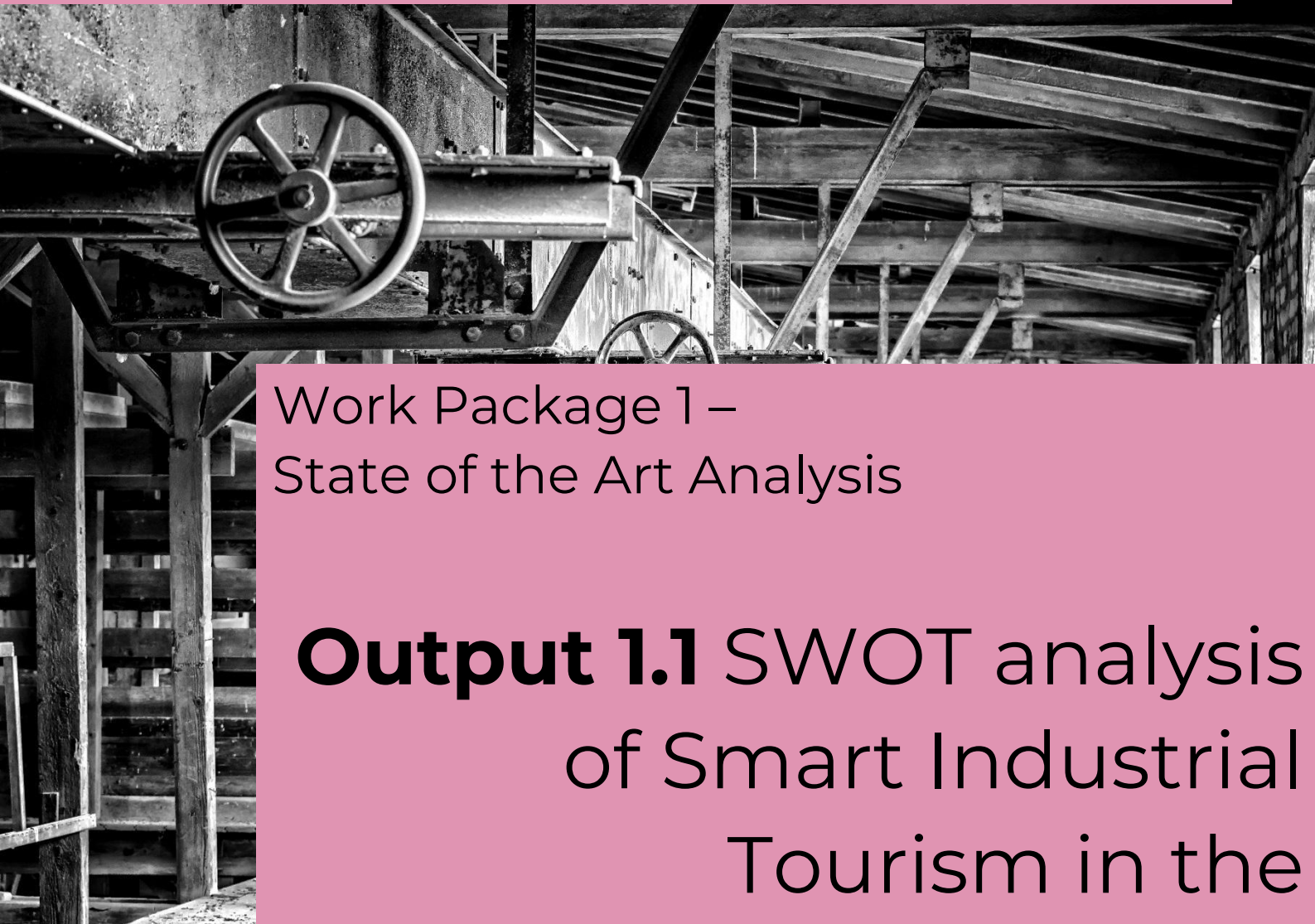The SMITour Project |
SMart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean

Work Package 1 –
State of the Art Analysis

Output 1.1 SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean
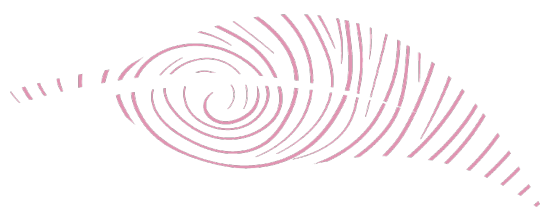
SMITour | Interreg Euro-MED | Co-funded by the European Union

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Executive Summary

This document provides the Transnational SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean based on the comparative analysis of the baselines studies of the partner regions jointly developed by the seven partner organisations, the GPs and the advanced technologies applications existing in each region. Based on the complementary data of the partners, the SWOT analysis indicates the drivers, hindrances, potentialities and criticalities for the development of SMIT activities in the Mediterranean.
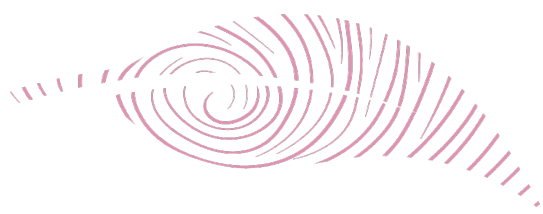
The SMITour Project | SMart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean

The SMITour project identifies the need to develop new SMart Industrial Tourism (SMIT) activities as a common challenge for Mediterranean regions wishing to leverage their industrial and manufacturing sites to diversify the economy, stimulate social and economic growth, minimize environmental impact and boost research and technological innovation. The high rate of industry participation in industrial tourism clusters makes this sector ideal for experimenting with advanced and immersive technologies that are already being adopted by manufacturing industries and that have been greatly enhanced by the covid-19 pandemic, and that allow combining physical and virtual visits through the use of AR, VR or MR (Augmented, Virtual and Mixed Reality). The virtuous combination of industrial tourism with advanced technologies gives rise to Smart Industrial Tourism (SMIT).

 SMITour aims at studying the social and economic potential of SMart Industrial Tourism in six Mediterranean regions, assessing the state of the art by analyzing existing good practices in industrial tourism and in the use of advanced technologies in the tourism sector, exploring pathways for the development of SMIT activities in the regions and cities involved.

 The project addresses the partners' common challenges by pooling their experience and know-how and by creating transnational Focus Groups involving the regional stakeholders to implement a series of thematic Innovation Camps that will co-design roadmaps and figure out a common Strategy and Action Plan to develop SMart Industrial Tourism. The Strategy and Action Plan will help MED regions to diversify tourism to stimulate social and economic growth while enhancing technological innovation. The partners will eventually be able to mobilize the necessary resources (human, technical, financial) and structures (management and governance) to achieve the project's goals.

 The following is **the partnership of the project**:

1. Municipality of Prato (IT) - Lead Partner
2. University Institute of Lisbon (PT)
3. Industrial Tourism Network of Catalonia - Barcelona (ES)
4. Prato Textile Museum Foundation (IT)
5. Hellenic Clothing Industry Association - Athens (EL)
6. E-institute, Institute for Comprehensive Development Solutions (SI)
7. Faculty of Economics and Business Rijeka (HR)

SMITour is funded by the Interreg Euro-MED programme through the European Regional Development Fund and co-financed by the National Revolving Fund for the implementation of EU policies.

Work Package1 – State of the Art Analysis

Activity 1.1: Baseline study of tourism systems in the partner regions
Output 1.1: SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean

Partner in charge: Iscte - University Institute of Lisbon
Partners involved: Prato, Iscte, XATIC, MDT, HCIA, eZAVOD, EFRI
Date of production: 31 January 2025

As a basis for its activities, SMITOUR pools and exploits the experience and know-how of its partners and regional stakeholders to create a shared knowledge-base that will be used by the transnational Focus and Working Groups (FWGs) to implement a series of thematic Innovation Camps. The Innovation Camps will in turn develop a number of thematic roadmaps to meet the several sub-challenges posed by the overall objective of developing Smart Industrial Tourism.

To create the shared knowledge-base, Work Package 1 of the project performs a "State of the Art Analysis", collecting information from its partners about the following three areas of interest:

A1.1 - Tourism systems in the partner regions

A1.2 - Industrial tourism practices in the Mediterranean

A1.3 - Application of advanced technologies in the tourism sector

The present document "Transnational SWOT analysis of Smart Industrial Tourism in the Mediterranean" is based on the comparative analysis of the baseline studies of the partner regions jointly developed by the seven partner organisations, mainly the surveys of industrial tourism in the partner countries/regions (see: Appendix 1 - SWOT Analysis of the Partner Countries), and secondarily on the GPs and the advanced technologies applications existing in each region. Based on the complementary data of the partners, the SWOT analysis indicates the drivers, hindrances, potentialities and criticalities for the development of SMIT activities in the Mediterranean.
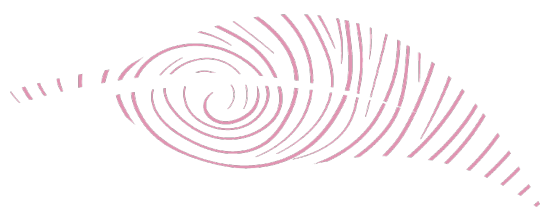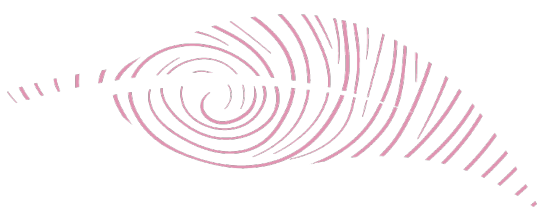
SWOT Analysis

To gain a deeper understanding of the internal and external factors influencing the success of industrial tourism sites, a SWOT analysis was conducted, examining both short-term and long-term perspectives. This involved identifying internal strengths and weaknesses, as well as external opportunities and threats. The decision to create two separate SWOT tables stems from the recognition that certain factors exert their influence over shorter timeframes, while others have a more enduring impact. This distinction allows for a more nuanced understanding of the challenges and prospects within the industrial tourism sector.

In the short term, industrial tourism sites can leverage their diverse visitor experiences, amenities, and online presence to attract visitors and enhance satisfaction. However, they must also address accessibility issues, cost barriers to technology adoption, and potential competition from other tourism sectors. Collaborative marketing initiatives and targeted events can further enhance their appeal and reach.
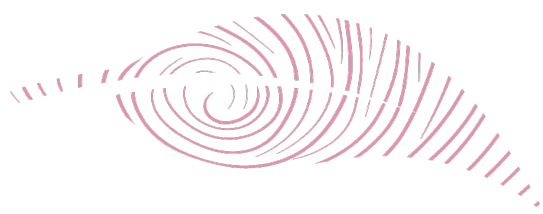
Short-Term SWOT Analysis for Industrial Tourism Sites

Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Diverse visitor experiences offered, including guided tours, interactive exhibits, and workshops.	Limited accessibility at some sites, hindering inclusivity for all visitors.	Potential for increased media coverage and public relations efforts to raise awareness.	Competition from other tourism sectors and changing visitor preferences.
Well-equipped with amenities such as welcome centers, shops, and cafeterias.	Cost of implementing advanced technologies can be a barrier.	Collaboration with tourism entities and local businesses for joint marketing initiatives.	Economic downturns and seasonal variations impacting visitor numbers.
Strong online presence with websites and social media platforms.	Integration of new technologies with existing systems can be challenging.	Organizing special events and themed tours to attract diverse visitor segments.	Negative perceptions or safety concerns related to industrial environments.
Focus on visitor engagement and education through interactive exhibits and guided tours.	Ensuring user experience is not compromised by technology integration.	Leveraging online platforms for visitor feedback and continuous improvement.	
Commitment to environmental sustainability through recycling, energy efficiency, and water conservation.			
Active promotion of regional heritage and contribution to local employment.			

From a long-term perspective, the preservation of industrial history, community engagement, and commitment to sustainability serve as key strengths. However, sites must also address the challenge of balancing technology integration with authentic human interaction, ensuring internet connectivity, and developing a skilled workforce to manage technological advancements. Long-term financial sustainability and adapting to evolving tourism trends are also crucial for continued success.

Long-Term SWOT Analysis for Industrial Tourism Sites

| Strengths	Weaknesses	Opportunities	Threats
Preservation of industrial history and showcasing of unique historical significance.	Balancing technology integration with authentic human interaction.	Developing immersive experiences with virtual and augmented reality technologies.	Long-term financial sustainability and securing funding for ongoing operations and development.
Strong community engagement through education programs, partnerships, and social initiatives.	Limited internet connectivity in some locations hindering online initiatives.	Expanding accessibility features to cater to diverse needs and abilities.	Maintaining relevance and adapting to evolving tourism trends and technological advancements.
Commitment to social sustainability through inclusivity, local partnerships, and cultural preservation.	Lack of skilled personnel to operate and maintain advanced technologies.	Creating partnerships with educational institutions for research and training opportunities.	Climate change impacts and potential environmental risks associated with industrial sites.
Focus on providing accessible and engaging experiences for diverse learning styles.	Data privacy concerns requiring robust data management protocols.	Developing sustainable transportation options and promoting responsible tourism practices.	
High level of visitor satisfaction indicating positive experiences and potential for repeat visits.			
Contribution to regional development through investment in infrastructure and support for local businesses.			
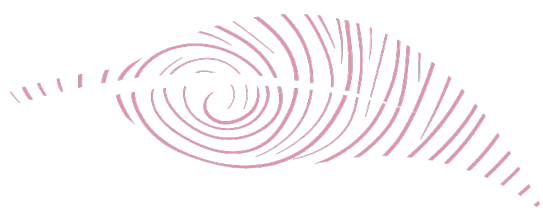
In summary, industrial tourism sites exhibit considerable strengths in visitor engagement, sustainability practices, and community involvement. However, they must address key challenges related to accessibility, technology adoption, and long-term financial sustainability. As such, the development strategy must effectively leverage existing strengths and mitigating weaknesses, where industrial tourism sites should capitalize on emerging opportunities and navigate potential threats to ensure their continued growth and contribution to local communities and regional development.
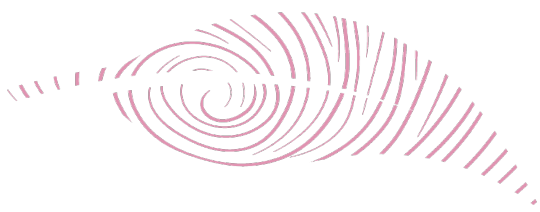
SWOT Analysis based on partners' surveys

The short-term and long-term SWOT analysis are based on the information contained in the partners' industrial tourism surveys:

STRENGHTS

Overall, the six partner countries/regions have unique strengths in their industrial tourism systems, ranging from a rich industrial heritage, strategic development, the integration of culture, and active use of technology, as hereafter described:

Croatia's tourism sector is experiencing growth and diversification with a focus on its industrial heritage. While it is traditionally known for its coastline and historical sites, there is a growing interest in industrial tourism. Key strengths include:

- **Rich Industrial Heritage**: Croatia boasts historic factories, mines, and shipyards, particularly in areas like Rijeka, Pula, and Labin, which attract tourists interested in industrial history.
- **Strategic Development**: Croatia is actively developing industrial tourism as part of a broader strategy to diversify and enhance its tourism sector.
- **Cultural Tourism Integration**: Initiatives like the conversion of the former sugar refinery in Rijeka into a city museum and the repurposing of the tobacco factory into cultural facilities show efforts to blend industrial heritage with cultural tourism.
- **Use of Technology**: Some sites, such as the Labin Mining Museum, offer VR tours and other technologies to enhance the visitor experience.
- **Government support:** The Croatian government and tourism authorities are indirectly promoting industrial tourism as part of a sustainable tourism strategy.

Greece has a developing industrial tourism sector that is part of a broader heritage tourism focus. Although often overlooked, Greece has a rich industrial past that is increasingly being recognized. Key strengths include:

- **Diverse Industrial Heritage**: Greece has a range of industrial sites, including manufacturing facilities, resource extraction sites, and transportation infrastructure.
- **Reutilization of Industrial Sites**: Successful examples include the National Museum of Contemporary Art in the old Fix brewery and the Athens School of Fine Arts in a former textile factory.
- **Cultural Integration**: Industrial sites are being used for cultural purposes, such as museums, exhibition halls, and educational spaces.
- **Active Promotion of Culture**: Events like the Aeschylea Festival in Eleusis demonstrate the integration of industrial sites with cultural activities.
- **Regional Concentration**: Industrial tourism sites are concentrated in regions such as Attica, Macedonia, and Thessaly.
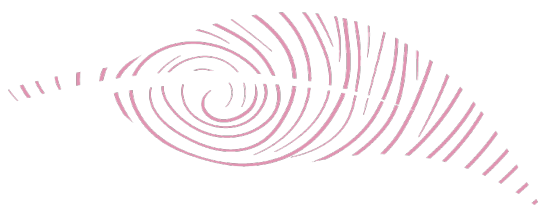
- **Growing Tourism**: The overall growth in Greek tourism supports the development of the industrial tourism sector.
- **Local initiatives:** Local initiatives, such as the walking tours organized by VIDA in the Piraeus Port, enhance the tourist experience and preserve industrial heritage.

Italy has a well-established industrial tourism sector that includes various forms such as industrial archaeology, company museums, and live industry tours. Key strengths include:

- **Rich Industrial Heritage**: Italy has a long history of manufacturing and commercial traditions that are reflected in its industrial heritage.
- **Company Museums**: The presence of over 68 business museums, recognized by ISTAT, highlights the importance of company-led industrial tourism.
- **Institutional Recognition**: ENIT, the official agency for the promotion of Italian tourism, has organized events to support and promote industrial tourism.
- **Diverse Sectors**: Industrial tourism in Italy includes sectors such as motors, design, fashion, food, and beverages.
- **Live Industrial Tourism**: The opportunity to visit working production sites, particularly in the food and beverage industry, is a popular offering.
- **Regional Strengths**: Regions like Lombardy, Piedmont, and Tuscany have a high concentration of business museums.
- **Integrated Experiences:** The union of several actors in the industrial tourism sector has led to integrated proposals such as "Made in Torino" and "Made in Padova".

Portugal has a growing industrial tourism sector, supported by a national network of sites. Key strengths include:

- **National Industrial Tourism Network**: The Tourism of Portugal has established a network of 217 sites across the country.
- **Diverse Industrial Sectors**: Industrial tourism in Portugal spans fashion and textiles, ceramics and glass, agri-food, mining, and energy.
- **Live Industry and Heritage**: The network includes both "live industry" sites (where companies offer tours of active production) and "industrial heritage" sites (museums and historical locations).
- **Regional Concentration**: Regions like São João da Madeira, Santa Maria da Feira, and Marinha Grande have a high concentration of industrial tourism sites.
- **Government Support**: Tourism of Portugal has a program to promote industrial tourism, aiming to enhance attractiveness in low-density territories.
- **Active promotion:** The program actively promotes offerings in both national and international markets via regional tourism entities and promotion agencies.

Slovenia's industrial tourism is growing with an emphasis on both historical sites and modern industrial processes. Key strengths include:
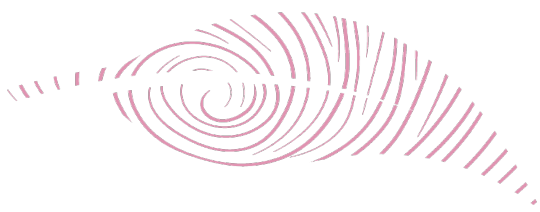
- **Focus on Heritage and Innovation**: Slovenia presents both former industrial sites and active production facilities with a blend of historical and contemporary interest.
- **Digital Integration**: The country is a leader in digitally enriched tourism, using VR, AR, interactive touchscreens, audio guides, and self-guided apps.
- **Diverse Industrial Sectors**: Tourism encompasses manufacturing, mining, energy, and technology.
- **Active Mining Areas**: Regions like the Šaleška, Zasavje, and Koroška regions offer unique experiences related to their mining history.
- **Government Support:** Governments often encourage tourism through incentives and initiatives.
- **Strong Tourism Growth:** Slovenia has seen strong growth in tourism, which provides a favorable environment for industrial tourism.
- **Educational Focus**: Industrial tourism initiatives in Slovenia offer educational insights about industry and provide entertainment through tours and interactive displays.

Spain (Catalonia) has a growing industrial tourism sector with a network of associated resources. Key strengths include:

- **Established Network**: XATIC (Industrial Tourism Network of Catalonia) has 105 associated resources in 54 municipalities, serving as a reference point for promotion.
- **Variety of Industries**: A diverse range of industries are involved, including audiovisual, new technologies, textiles, construction, and metallurgy, as well as the historical agro-food and wine tourism.
- **Dual Focus**: Industrial tourism in Catalonia is defined by two aspects: heritage sites and living industries, which allows for a range of visitor experiences.
- **Adaptable Tours**: Companies offer various tour formats including guided, audio-guided, and workshop-style tours, which are often adapted to different audiences.
- **Use of Technology:** The region has invested in audiovisual technologies for heritage spaces, and developed virtual games to attract visitors.
- **Regional Promotion**: While national support is limited, regional and municipal governments support industrial tourism initiatives.
- **Established Organization:** The presence of XATIC as a well-organized network provides structure to the region's industrial tourism.
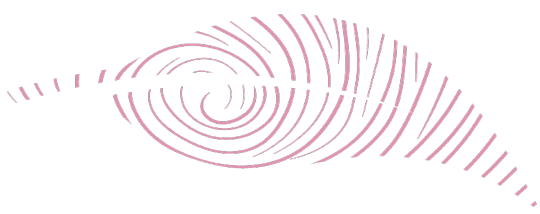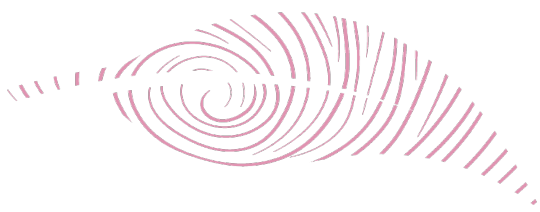
WEAKNESSES

Overall, the six partner countries/regions face common challenges, such as: lack of specific data, insufficient infrastructure, limited marketing, funding issues, and the need to balance preservation with development. More details follow:

Croatia While the industrial tourism sector is growing, it faces several challenges:

- **Lack of Specific Data:** There is a lack of concrete, publicly available data on the number of industrial tourism sites, visitor numbers, and revenue generated.
- **Limited Infrastructure:** Many industrial sites are located in areas with inadequate infrastructure, hindering tourist access.
- **Insufficient Marketing:** Industrial tourism is not yet well-known to potential travelers, and there is a need for more intensive marketing and promotional initiatives.
- **Funding Challenges:** The preservation and restoration of industrial heritage sites can be expensive, and securing sufficient funding is often difficult.
- **Seasonal Tourism:** The country's overall tourism is highly seasonal, and industrial tourism needs to find ways to attract visitors during off-peak months to ensure sustainable operations.
- **Indirect Government Support:** The Croatian government and tourism authorities only indirectly promote industrial tourism as part of a broader sustainable tourism strategy.

Greece Here the industrial tourism sector is in the early stages of development and faces significant obstacles:

- **Lack of Awareness:** There is a general lack of awareness about Greek industrial heritage and its tourism potential.
- **Limited Infrastructure:** Many industrial sites lack the necessary infrastructure to accommodate tourists, such as visitor centers, guided tours, and facilities.
- **Preservation Challenges:** Many industrial sites are in disrepair or have been demolished, requiring significant investment for restoration.
- **Accessibility Issues:** Some industrial sites are located in remote areas or have limited accessibility, making it difficult for tourists to reach them.
- **Interpretation and Storytelling Gaps:** There is often a lack of documentation, archival materials, or knowledgeable guides to effectively interpret the historical significance of industrial sites.
- **Balancing Preservation and Development:** Finding the right balance between preserving the historical integrity of industrial sites and developing them for tourism is a challenge.
- **Limited Marketing and Promotion:** Industrial tourism receives less marketing and promotion compared to other forms of tourism, resulting in low visibility.
- **Lack of Data:** There is a lack of specific data for visitors to industrial tourism sites in Greece.
- **No Comprehensive Policy:** There is no comprehensive national policy focusing specifically on industrial tourism.

- **Limited Technology Integration:** SMART technologies in industrial tourism sites could not be identified during the review.

Italy's industrial tourism sector, while well-established, still has weaknesses:

- **Complex Quantification**: The evaluation and quantification of Italian industrial sites is complex due to the various forms of industrial tourism.
- **Underestimation of Sites**: The number of industrial archaeology sites is believed to be largely underestimated.
- **Uneven Regional Distribution:** While some regions have a high concentration of industrial tourism sites, others are lacking.
- **Variable Visitor Numbers**: The average number of visitors varies greatly depending on the site, sector, and location.
- **Limited Live Industrial Tourism:** Despite being appreciated, live industrial tourism (visits to working production sites) has not yet seen strong development.
- **Lack of Specific Data:** The data on industrial tourism visitors is not complete, with some interesting sites being included in broader categories.
- **Need for Further Analysis:** There is a need for further analysis of digitization and technology integration at industrial sites.
- **Competencies Divided:** Competencies on culture and tourism are divided between the state and the regions, which can create inconsistencies.

Portugal's growing industrial tourism sector faces several challenges:

- **Lack of Visitor Data**: There is no available data on the average number of visitors per year to industrial tourism sites.
- **Infrastructure and Adaptation Needs**: Many industrial facilities are not initially designed to accommodate public visits, requiring adaptation.
- **Operational Impact:** Public visits may disrupt the normal functioning of industrial activities.
- **Employee Engagement:** Employees may feel uncomfortable or exposed to scrutiny during public visits, impacting productivity.
- **Communication and Coordination:** There is a need for better communication and coordination between tourism authorities, industrial companies, and other stakeholders.
- **Safety and Accessibility:** Some industrial sites may have safety concerns or limited accessibility.
- **Perception of Industrial Sites**: There is a need to overcome the perception that industrial sites are not interesting or appealing tourist destinations.

Slovenia While the country is advancing in industrial tourism, it faces several weaknesses:

- **Lack of Specific Statistics:** No specific statistics are available that detail the number of industrial tourism visitors and revenues generated.
- **Maintaining Historical Sites:** Maintaining and preserving historical sites is a challenge.

- **Ensuring Safety:** Ensuring safety standards at industrial tourism sites is crucial but can be challenging.
- **Effective Marketing:** Effectively marketing industrial tourism experiences remains a challenge.
- **Perception and Awareness**: Changing the perception of industrial sites as uninteresting or inaccessible is a challenge.
- **Infrastructure Development**: Ensuring that the infrastructure at industrial sites is suitable for tourism is crucial but may require investments.
- **Regulatory Compliance**: Adhering to safety regulations and environmental standards is challenging.

Spain (Catalonia) Here the industrial tourism sector also has weaknesses:

- **Lack of a Complete Census:** There is no census that covers all the industrial tourism resources in the territory.
- **Public Awareness:** A major challenge is getting the public to identify the term "industrial tourism" and understand its value.
- **Limited Government Support**: There is no specific policy from the Catalan government to support industrial tourism.
- **Budget Constraints**: Budget constraints limit the scope of marketing campaigns and promotion.
- **Competition with Other Cultural Tourism:** Industrial tourism is still relatively new compared to other forms of cultural tourism in the region.
- **Vision of Industrial Tourism**: Overcoming the vision of industrial tourism being associated with "a smoking chimney" is a challenge.
- **Massification Concerns:** There is a need to be very careful about the impact of mass tourism and to work together to achieve realistic and agreed-upon goals.
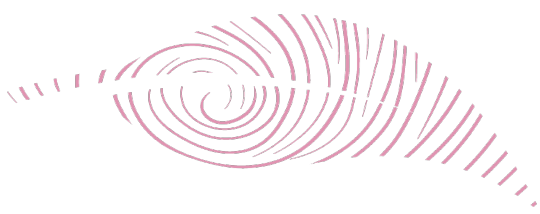
OPPORTUNITIES

Overall, the six partner countries/regions show substantial opportunities to develop industrial tourism, e.g.: diversifying tourism offerings, stimulating local economies, providing educational experiences, promoting sustainable practices, and leveraging the unique industrial heritage. More details follow:

Croatia

- **Diversification of Tourism:** Industrial tourism offers a significant opportunity to diversify Croatia's tourism sector, which has been traditionally dominated by coastal and historical attractions. This can attract a broader range of visitors, including those interested in technology, history, and education.
- **Economic Benefits:** Development of industrial tourism can stimulate the local economy, especially in regions not typically popular with tourists. This can boost local businesses such as restaurants, accommodations, and transportation.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Industrial tourism provides educational experiences that highlight the historical and cultural significance of Croatia's industrial heritage, appealing to specialized interest groups, universities, and schools.
- **Year-Round Tourism:** Promoting industrial tourism can reduce the seasonality of Croatia's tourism sector by encouraging year-round travel. This can stabilize the economy and create more secure jobs.
- **Sustainable Development:** Industrial tourism can be aligned with sustainable development goals, preserving historical monuments and promoting environmentally friendly practices. It also has the potential to combine with other types of tourism, such as adventure, cultural, and gastronomic tourism.
- **Strategic Investments:** Strategic investments and a growing interest in diverse tourism experiences are already supporting the momentum of industrial tourism in Croatia.

Greece

- **Untapped Heritage:** Greece has a rich industrial heritage that is often overlooked, presenting a significant opportunity to develop unique tourism experiences.
- **Reutilization of Sites:** There is potential for the reutilization of industrial heritage monuments to act as a lever for the development of special interest and alternative forms of tourism. Successful examples of reutilized industrial spaces include museums, exhibition halls, and educational spaces.
- **Cultural and Historical Appeal**: Industrial sites offer insight into the technical, economic, and social dimensions of industrial processes and their legacy, providing a holistic view for visitors. The transformation of industrial hubs into cultural hotspots enhances both cultural and historical appeal.
- **Economic and Social Importance:** Preserving and documenting industrial remnants, which are scattered across Greece and hold significant economic and social importance, keeps their memory alive.
- **Research and Education:** Greek industrial heritage provides opportunities for research and education for scholars and enthusiasts.
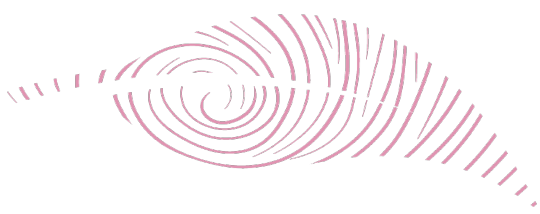
- **Tourism Potential:** Preserved industrial sites can attract tourists interested in history, culture, and heritage, contributing to the tourism industry and generating economic benefits.
- **Specialized Tourism:** Developing industrial tourism can attract specialized interest groups such as history enthusiasts, industry professionals, and school groups.
- **Strategic Focus:** The Greek Ministry of Tourism's focus on enhancing Greece as a leading, safe destination that offers authentic thematic tourism experiences throughout the year aligns well with industrial tourism.

Italy

- **Rich Industrial Heritage:** Italy has a well-recognized rich industrial heritage that is an expression of ancient commercial and manufacturing traditions.
- **Growth in Cultural Tourism:** There is a strong growth in new forms of cultural tourism, especially those linked to museums and business archives.
- **Company and Production Sites:** Company and production sites have value as historical, architectural, social, and cultural symbols, offering unique visitor experiences.
- **Productive Districts:** The territorial character of industrial development in Italy, generating networks that were not only productive but also social and cultural, could generate an additional path of opportunities for the market.
- **Live Industrial Tourism:** There is an opportunity to develop live industrial tourism, linking it with shopping tourism, which is the most appreciated form of experience, with the potential to allow visitors to buy products they have seen being produced.
- **Integrated Proposals:** The union of several actors proposing industrial tourism experiences has led to the structuring of integrated proposals, which could generate more opportunities.
- **Institutional Recognition:** The value of industrial tourism is recognized at an institutional level, with events and conferences dedicated to its promotion.
- **Regional Promotion:** Some regions, such as Tuscany, are actively promoting industrial tourism, highlighting the value and potential of this sector.

Portugal

- **National Network:** Portugal has a structured industrial tourism network, including 217 sites, that is well-established within the Tourism Strategy 2027. This network is comprised of both "live industry" and "industrial heritage" sites.
- **Regional Promotion:** The program is keen to promote industrial tourism offerings in national and international markets with the support of regional tourism entities.
- **Social Responsibility:** Companies can demonstrate a commitment to the community and promote an image of social responsibility by opening their doors to visitors.
- **Brand Image:** Industrial tourism is a chance to interact with potential clients and receive feedback on products and to be perceived as a valuable player within the territory.
- **Territorial Integration:** Industrial tourism contributes to the regional economy, promoting growth and development.

- **Transparency and Trust:** Offering a transparent manufacturing process can generate greater confidence from customers and reinforce the company's reputation.
- **Product Sales:** Direct product sales offered to visitors can generate additional revenue and increase brand visibility.
- **Diverse Industries:** There is a diverse range of industries involved in industrial tourism including fashion and textile, ceramics and glass, agri-food, extractive sector, energy, transport, services and communications, and metalworking.
- **Thematic Routes:** There is an opportunity to enhance the visitor experience by creating thematic routes.

Slovenia

- **Growing Sector:** Industrial tourism in Slovenia has been gradually growing, focusing on showcasing both industrial heritage and contemporary processes.
- **Authentic Image:** Presenting the former industry of a place is attractive to visitors, giving a place an authentic image.
- **Innovative Solutions:** There is an opportunity for innovation in finding solutions to revive and present old industries to attract tourists.
- **Economic Benefits:** Industrial tourism can improve work morale, correct negative publicity, and bring in additional income while creating new jobs and increasing visibility for companies.
- **Sustainable Tourism:** Industrial tourism contributes to sustainability by attracting people to day trips or multi-day trips, laying a foundation for further development.
- **Digitally Enriched Tourism:** Slovenia is a leader in digitally enriched tourism, with the potential to apply this to industrial tourism. The country is also working towards the use of 3D technology to enhance cultural heritage tourism.
- **Diverse Experiences:** There are opportunities to offer diverse experiences combining education and entertainment for various target groups.
- **Collaboration with Communities:** Involving local communities in planning and executing industrial tourism initiatives helps to create a sense of ownership and ensures the authenticity of the experience.
- **Strategic Partnerships:** Opportunities exist to foster collaborations between industries and tourism authorities.

Spain (Catalonia)

- **Established Network:** Catalonia has an established network of 105 resources across 54 municipalities with the potential for further growth.
- **Endorsed Product:** Being designated as an "endorsed product" by the Catalan Agency recognizes the network as the head entity for promoting industrial tourism, indicating further growth is expected.
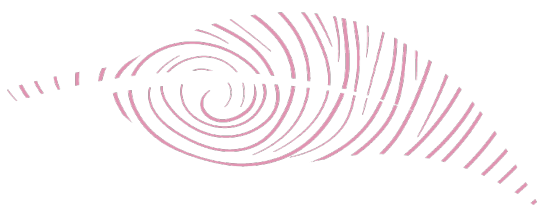
- **Variety of Industries:** There is a great variety of companies involved in industrial tourism, including audiovisual, new technologies, textiles, construction, railways, and metallurgy. Agro-food and wine tourism have also been pioneers in this area.
- **Diverse Experiences:** Industrial tourism offerings include heritage sites and living industry experiences, with variants such as guided tours, audio-guided tours, and experience workshops. The same company may adapt its tour to different target groups.
- **Growing Target Audience:** The audience is expanding beyond academic groups to include the general public and tourists.
- **Promotion of Active Companies:** The future of industrial tourism involves promoting visits to active companies to stimulate knowledge and curiosity and bring everyday products closer to end-users.
- **Territorial Development:** Industrial tourism offers a means for explaining the history and economic, social, and cultural development of a territory and its people.
- **Unique Offerings:** The uniqueness of industrial tourism sites and their promotion contributes to success.
- **Local Government Support**: Many municipal and county governments support this type of tourism and apply specific policies.

THREATS

Overall, the six partner countries/regions face various threats to the development of the industrial tourism sector, e.g.: lack of awareness, insufficient infrastructure, preservation challenges, marketing limitations, and the need to balance development with sustainability. More details follow:

Croatia

- **Lack of Understanding and Promotion:** A significant threat is the lack of understanding and promotion of conservation and maintenance of industrial sites. This can lead to neglect and deterioration of valuable heritage.
- **Balancing Modern Use and Tourism:** Finding a balance between modern industrial activities and tourism can be challenging. Ensuring that industrial operations do not interfere with the visitor experience, and vice versa, requires careful planning and management.
- **Limited Infrastructure:** Many industrial sites are located in areas with inadequate infrastructure, hindering tourist access. Improvements in transportation, signage, and tourist facilities are needed.
- **Seasonal Tourism:** The highly seasonal nature of tourism in Croatia, with peak travel during the summer months, poses a challenge for industrial tourism, which often operates year-round. Attracting tourists during the off-peak season is necessary to support sustainable operations and employment.
- **Funding for Preservation:** The preservation and restoration of industrial heritage sites can be expensive, and securing sufficient funding can be difficult.
- **Marketing Challenges:** Industrial tourism is a niche sector that is not yet well-known to potential travelers, requiring more intensive marketing and promotional initiatives. The national tourism

strategy's focus on natural beauty and sports activities, until recently, also limited the promotion of industrial tourism.

Greece

- **Lack of Awareness:** A major challenge is the lack of awareness about Greek industrial heritage and its tourism potential, making it difficult to attract visitors.
- **Limited Infrastructure:** Many industrial sites lack the necessary infrastructure to accommodate tourists, including visitor centers, guided tours, and facilities.
- **Preservation and Restoration:** Many industrial sites are in disrepair or have been demolished, requiring significant investment and expertise for preservation and restoration.
- **Access and Transportation:** Some industrial sites are located in remote areas with limited accessibility, posing a challenge for tourists.
- **Interpretation and Storytelling:** A lack of documentation, archival materials, or knowledgeable guides can hinder the interpretation and storytelling necessary to engage visitors.
- **Balancing Preservation and Development:** There is a delicate balance between preserving the authenticity of industrial sites and developing them for tourism, requiring careful planning.
- **Limited Marketing:** Industrial tourism may not receive as much marketing as other forms of tourism, leading to low visibility and awareness.
- **Absence of Comprehensive National Policy:** The lack of a comprehensive national policy specifically focusing on industrial tourism could slow development.
- **No Specific Data Collection:** The lack of specific data collection for industrial tourism visitors and revenues makes it difficult to assess the sector's impact.
- **Limited Technology Integration:** The limited use of smart technologies in industrial tourism sites also presents a challenge.
- **Need for Investment in Infrastructure:** Substantial investment is needed to renovate and make old industrial sites accessible and safe for tourists.
- **Community Engagement:** There is an ongoing challenge to educate and engage local communities about the benefits of industrial tourism.
- **Balancing Development with Preservation**: Transforming industrial sites into tourist attractions must be handled sensitively and sustainably to maintain their historical integrity and environmental sustainability.

Italy

- **Complex Evaluation of Sites:** Evaluating and quantifying Italian industrial sites is complex due to the various forms of industrial tourism.
- **Underestimation of Sites**: There is a possible underestimation of the total value of the sites due to the fact that the number of sites is also related to the type of production activity.
- **Variability in Visitor Numbers:** The average number of visitors varies significantly depending on the site, sector, and location.
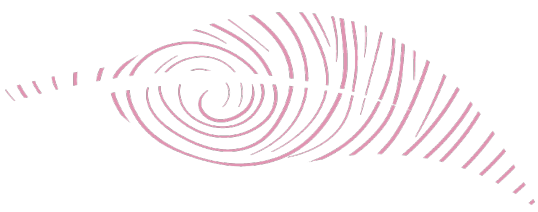
- **State and Regional Division**: Competencies on culture and tourism are divided between the state and the regions, which can complicate the development of a coordinated approach.
- **Incomplete Data:** The data on industrial tourism visitors and revenues are incomplete, as some sites may be included in broader categories.
- **Need for Further Investigation:** There is a need for further analysis and investigation regarding digitization efforts and their impact on industrial tourism.
- **Structuring Marketing Strategies**: There is a need to structure marketing strategies for industrial tourism sites, building sustainable products around these resources.
- **Sustainability Concerns**: Sustainability is the term to keep in mind and the main challenge in developing industrial tourism.

Portugal

- **Lack of Data:** There is a lack of specific data on the average number of visitors to industrial tourism sites and their demographics.
- **Infrastructure and Adaptation:** Many industrial facilities are not designed to accommodate public visits, requiring adaptation and infrastructure improvements.
- **Impact on Normal Operations:** Public visits can disrupt the normal functioning of industrial activities, requiring careful management.
- **Employee Engagement and Perception:** Employees may feel uncomfortable or exposed to scrutiny during public visits, which can affect productivity.
- **Cultural Shift**: Companies may find it difficult to embrace the concept of industrial tourism and see it as an opportunity rather than a disruption.
- **Communication and Coordination**: There is a need for better communication and coordination between tourism authorities, industrial companies, employees, and other stakeholders.
- **Safety and Accessibility:** Some industrial sites may have safety concerns or limited accessibility, requiring improvements.
- **Perception of Industrial Sites:** There is a challenge in overcoming the perception that industrial sites are not interesting or appealing tourist destinations.
- **Development of Thematic Routes**: There is a need for the development of thematic routes to enhance the visitor experience.

Slovenia

- **Lack of Specific Statistics:** There are no specific statistics available for industrial tourism visitors and revenues.
- **Maintaining and Preserving Historical Sites**: Maintaining and preserving historical sites requires constant effort and resources.
- **Ensuring Safety Standards**: Ensuring safety standards at industrial sites is important for visitors and employees.
- **Effective Marketing**: There is a need for effective marketing to promote industrial tourism experiences.
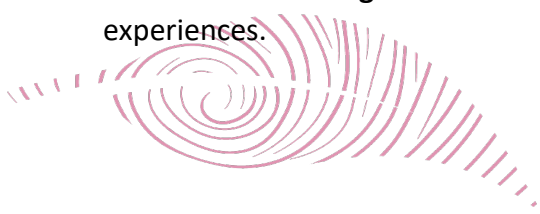
- **Preservation vs Development:** Balancing the preservation of industrial heritage with the need for development and modernization is a significant challenge.
- **Infrastructure Challenges:** Ensuring proper infrastructure and accessibility to industrial sites is crucial for a positive visitor experience.
- **Raising Awareness**: There is a need to raise awareness about industrial tourism and dispel misconceptions about its appeal.
- **Changing Perceptions:** A challenge is changing the perception of industrial sites as uninteresting or inaccessible.
- **Regulatory Compliance**: Adhering to safety regulations and environmental standards is challenging but necessary.

Spain (Catalonia)

- **Public Awareness:** A major challenge is getting the public to identify the term "industrial tourism" with the value given to it by the entities that promote it.
- **Lack of Specific Policy**: There is no specific policy at the Catalan government level to support industrial tourism, limiting its growth potential.
- **Dominance of Traditional Tourism:** Catalonia's long history with sun and beach tourism means that industrial tourism has to compete with the driving force behind most of the tourism industry.
- **Limited Budget**: Limited budgets for campaigns, image creation, and marketing can hamper the generalization of industrial tourism offerings.
- **Lack of Official Statistics**: There are no official statistics available on the number of industrial tourism visitors and the revenue generated.
- **Massification Concerns**: The sustainable development of tourism is a main challenge as massification cannot be a goal in itself.
- **Vision of Industrial Tourism**: Overcoming the vision of industrial tourism as simply "a smoking chimney" is a significant challenge.
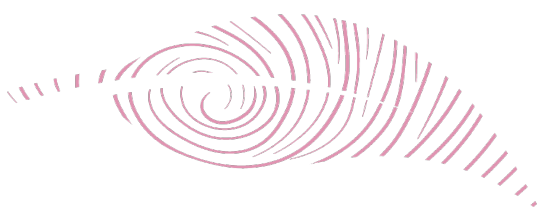
SWOT analysis based on the Catalogue of Industrial Tourism Practices

Further elements for the SWOT analysis have been derived from **D1.2.1 Catalogue of Industrial Tourism Practices**:

Strengths:

- **Unique Experiences:** Industrial tourism offers unique and engaging experiences that go beyond traditional tourism, allowing visitors to actively participate in the history and culture of industrial sites.
- **Educational Opportunities:** It provides educational opportunities for diverse audiences, including schools, communities, and individuals, fostering intergenerational knowledge-sharing and local pride.
- **Heritage Preservation:** Industrial tourism plays a crucial role in preserving historical sites, machinery, and artifacts, ensuring their survival for future generations.
- **Economic Development:** It acts as a catalyst for economic and social development in the Mediterranean region by attracting visitors and boosting local economies.
- **Technological Innovation:** The integration of digital and advanced technologies like AR and VR enhances visitor engagement and accessibility, creating more immersive experiences.
- **Community Engagement:** Industrial tourism fosters community engagement through open archive projects and public history initiatives, allowing residents to actively participate in the curation of their shared history.
- **Adaptive Reuse:** The restoration and adaptive reuse of industrial buildings allows sites to evolve while retaining their historical value.
- **Diverse Activities**: The sector offers a diverse range of activities like theatrical tours, culinary experiences, craft workshops, and activity-linked historical tours.
- **Accessibility:** There is a growing emphasis on making industrial tourism accessible to all through socially inclusive programs, catering to diverse needs and abilities.

Weaknesses:

- **Accessibility Challenges:** Some sites may face physical accessibility challenges for people with disabilities if not properly addressed.
- **Technological Barriers:** The reliance on technology may exclude visitors who are not comfortable with or do not have access to digital tools.
- **Maintenance Costs:** Preservation and restoration of historical machinery and buildings can be expensive, requiring significant investment.
- **Sustainability Concerns:** Balancing tourism development with the need to minimize environmental impact is a continuous challenge.
- Staffing Needs**:** Implementing immersive and interactive experiences might require specialized staff, such as trained guides, actors, or craftspeople.
- **Community Involvement:** Lack of local community engagement can hinder the success of industrial tourism initiatives.
- **Funding Limitations**: Lack of financial resources can be a hindrance in the implementation of programs and accessibility improvements.

- **Authenticity Concerns**: Some sites might face challenges in maintaining authenticity while modernizing their offerings.

Opportunities:

- **Technological Advancement:** Continued advancement in digital and augmented technologies offers new ways to enhance visitor experience.
- **Cross-Sector Collaboration:** Collaboration with educational institutions, community organizations, and local businesses can enrich industrial tourism offerings.
- **Thematic Routes:** The creation of thematic routes connecting different industrial sites can attract visitors with specific interests.
- **Cultural Venues:** Repurposing industrial landmarks as cultural venues can enhance their appeal and integration into the community.
- **Sustainability Practices:** Implementing sustainable practices can attract environmentally conscious visitors and contribute to long-term conservation efforts.
- **Social Inclusion**: Developing programs and resources to be more inclusive to disabled visitors and other marginalized groups.
- **Global Reach**: Using digital platforms to reach virtual tourists around the world who may be curious about industrial heritage.
- **Experiential Learning**: Increased interest in experiential learning will make activity-linked and interactive experiences more popular.

Threats:

- **Lack of Funding:** Insufficient funding can hinder conservation efforts, program development, and the use of advanced technologies.
- **Vandalism and Neglect:** Industrial sites may be vulnerable to vandalism and neglect if not properly managed and secured.
- **Loss of Authenticity:** Over-commercialization or improper restoration can diminish the historical authenticity of industrial sites.
- **Lack of Public Awareness:** Insufficient awareness and promotion can limit the potential visitor base.
- **Economic Downturns:** Economic fluctuations can reduce tourist traffic and funding for industrial tourism projects.
- **Competition:** Increasing competition from other forms of tourism can affect visitor numbers and profitability.
- **Climate Change:** Extreme weather events can damage historical structures and disrupt tourism activities.
- **Lack of skilled labor** Lack of local artisans, guides and experts to maintain historical authenticity.

This analysis shows that industrial tourism holds significant potential for economic, social, and cultural development, but requires careful planning, investment, and community engagement to overcome potential weaknesses and threats. The key is to balance preservation with accessibility, technology with authenticity, and tourism development with sustainability.

SWOT analysis based on the Catalogue of Advanced Technologies Applications for Tourism

Further elements for the SWOT analysis have been derived from **D1.3.1 Catalogue of Advanced Technologies Apllications for Tourism**:

Strengths:

- **Diverse Range of Technologies:** The catalog showcases a wide variety of advanced technologies being applied in tourism, including **Augmented Reality (AR)**, **Virtual Reality (VR)**, **Artificial Intelligence (AI)**, **Chatbots**, **Internet of Things (IoT)**, **gamification**, and **immersive experiences**. This diversity allows for a broad range of applications to enhance different aspects of the tourist experience.
- **Focus on Immersive Experiences:** There's a clear emphasis on technologies that provide immersive experiences such as AR/VR tours, 3D visualizations, and interactive exhibits. These technologies are proven to increase visitor engagement and satisfaction.
- **Specific Examples of Successful Implementations:** The document provides numerous examples of how these technologies are being used in real-world scenarios across different European regions. These case studies offer tangible evidence of the effectiveness of these technologies in various contexts, for example:
    - **AR Tours** at archaeological sites in Italy
    - **VR Experiences** at museums in Italy, Portugal, and Slovenia.
    - **AI Chatbots** for tourist assistance in Italy and Greece.
    - **IoT Applications** for smart museums in Italy, and for resort management in Greece.
    - **Gamification** of industrial heritage in Spain.
- **Enhancing Visitor Experience and Accessibility:** Technologies like AR/VR not only enhance the travel experience but also provide improved accessibility to historical sites and cultural heritage, making them more inclusive for diverse audiences.
- **Promotion of Sustainable Tourism:** The adoption of IoT technologies for energy and water management, as seen in Greece, demonstrates a commitment to sustainable tourism practices.
- **Focus on Collaboration:** The SMITour project emphasizes collaboration among various stakeholders such as technology developers, museum curators, government agencies, and tourism organizations.

Weaknesses:

- **Uneven Adoption of Technologies:** While some regions and sites have embraced advanced technologies, the document suggests that the level of adoption varies significantly across the Mediterranean region. Some areas show higher levels of experience, such as Italy, while others have lower levels of adoption, suggesting an uneven application of technology in tourism.
- **Cost and Technical Challenges:** The implementation of advanced technologies comes with challenges such as high implementation costs, technical complexities, the need for continuous updates, staff training requirements, and interoperability issues between different devices and platforms.

- **Data Privacy and User Acceptance:** There are challenges related to data privacy concerns, potential user preferences for human interaction, and cultural sensitivities.
- **Lack of Detailed Metrics:** Some case studies lack detailed metrics regarding the number of visitors, user satisfaction, and the comparison with before the implementation of these technologies. This makes it hard to fully assess the impact of these technologies.
- **Technology Obsolescence:** The report mentions that technology can quickly become obsolete and needs to be updated regularly. This requires ongoing investment and maintenance.

Opportunities:

- **Expanding AR/VR Applications:** There is a significant opportunity to further expand the use of AR and VR technologies across different types of tourism sites, including industrial sites, cultural heritage sites, and natural landscapes.
- **AI-Powered Personalization:** AI can be leveraged to offer more personalized experiences to tourists such as customized recommendations, real-time information, and multilingual support.
- **Integration of IoT for Smart Destinations:** The use of IoT can be extended beyond museums and resorts to create smart destinations that enhance energy efficiency, improve resource management, and provide better services to tourists.
- **Developing Interactive Learning Experiences:** Gamification and interactive storytelling can be used to make historical and cultural content more engaging for various types of visitors.
- **Public-Private Partnerships:** Collaborations between private technology companies and public tourism bodies can facilitate the adoption of advanced technologies.
- **Focus on Sustainability:** Further integration of technologies such as IoT can help promote more sustainable tourism practices.

Threats:

- **Technological Disruption:** Rapid changes in technology may render existing systems obsolete, requiring constant upgrades and investments.
- **Resistance to Change:** Some stakeholders may be resistant to adopting new technologies, potentially hindering innovation.
- **Data Security and Privacy Risks:** The increased use of technology creates potential data security and privacy risks that must be addressed with appropriate safeguards.
- **Unequal Access to Technology:** There is a risk that technology will exacerbate the differences between technologically advanced and less advanced regions.
- **Over-reliance on Technology:** There is a need to balance technological innovation with the unique cultural and historical aspects of tourism sites so technology does not detract from the authentic experience.

In summary, the SWOT analysis reveals that the use of advanced technologies in the Mediterranean tourism sector has significant potential to enhance visitor experiences and promote sustainable practices.
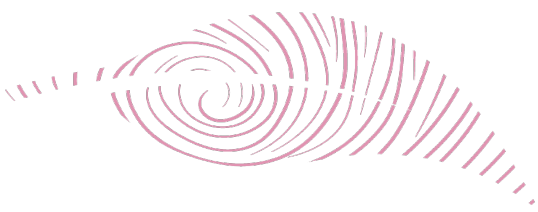
However, addressing challenges related to costs, technical complexities, data privacy, and ensuring equitable access to these technologies will be crucial for the long-term success of the initiative.
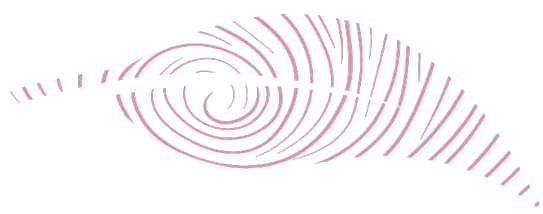
SOURCES

The present document is based on the following SMITOUR deliverables:

- *D.1.1.1 Baseline study of tourism systems in the partner regions*
- *D1.2.1 Catalogue of Industrial Tourism Practices V4c*
- *D1.3.1 Catalogue of Advanced Technologies Apllications for Tourism V4*

that can be downloaded from the project's website at the page:

https://smitour.interreg-euro-med.eu/what-we-achieve/