**DATES NEWSLETTER**

TITLE: Which are the data gaps and overlaps of the tourism ecosystem?

In order to identify the gaps and overlaps of existing data sharing initiatives in the tourism sector, the DATES project team relied on a plethora of evidence collected in the first four months of the project, including desk research, a survey and a workshop.

In line with the purpose of producing an accurate and up-to-date mapping of data sharing initiatives in the tourism sector, the desk research allowed the project team to map existing data sharing initiatives. Similarly, the survey allowed to gain insights on initiatives that could have been missed during desk research, further enabling the exploration of which data are needed in the tourism sector. Overall, the project team mapped 180 data sharing initiatives, 36 of which were identified through the survey. On the other hand, the workshop focused on prioritizing a series of business challenges that tourism stakeholders face in their day-to-day activities, which could be potentially solved by an enhanced use of data. This activity further allowed to define the stakeholders’ data needs, as they were asked to associate different types of data with various challenges pertaining to the tourism ecosystem.

The analysis of workshop results highlights that the most important data for the tourism sector (i.e. the ones associated with the sector’s most important challenges) are the are the ones regarding tourists’ behaviour, mobility data and demand and offer data. Similarly, the most needed data (i.e. the ones associated with the sector’s challenges to be addressed with the highest priority) are those on tourist behaviour, mobility data, and tourist flow data. At the same time, the results of the survey highlight that data on demand and offer, sustainability, mobility, and behaviour of tourists are currently missing datasets. Several survey answers further pointed out both a lack of awareness regarding data sharing and a lack of skills needed to extract useful information from the data, both of which might be among the reasons why the availability of tourism data is currently limited. By performing a deepened analysis on the results, several other data gaps were uncovered to be present in the current data sharing initiatives, such as the limited availability of data at local level, of data regarding car and other rentals, of user generated contents, private business datasets and card transactions data. Overall, the comparison of such workshop and survey results underlines the importance of filling the data gaps regarding tourists’ behaviour, mobility data and demand and offer data.

The results further highlight how incomplete data, lack of interoperability and data not being updated in a timely manner are the most common shortcomings of the current available data, and how there is a lack of cooperation and coordination for sharing data in the tourism sector. Cooperation and mutual trust are at the core of the functioning of data spaces. The deployment of a European data space for the tourism sector will surely contribute to spreading a data sharing culture within the sector.