

# BLUTOURSYSTEM

Scenarios co-design workshops (6)  
for a human centered learning model  
to a human centered design approach  
transferred to tourism actors

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## Document references

**Project:** BLUTOURSYSTEM “*Knowledge platform, skills and creative synergies for blue tourism ecosystem development*”

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**Partner in charge:** PP1 - Veneto Region

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## Table of contents

<u>Introduction</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>Co-design scenario workshop</u>	<u>4</u>
<u>The current status of the pilot areas</u>	<u>6</u>
<u>Certain and uncertain change drivers: where the market goes</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>How to face the challenge</u>	<u>10</u>

### Abstract

BLUTOURSYSTEM provides tourism operators with tools and skills to develop new business ecosystems. Capitalizing the knowledge gained with TourMedAssets, the project steers decision makers to rethink tourism, reduce gaps and design eco-innovative scenarios thus to promote sustainable growth.

The project aims to stimulate competitiveness, innovation and creative enhancement of the tourism offer.

The main aim is to enrich the analytical skills of stakeholders in order to improve the sustainable and creative tourism sector, while developing new knowledge based on advanced tools and services.

For this reason, learning sessions have been activated in some pilot areas in the eligible areas of the program and other dissemination and formative activities, for local actors.

Specific information about gaps and needs have been thus collected through interviews submitted to stakeholders, who represent both public and private sector in the tourism field.

WP4 has been then planned to achieve the specific objective 2 “Improving skills and capacities to develop new Blue Tourism CB networks and business ecosystem”.

Deliverable 4.3.1: for a real innovation in the tourism sector it is important that organizations become even much more capable to design tourism products placing tourists wishes in the centre of the design. It means that tourism products start from the understanding of the journey experience and the improvement of the touch points quality.

By involving stakeholders in a co-design process, we also increase their capacity to design innovative tourism products and of course also their networking attitudes.

This report focuses on how activities (seminars, workshops..) scheduled should have increased capacity to design and co-design tourism products.

## Introduction

The path started through Blutoursystem with the stakeholders of the Veneto destinations is based on the desire to define a probable scenario, starting from the current situation and identifying the circumstances that are most likely to occur. A path that, as already widely described in the deliverables, focuses on the enhancement of human resources and the development of innovation through a participatory approach aimed at creating networks among territorial subjects.

Starting from the characteristics of each territory, the challenges to be faced were identified and the possible solutions to be put at the base of the strategies following the co-design methodology.

## Co-design scenario workshop

On 20th and 21th of May 2019, 4 co-design scenario workshops were carried out in the areas identified by the Veneto Region, and they have been attended by the stakeholders of each destination, who were the actors in charge of management of the DMOs boards of each area and of the OTS association for the "meta- destination" Venice Lagoon.

The decision to involve, in these first meetings, a stricter but representative audience is based of the "ego network" approach: involving in a first phase some focal nodes of the networks ("ego", the representative actors involved) in consideration of the fact that the latter are in turn linked to other nodes ("alter", local actors) through various types of ties, creating a human social network.

The workshops were the occasion to define together with the interested parties, administrators and private operators, the developing scenarios of each destination and at the same time to better address the Living Lab activities to be carried out in the following months.

The structure of the workshops was similar in the four destinations:

- starting from the general framework of the BLUTOURSISTEM project and the opportunities it offers also in relation to the state of implementation of the Veneto Tourism Strategic Plan (PSTV),
- going on through the analysis of the current status of each destination, of the problems and challenges that are being faced (diversification, seasonal adjustment, integration in mature areas, etc.) and of the guidelines that are being adopted (sustainability, sectoral integration, organization, etc.). )
- comparing with the current dynamics of the tourism market, both for what concerns trends and consumption trends and tourist profiles and needs,
- then outlining the possible tourism products to be developed through focusing on specific needs and tourist features, even with the support of the tools and indicators, both the ones already realized within the Blutoursystem project and those that are being implemented (Tourist Observatory) on a regional level.

Through these co-designing scenario workshop, the operators, sharing ideas and working on the challenges to be faced and benefits to be maximized, have achieved a greater awareness on the opportunities that sustainable tourism development can bring to the destination and identified some guidelines supporting new considerations and to work on as a destination.

Some findings highlighted in the pre-phase and during the co design-scenario workshops are summarized in the following paragraphs.

## The current status of the pilot areas

The four destinations are characterized by the strong connotation linked to water, but with very different past and future dedications, united by the desire to pursue a path of innovative and sustainable development in the broadest sense of the term.

**CAORLE:** a mature and organized seaside destination, which in the future will face the challenge of diversifying the product and seasonal adjustment with greater commitment. Here you have the possibility to integrate the destination management with additional tools to support the operators, favouring the extension of the use of the regional Destination Management System for the booking functions and dynamic packaging of the destination.

**VENETIAN LAGOON:** compared to other realities, the Lagoon is a whole other story, as the territory includes more areas and organizations for managing the destination, covering a large ecosystem in which a sustainable tourist offer is supported by an association of operators (OTS - Sustainable tourism operators), born recently, which requires the continuation of a path of accompaniment and progressive maturation. The structuring of a Lagoon Area Brand as a meta-destination governance tool is one of the main objectives of the association that is working on the construction of a product in line with market expectations.

**PO AND ITS DELTA:** destination that rests its vision on the recognition as a UNESCO MAB Biosphere Reserve of the Po Delta and that also integrates the coastal offer of the coastal area in terms of nature tourism and active vacation. The transition from the strategic vision to the operational one by the OGD, which is in the start-up phase, requires an informative and technical support also for the involvement of the communities.

**EUGANEAN SPA AND HILLS:** re-modelled destination with a wider ambit than in the past, which integrates the thermal area with a mature tourist product and the hill area with emerging tourist products. The redefined destination is proposed as the largest area of preventive health in Europe

through a concept of Wellbeing in a holistic sense (not only spa treatments, but also wellness, culture, activities in contact with nature, spiritual wellbeing, etc.). The new vision of the destination implies an organizational and integration effort between operators also in sectors other than tourism.

## Certain and uncertain change drivers: where the market goes

The tourist market is constantly changing and if the last 10 years have been a period of great revolution for the spread of new web-related technologies, the current years and above all what awaits us for the next few years is partly predictable.

Starting from the fact that in the upcoming years tourism will continue to grow even at a fast pace. In 2018 international tourist arrivals grew by 5% in 2018, reaching 1.4 billion, two years ahead of the World Tourism Organization's long-term forecasts.

The UNWTO target of 1.8 billion by 2030 will presumably be reached in advance, except for exceptional events.

At the same time, export earnings generated by tourism rose to 1.7 trillion dollars, an increase of 4%, surpassing the world economy in 2018.

Even if there are still a few destinations to benefit from international tourism, the top ten destinations for arrivals concentrate 40% of arrivals from all over the world. Furthermore, 4 out of 5 tourists visit a destination in their own geographical area (Europeans in Europe, Chinese in Asia, etc.).

According to the World Tourism Organization, several factors contributed to this trend:

- some economic developments, such as a favourable global economic environment, a growing middle class in emerging economies,
- other more structural ones linked to technological progress, an increase in aerial connections with accessible travel costs, new visa facilitation policies, as well as new business models (OLTA spreading, sharing economy, etc.).

The "context" changes but tourists and their behaviour also change.

As longevity rates increase, societies age rapidly and more and more elderly people will travel, especially from traditional economies that still represent the most important source of demand. Older people who, however, want to feel, behave and be treated as younger, and above all have a growing spending potential.

Elders and not elders are always more aware, because compared to the past they can be much more easily informed, suffice it to say that, according to the UN estimates, now more than 50% of the world population uses the internet, which has largely passed the spread of other media (TV, radio, etc.).

And last but not least, (current and potential) tourists are increasingly oriented: if we consider that the demand for consumption and use of goods and services increasingly responds not only to the logical categories of need and economic capacity, but also to a scale of values responsibility, localism, identity, authenticity, and so on, that increasingly conditions it.

There are some trends that affect Veneto destinations and also the area of cooperation, and that characterize the new products, such as:

- the ever-increasing attention to GREEN and WELLBEING which translates into the demand for physical activity, health and wellness, healthy food, walks



- the search of LOCAL EXPERIENCES, to discover what the locals do, to live as a resident, to learn from those who live and work in the territory
- ADVENTURE which, in addition to the pure search for adrenaline rushes, today it includes sustainable itineraries and "slow" travel activities such as hiking, cycling with e-bikes, culinary activities and photography
- the specific requests related to MOBILITY: you want to arrive fast but live the territory slowly, also through new combinations of means of transport (train + bike, ...)

## How to face the challenge

There is no doubt that, for the localized offer, the challenge is stimulating but also demanding as it requires an effort that cannot be that of the individual.

At the base of everything there must be a strong "Marketing Intelligence", that is the ability to understand with the maximum of timing the current trends of becoming, approaching in this the tourism industry to that of food, fashion, automotive , etc.

Faced with this predictive intelligence we need an adaptive capacity: knowing how to provide flexible responses, within the framework of a vision that consists in integrated solutions and rapid delivery services.

This is certainly true for the seaside resort and other territories "with mature products", but it is also generally true: the challenges of innovation and diversification are valid everywhere, and it is not enough to propose a new product and/or approach a new market, if the dynamics of these products and markets are unknown, with their specific "life cycle" and with their quantitative and qualitative trend variables.

Compared to the recent past, the challenge is more difficult and requires more knowledge, but it is inevitable.

The Tourism Plan of the Veneto Region, in the wake of what is already contained in the strategic lines of regional development and of what is also identified by the National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2017-2022 - Italy Country for Travelers, reiterates the transition from the logic of the "territory" to that of the "tourist product", as an element that declines the expectations (experiential, services, etc.) of a renewed tourist, aware and informed and who can organize every part of his holiday independently.

The path of sharing the Plan through the work tables carried out with stakeholders and operators was to discuss the analysis of the products mainly as an expression of territorial peculiarities, and then to address the issue of products on the side of tourism demand: the product is what is bought.

Starting from the great value and behavioural references (which are the basis of consumption, including tourism) and from the analysis of tourism demand (tourist flows and reference markets, age, education level, etc.) it is possible to build just as many products and clusters of product, which respond to the search of experience and the satisfaction of a specific need.

The Strategic Plan has therefore identified specific lines of action in relation to tourism products, which can be divided into actions for:

- improve the competitiveness of traditional products (seaside, city of art, lake, etc.);
- developing "cluster" products with good/high growth potential on the market (i.e. cycling tourism);
- promote the construction of new experiential, structured, innovative, competitive, complementary and saleable tourism products, especially on the international market.

Going down from the regional level to that of the destinations, it is possible to define the products that can be developed in the individual territories, defining a non-exhaustive list of products that on the one hand allows expressing the specificities of the territories, and on the other the common factors that allow and even require a network of territories with a "variable geometry" and of companies, looking for a more efficient and profiled production and promotional organization based on demand expectations.

This Method can be reproduced in a logic of cross-border collaboration in the BLUTOURSYSTEM project.

Starting from these premises in the scenario design, much attention has been paid to the elements that can increase the awareness of the destinations, and of the operators, in relation to their potential and the development opportunities linked to new tourism products.

The path identified in fact allows to support institutions and operators throughout the process, from the construction to the marketing of the tourism product.

The Tourist Observatory represents an essential element to understand the desires and needs of the demand, the specific needs in relation to individual products/passions (the needs of a cyclist are different from those of a fisherman or a birdwatcher). And it is also a useful tool for identifying markets in relation to specific products and for positioning oneself against competitors.

The DMS represents instead the point of arrival for the new tourist products having among its functions not only the promotion of the tourist proposals but also their marketing, both in a traditional way, through the tourist package realized by putting together more services sold by the same subject and, above all, in an innovative way, by allowing consumers to create their own package through the purchase of individual services (dynamic packaging).

If the Observatory and the DMS represent the points of departure and arrival, what is in the middle between the conception and the sale is equally important and directly involves the participants in the activities of the Living Labs.

The specific in-depth analyses relating to the different realities of each destination have in fact highlighted the differences and potential of the four destinations which, starting from situations where they are more consolidated, from mature products such as spas and the seaside, find themselves having to diversify their offer not to be doomed to failure.