



**INSPIRES**  
RESILIENT TOURISM



## Session 2: Smart Tourism – Smart Destinations

# ***Definitions and Background***

# Smart Tourism Definition



***Smart tourism responds to new challenges and demands in a fast-changing sector, including the evolution of digital tools, products and services; equal opportunity and access for all visitors; sustainable development of the local area; and support to creative industries, local talent and heritage***

European Commission (Tourism Unit).

# Smart Destinations Definition



**Smart Destinations lead to the next generation of tourism, with a strategy for **technology**, **innovation**, **sustainability**, **accessibility** and **inclusivity** along the entire tourism cycle: before, during and after the trip; with residents as well as tourists in mind, factoring multilingualism, cultural idiosyncrasies and seasonality into tourism planning.**

UN Tourism (UNWTO).



# “Smart Tourism” Components

**Sustainability** does not only mean to manage and protect natural resources, but to **reduce seasonality** impacts on the environment and to **involve the local host community**.

**Accessibility** includes services that are **multilingual and digitally available** to all travellers and visitors, regardless of their age, cultural background or their physical disability.

**Digitalisation** uses **digital technologies to enhance all aspects of the tourism experience**, enabling simpler access to services for all travellers, as well as helping local businesses to grow.

**Cultural Heritage & Creativity**, to protect and capitalise on the cultural heritage as well as local potential and its creative assets for the benefit of the tourism destination, the industry and the visiting tourists in general.



# Pafos European Capital of Smart Tourism 2023



This project receives funding from the European Union's SMP Programme under Grant Agreement No 101181590.

# Dublin European Capital of Smart Tourism 2024



This project receives funding from the European Union's SMP Programme under Grant Agreement No 101181590.

# “Smart Destinations” Initiative

- Started in 2017 by UNWTO (since 2024 UN Tourism)
- 3 international conferences: 2017 Murcia, 2018 Oviedo, 2022 Valencia – together with EU Smart Tourism Capital
- Technology-driven, including Innovation, Sustainability, Accessibility, and Inclusivity



# Smart Tourism – Smart Destinations



**Smart tourism** uses digital technologies (such as data analytics, IoT, mobile apps, VR/AR, AI, and cloud systems) to enhance the visitor experiences, improve destination management efficiency, contribute towards tourism resilience, and support sustainable development of tourism.

**Smart destinations** are places that integrate these technologies across travel and transport, accommodation, attractions, and governance to create **connected, data-driven, and visitor-centered ecosystems.**

# Smart Tourism - Smart Destinations typology



## Smart Tourism: Services to travellers

- **Sustainability**
- **Accessibility**
- **Digitalisation**
- **Cultural Heritage and**
- **Creativity**



## Smart Destinations: Digital infrastructure and networks

- **Sustainability**
- **Accessibility**
- **Technology**
- **Cultural idiosyncrasies**
  
- **Innovation**
- **Inclusivity**
- **Seasonality**



**UN Tourism**

# EU Transition Pathway for Tourism (TPT)



- Launched in February 2022 by the European Commission
- Aiming for the post-pandemic recovery of the EU tourism sector
- Following stakeholder consultation and co-creation
- 27 Topics, target year 2030
- Co-implementation with pledges
- 12 Topics selected by ECTN as related to Smart Tourism and Smart Destinations



# TPT Topics addressed by INSPIRES



- **Topic 8: Green transition of tourism companies and SMEs**
- **Topic 16: Support for digitalisation of tourism SMEs and destinations \***
- **Topic 19: Awareness raising on skills needs for twin transition in tourism**
- **Topic 20: Awareness raising on changes in tourism demand and the opportunities of twin transition for tourism \***
- **Topic 25: Enhancing accessible tourism services \***
- **Topic 26: Tourism services for visitors and residents alike \***

**\* Smart Tourism related**

# Additional TPT Topics related to Smart Tourism



- **Topic 2: Regulatory support for multimodal travelling**
- **Topic 3: Improving statistics and indicators for tourism**
- **Topic 4: Comprehensive tourism strategies development or update**
- **Topic 5: Collaborative governance of tourist destinations**
- **Topic 6: Sustainable mobility**
- **Topic 10: Improving the availability of online information on tourism offer**
- **Topic 15: R&I for digital tools and services in tourism**
- **Topic 18: Coordinated management and updated information on travelling**

# Best Practices in Smart Tourism

by  
component

*Enhancing the visitor  
experience*

From:

- **Dublin**
- **Cork**
- **Venice**
- **Padova**
- **Dubrovnik**
- **Gothenburg**
- **Bremerhaven**
- **Sibiu**
- **Pafos**

ECTN member destinations

# Sustainability component of Smart Tourism



- Preserve and enhance the natural environment and resources
- Maintaining economic and socio-cultural development in a balanced way
- Natural resources management
- Resource-efficiency measures implementation
- Smart and sustainable mobility for visitors
- Climate actions, adaptation and mitigation
- Reducing tourism seasonality
- Involving the local host community
- Contribute to employment and diversification of the local economy

# Venice: #EnjoyRespectVenezia



- Awareness-raising campaign
- For visitors to behave responsibly, and to respect the environment, landscapes, art and locals.
- Impact of tourism, responsible travelling contributing to sustainability
- Campaign website, with an online calendar, day-to-day forecast of the number of expected visitors.
- Thereby, tourists can choose an appropriate day to sustainably visit the city.
- The website also gives visitors tips about lesser-visited places.



# Cork

- **Social sustainability** a focus, with 85% of tourism sector respondents in a survey engaging in some form of community engagement activity.
- **Business tourism** led by the Cork Convention Bureau (CCB) focus on legacy and regeneration.
- **CCB guide** to social sustainability initiatives for conference visitors and groups.
- **Business visitors** are encouraged to take steps to ensure that their events create 'zero-waste' and are as sustainable as possible,
- Encouraging participation in events and activities that give something back to the local community.



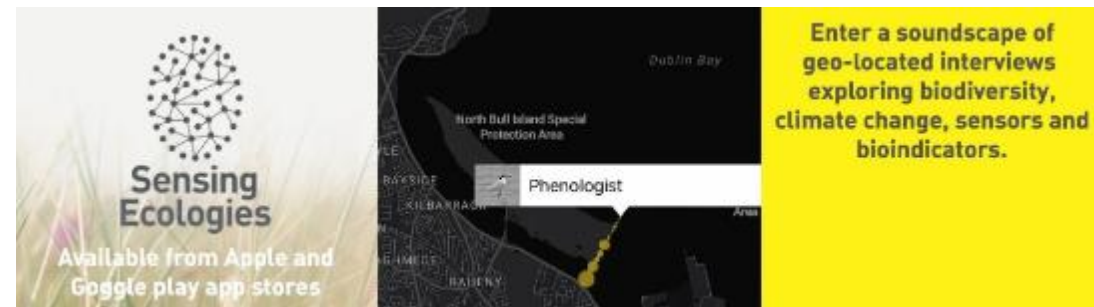
Co-funded by  
the European Union

# Dublin Bay Biosphere Smart Technology

## Discovering nature through augmented reality



- Sensing Ecologies is an augmented reality app developed by the Biosphere as part of a public art project.
- The app senses where the user is and builds wildlife soundscapes around them.
- Voiceovers and interviews are also included which educate the user on both wildlife and the effects of climate change.
- Solar-powered signage, water monitoring sensors
- Use of drones in collaboration with GIS systems to map and survey wildlife ecosystems.



# Dublin Coastal Trail: Sustainable Mobility

- Over 1600 Bikes in the open bike sharing network.
- Over 190 km of cycle routes, making two wheels the best way to explore Dublin.
- Ideal for exploring the coast and Biosphere Reserve on the Coastal Mobility Route of 3.6 km.
- The Coastal Mobility Route has evolved into a vital sustainable transport corridor for Dublin, effectively distributing visitors more sustainably.
- The route is now equipped with smart sensors to measure its usage.



Co-funded by  
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# Pafos Sustainable Mobility Committee



- Goal to deal with the introduction of low-carbon E-mobility systems and services
- Public transport running on renewable energy such as electric minibus
- Smart and integrated e-ticketing systems for tourists with multi-modal applications
- Multi lingual and multi-platform information and purchasing systems at tourist locations.
- Piloting of “Mobility as a Service” (MaaS) for sustainable tourism with low-carbon E-Mobility, smart multi-modal services for visitors to archaeological sites, including accessible tourism mobility facilities.



# Digitalisation component of Smart Tourism



- Supporting tourism businesses in the development and use of digital skills and tools
- Digitalisation of tourism services?
- Offering innovative tourism and hospitality information, products, services, spaces and experiences adapted to the needs of the consumers through ICT- based solutions and digital tools.
- Providing digital information on destinations, attractions and tourism offers
- Information on public transport
- Making attractions and accommodation digitally accessible.

# Gothenburg Event Impact Calculator



- Event Impact Calculator is a forecasting tool that was developed in Gothenburg and that supports event organisers to analyse and calculate the effect of events from an economic, social and environmental point of view.
- Included in the forecast are also emissions of tourism transport, giving the organisers a broad feel for the scale of impact of the event.
- Organisers are given the chance to experiment with different variables to achieve maximum positive outcome.
- Over 300 professional users have registered for using the tool.

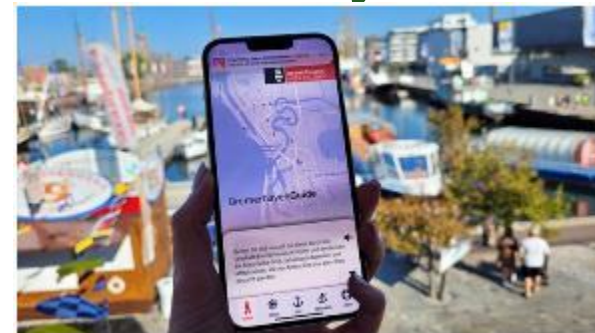
# Venice Smart Control Room

- Integrated control room to monitor mobility, gather data and intervene promptly and prevent any incidents from occurring.
- Monitoring tourist flows in real time to direct and divert streams accordingly to mitigate crowding, overtourism and help in the case of emergencies with quicker reaction times.
- SCR provides a unique and centralised system by which the city can control and manage demand by giving a comprehensive overview and planning for the future through the data collected.



# Bremerhaven Guide App

- Making the city's regional and cultural features more visible.
- Access to thematic city tours and individual stops.
- Tour on the history of the city's origins (Historical Museum and German Emigration Centre, the Zoo by the Sea and the City Theatre).
- Content conveyed through videos, audio stories, images and texts.
- In addition, impressive presence experiences are created through the integration of augmented reality elements.



# Dublin Discovery Trails app

- Brings the city's stories and communities to life.
- 'Doors into the Docklands' is the first trail released on the app and it is an innovative way to see the history of the Docklands come to life through smart technology.
- The app guides the user on a journey of discovery to some of the Docklands' most loved sites and attractions, enabling them to uncover compelling stories of Dublin's culture, heritage and history.
- A visitor can experience everything from the Guinness barges sailing down the River Liffey, to the Crimean banquet held in the CHQ or the story of the famine statues.
- The app has been a huge success since its launch with over 4000 downloads and an average dwell time of +30 minutes per user.
- The platform is also innovative from a procurement point of view as it is Ireland's first immersive shared platform, meaning that tourism stakeholders can concentrate their resources on developing immersive experiences on one single platform for Dublin.



# Pafos Smart App for Archaeological Park

- Smart App for infos to the UNESCO WHS Archaeological Park
- To ensure that residents and visitors alike have a complete and digital experience while visiting.
- The app allows users to gain access to useful content and information about the various monuments around the park, an audio guide in several languages, multiple videos, and tours to explore.



# Dublin Open Data Platform 'Dublinked'



- Encourages public bodies to make data available for everyone.
- Enables citizens, researchers and businesses to reap the benefits of access to the region's open data.
- 'Dublinked' hosts over 300 data sets, including many tourism databases that are used to build better tourism experiences by managing data feeds in digital city kiosks so visitors can navigate the city better.
- Teams build helpful city solutions using open travel data sets.



# Cork: Technology enabled tourist information

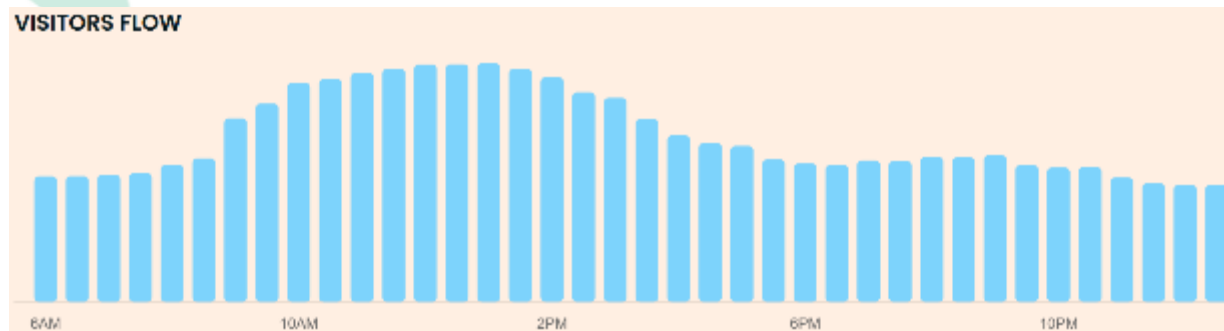


- Tourism kiosks providing visitors with detailed information and maps on tourist attractions, festivals, music venues, restaurants, pubs, traditional music, events, theatres and accommodation, in 8 different languages.
- The information is updated daily to ensure that users get accurate information.
- Content searches are monitored, and statistics are gathered to improve the kiosk service and review what visitors are most interested in.
- 71,000 requests per year via tourism kiosks.
- Ideas and sample itineraries, designed for different demographics, all of which encourage the visitor to get out and connect with nature, art and culture in the destination.
- 'No Car No Stress', 'Family Fun Little Legs' and 'Foot Loose & Fancy Free' are just some of the itineraries proposed.



# Dubrovnik Visitors monitoring and management

- Monitoring the number of people in the Old Town for “Carrying Capacity”.
- Data on the number of people entering updated every 15 minutes.
- Smarter and more informed decisions on managing pedestrian movement around and inside the Old Town.



# Cultural Heritage and Creativity component



- Creative use of cultural heritage and creative industries for an enriched tourism experience
- Actions to recognise and incorporate the tangible and intangible heritage of art, history and culture in its centre and surroundings, in the enhanced tourism offer
- Cultural heritage and creativity used to attract tourists from countries outside the EU,
- Exploit synergies between tourism and cultural and creative industries
- Protecting and capitalising on local heritage as well as cultural and creative assets for the benefit of the destination, the industry, visitors and residents.

# Dubrovnik Creative Hub

- ‘Lazareti Creative Hub of Dubrovnik’
- segments of the Lazareti complex were renovated and equipped for cultural tourism programmes.
- Special interest was put on environment care by implementing LED lights in the Lazareti complex, and the building venues were adjusted to people with disabilities, whereas tourist guides were educated how to guide them.
- The general aim of the project is the improvement of cultural heritage management through valorisation the cultural heritage venues and spreading the cultural-touristic offer based on the cultural heritage of Dubrovnik.

# Dublin EPIC Museum

- High-tech visitor attraction housed in the brick vaults of a historic warehouse in Dublin's Docklands.
- Irish history is a dynamic, immersive experience, rather than a long list of names and dates.
- Visitors can explore Irish culture and history in a fully interactive way with touch screen video galleries, motion sensor quizzes, remastered audio from 100 years ago, a 'whispering' literature gallery and engaging films.
- The museum is arranged in 20 galleries where it explores the reasons people emigrated and celebrates their impact across the globe.
- EPIC's digital storytelling is a sustainable model of exhibition making, allowing the museum to be updated with new stories or social changes.
- App in multiple languages to assist the wider museum experience.



# Gothenburg: 'Meet the Locals'



- 'Meet the Locals' connects visitors with locals and introduces the visitor to Gothenburg's daily life and the Swedish lifestyle, thereby personalising the visitor's trip through a local perspective.
- Sharing is the core of 'Meet the Locals'. Locals and visitors can meet in different forms, for example through a car-sharing service, a tour of the local sights,
- 'Meet the Locals' concept of sharing includes individuals who share their hobbies or interests, but also community initiatives, where resources can be used efficiently through sharing and borrowing instead of buying.
- The West Sweden Tourist Board gathered organisations, apps, Facebook groups and websites – all sharing a common goal - to make tourists and locals meet in various forms.

# Sibiu International Theatre Festival

- Third largest theatre festival in Europe.
- Annual 10-day festival, with plays, music and light shows from all over the world, organised in theatre halls, cathedrals, industrial halls, as well as streets and public squares.
- Internationally renowned artists, directors and ambassadors have been present throughout the years.
- The festival supports the city's independent theatre, as well as meetups between theatre schools and academies.

## **Sibiu International Theatre Festival**

**19 – 28 June 2026 / 33rd Edition / Soul**



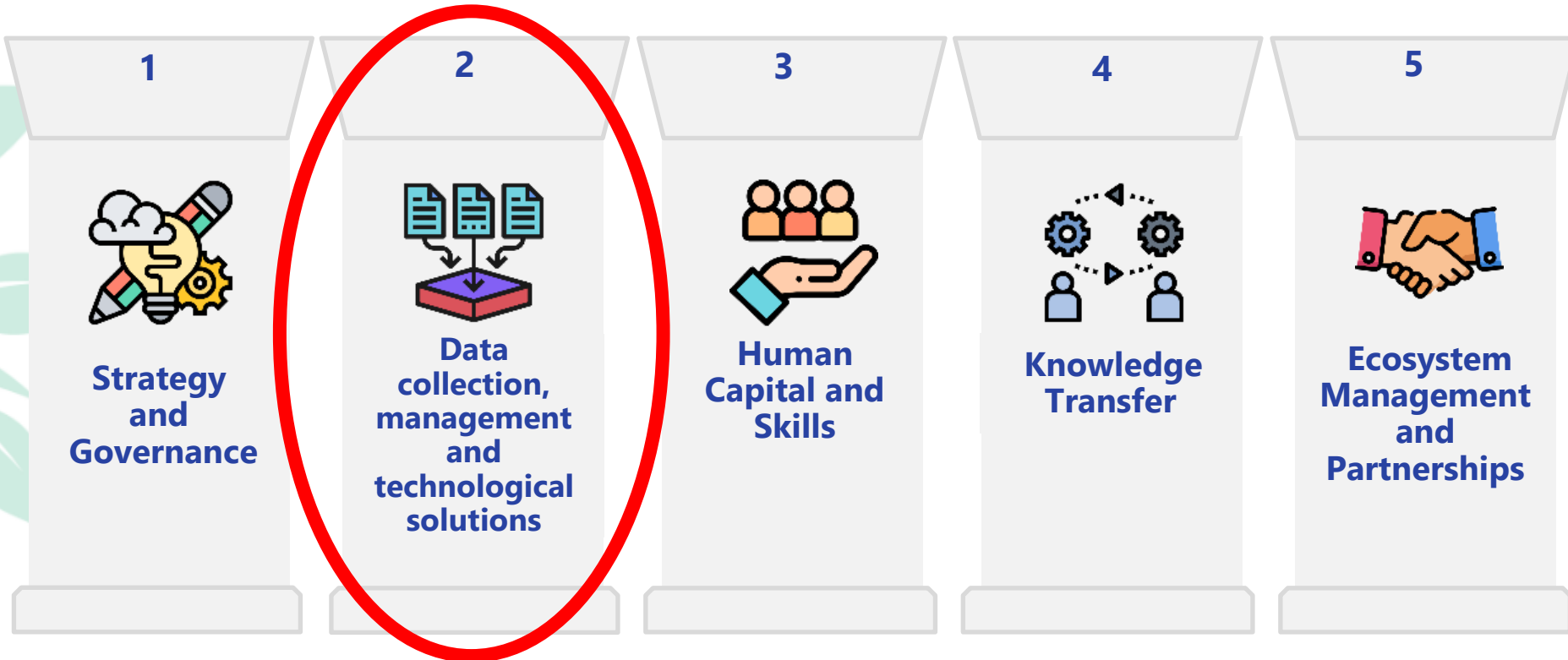
# Padova Museums Portal

- Web portal of Padova museums, a modern digital solution that gathers in one place the museum's offerings for the public.
- The web portal (MeB) displays the collections, artworks and main features of each museum in Padova.
- This tool represents an important information, research and promotion tool for visitors to Padova.



# The five pillars of a Smart Tourism

The five pillars of a Smart Tourism approach:



<https://smarttourismdestinations.eu>

## Technological progress



The growth of connectivity and distributed infrastructures are making **digital transformation increasingly accessible and capillary**. **Data represent the key fuel** for most of these forces.

- Big Data
- Recommender Systems
- Cloud computing
- Augmented Reality
- Artificial Intelligence
- Sensors and evolution in IoT
- Cybersecurity and blockchain
- Metaverse
- Robotics for tourism

# Data sources

- **User Generated Data:** Reviews - posts - blog articles – surveys.
- **Transaction Data:**
  - Web search and web page visiting
  - Online booking and purchasing
  - Consumer credit cards transactions.
- **Device Data:** Devices for tracking of movements, GPS data, mobile roaming data, Bluetooth data, RFID data, WIFI data and framework in various apps Smart city devices: data from traffic sensors, air quality, public transportation, internet access).
- **Businesses datasets:** Data on the number of passengers held by airlines, data on vacancies of hotels, data on restaurant reservations, events.
- **Official statistics.**

# Data

- Obtain valuable data and insights to define marketing strategies and expand the destinations' market share.
- Conduct market analyses and inform decision-making.
- Make real-time decisions.
- Improve the efficiency and competitiveness of the tourism industry and SMEs.
- Increase the destination's sustainability and accessibility.

## ***Smart Tourism***

*can be a driving force for innovation and an important factor of competitiveness, sustainable development, quality of life, and resilience of tourism destinations.*

# Benefits of Smart Tourism for SMEs

- **Enhanced Visibility and Market Access**
- **Better Customer Insights**
- **Operational Efficiency**
- **Improved Customer Experience**
- **Sustainability and Resource Optimisation**
- **Collaboration and Innovation Opportunities**

# Challenges to Overcome

- Limited digital skills or financial resources
- Data privacy and interoperability issues
- Dependence on public infrastructure and policy support

Thus,

- **capacity building,**
- **digital literacy,** and
- **public-private cooperation**

are key for SMEs to fully benefit from smart tourism.

# Latest Developments and Initiatives



- **New EU Sustainable Tourism Strategy underway**
- **Following consultation with stakeholders**
- **Smart Tourism included for the first time**
- **Emphasis on Tourism Resilience also**
- **Inclusion of Authenticity in Visitor Experiences**
- **Capacity Building and Skills Development included**

# Sustainable Tourism Strategy preview

## Four main pillars:

1. Sustainability and Competitiveness
2. Data and Technology
3. Staff shortages and Skills development
4. Destination EUROPE

All of the above are related to **Smart Tourism**

Flagship initiatives to be included



# Questions for discussion by SMEs

- **Challenges for the transition to Smart Tourism**
- **How to make your destination smart?**
- **Required skills for transition to Smart Tourism**
- **Role of SMEs in Smart Tourism and Smart Destinations**
- **Digital Marketing of Tourism, what next?**
- **AR/VR & AI for Cultural Heritage and Creative Tourism**
- **Benefits for SMEs, are you ready to take advantage?**

# Cooperation with other projects

- **DETOUR, PHOENIX (and TASTE) sister projects**
- **Smart Tour Interreg Europe (Bremerhaven)**
- **TURBO Interreg Europe (Sevilla)**
- **TIB Interreg Europe (Sevilla)**
- **REDIRECT Interreg BSR (Bremerhaven)**
- **SMARTIES SMP-COSME (Pafos ECTN member)**
- **Other relevant projects ?**
- ...



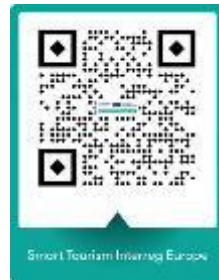
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