to visualize historical processes, understand complex machinery, and connect with the human stories of labor and innovation in deeply engaging ways. Technology is seen as a tool, not intending to lose authenticity, rather to allow to raise value over key industrial heritage. The result is an immersive, educational, and memorable journey into the industrial soul of the region.

## 2.3. The Mediterranean Opportunity: Diversification, Resilience and Identity

The Mediterranean's "sun and sea" tourism model is the cornerstone of the region's economy and a vital source of employment. Rather than competing with this established strength, Smart Industrial Tourism offers a powerful complementary strategy designed to enrich the overall visitor experience and build a more diverse, resilient, and sustainable tourism ecosystem. SMIT experiences can be seamlessly combined with the region's other celebrated attractions. A visit to an industrial site can easily be integrated with cultural tours, gastronomy and wine experiences, active and eco-tourism activities, or a coastal holiday. This synergy provides multiple benefits:

- It helps expand visitor expenditure by offering a wider array of activities.
- It improves the territorial distribution of tourist flows, drawing visitors to inland areas, post-industrial landscapes, and low-density territories, thus stimulating economies in regions not typically popular with tourists.

It enriches the tourism offer in the shoulder seasons, as many industrial tourism sites are all-weather, indoor attractions, helping to reduce seasonality and create year-round employment.

By weaving industrial heritage into the broader tapestry of Mediterranean attractions, SMIT creates a more profound and multi-layered destination narrative, encouraging longer stays and a deeper connection to the region's identity.



### 2.3.1. Key Industrial Tourism Resources in the Mediterranean

Europe gathers a long list of industrial heritage sites. The European Route of Industrial Heritage's guide emphasizes interactive experiences at these sites, with many offering tours, museum exhibits, workshops, and cultural events that illustrate historical production processes and their social impacts. In addition to showcasing iconic sites like coal mines in Germany's Ruhr Valley, textile mills in England, and maritime ports in the Netherlands, it promotes smaller sites that play vital roles in regional history.

The following map highlights a selection of key industrial tourism sites and hubs mentioned across the SMITour project. These locations represent the rich diversity of the Mediterranean's industrial heritage, from historic mines and textile mills to modern factories and technology-driven cultural centers.

- **Prato, Italy:** A historic and active center for the **textile industry**, renowned for its recycled wool production and the focus of the TIPO (Turismo Industriale Prato) initiative.
- **Catalonia, Spain:** A region with a dense network of industrial heritage, including the **Manresa Water and Textile Museum** and the innovative energy reuse at **La Tèrmica Roca Umbert** in Granollers.
- **Almadén, Spain:** Site of a historic **mercury mine** and a UNESCO World Heritage site, now the Almadén Mining Park, an exemplary case of heritage preservation.
- **Lisbon, Portugal:** Home to innovative cultural reuse projects like the **Electricity Museum**, a former power plant turned into a cultural landmark.
- **Portugal** has developed the Portuguese Network of Industrial Tourism embodying 267 industrial tourism resources.
- **Athens, Greece:** A hub for the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings, such as the former Fix brewery, now the **National Museum of Contemporary Art**, and the **Industrial Gas Museum**.
- **Lavrion, Greece:** A historic **mining town** now home to the Lavrion Technological and Cultural Park, which revitalizes old industrial facilities for modern use.
- **Idrija, Slovenia:** A UNESCO World Heritage site for its extensive **mercury mining** history, offering immersive underground tours and VR experiences.
- **Velenje & Šoštanj, Slovenia:** A key **mining region** that has diversified its offer to include unique experiences like underground dining and the Museum of the Leather Industry.
- **Rijeka, Croatia:** A port city with a rich industrial past, where former industrial buildings like a sugar refinery and tobacco factory are being converted into city museums and cultural facilities.
- **Labin, Croatia:** A prominent **coal mining** town in Istria, featuring the Labin Mining Museum which uses VR tours to enhance the visitor experience.

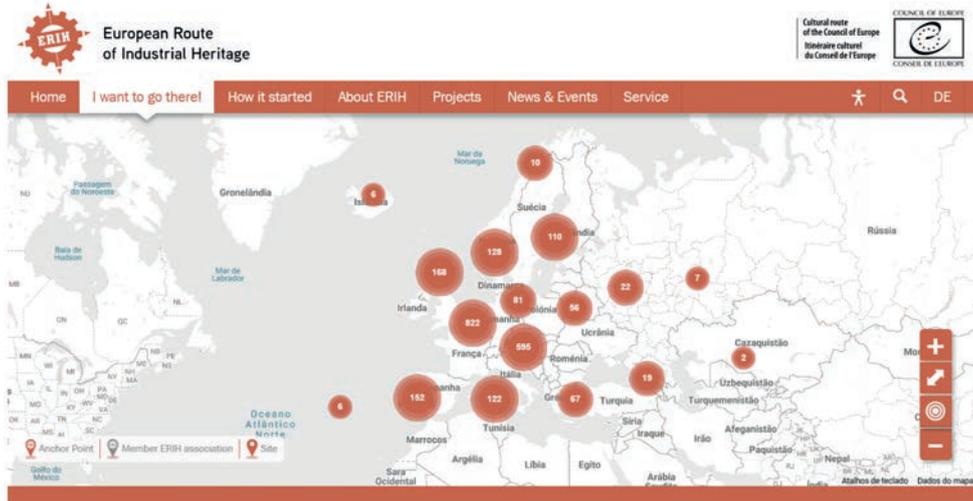


Figure 1 – European Route of Industrial Heritage map, © ERIH





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**3. Strategic Diagnosis: A Synthesis  
of the Mediterranean Landscape**



### 3. Strategic Diagnosis: A Synthesis of the Mediterranean Landscape

The development of a common strategy for Smart Industrial Tourism must be grounded in a clear understanding of the current landscape. This diagnosis synthesizes the shared strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats (SWOT) across the Mediterranean partner regions and distills key insights from the detailed regional roadmaps.

#### 3.1. Key Findings from the SWOT Analysis

The transnational SWOT analysis, based on partner surveys and catalogue data, reveals a consistent set of conditions across the Mediterranean, creating a common ground for strategic action.

##### Strengths to Leverage:

- **Rich and Diverse Industrial Heritage:** The primary strength is the existence of a vast and varied industrial heritage, including historic factories, mines, shipyards, and sites related to textiles, food, and energy production across all partner regions.
- **Potential for Authentic Storytelling:** This heritage provides a rich potential for unique and engaging storytelling that goes beyond traditional tourism, allowing for the preservation of historical memory and regional identity.
- **Growing Community Engagement:** There is a demonstrated commitment in many locations to community involvement, education programs, and sustainability practices, there are active SMEs, which fosters local pride and ensures a more authentic visitor experience.

##### Weaknesses to Address:

- **Fragmented and Underdeveloped Infrastructure:** Many industrial sites suffer from a poor physical condition, limited accessibility, and a lack of basic visitor infrastructure (e.g., transport, signage, facilities).
- **High restoration costs, Insufficient Funding and Data:** Restoration costs are significantly high, sustained funding over short-term project funding are critical weaknesses. Moreover, a critical and universal weakness is the lack of specific data on visitor numbers and revenue, which complicates strategic planning and securing funding.
- **Skills Gaps and Low Awareness:** There is a notable lack of skilled personnel for heritage interpretation and the use of digital tools. Furthermore, there is low public and institutional awareness of “industrial tourism” as a valuable and attractive concept.
- **Barriers to Technology Adoption:** The cost of implementing and maintaining advanced technologies is a significant barrier for many sites, alongside the technical challenges of integrating new systems with existing infrastructure.
- **Accessibility barriers:** Many sites are not universally accessible, which increases the funding needed, and even in some cases it might not be feasible because of the location or infrastructure characteristics.



## Opportunities to Seize

- **Tourism Diversification:** SMIT offers a major opportunity to diversify the Mediterranean's tourism portfolio, reducing seasonality and attracting new visitor segments interested in history, technology, and education.
- **Technological Innovation:** The advancement of immersive technologies like Augmented Reality (AR) and Virtual Reality (VR) provides powerful tools to enhance the visitor experience, reconstruct historical settings, and make inaccessible areas visitable.
- **Development of Thematic Routes:** There is significant potential to create interconnected thematic routes (e.g., mining, textiles, energy) at regional, national, and transnational levels, creating more comprehensive and marketable tourism products.
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** SMIT can act as a catalyst for collaboration between tourism, culture, creative industries, education, and industry, including SMEs, creative industries, sport activities, gastronomy activities, and research institutions, fostering innovation and regional development.

## Threats to Mitigate

- **Financial Instability:** The discontinuity of project funding and general economic downturns pose a constant threat to the long-term sustainability and maintenance of industrial heritage sites.
- **Loss of Authenticity:** There is a risk that over-commercialization, improper restoration, or an over-reliance on technology could diminish the historical authenticity and cultural value of the sites.
- **Competition and Shifting Trends:** Industrial tourism must compete with more established tourism sectors. Rapidly changing tourism trends also create a risk of experiences becoming outdated.
- **Degradation of Heritage:** Without proper restoration and reuse, many valuable industrial sites face further degradation, neglect, and the irreversible loss of heritage.



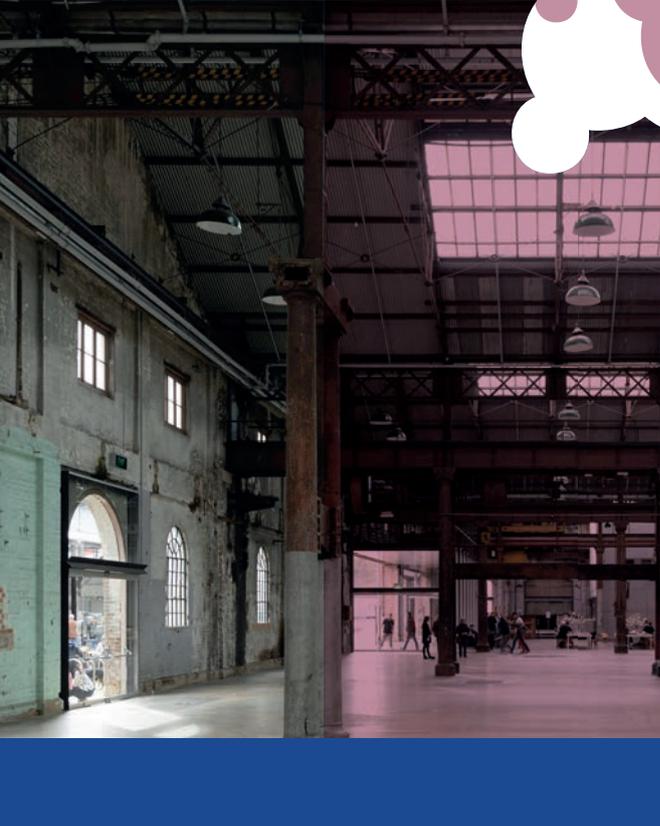
### 3.2. Insights from Regional Roadmaps

The roadmaps from Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy, while tailored to their specific contexts, reveal a shared methodological approach and highlight common strategic priorities.

- **A Call for Structured and Strategic Planning:** All roadmaps demonstrate a clear consensus on the need for a structured approach to SMIT development. They are universally built around core components such as defining specific objectives, setting key milestones, detailing main activities, identifying stakeholders, and creating frameworks for monitoring with Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). This indicates a move away from ad-hoc projects towards long-term, strategic management.
- **The Power of Thematic Itineraries and Digitalization:** The Slovenian roadmap, in particular, champions the creation of national-level thematic routes (e.g., "Slovenian Mining Route," "Energy Route") as a way to connect disparate sites into a cohesive and marketable national product. It also highlights Slovenia's focus on becoming a leader in digitally enriched tourism, leveraging technologies like VR and 3D digitization to transform the visitor experience. This focus on creating structured, tech-forward products is also central to the Prato roadmap, with its co-designed "Water Route" and "Recycled Textile & Sustainable Fashion Route". Moreover, the Croatian focus on **adaptive reuse** and **digital innovation to activate inaccessible or fragmented heritage**. Such as Rijeka's core heritage assets (maritime, shipbuilding, food-processing, tobacco) and its strength as a starting point for SMIT activation due to its preserved heritage and experience in industrial site repurposing.
- **Bridging the Urban-Rural Divide:** The Greek roadmap brings a critical dimension to the forefront: the significant disparity between metropolitan centers like Athens and the periphery. Regional areas, despite hosting rich industrial assets, face structural barriers in funding, visibility, and capacity. A successful Mediterranean strategy must therefore include targeted measures to empower peripheral regions, support SMEs, and ensure equitable development.
- **The Imperative of Sustainable Funding:** A recurring theme across all planning documents is the critical threat of financial instability. The roadmaps recognize that relying on ticketing and short-term project funding is not a viable long-term model. Consequently, a key strategic priority is the development of **diversified revenue** streams. This includes creating new lines of business such as themed bar-restaurants, railway-inspired merchandising, premium experiences like workshops and exclusive tours, and monetizing digital content. This approach is essential to ensure the financial health and continuous improvement of SMIT sites.
- **A New Paradigm of Use: Fusing Heritage with Living Culture, Gastronomy, Sports, and Creativity:** A crucial insight is that to be financially viable and remain relevant, restored industrial sites cannot function merely as static museums. They must transform into dynamic, multi-purpose venues that serve both local communities and visitors. This requires joining forces with other disciplines. The roadmaps provide powerful examples of this fusion in action:



- **Sports and Active Tourism:** In Slovenia, visitors can explore a defunct lead and zinc mine by **kayaking through its flooded tunnels or biking in its underground passages**, creating a unique adventure tourism experience directly linked to industrial heritage.
  - **Creative and Cultural Industries:** Industrial sites are being repurposed as vibrant cultural venues for events like the **Aeschylea Festival in Eleusis**, Greece , or as creative hubs for design and prototyping workshops, such as **RogLab in Ljubljana**. The Prato roadmap also integrates collaborations with **cinema and audiovisual production**.
  - **Interdisciplinary Experiences:** Many initiatives are blending industrial heritage with other local strengths. The **Ormož Lagoons** in Slovenia link the history of a former sugar factory with nature conservation and birdwatching. The roadmaps for Prato and Slovenia both emphasize synergies with **gastronomy, green tourism, and local culinary providers**. This fusion makes the sites living parts of the contemporary cultural landscape, ensuring their relevance and long-term economic sustainability.
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4

**4. Vision, Mission and Values for SMIT in the Mediterranean**



## 4. Vision, Mission and Values for SMIT in the Mediterranean

Based on the strategic diagnosis, the following vision and mission are proposed to guide the collective efforts of the SMITour project and its stakeholders.

### 4.1. Vision Statement

To establish the Mediterranean as a leading global destination for innovative, sustainable, climate change resilient, inclusive, and authentic Smart Industrial Tourism, transforming its rich industrial past into a vibrant driver for cultural identity, regional regeneration, and immersive tourism experiences.

### 4.2. Mission Statement

To empower Mediterranean communities and stakeholders by co-designing and developing a network of engaging Smart Industrial Tourism experiences. This will be achieved by pooling knowledge and resources, strategically integrating immersive technologies to enhance storytelling, fostering cross-sectoral partnerships to ensure sustainability, and transforming industrial assets into unique cultural attractions that diversify the region's tourism offer for generations to come.

### 4.3. Long-term Objectives

- Revalorise Industrial Heritage – Preserve and reinterpret tangible and intangible industrial assets through storytelling and creative interpretation.
- Diversify Tourism in Time and Space – Promote year-round, regionally balanced visitation through new itineraries and cross-sector clustering.
- Integrate Advanced Technologies – Adopt immersive and smart tools (AR, VR, AI, IoT) to enhance accessibility, learning, and engagement.
- Foster Innovation and Education – Develop skills and digital literacy across SMEs, tourism professionals, and communities.
- Strengthen Governance, Measuring and Cooperation – Create stable, multi-level governance systems and interregional partnerships, pivoting on rigorous data and monitoring.
- Ensure Sustainability and Inclusiveness – Embed environmental, social, and accessibility criteria into every SMIT initiative.





#### 4.4. Core Values

To translate our vision and mission into tangible actions, all initiatives developed under this strategy will be guided by the following seven core values. These values serve as a compass, ensuring that every project, partnership, and experience contributes to a model of Smart Industrial Tourism that is responsible, equitable, and excellent.

- **Sustainable and Climate Resilient** This value represents a deep commitment to creating a tourism model that is environmentally responsible, economically viable, and socially beneficial. It involves prioritizing the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings, integrating renewable energy, and minimizing waste and water consumption. Furthermore, it means proactively designing all-weather attractions and low-impact experiences that are resilient to the effects of climate change, ensuring the long-term health of both the heritage sites and the tourism sector.
- **Inclusive** Inclusivity ensures that Smart Industrial Tourism is accessible and welcoming to everyone, regardless of physical, sensorial or cognitive ability, age, language, or socio-economic background. This value mandates the application of universal design principles in all infrastructure, from ramps and accessible facilities to digital tools with multilingual options and features for the visually and hearing impaired. It also means creating socially inclusive programs and fair pricing structures to remove barriers and allow all members of the community and diverse visitor groups to connect with their shared heritage.
- **Innovative** Innovation is the engine of SMIT. This value drives the creative use of technology—not as a gimmick, but as a powerful tool for storytelling and engagement. It involves leveraging immersive tools like AR and VR to reconstruct past environments, using gamification to make learning fun for families, and exploring AI for personalized visitor journeys. Innovation also extends to business models, educational formats, and cross-sectoral partnerships, ensuring the SMIT offer remains dynamic, relevant, and captivating.
- **Competitive** To thrive in a crowded global market, Mediterranean SMIT must offer a distinct and compelling value proposition. This value focuses on building a competitive edge by highlighting the unique and authentic industrial stories that cannot be replicated elsewhere. Competitiveness is achieved by creating high-quality, professionally managed experiences, developing strong thematic routes, and positioning SMIT as an enriching complement to the region's other tourism offers, thereby enhancing the overall attractiveness of the Mediterranean as a destination.
- **High Quality** A commitment to high quality is non-negotiable across every facet of the visitor experience. This value encompasses the accuracy of historical interpretation, the seamless functionality of digital tools, the professionalism and knowledge of guides, and the safety and cleanliness of the facilities. Upholding a high standard of quality is fundamental to achieving visitor satisfaction, generating positive word-of-mouth, and building the long-term credibility and reputation of the Mediterranean SMIT brand.
- **Gender Equality** Industrial history is the story of all people who powered it, and this value ensures a conscious effort to achieve gender equality in both narrative and practice. This means actively researching and giving visibility to the often-overlooked roles and contributions of women in the region's industrial past. It also involves ensuring equal opportunities for women in management, guiding, and decision-making roles within the SMIT sector, and designing experiences and economic opportunities that empower and benefit women in local communities.
- **Safe** The safety of visitors and staff is the highest priority, especially in environments that may include active industrial operations or fragile heritage structures. This value represents an unwavering commitment to risk management and well-being. It is operationalized through rigorous safety audits, clear and accessible emergency procedures, regular infrastructure maintenance, and comprehensive training for all personnel. A safe environment is the foundation upon which trust and a positive visitor experience are built.



5

## 5. Strategic Axes



## 5. Strategic Axes

The following Strategic Axes represent the core principles and thematic priorities that will guide the development of Smart Industrial Tourism across the Mediterranean. They define the fundamental character of the SMIT experience, ensuring it is valuable, memorable, and aligned with the overarching vision.

### 5.1. Identity & Branding

To overcome the current fragmentation and low visibility of industrial tourism, a strong and unified identity is essential. This axis focuses on creating a cohesive brand for Mediterranean SMIT that communicates its unique value proposition. The goal is to develop a shared narrative—“Slovenia – a land of innovation and creativity through time” is a prime example—and a recognizable visual identity. Instead of creating a new public-facing certificate, this axis proposes that the **brand itself becomes the mark of quality**. Adherence to a shared quality framework will be the prerequisite for sites to join the official **“Mediterranean SMIT Network”** and be featured on its curated thematic routes. This creates a powerful sense of belonging and a collective commitment to excellence, where the incentive is not a logo, but the tangible benefits of network inclusion, such as joint promotion and increased visibility.

- **Specific Objectives:**

- **1.1:** Develop a unified brand identity, including a common narrative, visual guide, and promotional materials for the “Mediterranean SMIT Network.”
- **1.2:** Establish a shared Quality Framework—defining standards for authenticity, visitor experience, safety, and sustainability—as the basis for membership in the Network and inclusion in official SMIT routes.

- **Strategic Approach:** The approach will be rooted in co-design and tangible benefits. It will involve collaborative workshops with stakeholders to co-create the brand narrative and the **Quality Framework**. This framework will serve as an internal guide and self-assessment tool for suppliers. The primary strategic mechanism for ensuring quality is that only sites that verifiably adhere to the framework will be granted membership in the “Mediterranean SMIT Network.” The key benefit of membership will be **inclusion in high-visibility, officially branded thematic routes** that are marketed directly to tour operators and the public. This creates a self-reinforcing system: maintaining high standards grants access to powerful marketing and a community of practice, which in turn drives visitors and reinforces the value of quality. The brand the visitor trusts is the curated route, not an abstract certificate.



Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
<b>National/Regional Tourism Boards (PAs)</b>	<b>Own, Endorse, and Fund the Brand.</b> These entities provide the formal endorsement (Action A1.1) and <b>allocate the main significant budget for brand development and international marketing</b> (Instrumental Axis 11/ I4.1). They act as the final decision-makers on brand guidelines and Quality Framework approval (Action A1.2).
<b>Site Managers, Local PAs, Local DMOs, Private Sector</b>	<b>Co-create and Implement.</b> They participate in <b>“bottom-up” transnational workshops</b> to define the core narrative, ensuring the brand identity is authentic and resonates with on-the-ground experiences (Action A1.1). They adhere to the <b>Tiered Quality Framework</b> (Action A1.2) and integrate the Mediterranean SMIT brand with their local brand.
<b>Quality Task Force</b>	<b>Develop and Monitor.</b> They design the technical <b>Tiered Quality Framework</b> (Action A1.2) and monitor adherence for inclusion in official routes (Action A4.3).
<b>Creative/Marketing Agencies</b>	<b>Technical Execution.</b> They are responsible for the technical co-design of the brand identity, visual guide, and communication templates (Action A1.1).

The Quality Framework (Action A1.2 ) should adopt a **Tiered Adherence Model** to accommodate the vast operational differences within the Mediterranean SMIT ecosystem, ensuring the framework is inclusive of small businesses while driving larger entities towards best practice. The framework serves as the entry prerequisite for Network membership and inclusion in official routes.



Tier	Target Audience	Primary Focus & Requirements	Example Sites
<b>Tier 1: Authentic Starter</b>	Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs)/ <b>Living Industry</b> Sites	<b>Authenticity, Safety, Basic Interpretation, and Living Industry Integration.</b> Focus on: <b>Public Liability Insurance</b> , basic safety signage (Action A4.3), clear interpretation materials (e.g., multilingual fact sheet), demonstrable link to the local community, and a commitment to preserving the integrity of active industrial processes.	Small artisanal workshops, family-run active factories, local culinary producers integrated into a route.
<b>Tier 2: Engaged Explorer</b>	Regional/Local Museums, Mid-sized Cultural Institutions, Large Tour Operators, and Developing Heritage Sites	<b>Experience Quality, Capacity Building, and Initial Digital Use.</b> Focus on: Formalized <b>capacity-building plan</b> for staff (Action I3.1), adherence to <b>Gender Equality</b> in narratives (Action A2.1), implementation of <b>Digital Marketing tools</b> (Action I4.1), basic KPI data submission (Action I5.1), and documented plans for sustainability.	Regional textile museums, mid-sized decommissioned factories, cultural sites undergoing initial phases of adaptive reuse.
<b>Tier 3: Smart Pioneer</b>	Flagship Sites, Cultural Districts, Large Industrial Parks, and National Tourism Bodies	<b>Universal Design, Advanced Innovation, and Comprehensive Resilience.</b> Focus on: Full adherence to <b>Universal Design</b> principles (Action A6.1), implementation of <b>Advanced Technology</b> pilots (e.g., AR/VR/Gamification) (Action A3.1), documented <b>Climate Resilience and Circular Economy</b> narratives (Action A7.2), and mandatory participation in the <b>KPI Dashboard</b> and <b>Annual Reporting</b> (Action I5.2).	Rijeka's Palača šećerane VR Experience, UNESCO heritage mines with immersive tours, major industrial cultural districts (e.g., Benčić Complex).



### 5.2. Authenticity in Storytelling and Experience

The core appeal of industrial heritage lies in its authenticity. This axis mandates that every SMIT experience must be rooted in genuine historical narratives, real production processes, and the lived experiences of the people and communities involved. It prioritizes the collection of oral histories and the preservation of heritage integrity. Technology will be used as a tool to reveal and enhance authenticity—such as showing historical reconstructions—not to create superficial entertainment. The story must always lead the technology.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **2.1:** Launch a transnational initiative to systematically collect, archive, and integrate oral histories from former industrial workers and their communities into site interpretations.
- **2.2:** Establish clear ethical guidelines for the restoration and interpretation of industrial heritage, prioritizing the preservation of historical integrity and material authenticity.

• **Strategic Approach:** This will be achieved through a “living heritage” model. The strategy involves launching community-based research projects to capture and archive oral histories, creating a valuable repository of intangible heritage. Formal partnerships will be established with conservation experts, universities, and bodies like TICCIH to develop and disseminate best-practice guidelines for authentic restoration and interpretation. A peer-review process will be encouraged for new digital experiences to ensure they are historically sound and enhance, rather than detract from, the site’s authenticity.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Cultural Institutions (Museums/Archives) & Universities	<b>Lead Content Creation and Archiving.</b> They lead the <b>Transnational Oral History &amp; Archiving Program</b> (Action A2.1), providing the methodology, collecting/digitizing oral histories, and defining the <b>Ethical Charter</b> for interpretation (Action A2.2).
Heritage Conservationists & TICCIH	<b>Set Standards.</b> They develop the <b>Ethical Guidelines</b> for restoration to ensure historical accuracy and integrity (Action A2.2).
Local PAs & Community Associations	<b>Facilitate and Contribute.</b> They facilitate access to interviewees (former industrial workers) and engage local communities in the oral history collection process (Action A2.1).
Site Managers & Creative Industries	<b>Integrate Storytelling.</b> They ensure the collected oral histories are faithfully integrated into the final visitor experience, digital content, and exhibitions (Action A2.1).



### 5.3. Innovation with Purpose

This axis champions the thoughtful and strategic use of technology to deepen understanding, broaden accessibility, and create uniquely immersive experiences. Innovation is not about technology for its own sake, but about using tools like AR, VR, and gamification purposefully. This means enhancing, not replacing, the physical experience by bringing invisible histories to life, animating dormant machinery, or explaining complex processes. It also involves continuously exploring new interpretive methods to keep the SMIT offer fresh and engaging for diverse audiences, especially younger generations.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **3.1:** Pilot and scale the use of AR and VR at a minimum of ten diverse sites across the Mediterranean to reconstruct historical processes and make inaccessible areas visitable.
- **3.2:** Create a “SMIT Digital Toolkit” that provides guidance and best-practice examples for sites to implement interactive technologies like gamification and AI-powered storytelling, as well as digital marketing, SEO and audiovisual content for organic growth. Moreover it can include a trial and error model of new technologies for universities, research centers, etc.

- **Strategic Approach:** The approach will be to create “Living Labs” and pilot projects at selected sites where new technologies can be tested and refined in a real-world environment before wider deployment. This will be done in partnership with technology companies, startups, and universities. The “Digital Toolkit” will be developed as a dynamic online resource, populated with practical case studies from the catalogues of practices and technologies, how-to guides, and a directory of trusted tech providers to lower the barrier to adoption for all sites.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Regional PAs (Innovation Depts.) & EU Funds	<b>Fund and Enable.</b> They provide the initial <b>seed funding and innovation grants</b> (e.g., Horizon Europe) for the <b>SMIT ‘Living Labs’</b> (Action A3.1) and support the development of the tiered <b>SMIT Digital Toolkit</b> (Action A3.2).
Universities & Tech Startups	<b>Technical Leadership and Prototyping.</b> They lead the <b>R&amp;D</b> in the <b>Living Labs</b> (Action A3.1), test new AR/VR/Gamification concepts (e.g., Rijeka’s VR Sugar Palace), and develop the practical content and provider directory for the <b>Digital Toolkit</b> (Action A3.2).
Site Managers & Living Industry SMEs	<b>Pilot and Implement.</b> They offer their sites as the <b>Living Labs</b> for testing new technologies (Action A3.1) and are the primary users of the tiered <b>Digital Toolkit</b> (Action A3.2), applying the ‘Low-Tech/High-Touch’ or ‘High-Tech’ pathways based on their capacity.



#### 5.4. Collaboration, Clustering, and Routes

No single site can create a destination. This axis establishes collaboration as the engine for building a resilient SMIT ecosystem. The core strategy is to move from promoting isolated sites to marketing **branded, high-quality thematic routes**. Critically, these routes and clusters are not just chains of industrial sites; they are rich, interdisciplinary ecosystems. Their success and financial viability depend on fusing industrial heritage with other vibrant sectors such as the **creative industries, gastronomy, wine, sports, and nature tourism**. This fusion creates multi-layered experiences that keep heritage sites alive and relevant for local communities and diverse visitor profiles alike.

- **Specific Objectives:**

- **4.1:** Facilitate the creation of formal regional SMIT clusters that are inherently interdisciplinary, bringing together heritage sites with actors from the creative industries, gastronomic and wine initiatives, sports, music, and active tourism sectors, living industries, among others.
- **4.2:** Design, map, and promote at least three transnational thematic routes that showcase these hybrid experiences, combining industrial site visits with hands-on workshops, culinary offerings, artistic events, or sports activities.
- **4.3:** Ensure that all sites and partners included in officially branded SMIT routes meet the standards defined in the shared **Quality Framework**, guaranteeing a consistent and high-quality visitor experience.

- **Strategic Approach:** The approach begins with the formation of **interdisciplinary regional clusters**. Co-design workshops, led by cluster facilitators, will not only map industrial assets but will actively recruit partners from other sectors: local chefs and wineries, artists and designers, sports clubs and nature guides. Once these collaborative clusters are formed and their members adhere to the **Quality Framework**, the transnational **“Mediterranean SMIT Network”** will curate and brand the thematic routes. The curation process will specifically focus on creating compelling, multi-faceted itineraries. For example, a “Mining Route” could include a VR mine tour, a hiking trail along an old railway, a tasting of “miners’ cuisine” at a local restaurant, and an art installation in a repurposed industrial building. This ensures the final product is a rich, dynamic experience that appeals to a broad audience and provides multiple reasons to visit a region, thereby strengthening its overall competitiveness and ensuring long-term financial viability. Moreover, cluster formation must explicitly **Focus on clusters in the product creation with Living Industry**, including researching and attracting interesting active companies.



Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Regional Development Agencies & DMOs	<b>Facilitate and Curate.</b> They lead the structured workshops to facilitate <b>Interdisciplinary Cluster Formation</b> , actively recruiting <i>Living Industry</i> partners (Action A4.1). They then curate, map, and officially brand the <b>Transnational Thematic Routes</b> (Action A4.2).
National/Regional Tourism Boards (PAs)	<b>Endorse and Promote.</b> They provide the official <b>endorsement of the branded routes</b> and integrate them into international tourism promotion platforms (Action A4.2).
Local PAs, SMEs (Creative, Gastronomic, Sports), and Site Managers	<b>Co-create the Product.</b> They participate in the clusters, combining their assets (e.g., Rijeka's mills route with walking/cycling clubs) to design the <b>hybrid, interdisciplinary tourism product</b> that moves beyond single-site visits (Action A4.1).
Transnational SMIT Network	<b>Quality Control.</b> It manages the ' <b>Quality for Inclusion</b> ' Mechanism (Action A4.3), ensuring only sites adhering to the <b>Tiered Quality Framework</b> are included in the official branded routes.



### 5.5. Integrated Sustainability and Urban Planning

Sustainability must be woven into the fabric of every SMIT initiative, balancing economic viability, environmental responsibility, and socio-cultural integrity. Critically, this cannot be achieved in isolation. SMIT development must be deeply integrated with **urban and territorial planning** to ensure it benefits the entire community. This means that when new urban plans are developed, they must foster and facilitate flows to heritage sites. This integration involves designing **sustainable mobility** solutions (public transport, cycling paths) to connect cities with industrial sites, managing tourist flows to prevent congestion, and ensuring that **utilities, waste management, and public services** are planned to support the needs of both local residents and the “floating population” of visitors.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **5.1:** Integrate SMIT development into regional and urban planning documents, including mobility and land use plans.
- **5.2:** Promote the adaptive reuse of derelict industrial buildings as a primary strategy for urban regeneration and heritage preservation.
- **5.3:** Develop sustainable mobility solutions to connect urban centers with peripheral SMIT sites, reducing reliance on private cars.

- **Strategic Approach:** The approach will involve establishing joint working groups between tourism boards and municipal/regional planning authorities to ensure strategies are aligned. Policy advocacy will be a key activity, promoting financial and regulatory incentives for the adaptive reuse of industrial buildings. Co-designing sustainable mobility plans will be a priority, creating integrated transport tickets and promoting green corridors (cycling/walking paths) that link heritage sites with urban centers and other local attractions.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Local/Regional PAs (Planning & Transport Depts.)	<b>Lead Policy Integration and Implementation.</b> They are the lead actors in developing and mandating the <b>SMIT-Integrated Urban &amp; Spatial Planning Guidelines</b> (Action A5.1). They also <b>fund and implement pilot projects for Sustainable Mobility</b> (Action A5.2).
Urban Planners & Architects	<b>Technical Design.</b> They design the guidelines, focusing on adaptive reuse (e.g., Rijeka’s Benčić complex model), sustainable visitor flows, and connecting peripheral sites with urban centers.
Tourism Boards & Site Managers	<b>Advocate and Inform.</b> They advocate for the integration of SMIT sites into urban master plans and inform planners about visitor needs and potential congestion issues.



### 5.6. Inclusivity and Accessibility

SMIT must be for everyone. This axis commits to breaking down physical, cognitive, social, and economic barriers. It mandates the application of universal design principles for physical accessibility (ramps, lifts) and the use of technology to enhance digital accessibility (multilingual content, audio descriptions, tactile tours). It also promotes social and economic access through tiered pricing, community open days, and targeted outreach to ensure local communities and diverse groups can participate fully.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **6.1:** Conduct accessibility audits for all participating SMIT sites and support the implementation of phased upgrade plans based on universal design principles.
- **6.2:** Ensure all digital platforms and key on-site interpretive materials are available in multiple languages and accessible formats (e.g., subtitles, audio descriptions).

• **Strategic Approach:** This will be implemented through a “design for all” methodology. A standardized accessibility audit template will be created and disseminated to all sites. Partnerships will be established with organizations representing people with disabilities to co-design experiences and ensure they meet real-world needs. All technology procurement and development will have digital accessibility as a core contractual requirement.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Local/Regional PAs & National Grant Bodies	<b>Fund and Mandate.</b> They allocate <b>grants and funding for site upgrades</b> and enforce <b>accessibility compliance</b> in all public-funded heritage projects (Action A6.1).
Accessibility Experts & NGOs	<b>Audit and Co-design.</b> They conduct the initial <b>Accessibility Audits</b> and co-design the tiered upgrade plans based on universal design principles (Action A6.1). They also ensure <b>Multilingual/Multi-Sensory Digital Content Standards</b> (Action A6.2) are met for all users.
SMIT Site Managers & Digital Content Developers	<b>Implement.</b> They implement the physical upgrades and ensure all digital content, like VR narratives, gamification interfaces, and websites, meet the multi-sensory and multilingual standards (Action A6.2).

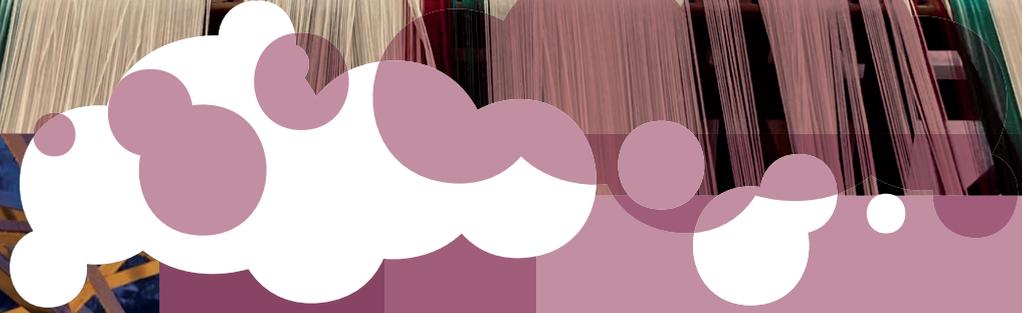


### 5.7. Climate Resilience

Recognizing the Mediterranean's vulnerability to climate change, this axis embeds resilience into the design of the SMIT model. The focus is on developing high-quality, all-weather indoor attractions that are less dependent on seasonal weather patterns and more resilient to extreme events like heatwaves. This not only future-proofs the tourism offers but also helps to extend the visitor season into the shoulder months, contributing to a more sustainable, year-round tourism economy.

- **Specific Objectives:**
  - **7.1:** Develop and promote at least ten all-weather SMIT itineraries designed to strengthen tourism offerings during the shoulder seasons and reduce vulnerability to extreme weather.
  - **7.2:** Integrate educational content on climate action, industrial transition, and the circular economy into the core narrative of participating SMIT sites.
- **Strategic Approach:** The strategy will focus on integrating climate vulnerability assessments into site management plans. Financial incentives will be promoted for sites to invest in renewable energy and water-saving technologies. Marketing efforts will specifically target the shoulder seasons, highlighting the value of SMIT sites as compelling indoor, all-weather cultural destinations.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
<b>DMOs &amp; Tour Operators</b>	<b>Promote and Package.</b> They lead the marketing strategy to identify and promote ' <b>All-Weather</b> ' SMIT Itineraries (Action A7.1), reducing the reliance on seasonal tourism.
<b>SMIT Site Managers &amp; Educators</b>	<b>Develop Content.</b> They develop interpretive materials and educational programs that link industrial heritage to contemporary issues of <b>Climate Action and the Circular Economy</b> (Action A7.2), using sites like active factories as <i>Living Industry</i> examples.
<b>National/Regional Tourism Boards (PAs)</b>	<b>Incentivize.</b> They provide incentives for package tours and tourism promotion targeting shoulder seasons (Action A7.1).



6

**6. Instrumental Axes**



## 6. Instrumental Axes

### Defining the “How”

The Instrumental Axes are the operational enablers that provide the necessary structure, resources, and tools to bring the Strategic Axes to life. They are the practical mechanisms for implementation, defining how the strategy will be executed.

### 6.1. Governance

To ensure cohesive and effective implementation, a clear governance framework is required at multiple levels. This involves establishing formal partnerships (e.g., a “Mediterranean SMIT Network”), defining roles and responsibilities for public authorities and private stakeholders, and creating coordination bodies for regional clusters and transnational routes. Good governance will prevent fragmentation, facilitate decision-making, and ensure long-term strategic alignment.

### • Specific Objectives:

- **1.1:** Establish a transnational “Mediterranean SMIT Network” to coordinate strategy, share best practices, and manage joint projects.
- **1.2:** Create clear guidelines and templates for establishing regional SMIT clusters and public-private partnerships.

- **Strategic Approach:** The approach will utilize a multi-level governance model. A transnational steering committee, composed of representatives from each partner region’s public authorities, will be established to oversee the “Mediterranean SMIT Network”. At the local level, the strategy is to empower regional development agencies or lead municipalities to act as facilitators for cluster formation, using the provided guidelines and templates to ensure consistency and share best practices.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
National/Regional Public Authorities (PAs)	<b>Lead, Formalize, and Chair.</b> They are the <b>core members</b> of the transnational “ <b>Mediterranean SMIT Network</b> ” and its <b>Steering Committee (SC)</b> . Their role is to formalize the network’s legal and operational framework (e.g., MoUs), lead high-level decision-making, and ensure the strategy is aligned with national/regional policies. <b>PAs budget funds the initial formalization and annual operation of the Network/SC</b> (Action I1.1).
Regional Development Agencies & Local PAs	<b>Facilitate and Empower Local Structures.</b> They use the provided <b>Governance Templates</b> (Action I1.2) to act as facilitators for the formation and formalization of <b>regional SMIT clusters</b> . Their mandate is to empower local municipalities and site managers to take ownership of local implementation and coordinate diverse local actors.
Local SMIT Site Managers, SMEs, & Creative Sector	<b>Participate and Inform.</b> They participate in their regional clusters, adhering to the established governance structures. They provide essential bottom-up feedback to the Steering Committee regarding local needs, challenges, and success factors.
Legal Experts & EU Institutions	<b>Technical Support.</b> They ensure the legal documentation (Charter, Rules of Procedure) is sound and provide technical assistance during the formal establishment of the transnational network (Action I1.1).



## 6.2. Funding

Sustainable funding is the lifeblood of the strategy. This axis focuses on moving beyond a dependency on short-term projects by creating a diversified funding portfolio. It involves a proactive strategy to systematically map and access public funding streams, develop models for public-private partnerships, and empower sites to generate their own revenue through innovative business models.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **2.1:** Create a “SMIT Funding Guide” for stakeholders, mapping relevant EU, national, and regional funding opportunities.
- **2.2:** Develop and pilot at least three different diversified revenue models (e.g., premium experiences, merchandising, venue rental) across the network.

• **Strategic Approach:** The approach is twofold. First, a dedicated “Funding Task Force” will be created to continuously update the “SMIT Funding Guide” and provide direct support to stakeholders in preparing applications for EU and national funds. Second, a series of capacity-building workshops will be organized, focusing on business model innovation, where sites can co-design and test new revenue streams using tools like the Business Model Canvas. For all year-round activity business models need to take into account that clients are locals and visitors. Part of the funding guide can focus on the transformation of the Living industry into tourism offer.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
National/Regional Tourism Boards (PAs)	<b>Main Allocator.</b> They are the <b>main source and allocator of significant promotional budgets</b> across the Mediterranean (Instrumental Axis 11/I4.1). They co-fund R&D grants (Action A3.1) and are responsible for ensuring long-term maintenance budgets.
Funding Task Force	<b>Identify and Guide.</b> They research and compile the <b>Comprehensive SMIT Funding Guide</b> (Action I2.1), including the specific section on <b>Financing for Living Industry Transformation</b> (Catalonia/Prato focus).
National Investment Agencies & Regional PAs	<b>Facilitate PPPs.</b> They lead the development of the <b>Public-Private Partnership (PPP) programs</b> (Action I2.2) to diversify revenue streams.
SMEs/Site Managers	<b>Generate and Apply.</b> They apply for grants listed in the Funding Guide and implement <b>diversified revenue models</b> (e.g., premium experiences) to ensure financial sustainability beyond project funding.



### 6.3. Capacity Building

The success of SMIT depends on the skills of the people who manage and deliver it. This axis addresses the identified skills gaps through targeted training and professional development programs for stakeholders in areas such as heritage interpretation, digital literacy, business planning, and visitor services.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **3.1:** Design and deliver a standardized “SMIT Academy” training curriculum for guides and managers, focusing on storytelling, digital tools, and visitor engagement.

**3.2:** Launch a mentorship program connecting established SMIT sites with emerging ones and SMEs to accelerate knowledge transfer. This will be useful to connect experienced members with new members and facilitate membership expansion. Moreover, useful to formalize the exchange of good practices and knowledge with European networks (ERIH) and similar associations.

- **Strategic Approach:** A “train-the-trainer” model will be adopted. A core curriculum for the “SMIT Academy” will be developed by a consortium of academic partners and expert practitioners. This curriculum will then be adapted and delivered at the regional level by certified local trainers. The mentorship program will be facilitated through an online platform, matching experienced site managers with newcomers and SMEs based on their specific needs and industrial sector. There would be modules on “Commercialization, Marketing and Management of Experiences in Living Industry” for SMEs and managers.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Universities & Vocational Training Centers	<b>Design and Deliver.</b> They design and deliver the tiered <b>SMIT Academy Curriculum</b> (Action I3.1), ensuring the new focus on <b>‘Commercialization and Management of Experiences in Living Industry’</b> for SMEs is included.
Transnational SMIT Network & Experienced Site Managers	<b>Mentor and Exchange.</b> They establish and manage the <b>Peer Mentorship &amp; Exchange Program</b> (Action I3.2), connecting experienced Tier 3 sites (e.g., Rijeka’s cultural district) with emerging Tier 1 and 2 sites/SMEs.
Regional PAs	<b>Fund and Mandate.</b> They fund training participation and formally recognize the <b>SMIT Academy certification.</b>



### 6.4. Communication and Marketing

To build a strong brand and attract visitors, a professional and coordinated communication strategy is essential. This axis will focus on developing the unified brand identity for Mediterranean SMIT and implementing multi-channel marketing campaigns that tell the compelling story of the region's industrial heritage.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **4.1:** Launch a unified digital platform (website and mobile/web app) for the Mediterranean SMIT brand, featuring an interactive map (story maps) of sites, thematic routes, and a booking portal.
- **4.2:** Develop a communication plan partially relying on paid campaigns and mostly on organic content generation.
- **4.3:** Execute a targeted international marketing campaign(s) to promote Mediterranean SMIT as a unique cultural tourism product in key source markets.

• **Strategic Approach:** The strategy will be to create a central brand managed by the transnational network, while allowing for regional adaptation in promotion. A lead partner or an external agency will be tasked with developing and maintaining the unified digital platform. The international marketing campaign(s) will be executed in phases, initially targeting niche markets (heritage tourists, educational groups) before expanding to broader audiences, using content co-created with the sites themselves to ensure authenticity. Each heritage site has its website, but if all are connected its brand presence online is more easily recognized by search engine algorithms. FAM and press trips are included here, for instance FAM Thematic Trips Focused on the Living Industry of Prato - Italy or Catalonia-Spain, or elsewhere, for tour operators and influencers to encourage the sale of the experiences and products.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
National Tourism Boards (PAs)	<b>Provide Main Budget &amp; Strategy.</b> They provide the primary budget for the <b>Unified Digital Marketing Strategy</b> (Action I4.1) and approve the international campaign, ensuring national efforts across nations are connected to the central brand.
DMOs & National Tourism Boards	<b>Lead FAM Trips.</b> They host the <b>Familiarization (FAM) Trips</b> (Action I4.2), specifically organizing thematic trips focused on flagship products like Rijeka's digital experiences or the <i>Living Industry</i> routes for tour operators and media.
Transnational SMIT Network	<b>Manage Digital Platform.</b> It manages the unified digital platform and coordinates the joint campaign execution (Action I4.1).
Local Stakeholders (Local PAs, DMOs, SMEs)	<b>Local Promotion.</b> They connect their local promotional efforts to the Mediterranean SMIT brand using their own local budget, driving traffic to the transnational routes (Action I4.1).



### 6.5. Business Intelligence

To facilitate data-driven decision-making and continuous improvement, this axis focuses on establishing a system for business intelligence. This involves the standardized collection and analysis of key data on marketing and communication actions' success and failure, visitors, revenue, and satisfaction to measure impact, identify trends, and adapt the strategy effectively.

• **Specific Objectives:**

- **5.1:** Develop a common dashboard of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and a standardized data collection methodology for all participating sites.
- **5.2:** Publish an annual "State of Mediterranean SMIT" report based on collected data to track progress, demonstrate impact, and inform strategic adjustments.

- **Strategic Approach:** A common, user-friendly data collection tool (e.g., a simple web-based form or app) will be developed and provided to all participating sites. A central data analyst or a partner university will be responsible for aggregating this data, managing the KPI dashboard, and producing the annual report. This report will be a key tool for advocacy, strategic planning, and demonstrating value to funders. One of the clusters form should be bringing feedback into what else should be measured, so that the KPIs evolve and respond to the needs of its users.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
<b>Business Intelligence Experts &amp; IT Partners</b>	<b>Design and Implement the System.</b> They lead the development and implementation of the <b>Standardized KPI Dashboard and Data Collection Platform</b> (Action I5.1). This includes designing common KPI definitions (e.g., satisfaction, revenue, sustainability metrics) and ensuring the platform is user-friendly and secure.
<b>Regional PAs (Tourism Depts.) &amp; Transnational SMIT Network</b>	<b>Mandate and Report.</b> Regional PAs mandate data submission from publicly funded sites and enforce data protection guidelines (Action I5.1). <b>The Transnational SMIT Network</b> compiles, analyzes, and publishes the <b>Annual "State of Mediterranean SMIT" Reports</b> (Action I5.2). These reports are key tools for policy review and advocacy.
<b>SMIT Site Managers &amp; DMOs</b>	<b>Collect and Submit Data.</b> They are the primary users of the system, responsible for <b>timely and accurate data submission</b> (e.g., visitor numbers, digital engagement, revenue metrics) via the standardized tools (Action I5.1). They also provide cluster-specific feedback on what other metrics should be tracked, ensuring KPIs evolve to meet user needs.
<b>Research Institutions</b>	<b>Analyze and Verify.</b> They assist the Transnational SMIT Network with the aggregation and rigorous analysis of data, contributing to the credibility of the annual reports (Action I5.2).



### 6.6. Infrastructure

A quality visitor experience requires quality infrastructure. This axis addresses the physical readiness of sites and the connectivity between them, ensuring they are safe, accessible, and easy to navigate.

- **Specific Objectives:**
  - **6.1:** Define and disseminate a “SMIT Site Readiness Checklist” outlining minimum standards for safety, accessibility, visitor facilities, and interpretation.
  - **6.2:** Implement a unified physical and digital signage system for all official SMIT thematic routes to ensure a seamless and intuitive visitor journey.
- **Strategic Approach:** The “SMIT Site Readiness Checklist” will be developed through a consultative process involving safety experts, accessibility consultants, and experienced site managers, creating a practical self-assessment tool. The implementation of infrastructure improvements will be linked to the funding axis, with priority given to projects addressing critical safety and accessibility gaps. The unified signage system will be designed centrally as part of the brand identity and then produced and installed locally by regional authorities to ensure consistency.

Stakeholder Role	Responsibility in this Axis
Regional/Local PAs & Road Authorities	<b>Fund, Regulate, and Implement Physical Infrastructure.</b> They provide the <b>funding for infrastructure improvements</b> (Action I6.2) and integrate the <b>SMIT Site Readiness Checklist</b> (Action I6.1) into local planning permits and operational licenses. They lead the deployment and maintenance of the <b>Unified Signage and Wayfinding System</b> for routes (Action I6.2).
Site Managers & Safety Officers	<b>Self-Assess and Upgrade.</b> They use the <b>SMIT Site Readiness Checklist</b> for self-assessment against minimum standards for safety, accessibility, visitor facilities, and digital connectivity (Action I6.1). They are the direct implementers of the infrastructure upgrades linked to funding prioritization.
Infrastructure Experts & Branding Experts	<b>Technical Design.</b> They design the <b>Readiness Checklist</b> based on best practices and create the consistent design manual for the <b>Unified Signage and Wayfinding System</b> (Action I6.2).
Digital Cartographers & Tech Providers	<b>Digital Connectivity.</b> They ensure <b>robust digital connectivity</b> and integration of the wayfinding system with mobile apps and QR codes (Action I6.2), addressing the need for robust digital infrastructure.



## **7. Enabling Conditions and Success Factors**



## 7. Enabling Conditions and Success Factors

For the ambitious vision of a Mediterranean SMIT network to become a reality, several cross-cutting enabling conditions must be in place. These factors are not specific to any single action but are foundational to the success of the entire strategy. They create the fertile ground upon which the strategic and instrumental axes can be effectively implemented.

### 1. Ensure Robust Digital Infrastructure

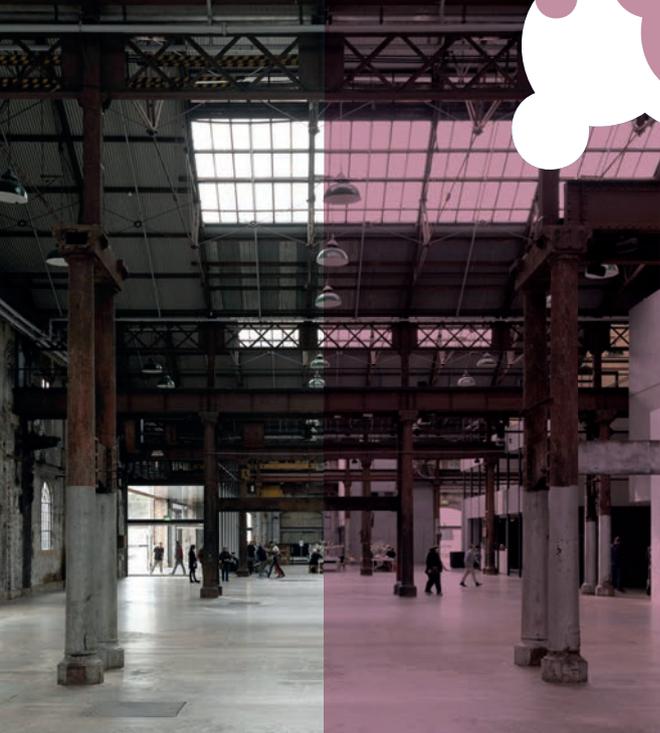
The “Smart” in SMIT is contingent on accessible and reliable digital infrastructure. This goes beyond the technologies at individual sites and refers to the broader digital ecosystem. A significant challenge identified is the technological gap and low digital literacy, particularly in rural and peripheral areas. Success requires equitable access to high-speed internet, which is the backbone for immersive AR/VR experiences, online booking platforms, and digital marketing. Furthermore, shared platforms, like the proposed unified website or the “Digital Password” system, depend on interoperability and a common technological framework to function seamlessly across regions and countries.

### 2. Steer Policy Alignment at Regional and National Levels

SMIT cannot thrive in a policy vacuum or with fragmented, uncoordinated support. A critical success factor is the alignment of tourism, cultural, industrial, and urban planning policies at all levels of governance. As highlighted in the Greek roadmap, industrial tourism is often disconnected from central tourism strategies. Public authorities must transition from being passive administrators of external funds to active drivers of innovation. This involves embedding SMIT into national tourism strategies, as Greece has begun to do, modernizing heritage protection laws to allow for innovative reuse, and creating financial incentives (grants, subsidies) that encourage private sector investment in tech-driven experiences.

### 3. Enforce Effective Inter-regional and Transnational Cooperation Mechanisms

The vision of creating compelling transnational thematic routes and a unified Mediterranean brand depends entirely on effective cooperation. This requires establishing formal mechanisms for collaboration that go beyond temporary projects. The creation of a “Mediterranean SMIT Network”, as proposed in the governance axis, is the central enabler here. This body would be responsible for managing the brand, coordinating joint marketing campaigns, facilitating knowledge exchange, and advocating for the sector at the EU level. Without a structured and sustained mechanism for cooperation, individual efforts will remain fragmented, and the strategy’s full potential will not be realized.



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## 8. Conclusion



## 8. Conclusion

This strategy charts an ambitious but achievable course for the future of industrial heritage in the Mediterranean. It moves beyond a simple diagnosis of challenges and opportunities to present a clear, actionable framework for transforming the region's rich industrial past into a vibrant and sustainable tourism future. The core of this strategy lies in a powerful dual approach:

- 1. Building a Unified, High-Quality Brand:**

By focusing on a shared identity, authentic storytelling, and purposeful innovation, we can create a world-class SMIT experience that is unique to the Mediterranean.

- 2.**

**Creating a Resilient, Collaborative Ecosystem:**

Through structured governance, diversified funding, and targeted capacity building, we will empower stakeholders at every level—from local SMEs to national authorities—to become active participants in this shared journey.

This is more than a plan to diversify tourism. It is a strategy for **regional regeneration, cultural preservation, and community empowerment**. It recognizes that our industrial heritage sites are not relics of the past but living assets that, when fused with creativity, technology, and interdisciplinary collaboration, can tell powerful stories about who we are and inspire new paths for the future.

The success of this vision now rests on our collective commitment to action. The roadmaps from Spain, Greece, Slovenia, Croatia and Italy have illuminated the path forward. Now is the time for stakeholders across the Mediterranean to embrace this shared vision, to build the clusters and routes, to forge the partnerships, and to invest in the innovation that will secure a dynamic and prosperous future for our invaluable industrial heritage.



## Annexes

- D 1.2.1 Catalogue of Industrial Tourism Practices
- D 1. 3. 1. Catalogue of Advanced Technologies Applications for Tourism
- Output 1.1 SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean
- Roadmaps for Industrial Tourism Itineraries in Prato
- ROAD MAP of the Industrial Tourism Experiences Developed in the SMITOUR Interreg euro-MED project workshop: Validation of the Methodology for Creating Industrial Tourism Products in Catalonia
- ROAD MAP of the Industrial Tourism Experiences Developed in the SMITOUR Interreg euro-MED project workshop: Challenges and opportunities of Industrial Tourism in Greece
- ROAD MAP of the Industrial Tourism Experiences Developed in the SMITOUR Interreg euro-MED project workshop: Challenges and opportunities of Industrial Tourism in Slovenia



## Sources, tables and figures

### List of sources

This strategy was developed based on the analysis and synthesis of the following key documents produced within the SMITour project:

- **Output 1.1:** SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean (smitour-wp1-output-1.1-swot-analysis-of-smart-industrial-tourism-in-the-mediterranean-v6.pdf)
- **Deliverable 1.2.1:** Catalogue of Industrial Tourism Practices (smitour-wp1-d1.2.1-catalogue-of-industrial-tourism-practices-v4c.pdf)
- **Deliverable 1.3.1:** Catalogue of Advanced Technologies Applications for Tourism (smitour-wp1-d1.3.1-catalogue-of-advanced-technologies-applications-for-tourism-v4\_compressed.pdf)
- **Deliverable 2.2.1:** Joint Thematic Roadmaps for developing SMIT in the Med regions, including:
  - Roadmap for Prato, Italy (SMITour - Roadmaps for Industrial Tourism Itineraries in Prato 20251014.docx)
  - Roadmap for Catalonia, Spain (D.2.2.1 - 1 XATIC - Joint Thematic Roadmap for developing SMIT in the Mediterranean regions (1).pdf)
  - Roadmap for Greece (D.2.2.1 - 2 HClA - Joint Thematic Roadmap for developing SMIT in the Mediterranean regions (1).pdf)
  - Roadmap for Slovenia (D.2.2.1\_eZavod\_RRAPodrMB-Joint Thematic Roadmap for developing SMIT in the Med regions\_071025\_DRAFT.docx and Annex 1\_SMITour\_Roadmap\_Slovenia\_Objectives\_Measures\_Activities\_Expected impacts\_30092025.xlsx - List1.csv)
  - Roadmap for Rijeka – Croatia <https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1WC5zTkbWOerZclEu7L4TkGtSScAeLoA2>



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