

DATES workshop – Towards a data space for tourism

Based on statistical data, Europe is the global leader in international tourism, accounting for roughly two-thirds of international tourist arrivals worldwide. To put this into another perspective, the OECD reports that France, Italy and Spain, together with Mexico in Türkiye, received almost 38 % of worldwide arrivals in 2021.

It is easy to see why tourism plays an integral and important role in the EU's greener and more digital economy. The European Commission had acknowledged this by presenting the Digital Europe Programme focused on bringing digital technology to businesses, citizens and public administrations, and opening a call through this new EU funding programme for the deployment of a secure and trusted tourism data space, ensuring transparent control of data access, use and re-use. The DATES project had been the only one selected on the entire EU-level.

The objective of the project DATES is to develop a strategy roadmap for building a tourism data space, a particular type of data sharing initiative characterized by a higher level of data control by participants, in collaboration with tourism sector stakeholders. The DATES project is going to set basis of the European Data Space for Tourism.

The upcoming European Data Space for Tourism is a domain-specific data space with some other examples being the European data space for cultural heritage, mobility, skills, media, smart communities etc., as the European strategy for data aims at creating a single market for data, i. e. a common European data space, combining and integrating data from different domain-specific data spaces.

Accelerating the data sharing economy and boosting a more competitive and sustainable tourism industry, Data Spaces are decentralised and standard-based structures to enable trustworthy data sharing between the data space participants on a voluntary basis, regulated through governance, business, legal and technical combined mechanisms.

The transversality of the tourism industry generates synergies with other afore-mentioned sectors, giving the DATES project a special importance. It is not surprising that the workshop titled 'Towards a data space for tourism – Prioritisation of data needs and data purposes' attracted more than 200 participants representing the whole tourism value chain contributing to set the basis of the European Data Space for Tourism.

The workshop, held online on February 8th, hosted by Intellera Consulting and the project lead partner AnySolution, gave an overview of DATES and its goals, identified data needs in the tourism sector; identified gaps in accessing data and outlined the main business problems. Overall, 207 participants from 27 countries 2 attended the event.

After the introduction of Giovanna Galasso from Intellera Consulting and the presentation of the DATES project by Dolores Ordoñez from AnySolution, Jean-François Cases from Amadeus and president of EONA-X offered a clear view of a data space from the perspective of the industry, with a clear business model behind the strategy which allows all the involved stakeholders to be more competitive. Furthermore, Árpád Welker from the European Commission explained the vision of the European Union on common European data spaces and which are the principles that will allow the generation of domain-specific

Data Spaces. Thereafter, the initial findings of the project were presented, and the break-out rooms' setup (second section) were subsequently introduced.

The objective of the second section of the workshop was to prioritise a series of business challenges that stakeholders face in their day-to-day activities, and that could be potentially solved by the use of a sector data space. At the same time, this activity allowed to define the stakeholders' data needs, as they were asked to associate different types of data with each challenge. In order to do so, participants were split into four breakout rooms, one for each of the identified data purposes, i.e., the main reasons why tourism stakeholders might be interested in accessing data. The breakout rooms were:

- Breakout room I: Increase of tourism sustainability & accessibility;
- Breakout room II: Conduct market analysis & inform decision-making;
- Breakout room III: Improvement of the interaction and engagement of the tourist;
- Breakout room IV: Improvement of planning and operations of tourism services

Each breakout room represented a specific data purpose for which the team uncovered various related challenges. Within the scope of the first breakout room, behaviour of tourists, sustainability data, tourist flows and mobility data were identified to be the three types of data most useful to solving the recognised challenges. Correspondingly, the project team of the Breakout room II most often identified behaviour of tourists, tourist flows, mobility data and demand and offer data as crucial, whereas the project team of the third breakout room most often pointed out behaviour of tourists, typology of tourists, demand and offer data, purchase habits, tourists' satisfaction and emotions, local/residents' satisfactions and emotions as the most valuable types of data. Inside the limits of the Breakout room IV, behaviour of tourists, tourist flows, local/residents' satisfaction and emotions, demand and offer data and mobility data were highlighted.

The entire workshop report is accessible through the following [link](#).

The DATES project consortium will use the evidence collected from the workshop for defining the use cases of the European data space for tourism. More specifically, starting from the challenges with the highest priority, desk research is going to be carried out and a workshop organised to develop and discuss the use cases. Such use cases will lay at the basis of the data space technical and governance requirements definition. Consultations related to these topics will take place in the upcoming months

As stressed in the introduction, tourism is a mainstay of the European economy, attracting more than 50% of the world's total international tourist arrivals and being Europe's third largest economic sector. A lot of weight weighs on the DATES project's shoulders but we are glad to say that the 'Towards a data space for tourism – Prioritisation of data needs and data purposes' workshop successfully showcased the first palpable results of what is to be an innovative data sharing initiative.

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