Ref. Ares(2026)6568192 - 30/06/2026

TOURAL

Multidimensional model of tourism verticals driving the sustainable balanced growth among rural & remote grids and urban clusters of rural regions, fostering macro-regional cooperation

101132489, HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01

Deliverable D3.3:

Action Plans, KACs & UCCST Model Implementation

Deliverable Version:	D3.3, v.1
Document Identifier:	Action Plans, KACs & UCCST Model Implementation
Preparation Date:	June 30, 2026
Document Status:	Final
Author(s):	Dimitrios Papadimitriou, Christina Psarrianou, Cinzia Liberatore (ABR), Natascia Bani (ABR)
Dissemination Level:	PU - Public

Funded by the European Union

HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-05

Deliverable SUMMARY SHEET

Deliverable Details	
Type of Document:	Deliverable
Document Reference #:	D3.3
Title:	Action Plans, KACs & UCCST Model Implementation
Version Number:	1
Preparation Date:	June 30, 2026
Delivery Date:	June 30, 2026
Author(s):	Dimitrios Papadimitriou, Christina Psarrianou, Cinzia Liberatore (ABR), Natascia Bani (ABR)
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Document Identifier:	Action Plans, KACs & UCCST Model Implementation
Document Status:	Final
Dissemination Level:	PU - Public

Project Details	
Project Acronym:	TOURAL
Project Title:	Multidimensional model of tourism verticals driving the sustainable balanced growth among rural & remote grids and urban clusters of rural regions, fostering macro-regional cooperation
Project Number:	101132489
Call Identifier:	HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01
Call Theme:	**HORIZON-CL2-2023-HERITAGE-01-05**
Project Coordinator:	Centre for Research and Technology Hellas (CERTH)
Participating Partners:	CERTH – Centre for Research and Technology Hellas – Greece MoN – NESEBAR MUNICIPALITY – Bulgaria BHF – FONDATSIYA BALKANSKO NASLEDSTVO – Bulgaria BRTA – BURGASKA REGIONALNA TURISTICHESKA ASOTSIATSIA – Bulgaria GALDD – ASOCIATIA GAL DELTA DUNARII – Romania KIN – CIVIL ORGANIZATION KINBURN – Ukraine NECU – NATIONAL ECOLOGICAL CENTRE OF UKRAINE – Ukraine BSEC – ORGANIZATION OF THE BLACK SEA ECONOMIC COOPERATION – Türkiye

	ICBSS – INTERNATIONAL CENTER FOR BLACK SEA STUDIES – Greece MoA – DIMOS ALONNISOU – Greece MoS – DIMOS SKOPELOU – Greece ZDRN – AGENCIJA ZA RAZVOJ ZADARSKE ZUPANIJE ZADRA NOVA – Croatia ITACA – IL TERRITORIO AL CENTRO DELLATTENZIONE - ASSOCIAZIONE PER LO SVILUPPO LOCALE – Italy PoT – PROVINCIA DI TERAMO – Italy ABR – REGIONE ABRUZZO – Italy ATL – ATLANTIS SYMVOULEFTIKI ANONYMI ETAIREIA ATLANTIS CONSULTING SA – Greece AMU – UNIVERSITE D'AIX MARSEILLE – France CPMR – CONFERENCE DES REGIONS PERIPHERIQUES MARITIMES D EUROPE – France Ruraltour – FEDERATION EUROPEENNE DE TOURISME RURAL – France IHU – DIETHNES PANEPISTIMIO ELLADOS – Greece
Contract Start Date:	January 1, 2024
Duration:	36 Months

Deliverable D3.3: Short Description
T3.2 will design multi-objective models to optimise the UCCST model developed in T3.1, following the co-design processes defined in T2.3. The optimisation will take into account: (a) value propositions for each targeted niche, maximising the unique assets and strengths of TOURAL regions; (b) blended propositions across niches; (c) effectiveness gains of corroborated tourism offerings through joint service provision; and (d) benefits from potential stakeholder collaborations at inter-, intra-, and macro-regional levels. This work is linked to deliverable D3.2. Building on these results, T3.3 will complement the UCCST model with a sustainability assessment of the TOURAL regions across all four dimensions (environmental, social, cultural, and economic). It will also analyse barriers to implementation, such as limited niche penetration in global markets, shortages of qualified professionals, or seasonality in human resources and propose mitigation measures (e.g. diversified packages with incentives, training programmes, synergies and joint planning, targeted marketing, digital service blueprints, and innovative business models). Using the methods established in T2.3, consortium partners will then co-design and adapt the UCCST model with local stakeholders, individualising tourism offerings and services to reflect each region's distinct assets and comparative advantages. This task also contributes to deliverable D3.2.

Deliverable D3.3: Revision History			
Version:	**Date:**	**Status:**	**Comments**
0.1	07/11/2025	Draft	Common input template designed and circulated to all pilot regions
0.2	09/01/2026	Draft	Version 1 of regional contributions received
0.3	20/03/2026	Draft	Structured review and common feedback issued to pilots after 1-1 meetings
0.4	29/05/2026	Draft	Version 2 regional contributions received; ABR T3.5 contributions received
0.5	26/06/2026	Draft	Reviewed by TOURAL partners
1.0	30/06/2026	Final	Final version prepared by MoS

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Executive Summary

This Deliverable (D3.3) is associated with Tasks T3.4 and T3.5 of Work Package 3 (WP3), led by the Municipality of Skopelos (MoS) and the Abruzzo Region (ABR) respectively.

The primary objective of T3.4, and the core content of this report, is the development of one Action Plan per TOURAL pilot region for implementing the Individualised UCCST Model. UCCST brings together four tourism verticals: Underwater Cultural and Nature Heritage Tourism (UCNHT), Cultural and Creative Tourism (CCT), Cultural Science Tourism (CST) and Silver Tourism (SLT). Each Action Plan operationalises the outputs of T3.3, translating co-design findings, regional diagnostics and stakeholder inputs into concrete, phased implementation roadmaps tailored to each pilot site.

Six Action Plans have been developed, covering Nessebar (Bulgaria), the Danube Delta (Romania), North Sporades / Alonissos (Greece), the Province of Teramo (Italy), Kutsurub (Ukraine) and Šimuni on the Island of Pag (Croatia). Each plan addresses the individualised model, regional strengths and opportunities, tourism offerings per vertical, implementation actions with milestones and go/no-go decision points, sustainability strategy, legislative and governance considerations, risk assessment and synergies. Four cross-cutting analytical dimensions defined for T3.4 are addressed throughout: cost-effectiveness of offerings (especially off-season), strengths and opportunities of rural grids, joint promotion for economies of scale, and control of tourism flows through policy and digital simulation tools.

A Knowledge Awareness Centre (KAC) has been established in each pilot region as the regional hub for promoting the UCCST model and delivering immersive experiences to visitors. KAC progress and the small-scale enactment of indicative UCCST services are reported under T3.5, led by ABR, and form Chapters 5 and 6 of this deliverable.

The methodology underpinning this deliverable was a structured, iterative co-production process: circulation of a common input template, a first round of regional reporting, a structured review by MoS with the assistance of ATL, six individual alignment meetings with pilot partners, and a second revision cycle yielding the final contributions consolidated here.

List of Symbols and Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Meaning
AR	Augmented Reality
ART4SEA	Synergetic project (Creative Europe) supporting the Alonissos KAC
CCT	Cultural & Creative Tourism
CH	Cultural Heritage
CST	Cultural Science Tourism
DMO	Destination Management Organisation
KAC	Knowledge Awareness Centre
ICUA	International Centre for Underwater Archaeology, Zadar
LL	Living Lab
PDO	Protected Designation of Origin
PGI	Protected Geographical Indication
SLT	Silver Tourism
SME	Small and Medium-sized Enterprise
TSG	Traditional Speciality Guaranteed
TV	Tourism Verticals
UCCST	Underwater, Cultural, Creative, Science and Silver Tourism
UCH	Underwater Cultural Heritage
UCNHT	Underwater Cultural & Natural Heritage Tourism
UW	Underwater
VR	Virtual Reality
WP	Work Package

1 Introduction

Deliverable D3.3 is the final output of Work Package 3 (WP3) of the TOURAL project. It consolidates the work carried out under two closely related tasks:

- T3.4 (Action Plans for UCCST Model Implementation, led by the Municipality of Skopelos), and;
- T3.5 (Regional KACs and Small-Scale TOURAL Indicative Services Implementation per Region, led by the Abruzzo Region).

The report covers the six TOURAL pilot regions and responds directly to the project objective of supporting the transition of rural and coastal areas into smart UCCST destinations.

The objective of T3.4, for which MoS is responsible as regards the drafting of this deliverable, is the development of a concrete, evidence-based Action Plan for each pilot region. Each plan provides a structured roadmap for implementing the region's Individualised UCCST Model as designed in T3.3.

The T3.5 contribution, presented in chapters 5 and 6, covers the establishment and operation of Knowledge Awareness Centres and the small-scale enactment of indicative UCCST services. It was authored by ABR together with the regional partners.

Together, the two parts of D3.3 form an integrated planning and early-implementation framework. The T3.4 Action Plans set the strategic and operational direction, while the T3.5 activities initiate proof-of-concept experiences and gather lessons learned that will feed into the full-scale implementation phase addressed in WP4.

1.1 Linkages with Previous WP3 Deliverables

D3.3 builds directly on the two preceding WP3 deliverables:

D3.1 (TOURAL UCCST Models) provided the generic multidimensional UCCST model, defining the four tourism verticals – UCNHT, CCT, CST and SLT – and the conceptual co-creation framework. It constitutes the thematic layer on which the regional plans are grounded.

D3.2 (Optimisation Methods for UCCST Models – Sustainability and Barriers) provided the regional diagnostics, sustainability gap analysis, multi-objective optimisation results and barrier-mitigation strategies developed through co-design under T3.3. It constitutes the regional analytical layer, identifying the specific opportunities, weaknesses and policy gaps each Action Plan must address.

The Action Plans in this document operationalise these findings, moving from analysis to implementation. They also integrate the empirical co-creation results produced through the WP2 Living Labs across the six pilot regions, which constitute the stakeholder validation layer.

1.2 Key Objectives and Link with Pilot Site Implementation Strategies

The deliverable pursues four objectives. First, to translate each regional UCCST model into a phased, costed and governable roadmap. Second, to ensure comparability across regions while preserving regional specificity, through a common structure. Third, to embed the four cross-cutting analytical dimensions of T3.4 into every plan. Fourth, to connect each Action Plan to its regional KAC and to the small-scale indicative services that demonstrate the model in practice. The result links each region's strategic ambition to concrete near-term steps, milestones and decision points.

2 Methodological Framework

D3.3 is the implementation layer of a design-to-action continuum that runs across the three WP3 deliverables and the WP2 Living Labs. The table below summarises the four-layer logic connecting these inputs.

Table 1. The four-layer analytical framework underpinning the Action Plans

Layer	Source and content
Thematic layer (D3.1)	Generic UCCST model: the four verticals (UCNHT, CCT, CST, SLT), the co-creation framework and the common service catalogue
Regional layer (D3.2 / T3.3)	Sustainability and barriers assessment, multi-objective optimisation and the individualised UCCST model per region produced through co-design
Stakeholder layer (WP2 Living Labs)	Empirical co-creation results from stakeholders across the six pilot regions; validated regional assets, priorities and social acceptance
Implementation layer (D3.3 / T3.4)	Action Plans per region: sustainability strategies, stakeholder roles, tourism offerings, milestones, risks, KACs and small-scale pilots

2.1 Co-Production Process and Iterative Revision

The Action Plans were developed through a structured, multi-round co-production process coordinated by MoS with methodological support from ATL. The process involved 6 stages:

1. Design of the D3.3 input template (MoS, Q3 2025). MoS designed a common structured template ensuring consistency across the six regions while allowing regional specificity. The template covered the UCCST model summary, strengths and opportunities, implementation actions and timeline, sustainability strategy, legislative considerations, risk assessment, synergies, small-scale implementation and KAC linkage.
2. Circulation and first round of reporting (Q4 2025 – Jan 2026). The template was circulated to all pilot partners, who completed Version 1 of their plan as the initial baseline.
3. Initial review and common feedback (Feb 2026). MoS, ABR & ATL reviewed all Version 1 contributions against the D3.3 requirements, the mandatory indicators and the WP3 KPI framework, and issued structured feedback identifying gaps in completeness, specificity and format compliance.
4. Individual alignment meetings (Mar–Apr 2026). Six dedicated online meetings were held with each pilot partner to clarify expectations, discuss specific challenges and agree the structure of the revised contributions.
5. Second revision cycle (Apr–May 2026). Pilots revised their contributions and added supplementary detail. The Croatia plan was improved and finalised in June 2026.
6. Consolidation into D3.3 (May–Jun 2026). MoS consolidated all contributions into the unified structure, ensuring cross-referencing, narrative coherence and compliance with the mandatory indicators, and integrated the ABR contributions on KACs and indicative services.

2.2 Structure and Components of the Regional Action Plans

Each regional Action Plan follows a consistent structure, enabling comparison while preserving regional character. The common components are:

- Regional profile and UCCST model summary: key characteristics of the pilot region and the individualised model derived from T3.3.
- Strengths and opportunities of rural grids: unique assets and strategic opportunities for UCCST development, contributing to the target of at least 30 unique assets.
- Tourism offerings and services: concrete products and services, contributing to the target of at least 20 offerings.
- Implementation actions and timeline: structured tables with phases, milestones, responsible actors and go/no-go decision points, contributing to the target of at least 24 milestones.
- Sustainability strategy: environmental, socio-cultural, economic and institutional measures.
- Legislative and governance considerations: the relevant regulatory framework and governance structures.
- Risk assessment and mitigation: main implementation risks and proposed responses.
- Synergies and joint promotion: collaborations within and across regions, contributing to the target of at least 10 joint promotions.
- KAC linkage and small-scale implementation: the regional awareness center and the indicative pilot actions that demonstrate the model.

3 Cross-Cutting Analytical Dimensions of the Action Plans

All six Action Plans address four cross-cutting analytical dimensions defined for T3.4. These dimensions transcend individual regions and form the common analytical backbone of the TOURAL model implementation strategy across the macro-region.

3.1 Cost-Effectiveness of Tourism Offerings

A key criterion for the viability of UCCST offerings is their cost-effectiveness, particularly during off-peak seasons. Seasonality remains one of the most persistent structural challenges for rural and coastal destinations across the six regions. The Action Plans address it by designing offerings that extend the season beyond traditional peaks and distribute visitor flows more evenly across the year.

Concrete strategies include autumn and spring packages in Nessebar, year-round slow-tourism routes and digital interpretation in the Danube Delta, off-season training and capacity pathways in the Province of Teramo, off-season silver and cultural packages in the North Sporades, digital and virtual offerings that function regardless of physical site access in Kutsurub, and modular off-season packages co-created with local operators in Šimuni–Pag. In each case, cost-effectiveness is weighed against the investment required and the expected social return in jobs, SME support and community income diversification. The reuse of existing premises for KACs is a recurring measure that keeps capital expenditure low.

3.2 Strengths and Opportunities of Rural Grids

Each pilot region sits at the intersection of rural hinterlands and more urbanised or heavily visited coastal nodes. A central aim of the TOURAL model is to redistribute tourism benefits across this rural-urban grid, countering the concentration of visitors and value in already developed areas. Across the six regions, the plans document more than 30 unique assets, spanning natural heritage, archaeological resources, scientific infrastructure, intangible traditions and landscape diversity.

Notable examples include the submerged archaeology and Natura 2000 sites of Nessebar's hinterland; the multi-ethnic landscape and biodiversity of the Danube Delta; the marine park and underwater heritage of the North Sporades; the Apennine biodiversity corridors and agro-food traditions of the Abruzzo hinterland; the steppe, estuary and ancient Olbia complex of Kutsurub; and the maritime, gastronomic and underwater heritage of Šimuni and Pag Island.

3.3 Control of Tourism Flows and Demand-Offer Balance

Sustainable destination management requires tools for monitoring and managing visitor flows, preventing over-tourism at sensitive sites while channelling demand toward under-visited rural areas. The Action Plans embed flow-control strategies aligned with the project's digital and simulation tools. These include visitor-capacity assessment for fragile ecosystems such as the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve, smart routing through digital maps and heritage trails, carrying-capacity policy recommendations in Nessebar and the North Sporades, seasonal programming designed to avoid peak congestion in Kutsurub and Šimuni/Pag, and DMO-level coordination for regional visitor management in the Danube Delta and the Province of Teramo.

3.4 Joint Promotion and Economies of Scale

The fourth cross-cutting dimension concerns joint promotion and the pursuit of economies of scale across the macro-region. Acting individually, small rural and coastal destinations rarely command the visibility or marketing resources needed to reach international audiences; by promoting their UCCST offerings together, the pilot regions can share costs, pool content and present a coherent thematic proposition. The Action Plans embed this logic in several ways: the exchange of digital interpretive materials and VR products across the regional KACs, so that visitors in one region discover the others; the development of cross-regional thematic itineraries around shared assets such as underwater heritage, ancient Greek and Black Sea history, and slow

coastal tourism; and cooperation on common branding, joint market research and coordinated outreach. Specific examples include the Silver Tourism cooperation between the Province of Teramo and the Croatian pilot, the underwater-heritage and non-diver interpretation links between Croatia and the North Sporades, the sharing of the Olbia VR products developed in Kutsurub, and the Black Sea macro-regional cooperation pursued by the Danube Delta through the CPMR Balkan and Black Sea Commission. Across the six regions, the plans document at least 10 joint-promotion actions, reinforcing the visibility and economic sustainability of the TOURAL model.

4 Regional Action Plans

This chapter presents the six Regional Action Plans, one per pilot site. Each plan was co-authored with the regional partners on the basis of the common template and the individualised model from T3.3. The plans share a common structure to allow comparison, while their content reflects the specific assets, constraints and governance context of each region. The table below offers a comparative overview of the six pilot regions, their lead partners, the verticals primarily addressed and their distinctive focus. It provides context for the detailed Action Plans that follow.

Table 2. Comparative overview of the six TOURAL pilot regions.

Pilot region	Lead partner(s)	Distinctive focus
Nessebar (Bulgaria)	MoN, BHF, BRTA	UNESCO heritage; bridging urban core and rural hinterland through digital experiences
Danube Delta (Romania)	GALDD	Biosphere Reserve; eco and cultural tourism; carrying-capacity governance
North Sporades (Greece)	MoA, MoS	National Marine Park and underwater museum; art-and-sea synergies
Province of Teramo (Italy)	PoT, ABR, ITACA	Sea-to-mountain landscape; silver tourism; biodiversity-linked culture
Kutsurub (Ukraine)	NECU, KIN	Post-crisis, digital-first recovery; ancient Olbia heritage
Šimuni, Pag Island (Croatia)	ZDRN	Maritime and underwater heritage; PDO gastronomy; small-scale authentic tourism

4.1 Nessebar (Bulgaria)

4.1.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

Pilot site Nessebar lies on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast. The regional partners are the Municipality of Nessebar (MoN), the Balkan Heritage Foundation (BHF) and the Burgas Regional Tourism Association (BRTA). The Nessebar model addresses all four verticals: UCNHT, CCT, CST and SLT.

Informed by D3.1 and D3.2, the Nessebar UCCST model focuses on balancing growth between the urban UNESCO site and the rural hinterland by leveraging scientific research linked to UCNHT and CST. Core offerings translate scientific discoveries, such as the submerged archaeological walls, into accessible digital and physical experiences, addressing the D3.2 barriers of seasonality and over-tourism. Products are diversified across all verticals, including wellness retreats, wine tours, AR and VR experiences, and educational workshops such as “Malki Arheolozi” (Young Archaeologists). Key local actors include the Municipality, BHF, BRTA and local SMEs.

4.1.2 Strengths and Opportunities

Nessebar’s primary strength is its UNESCO World Heritage status combined with rich submerged archaeological assets, providing a unique foundation for the UCNHT and CCT verticals. The principal opportunity is to leverage scientific research and digital innovation to bridge the gap between the heavily visited urban centre and the underexploited rural hinterland, transforming seasonal mass tourism into a sustainable, year-round, higher-value ecosystem.

4.1.3 Implementation Actions and Milestones

The following actions are aligned with the product catalogue and the KPI framework. Each carries a milestone with an associated checkpoint.

Table 3. Nessebar – implementation actions and milestones.

Action	Timeline	Milestone / expected output	Responsible
Develop and launch year-round products (autumn wellness retreats, wine tours, cultural and educational breaks)	Q1 2026 – 2028+	Launch of 3 off-season packages; season extended to about 9 months	BRTA and local tour operators
Develop digital offerings and infrastructure (KAC integration, VR "Journey through Time", AR experiences)	Q2 2026 – 2028+	Testing and official launch of KAC digital experiences; underwater heritage accessible without site degradation	Municipality of Nessebar
Social engagement, environmental and citizen science (workshops, clean-ups, biodiversity monitoring)	Q1 2026 – ongoing	6 campaigns per year; community stewardship of heritage	Municipality / BHF
Enhance governance and local stewardship (management board; formalise Quadruple Helix networks)	Q1 2026 – 2028+	Stakeholder agreement signed; management board established	Municipality of Nessebar

4.1.4 Sustainability Strategy

The Action Plan is integrated into the municipal development strategy to ensure long-term viability. Financial sustainability is pursued through public-private partnerships and the operation of the KAC as a primary attraction. Formalising the stakeholder network keeps the model active beyond the project. Cost-effectiveness is reinforced by integrating the KAC into the existing Tourism Information Centre in the Old Town, which minimises capital expenditure and concentrates investment in high-value digital solutions.

4.1.5 Legislative and Governance Considerations

All actions adhere to the heritage-protection rules associated with Nessebar's UNESCO status. Interventions in underwater archaeology and physical cultural assets are aligned with the guidelines of the Ministry of Culture and the Centre for Underwater Archaeology, ensuring tourism development does not compromise the integrity of protected sites.

4.1.6 Risk Assessment

Table 4. Nessebar – risk assessment and mitigation.

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Shortage of skilled labour in niche tourism sectors	High	Joint upskilling and reskilling with educational and vocational centres
Tourism pressure and over-tourism in physical spaces	High	Digital content (VR/AR) and WP5 tools to manage and distribute visitor flow
Weak cross-sector collaboration; uneven economic distribution	Medium	Formalise Quadruple Helix networks established during the Living Labs

4.1.7 Synergies and Joint Promotion

The plan leverages synergies with existing initiatives, including the ITACA project and regional maritime strategies. Collaboration with the Ministry of Culture and the Centre for Underwater Archaeology aligns the plan with national heritage standards while opening opportunities for international scientific tourism and for cross-regional cooperation on underwater heritage with other TOURAL coastal regions.

4.1.8 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

The primary pilot goal is the operationalisation of the KAC in the Tourism Information Centre of the Old Town, configured to host VR tours ("Journey through Time") and AR experiences of submerged sites based on research by the Centre for Underwater Archaeology. Joint training initiatives with educational and vocational institutions address the shortage of skilled labour through specialised UCCST modules. The pilot will test the use of digital content to manage physical visitor flow and gauge user acceptance of new offerings.

4.2 Danube Delta (Romania)

4.2.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

The Danube Delta pilot is coordinated by the Local Action Group "Danube Delta" (GALDD). The Delta holds a threefold conservation status – UNESCO Biosphere Reserve, Ramsar Wetland of International Importance and UNESCO Natural World Heritage Site – and is part of the Natura 2000 network. The model addresses Nature Heritage Tourism, Cultural Heritage Tourism and the emerging potential of Silver Tourism, with Cultural and Creative Tourism emphasised by Living Lab participants as the future of tourism in the Delta.

The individualised model is grounded in the fragile, protected character of the wetland. It prioritises ecotourism and slow tourism that fit the carrying capacity of the area, alongside the valorisation of the Delta's multi-ethnic cultural heritage. The model is organised around three Living Lab scenarios: monitoring uncontrolled tourism, promoting the Delta as a model of multi-ethnicity, and building an effective public-private cooperation platform at Tulcea County level. A central institutional development is the new Destination Management Organisation, "Eco Delta Tulcea", established in December 2025.

4.2.2 Strengths and Opportunities

Key strengths include exceptional environmental heritage as a UNESCO Biosphere Reserve and Ramsar site, rich multi-ethnic cultural traditions, strong potential for nature-based tourism and access to the Black Sea coast. The principal opportunities lie in eco-tourism development, the valorisation of intangible cultural heritage for year-round tourism, and the future Danubius-RO scientific hub in Murighiol, which strengthens the Cultural Science Tourism vertical. Moreover, the Delta is distinguished instead by a growing family of Protected Geographical Indication (PGI) and Traditional Speciality Guaranteed (TSG) products which translate the Delta's ecological richness directly into economic and cultural value for its communities. Key challenges remain underdeveloped infrastructure, remoteness, fragmented governance and the absence of a regional tourism strategy.

4.2.3 Tourism Offerings

Table 5. Danube Delta – core co-created tourism offerings.

Offering / service	Expected outcome
Slow tourism routes on water (e.g. the 52 km Tulcea–Mila 23 "Ivan's Delta" route)	Sustainable, low-impact exploration that protects natural heritage and distributes flows

Slow tourism routes on land and water	Links the continental county with the wetland; promotes the wider county heritage
Authentic experiences in rural ethnic communities (gastronomy, winter traditions, festivals)	Year-round, repeatable seasonal experiences; addresses older travellers
Tourism for research (culture, history, archaeology, environment)	Science tourism linked to the Danubius-RO / ERIC research hub in Murighiol

4.2.4 Implementation Actions and Milestones

Given the absence of a regional tourism strategy, the plan follows a phased approach. Short-term actions feasible within the project create the conditions for a longer-term strategy; medium- and long-term actions address infrastructure, carrying capacity and branding. The DMO "Eco Delta Tulcea" is the key coordinating decision point.

Table 6. Danube Delta – phased implementation actions and milestones.

Action	Phase / timeline	Milestone / go/no-go	Responsible
Operationalise the DMO "Eco Delta Tulcea" for Tulcea County	Short term, Q2–Q4 2026	DMO active (established Dec 2025); GALDD admitted as member	Tulcea County Council / DMO
Build the framework for a Tulcea County / Danube Delta tourism strategy	Short term, Q2–Q4 2026	Strategy framework, funding source and method defined	DMO / Tulcea County Council
Capacity building and skills development for local stakeholders	Short term, Q2–Q4 2026	Training workshops delivered under WP4	GALDD
Enhance KAC Malcoci and develop digital interpretation tools ("Ivan's Delta" app)	Short term, Q2–Q4 2026	KAC services extended; digital tool promoted	GALDD
Carrying-capacity study and monitoring system for the DDBR	Medium-long term, from Q4 2026	Framework and financing for the study agreed	DDBR Administration / DMO
Accessibility infrastructure (railway, airport, green transport) and Delta branding / eco-labels	Long term, 2027–2037	Investment projects initiated; brand and eco-label scheme launched	Tulcea County Council / DMO

4.2.5 Sustainability Strategy

The dual challenge for the Delta is conserving its ecological assets while improving residents' quality of life; sustainable development requires harmonising economic growth, social inclusion and environmental protection. Environmental sustainability rests on ecotourism, slow tourism and a carrying-capacity monitoring system that treats capacity as an information system rather than a single visitor limit. Socio-cultural sustainability centres on valorising the multi-ethnic heritage and engaging communities so that residents benefit from tourism. Economic sustainability

diversifies attractions, extends stays and supports micro-enterprises, fisheries and crafts. Institutional sustainability depends on the new DMO and a Delta-wide cooperation platform.

4.2.6 Legislative and Governance Considerations

Tourism in the Reserve is governed by the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration framework and the Reserve Management Plan, which provides zoning, seasonal restrictions, visitor monitoring and permit systems. The plan stresses that insufficient monitoring and control, due to limited resources and low awareness, remains a barrier, and that economic interests should not be allowed to override conservation objectives.

4.2.7 Risk Assessment

Table 7. Danube Delta – key risks and mitigation

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Low commitment / lack of resources at county and DMO level; weak coordination	High	Quarterly stakeholder meetings; formalised multi-stakeholder coordination aligned with regional strategies
Delay in adopting a tourism strategy; lack of a common public-private vision	High	Initiate discussions through WP4 training sessions; DMO-led resourcing
Insufficient skills and time for product development and digital promotion	Medium	Coordination working group; funding sought for training of tourism stakeholders
Insufficient time to test integrated UCCST packages	Medium	Gradual off-season pilot testing; niche promotion; cooperation with regional boards

4.2.8 Synergies and Joint Promotion

Cross-regional cooperation is to be explored at the Black Sea macro-regional level and through the CPMR Balkan and Black Sea Commission. Tulcea County stakeholders are engaged in European initiatives such as EcoDaLLI and Nevermore, and have proposed other initiatives. The KAC will host promotional materials from local and regional stakeholders, supporting joint promotion and a shared Delta brand.

4.2.9 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

The KAC is hosted at GALDD headquarters in Malcoci (Nufăru commune), with an alternative urban site at the National Centre for Tourism Information and Promotion in Tulcea under discussion. First activities launched in late 2025 included presentations for students and residents on TOURAL objectives, local culture and sustainable tourism. The KAC will be supported by Tulcea County Council and the DDBR Administration through promotional materials, and progressively integrates multimedia storytelling and VR/AR tools.

4.3 North Sporades (Greece)

4.3.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

The North Sporades pilot centres on Alonissos and the National Marine Park of Alonissos and the Northern Sporades, the largest marine protected area in Europe. The model is led by the Municipality of Alonissos along with 2 local key NGOs: Aenaos Thalassa Foundation and MOm. It focuses primarily on Underwater Cultural and Natural Heritage, complemented by Cultural and

Creative models and Silver Tourism, building on the island's underwater museum, marine heritage and extensive coastline.

A core strategic priority is the delivery of modern infrastructure, including marinas in several locations, designed to leverage the island's maritime heritage and coastline and to position it as a nautical hub. These investments support the underwater tourism and silver tourism segments and the year-round operation of hybrid physical-digital offerings.

4.3.2 Strengths and Opportunities

The island's defining strengths are its marine park, the underwater museum and its maritime identity, which provide a strong basis. The principal opportunity is to combine these assets with art-and-sea programming and digital access to submerged heritage, extending the season through silver and cultural tourism and reducing pressure on the most sensitive marine sites.

4.3.3 Tourism Offerings

Table 8. North Sporades – indicative tourism offerings.

Offering / service	Expected outcome
Underwater museum visits with VR-based remote access to submerged heritage	Year-round, low-impact access to sensitive sites
Art-and-sea exhibitions and creative programming (in synergy with ART4SEA or other artistic initiatives)	Cultural diversification and off-season attraction
Marine science and educational experiences	Awareness and citizen engagement with the marine park
Silver and cultural off-season packages	Season extension and stable local income

4.3.4 Implementation Actions and Milestones

Table 9. North Sporades – indicative actions and milestones.

Action	Timeline	Milestone / go/no-go	Responsible
Renovate and operate the KAC in synergy with ART4SEA	2025 – ongoing	KAC reopened and operational (achieved)	Municipality of Alonissos
Develop VR-based underwater exploration and digital storytelling	Q1–Q4 2026	Digital offerings launched at the KAC	Municipality / Aenaos Thalassa Foundation
Develop modern marina and nautical infrastructure	2026–2028	Feasibility and first works; go/no-go on funding	Municipality of Alonissos
Establish a Living Lab working group as advisory and co-creation body	2026	Advisory body active; offerings co-designed	Municipality / local stakeholders

4.3.5 Sustainability Strategy

Environmental sustainability is anchored in the protection regime of the marine park and in digital access that reduces physical pressure on submerged sites. Socio-cultural sustainability rests on

community co-creation through the Living Lab and on art-and-heritage programming that reinforces local identity. Economic sustainability is pursued through season extension and higher-value nautical, silver and cultural offerings

4.3.6 Risk Assessment

Table 10. North Sporades – key risks and mitigation.

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Pressure on sensitive marine sites in peak season	High	VR access, carrying-capacity rules and marine-park coordination
Dependence on external funding for marina infrastructure	Medium	Phased works with go/no-go decision points tied to funding

4.3.7 Synergies and Joint Promotion

The main project supporting the creation and renovation of the KAC is ART4SEA, whose fusion of art and environmental awareness is directly aligned with the KAC philosophy and strengthens the UCNHT dimension. The island is a natural partner for cross-regional underwater heritage itineraries with Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania, and for knowledge exchange on interpreting and presenting underwater heritage to non-divers, including with the Croatian pilot.

4.3.8 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

The Alonissos KAC is the most advanced in the network. Renovated within TOURAL in summer 2025 and reopened with the ART4SEA exhibition, it acts as a flagship hub offering advanced VR underwater exploration, museum exhibitions and digital storytelling, with a strong educational role and a clear contribution to year-round tourism.

4.4 Province of Teramo (Italy)

4.4.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

The Italian pilot is the Province of Teramo, coordinated by the Province of Teramo (PoT), the Abruzzo Region (ABR) and ITACA. The region addresses CCT, CST and SLT. Its landscape runs from the Adriatic coast to the highest peaks of the Apennines, encompassing protected areas such as the Gran Sasso–Laga National Park, the Marine Protected Area and the Calanchi di Atri Reserve, alongside a rich architectural and religious heritage.

The core tourism services co-created with stakeholders are: targeted and innovative branding focused on the high value of cultural heritage; training pathways for tourism operators in innovation, digitalisation and networking; and improved physical accessibility to cultural and natural sites, with particular regard to silver tourists. The strategic ambition is to move from a low-skill, coastally concentrated tourism toward more mature and competitive forms balanced between coast and inland.

4.4.2 Strengths and Opportunities

Strengths include valuable cultural heritage, excellent food and wine, a varied natural landscape from sea to mountain, a varied tourist offer and a territory that remains environmentally intact. Opportunities lie in the strong potential for Silver Tourism and Cultural and Creative Tourism, the development of untapped environmental, historical and production assets, the creation of innovative jobs and rising demand for experiences in intact destinations.

4.4.3 Implementation Actions and Milestones

Table 11. Province of Teramo – implementation actions and milestones.

Action	Timeline	Milestone / expected output	Responsible
Support measures for off-season flows through new green and slow mobility and improved accessibility	Q2–Q4 2027	Funds identified; instruments reoriented; first call for proposals launched	Regional Authority / Chamber of Commerce
Training pathways for operators and stakeholders	Q4 2026 – Q4 2027	At least 3 training paths with at least 10 operators	ITACA / training institutions; University of Teramo
Strengthen governance and collaborative networks; entry in operation the Regional Tourism Observatory	Q4 2026 – Q4 2027	Regional Tourism Observatory established as advisory body	Regional Authority and tourism stakeholders
Sensitisation campaigns for biodiversity and environmental protection	Q3–Q4 2026	At least 2 campaigns delivered	Local environmental associations
Targeted and innovative destination branding	Q4 2027	New destination brand created	Regional Authority / promotion agencies

4.4.4 Sustainability Strategy

Environmental sustainability is advanced through awareness of the high environmental value of the destinations, protection of natural assets and the use of renewable energy and sustainable resource management. Socio-cultural sustainability improves access to education and training and preserves intangible heritage as a driver of community development. Economic sustainability increases green and innovative employment, broadens access to digital services and promotes sustainable tourism. Institutional sustainability strengthens regional coordination and the enactment of sectoral policies. Mitigation measures include tailoring services to SLT, CST and CCT visitors, involving communities in design, integrating intangible heritage, upskilling operators and running targeted marketing campaigns.

4.4.5 Legislative and Governance Considerations

The plan operates within the national tourism code (Legislative Decree 79/2011) and the Cultural Heritage and Landscape Code (Legislative Decree 42/2004), complemented by Abruzzo regional laws on tourism organisation and on heritage protection and enhancement. Governance is coordinated by the Abruzzo Region with local municipalities, cultural and environmental associations and tourism federations, reinforced by the Regional Tourism Observatory once it is brought into operation.

4.4.6 Risk Assessment

Table 12. Province of Teramo – risk assessment and mitigation.

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Limited interest or awareness in niche tourism sectors	Medium	Awareness-raising actions targeted at tourism stakeholders

Low propensity to integrate transport with tourism	High	Recruit professionals to plan experience-oriented transport pathways
Absence of coordinated planning between sectors	Medium	Maintain a stable network of public and private stakeholders
Proliferation and overlap of branding and digital tools	Medium	Rationalise tools
Fragmentation of funding	Medium	Coordinate and reorient existing funding

4.4.7 Synergies and Joint Promotion

Collaboration with local municipalities, which own the KAC premises, ensures technical and financial sustainability. ITACA manages a stable network of cultural, environmental and civil society associations, and the University of Teramo offers a course in Cultural Tourism Sciences that supports training. The plan also benefits from connections with regional service providers (public transport, rail, SME finance and broadband). The Province is the natural Silver Tourism partner for the Croatian pilot, supporting season-extension cooperation and joint market research on older visitors.

4.4.8 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

Tourism flow is managed through seasonality and visitor distribution – promoting off-season events and lesser-known itineraries – and through access management and carrying-capacity tools such as booking systems, timed entry and the ICT tools developed under WP5. The KAC is conceived as an upgrade of an existing visitor centre, providing the physical anchor for the small-scale services.

4.5 Kutsurub (Ukraine)

The Kutsurub plan is a distinctive case of responsible planning under exceptional circumstances. It adopts a phased, digital-first approach with conditional go/no-go points tied to the security situation and demining.

4.5.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

The Kutsurub territorial community in Mykolaiv region is coordinated by NECU and KIN. It combines natural steppe with a ravine relief, sandy shores and the coastal waters of the Dnipro-Bug estuary, with high biodiversity. The Dnipro-Buzkyi Lyman and Adzhygol Balka belong to the Emerald Network. The community hosts the National Historical and Archaeological Reserve “Olbia”, one of the major ancient Greek city-states of the Northern Black Sea region. The model spans CCT, CST, UCNHT and SLT.

Under wartime conditions, the model prioritises digital and virtual tourism in the present, with on-site offerings planned for the post-war recovery. The project team and stakeholders are developing a tourism brand and visual identity for the community, together with a set of tourist routes and experiences linking the Olbia reserve, the Dnipro cliff, the Adzhygol beam, the Kinburn Peninsula, local wineries, the Bakhtov artists' house and the Taurian painting workshop.

4.5.2 Strengths and Opportunities

Strengths include the natural and coastal ecosystems, the archaeological heritage of the Olbia area and significant Cultural Science Tourism potential through collaboration between research institutions and tourism operators. Opportunities lie in eco and educational tourism, digital and VR access to heritage that functions despite limited physical access, and a structured post-war

tourism recovery trajectory. The principal constraints are the security situation, damaged infrastructure and accessibility.

4.5.3 Tourism Offerings and Phased Actions

Offerings are organised by phase, with the realistic short-term focus on digital products and brand development, and on-site experiences scheduled for medium and long term subject to security and demining.

Table 13. Kutsurub – phased actions, verticals and conditional milestones.

Action	Phase / timeline	Milestone (conditional)
Community tourism brand and visual identity	Short term, to end 2026	Brand and symbol described and adopted
Interactive 3D tour "Virtual Olbia and the Olbian Chora"	Short term, to end 2026	3D tour produced and hosted at the KAC
Open the KAC at the Mykolaiv Museum of Shipbuilding (interim)	Short term, Q2 2026 (opened 29 May 2026)	KAC inaugurated; VR and dry-dive content available
Historical-cultural tour "Olbia: Ancient Greece, Scythia and Local Heritage"	Medium term, subject to security	Tour piloted online or offline as conditions allow
Wine-making, ecotourism and festival tours	Medium term, 2027 if hostilities cease	On-site tours launched after demining
Coastal water-heritage tour and wellness/silver programme	Long term, 2029 if conditions allow	On-site delivery after recovery of infrastructure

4.5.4 Sustainability Strategy

Environmental sustainability is built on ecological culture and education, eco-friendly packaging, waste sorting and the future development of cycle paths and eco-trails. Socio-cultural sustainability rests on engaging youth and residents in preserving heritage and on rural (green) and event tourism that build local identity. Economic sustainability depends on attracting investment for infrastructure recovery, simplified lending for green estates and capacity building for stakeholders, with trainings planned for 2026. Institutional sustainability relies on existing regulatory instruments and on strengthening governance for heritage protection during recovery.

4.5.5 Risk Assessment

Table 14. Kutsurub – risks, constraints and mitigation.

Action area	Risk / constraint	Impact	Mitigation
Digital products (3D tour)	Power outages and internet disruption	Schedule change	Use of backup energy sources
On-site tours and trails	Security situation; no physical access to the area	Schedule change	Await end of hostilities and demining
Infrastructure-dependent offerings	War-damaged accommodation and access	Delayed delivery	Phased recovery; digital-first delivery in the interim

4.5.6 Synergies and Joint Promotion

Cooperation focuses on the direct exchange of multimedia materials between consortium partners, dissemination of project routes, and the exchange of VR products for joint use across the regional KACs, so that visitors can learn about other TOURAL regions. The Olbia 3D tour and a future full VR product of the Olbia polis are candidate shared assets, and the team drew inspiration for digital interpretation from the lace museum visited on the Island of Pag (Croatia).

4.5.7 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

The KAC was inaugurated on 29 May 2026 within the Mykolaiv Museum of Shipbuilding as an interim location, equipped with VR technology for 3D tours of Olbia, artefact-based games and dry-diving content developed with consortium partners. Once the security situation improves, equipment and materials will be transferred to the community's Centre for Administrative Services. The KAC is conceived as a hub for awareness and education, coordination of tourism actors and digital promotion of the region.

4.6 Šimuni, Island of Pag (Croatia)

4.6.1 Regional Profile and UCCST Model

The Croatian pilot is Šimuni on the Island of Pag, coordinated by the Zadar County Development Agency ZADRA NOVA (ZDRN). The plan primarily addresses Underwater Cultural and Nature Heritage Tourism (UCNHT) and Silver Tourism (SLT). The co-creation process with local stakeholders produced a set of integrated, small-scale, experience-based offerings that are modular and adaptable, allowing visitors to build personalised experiences while supporting sustainable tourism principles.

The offerings comprise: authentic maritime and fishing experiences interpreting fishing as intangible heritage; gastronomic experiences built around local products, especially Pag cheese, lamb and seafood; nature-based and low-impact activities including walking and cycling routes, coastal interpretation trails and introductory diving programmes; small-scale cultural events and workshops co-designed with the community; sustainable nautical tourism services promoting responsible boating and anchoring; and maritime heritage-based cultural products that interpret underwater and coastal heritage, including guided dives at selected sites and digital interpretation for non-divers.

4.6.2 Strengths and Opportunities

The model reflects the region's distinctive assets: the maritime identity and fishing heritage of Šimuni as a traditional fishing village; the underwater archaeological site of Letavica, a Roman shipwreck near Cape Letavica; the recognisable gastronomy of Pag cheese and Pag lamb, both holding the European PDO label; the small-scale, community-based character of the destination, distinct from mass-tourism centres; and the need to adapt to climate change through sustainable, low-impact products and stronger off-season offers. By focusing on these assets, the model reinforces local identity and differentiates Šimuni in the Adriatic market.

4.6.3 Implementation Actions and Milestones

Table 15. Šimuni–Pag – main actions, timeline and expected outputs.

Main action	Timeline	Expected output / milestone	Responsible
Develop the KAC as an interpretive and educational point	Q1–Q2 2026	KAC focused on local cultural, maritime and underwater heritage and sustainable tourism; promotes local	ZDRN / ICUA

		products and responsible behaviour at sea	
Develop integrated UCCST experience packages	Q3 2026	At least two modular products: one immersive heritage-gastronomy-outdoor product and one Silver Tourism product for older visitors	ZDRN / Pag Tourist Board
Capacity building and skills development for local stakeholders	Q2–Q3 2026	At least three training activities on interpretation, sustainability, experience design, governance and digital marketing	ZDRN
Develop a digital interpretation and promotion tool	Q4 2026	Digital tools (3D models, content) for underwater and coastal heritage, responsible-tourism guidance and off-season visibility	ZDRN

The plan further defines six milestones tracking the KAC location and institutional model, its content concept including the Letavica site, the core digital content, the stakeholder network and Living Lab cooperation model, the training delivered and a marketing plan for Šimuni.

Table 16. Šimuni–Pag – milestones and timeline.

No.	Milestone	Timeline
1	Confirmed KAC location and institutional model at ICUA Zadar, with its interpretive, educational and promotional role agreed	Q1 2026
2	Defined KAC content concept, including presentation of the Letavica underwater site	Q2 2026
3	Core digital interpretive and promotional content (3D, VR, educational materials) developed and integrated	Q3 2026
4	Established stakeholder network and operational Living Lab cooperation model	Q3 2026
5	Training activities delivered to key stakeholders	Q2–Q4 2026
6	Marketing plan for the presentation of Šimuni prepared	Q4 2026

4.6.4 Sustainability Strategy

The strategy builds on stakeholder collaboration, multi-niche tourism potential and identified gaps in connectivity, service diversification and digital readiness, addressing environmental, socio-cultural, economic and institutional dimensions.

Environmental. Low-impact, small-scale and experience-based activities limit pressure on natural resources; responsible nautical tourism and environmentally friendly marina practices reduce seabed and coastal degradation; spreading visitor flows across the year eases pressure on water, waste systems and coastal ecosystems; monitoring of indicators defined by the Pag Tourism Destination Management Plan guides corrective measures.

Socio-cultural. Co-creating products keeps residents, fishermen, cultural actors and SMEs at the centre, preserving Šimuni as a living fishing village; cultural and creative activities safeguard

intangible heritage; intergenerational and inclusive activities, linked to Silver and Cultural Tourism, foster cohesion; the digital presentation of underwater heritage strengthens its visibility within the community's identity.

Economic. Diversifying beyond the summer and nautical peaks strengthens local value chains across gastronomy, fisheries, accommodation and guiding; higher-quality cultural experiences raise average expenditure; Silver Tourism extends the season and stabilises employment, in line with the balanced niche allocation recommended in D3.2.

Institutional. The island of Pag is divided between two counties with four tourism boards, complicating integrated management; the strategy promotes project-based cooperation among tourism boards and stakeholders, continued coordination among local authorities, adoption of the destination management plan, continuous monitoring of indicators and digital data-sharing to support participatory governance.

4.6.5 Legislative and Governance Considerations

ICUA Zadar, a UNESCO Category II Centre under the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media, plays a key role in the KAC, hosting it and leading the interpretation of underwater heritage and the Letavica site. Zadar County, the County Tourist Board and the regional agencies ZADRA NOVA and AGRRA link local activity to regional priorities and funding. The Town of Pag and competent local units provide the implementation framework, and the island's tourism boards support promotion across administrative boundaries. National and regional frameworks include the national Sustainable Tourism Development Strategy to 2030 and the Pag and Zadar County destination management plans (in adoption).

4.6.6 Risk Assessment

Table 17. Šimuni–Pag – key risks and mitigation.

Risk	Impact	Mitigation
Strong seasonality and very low off-season demand (about 2.2% off-season occupancy)	High	Diversify off-season products (Silver Tourism, gastronomy, heritage, outdoor); pilot off-season packages; niche promotion; joint promotion with regional boards
Lack of qualified labour and niche skills	High	Targeted training in interpretation, product design and digital marketing; cooperation with educational and professional institutions
Limited capacities of local stakeholders	Medium	Structured training; simpler modular products; mentoring and gradual community involvement
Weak digital visibility and market reach	Medium	Shared digital platform and tools; integration into tourism-board channels; investment in online booking and promotion
Transport, utility and tourism infrastructure constraints	Medium	Gradual, sustainability-aligned infrastructure improvement; accessibility for older visitors and persons with disabilities
Environmental pressure during peak season; risk to underwater heritage	High	Responsible-behaviour guidelines; cooperation with marina and beach operators; flow redirection off-season; monitoring and digital protection of heritage

Fragmented governance across two counties and four tourism boards	Medium	Formalise a local multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism; project-based cooperation; align with development documents
External shocks (war, economic crisis, disease) and climate-change risks	High	Diversify markets and products; strengthen off-season and domestic demand; adapt activities to climate; monitor environmental indicators
Depopulation and outmigration	Medium	Develop year-round income-generating products; strengthen entrepreneurship; valorise local knowledge, traditions and crafts

4.6.7 Synergies and Joint Promotion

The pilot will pursue synergies with European networks and other EU-funded initiatives in underwater cultural heritage and sustainable coastal tourism, including UNESCO-related frameworks and Adriatic–Mediterranean projects, positioning the Croatian KAC as a knowledge-sharing node within the wider European ecosystem. This cooperation also supports the KAC through the exchange of digital interpretive materials, thematic heritage stories and good practices in community involvement.

4.6.8 Small-Scale Implementation and KAC Linkage

Planned pilot actions demonstrate products based on underwater and maritime heritage and on Silver Tourism. They include establishing and piloting the KAC at ICUA Zadar, within the former St. Nicholas church and monastery complex, where the St. Nicholas Educational and Presentation Centre for Underwater Archaeology already operates. The TOURAL project and the Letavica site are to be presented through 3D models, VR experiences and educational materials, promoting Šimuni to tourists staying in Zadar and encouraging excursions to the island. Pilot activities also test smaller modular products combining heritage, gastronomy and outdoor activity, and a Silver Tourism product focused on fishing culture and a slower pace. The pilots directly shape the KAC through concrete interpretive, educational and promotional content.

5 Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs)

Chapters 5 and 6 present the work carried out under Task 3.5, led by the Abruzzo Region (ABR) in cooperation with the regional partners. Building directly on the Action Plans set out in Chapter 4, they move the focus from strategic planning to early implementation: Chapter 5 describes the Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs) established in each pilot region as the operational hubs of the UCCST model, while Chapter 6 reports the small-scale indicative services enacted as proof-of-concept experiences. Together they translate the regional models into tangible activities, generating practical evidence and lessons learned that feed into the full-scale implementation phase addressed in WP4.

5.1 Concept and Role of KACs

Within the TOURAL framework, the Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs) represent the core operational hubs for implementing the UCCST model. They are designed as multifunctional spaces that integrate tourism promotion, stakeholder engagement and digital innovation. KACs serve four main roles:

- Destination hubs promoting regional cultural, natural and creative assets;
- Interactive experience centres, integrating digital technologies such as VR/AR “dry-dive” experiences and virtual exhibitions;
- Living Labs, supporting stakeholder co-creation, dialogue and the validation of tourism services and business models;
- Drivers of sustainable, year-round tourism development, especially in rural and remote areas.

5.2 KAC Description per Pilot Region

The six regional KACs are at different stages of development, ranging from fully operational hubs to proto-centres still under design. The following sub-sections describe each centre in turn, and a comparative overview is provided at the end of the section.

5.2.1 Province of Teramo (Italy)

In the Teramo pilot region, the KAC is conceived as the evolution of an existing visitor centre, which will be upgraded through the integration of advanced digital tools and expanded service offerings. This approach builds on already available infrastructure while enhancing the centre’s capacity to function as a fully operational hub for the UCCST model.

The KAC is expected to be operated by local municipalities or regional authorities, supported by public funding schemes and reinforced by partnerships with tourism operators, cultural institutions and private stakeholders.

From a thematic perspective, the Teramo KAC focuses on Cultural & Creative Tourism, Cultural Science Tourism and Silver Tourism, leveraging the region’s historical heritage, natural landscapes and experiential tourism potential. Its core functions will include:

- provision of integrated tourist services (information, booking and guided tours);
- deployment of VR/AR applications, including “dry-dive” experiences and virtual heritage access;
- development of multimedia storytelling environments combining physical exhibitions and digital content;
- a strong emphasis on accessibility, through multilingual and inclusive design;
- promotion of year-round tourism, especially through nature-based and educational experiences.

Toural
Toural
Toural

Photobooth

Figure 1. Photos from the KAC visit during the 4th TOURAL GA in Pineto, Teramo, Italy

5.2.2 Šimuni–Pag (Croatia)

In the Croatian pilot site of Šimuni–Pag, the KAC is implemented through the upgrade of an existing visitor centre, operating in close synergy with the TOURAL Knowledge Awareness Centre hosted at the International Centre for Underwater Archaeology in Zadar (ICUA Zadar), a nationally and internationally recognised institution under the Croatian Ministry of Culture and Media and UNESCO.

The centre is operated by a public institution with established expertise in research, conservation, education and international cooperation, supported by EU funding and local authorities, and characterised by structured stakeholder involvement. Through its connection with ICUA Zadar, the KAC also serves as a platform for knowledge exchange and responsible tourism promotion.

The KAC specialises in Underwater Cultural and Natural Heritage Tourism, leveraging ICUA Zadar's role as a UNESCO Category II Centre and its contribution to the 2001 UNESCO Convention, complemented by cultural, ecotourism and silver tourism dimensions. Its operational model combines immersive and educational experiences with digital and traditional interpretation tools. Core functions include:

- VR/AR “dry-diving” and virtual exhibitions;
- interactive and audiovisual installations;
- scientifically grounded narratives on archaeology, sustainability and coastal biodiversity;
- multisensory accessibility solutions;
- premium immersive experiences;
- multimedia storytelling, educational workshops and thematic events on underwater heritage.

Furthermore, the operational framework integrates internationally recognised best practices, including the UNESCO-designated “System of protection and management of underwater cultural heritage on the sites Velika shallows near Cavtat, Letavica and Baron Gautsch” (2023), reinforcing the role of ICUA Zadar (and consequently the Croatian KAC) in international cooperation and heritage preservation.

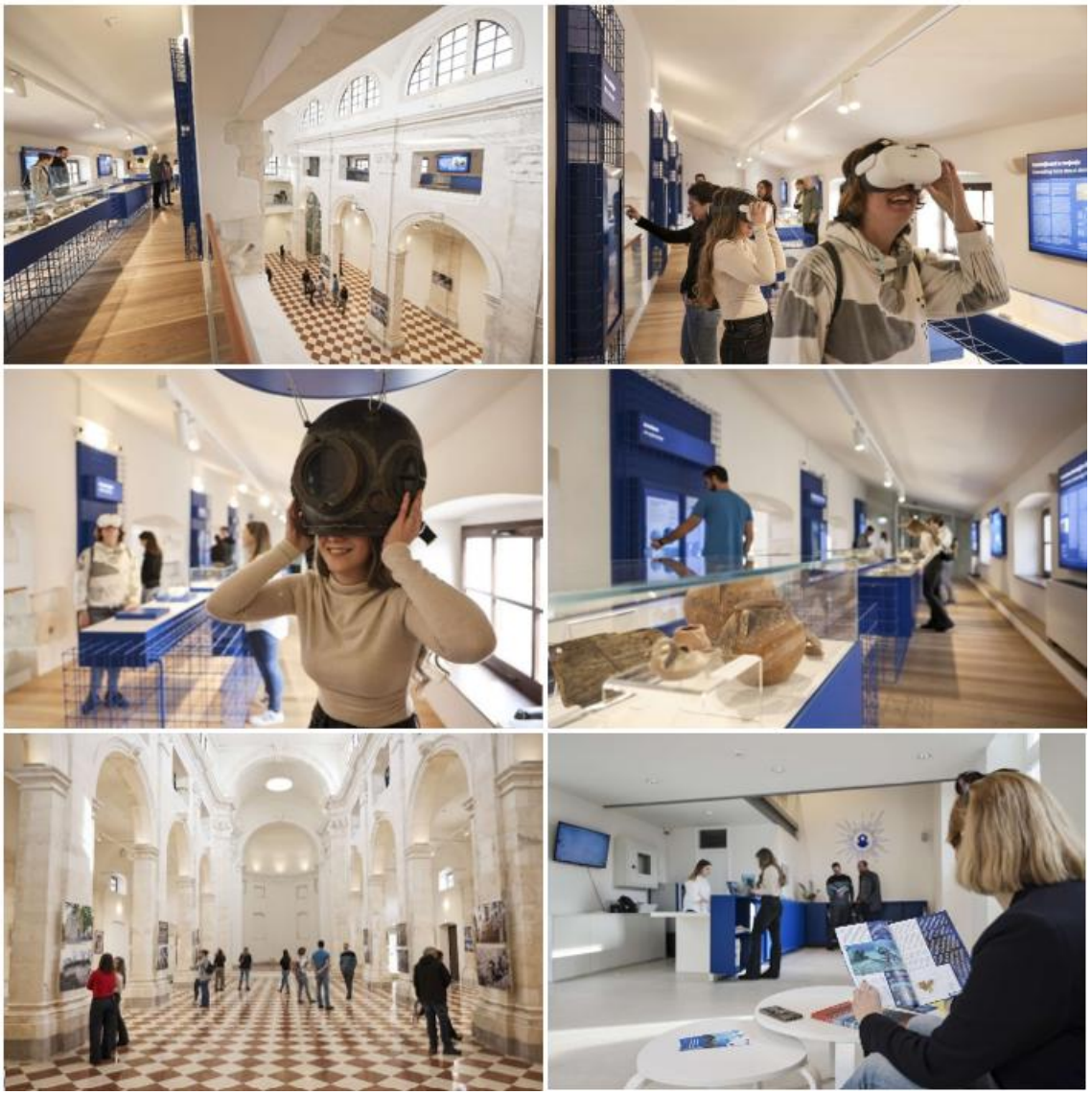

Figure 2. the TOURAL Knowledge Awareness Centre at ICUA Zadar (Croatia).

5.2.3 Kutsurub (Ukraine)

The KAC in Kutsurub represents a greenfield implementation, currently established in a temporary location within the Mykolaiv Museum due to ongoing wartime conditions, with a long-term plan for relocation to the local community. On 29 May 2026, the KAC was officially inaugurated within the Mykolaiv Museum of Shipbuilding and Fleet, marking the operational launch of the centre.

The centre is managed by the local municipality in collaboration with project partners, with a strong reliance on project funding and a gradual transition towards diversified revenue models. Its thematic focus reflects both tourism development and socio-economic resilience, integrating cultural, creative, eco and science tourism, with a strong emphasis on community rebuilding and local identity. The KAC also plays a key role in raising environmental awareness, promoting responsible tourism and supporting the preservation of cultural and natural heritage within the Kutsurub community. Key characteristics include:

- a combination of digital activities (VR-based virtual visits) and physical activities (craft and gastronomy workshops);

- virtual tours of the National Historical and Archaeological Reserve “Olbia”;
- lectures, quests and educational games for young people on cultural and natural heritage preservation;
- educational seminars and citizen-science initiatives;
- practical sessions using dry-diving and serious-game materials developed with TOURAL partners;
- storytelling centred on heritage, traditions and sustainability;
- promotion of community-based tourism models;
- development of revenue linked to local products and experiences.

Despite the challenging context, the KAC demonstrates a high level of stakeholder engagement and adaptability, acting as a regional platform that connects science, ecology and community interests while integrating international best practices in sustainable heritage management.

Figure 3. Kutsurub KAC at the Mykolaiv Museum of Shipbuilding and Fleet (Ukraine) inaugurated 29 May 2026.

5.2.4 Tulcea (Romania)

In the Tulcea pilot region, the KAC is currently in a proto-stage, hosted within the headquarters of GAL Delta Dunării (GALDD), and will be further developed into a fully equipped centre. The

KAC is located in Malcoci Village, Nufăru Commune, within the territory of the Danube Delta Local Action Group (GALDD). The governance model is based on a public–private partnership involving GALDD, public authorities and a wide network of local stakeholders.

The KAC focuses on eco-tourism, cultural and creative tourism, and nature heritage tourism, capitalising on the unique value of the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve and the region's multi-ethnic identity. In late 2025, the first activities were launched in the newly equipped KAC space, including presentations for high-school students and local residents on TOURAL objectives, local culture and sustainable tourism in the Danube Delta. The KAC functions include:

- organisation of workshops, educational seminars and community events;
- use of multimedia storytelling and physical exhibitions;
- progressive integration of VR/AR technologies and interactive tools;
- establishment of a stakeholder-engagement platform supporting co-creation;
- application of sustainability principles, including zero-waste practices and digital-first communication.

The KAC will be supported by Tulcea County Council and the Danube Delta Biosphere Reserve Administration through informational materials promoting sustainable tourism in the region.

Figure 4. Tulcea KAC at the GALDD headquarters, Malcoci Village (Danube Delta, Romania).

5.2.5 Alonissos (Greece)

The Alonissos KAC represents a fully operational and advanced model, already acting as a flagship hub within the TOURAL network. Operated by the Municipality, it functions as a central reference point for regional tourism development, with strong stakeholder involvement and continuous upgrading of services.

The centre is highly specialised in Underwater Cultural and Natural Heritage Tourism, complemented by cultural, creative, eco and science tourism experiences. In summer 2025, the KAC was renovated within the TOURAL project and reopened with the ART4SEA exhibition, further enhancing its cultural and creative dimension. Its distinguishing features include:

- advanced VR-based underwater exploration, enabling remote access to submerged heritage;
- integration of museum exhibitions and digital storytelling environments;

- thematic installations and collaborations (e.g. creative projects such as ART4SEA);
- a strong educational and awareness-raising role;
- an effective contribution to year-round tourism, through hybrid physical–digital offerings.

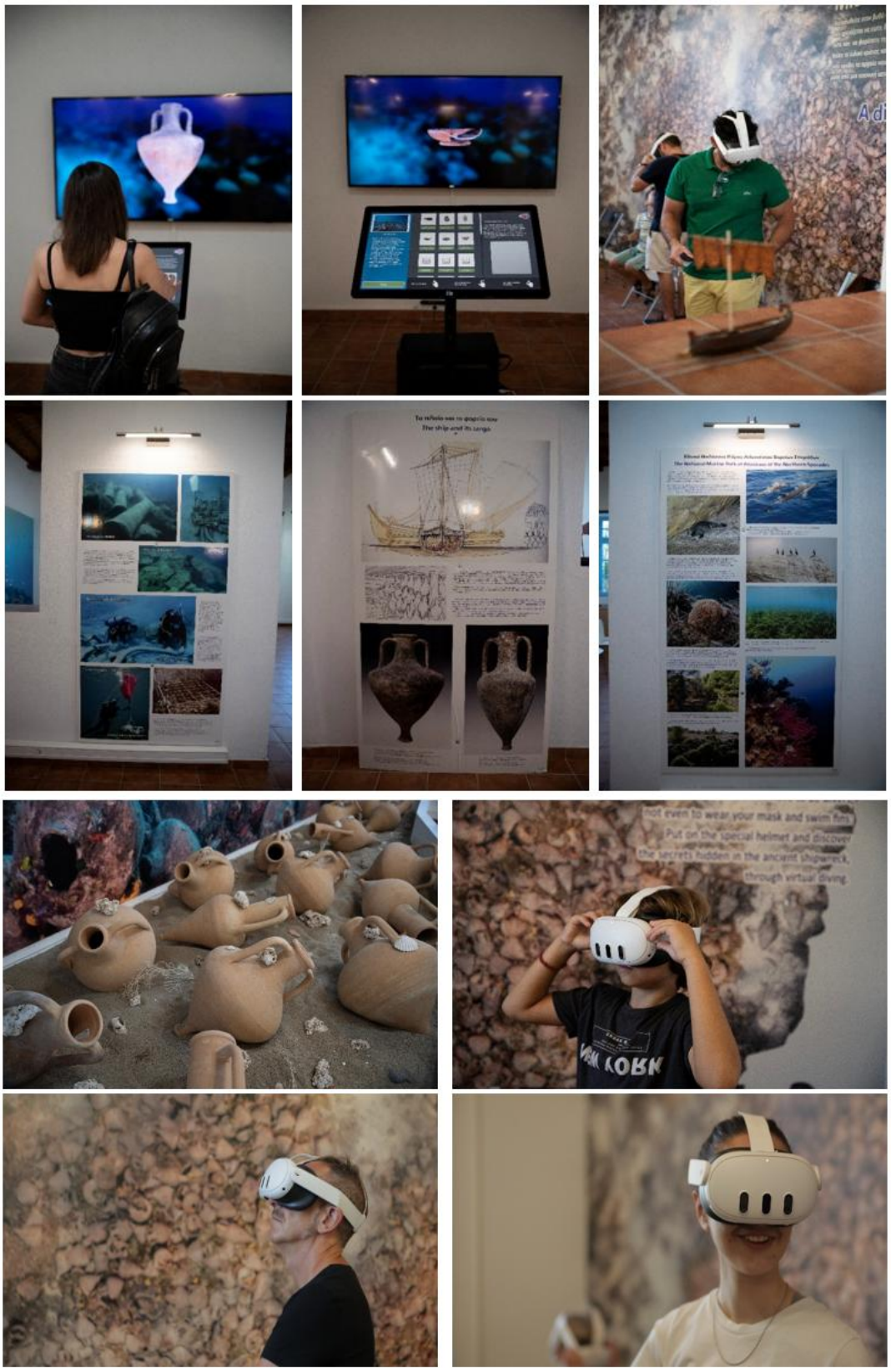

Figure 5. Alonissos KAC and the Virtual exhibition (North Sporades, Greece).

5.2.6 Nessebar (Bulgaria)

In Nessebar, the KAC is under development, building on a solid base of existing tourism infrastructure and UNESCO-listed cultural heritage assets. The centre is expected to operate under a public governance model, with strong collaboration among local stakeholders and tourism actors. Its thematic orientation combines cultural heritage tourism, coastal tourism and sustainable development approaches, reflecting the identity of the destination. Planned functionalities include:

- development of digital storytelling systems to interpret heritage assets;
- implementation of VR/AR immersive experiences;
- provision of tourist services and orientation tools;
- promotion of local traditions, crafts and cultural identity;
- enhancement of accessibility and multilingual content;
- support to tourism diversification beyond the peak season.

Figure 6. Nessebar KAC pictures

5.3 Comparative Overview of KACs

The table below summarises the status, governance model, thematic focus and key features of the six regional KACs, highlighting both their diversity and their shared orientation towards digital, immersive and community-based tourism.

Table 18. Comparative overview of the regional Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs).

Pilot region	Status	Governance	Main focus	Key features
Teramo (IT)	Planned (upgrade)	Public (municipal/regional) + stakeholders	CCT, CST, SLT	VR/AR, storytelling, booking tools, accessibility
Šimuni–Pag (HR)	Upgrade of existing (in synergy with ICUA Zadar)	Public institution + EU support	UCNHT, CCT, SLT	VR diving, interactive exhibits, premium services, UNESCO-

				linked expertise (ICUA Zadar)
Kutsurub (UA)	New – operational (temporary location)	Municipality + partners	CCT, eco, CST, community resilience	VR (Olbia virtual tours), workshops, educational games, citizen science, dry-dive & serious games, local products
Tulcea (RO)	Proto-KAC	PPP (GALDD-led)	Eco-tourism, CCT, heritage	Workshops, storytelling, future VR/AR, educational sessions, sustainability debates, brochures
Alonissos (GR)	Fully operational	Municipality	UCNHT + mixed tourism	Advanced VR, hybrid exhibitions, flagship hub
Nessebar (BG)	In development	Public + stakeholders	Cultural heritage, coastal tourism	Digital storytelling, VR/AR, accessibility tools

5.4 KAC Synergies

The Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs) established within the TOURAL project form **a coordinated and interconnected system of regional hubs** whose added value goes beyond their individual functions. Rather than operating as isolated infrastructures, KACs are designed to work as a **networked ecosystem**, supporting cooperation, knowledge circulation and joint development processes across all pilot regions.

A first and fundamental level of synergy is the **macro-regional cooperation dimension**. Through their coordinated operation, KACs strengthen links between the Adriatic-Ionian and Black Sea regions, fostering a common strategic vision for tourism development. This cooperation enables the creation of **multi-destination tourism offerings**, in which complementary assets from different regions (underwater heritage, cultural traditions and natural environments) are combined into integrated experiences. In this sense, KACs act as gateways connecting rural and remote areas to wider macro-regional tourism circuits, contributing to balanced territorial development and the diversification of tourism flows.

A second dimension of synergy emerges from the strong integration between KACs and the Living Lab framework adopted by the project. **KACs provide the physical and operational spaces in which stakeholders** (including public authorities, tourism operators, cultural institutions and local communities) **actively participate in the co-design, co-creation and validation of tourism services and business models**. Through this approach, KACs enable the exchange of experiences, methodologies and results across regions, ensuring that local innovations are shared, adapted and scaled at macro-regional level. The continuous feedback loops between Living Labs enhance the consistency and effectiveness of the UCCST model, reinforcing its participatory and adaptive nature.

A key enabling factor is the **shared digital ecosystem developed within the TOURAL project**. KACs are interconnected through common digital tools and platforms, including the augmented tourism platform, VR/AR applications and interactive storytelling systems. These technologies allow regions to share digital content, immersive experiences and tourism narratives, making local

assets accessible beyond geographical limitations. KACs also contribute to the development of regional tourism data spaces, enabling the collection, sharing and analysis of tourism-related data. This data-driven dimension supports informed decision-making, improves tourism flow management and facilitates the development of innovative services tailored to different user profiles.

A further area of synergy concerns knowledge transfer and capacity building. Through cross-regional training activities, workshops and twinning initiatives, KACs support the continuous exchange of skills, expertise and best practices among stakeholders. Regions with more advanced experiences can provide guidance and mentorship to those at earlier stages of development, fostering a collective learning process. This strengthens the operational capacity of individual KACs while reducing disparities among regions and ensuring a more homogeneous implementation of the UCCST model.

KACs also enable synergies at the level of tourism value chains and business development. By acting as local coordination points, they integrate different actors (such as SMEs, cultural organisations, research institutions and public authorities) into coherent value chains. This supports the co-creation of new tourism products and services, as well as the development of joint business models and multi-destination packages. In addition, KACs provide access to funding opportunities and support mechanisms, including the project's one-stop-shop for funding instruments, thereby strengthening the economic sustainability and scalability of tourism initiatives.

At the governance level, KACs contribute to **policy alignment and institutional cooperation**. Through their interaction with policymakers and stakeholders, they support the development of coordinated policy pathways at both regional and macro-regional levels. This facilitates the integration of UCCST principles into regional strategies (such as RIS3) and promotes more effective, evidence-based policymaking.

Finally, the network of KACs enhances the project's **innovation and replication potential**. The methodologies, tools and collaborative processes developed within the KAC framework can be transferred to other regions, supporting the scaling-up of the TOURAL model beyond the pilot areas. In this perspective, KACs represent not only operational hubs but also **innovation nodes within a broader European ecosystem,** contributing to the diffusion of sustainable, digital and participatory tourism practices.

Overall, the synergies among KACs reflect **a multi-layered cooperation system** in which territorial, technological, economic and governance dimensions are fully integrated. This systemic approach is essential for ensuring the effectiveness and long-term impact of the UCCST model across different regional contexts.

6 Small-Scale UCCST Model Implementations (Indicative Services)

The definition of indicative services within the TOURAL project builds upon the multidimensional UCCST framework developed in D3.1 and further refined through the optimisation, sustainability and barrier-assessment activities carried out in D3.2. These analytical components provide a structured understanding of regional potentials, constraints and priorities, enabling the transition from conceptual modelling to **practical and implementable tourism services tailored to the specific characteristics of each pilot area**.

Within this context, indicative services represent the **operational translation of the UCCST model**, combining the four tourism niches into integrated and locally adapted offerings. Their design is informed by the identification of sectoral strengths, as well as by key enabling factors, such as connectivity, service quality, stakeholder collaboration and technological integration, which determine the feasibility of tourism development strategies.

A central role in this process is played by the Knowledge Awareness Centres (KACs) described in Chapter 5. KACs facilitate stakeholder engagement, support the co-creation of tourism services and ensure alignment between strategic objectives and local needs, enabling continuous interaction between analytical outputs and their practical application in the territories. They also help to overcome key implementation barriers, such as weak collaboration, limited innovation capacity and fragmented governance, by fostering cooperation among public authorities, tourism operators, communities and research actors. This strengthens the capacity of regions to develop coherent, **sustainable and market-oriented tourism services.**

In this perspective, the indicative services presented in the following sub-sections should be understood as **context-driven and scalable solutions**, emerging from the combined contribution of analytical modelling and participatory processes within the KAC ecosystem, and aimed at supporting the effective implementation of the UCCST model across the TOURAL pilot regions.

6.1 Indicative Services per Pilot Region

In the **Province of Teramo**, the implementation focuses on an integrated service package combining cultural, environmental and inclusive tourism components. Particular emphasis is placed on the creation of cultural-heritage routes and experiential tourism activities, enriched by digital tools such as booking platforms and virtual tours. These are complemented by educational initiatives and biodiversity-related experiences, as well as by accessible tourism offers targeting senior visitors, ensuring a diversified and inclusive tourism portfolio.

In **Šimuni, on the island of Pag**, the implementation is oriented towards the pilot testing of advanced and immersive tourism experiences. The focus is on the use of virtual-reality technologies to enhance access to underwater archaeological heritage, combined with interactive exhibitions hosted within the KAC. These activities are strengthened by the contribution of ICUA Zadar, which provides internationally recognised expertise in underwater archaeology, conservation and digital interpretation, ensuring high-quality content and alignment with UNESCO standards.

In the **Kutsurub region**, the small-scale implementation adopts a more community-oriented approach, reflecting the specific socio-economic context and current challenges of the area. The emphasis is on community-based tourism experiences, including cultural workshops and gastronomy-related activities that highlight local traditions. The implementation also includes virtual tours of Olbia, educational games and youth-oriented activities on cultural and natural heritage, as well as training seminars for stakeholders and community members. Digital tools are introduced to ensure virtual access to cultural heritage, alongside educational and resilience-oriented tourism services that contribute to long-term recovery and capacity building. The use of VR, dry-diving tools and serious games strengthens the digital and educational dimension of the pilot.

In **Tulcea**, within the Danube Delta region, the implementation prioritises environmentally driven and participatory tourism activities. The focus is on eco-tourism and wetland-based experiences, supported by cultural and gastronomy workshops that promote local identity. Particular importance is given to citizen-science initiatives, which actively involve visitors and local communities, as well as to the development of digital tourism tools, including applications and virtual-tour solutions that enhance accessibility and visibility.

In **Alonissos**, the testing phase centres on the valorisation of underwater cultural heritage through both physical and digital experiences. The implementation includes the enhancement of underwater museum visits, complemented by virtual-access solutions and immersive storytelling based on VR technologies. These activities are combined with cultural events and exhibitions, as well as marine-science tourism initiatives, contributing to a multidimensional, year-round tourism offer.

Finally, in **Nessebar**, the implementation builds on the strong cultural and historical identity of the site, focusing on heritage-interpretation services linked to its UNESCO designation. This is accompanied by a wide range of creative and cultural tourism activities, as well as educational and archaeological experiences. Digital heritage platforms and virtual-reality tools further enrich the offer, supporting both accessibility and innovative forms of storytelling.

Overall, these indicative small-scale implementations demonstrate how the TOURAL approach can be concretely applied across different regional contexts, combining innovation, sustainability and stakeholder engagement. Through the coordination of KACs, they contribute to the creation of **integrated, adaptable and scalable tourism services**, aligned with the objectives of the UCCST model and capable of generating long-term value for local communities and visitors alike.

6.2 Link with Living Labs and Co-Creation Processes

A fundamental element supporting the development of the indicative small-scale implementations is their strong and structured connection with the Living Lab approach adopted within the TOURAL framework. **The Living Labs represent the primary interface between analytical modelling and real-world application**, ensuring that the services developed are not only theoretically sound but also practically relevant and locally validated.

Through iterative co-design processes, a wide range of stakeholders (including local authorities, tourism operators, SMEs, research institutions, cultural organisations and community representatives) have been actively engaged in shaping the indicative services. This has allowed the project to move beyond a top-down planning approach, adopting instead a **participatory and demand-driven methodology** in which local knowledge, expectations and constraints are systematically integrated into the design of tourism offerings.

In practical terms, Living Lab activities have supported several key functions. First, they have enabled the **generation of service ideas**, building on local assets and emerging tourism trends. Second, they have facilitated the **validation and refinement of these concepts**, through workshops, consultations and pilot-testing phases. Third, they have contributed to the **assessment of business models**, allowing stakeholders to evaluate feasibility, economic sustainability and market potential.

Importantly, the Living Lab approach has also ensured that critical transversal aspects, such as accessibility, inclusiveness, environmental sustainability and digital readiness, are consistently embedded in the design of services. Stakeholder input has been particularly relevant in defining accessible tourism solutions, improving service quality for specific target groups (such as seniors), and identifying appropriate uses of digital technologies, including VR/AR tools and digital platforms.

Overall, the integration of Living Labs within the implementation process has strengthened the **ownership, adaptability and long-term viability of the proposed services**, ensuring that they

reflect both strategic priorities and local realities, and reinforcing the role of KACs as key enablers of innovation and co-creation in the tourism sector.

6.3 Cross-Pilot Cooperation

Beyond their local dimension, the indicative small-scale implementations are embedded within a broader framework of **cross-pilot cooperation**, which represents a core value of the TOURAL project. While each pilot region develops context-specific solutions, simultaneous implementation across multiple territories enables the emergence of **shared patterns, transferable practices and opportunities for integration.**

One of the most significant outcomes of this cross-regional approach is the identification of **common thematic axes**, such as the use of immersive technologies for heritage interpretation, the development of experience-based tourism products and the integration of scientific and educational components into tourism offers. These commonalities facilitate the exchange of methodologies and tools among regions, supporting mutual learning and accelerating implementation.

At the same time, complementarities between regions create opportunities **for joint tourism products** and **multi-destination offerings**, particularly within the Adriatic–Ionian and Black Sea macro-regional contexts. For example, underwater-heritage experiences, eco-tourism activities and cultural routes developed in different pilot areas can be combined into **coherent thematic itineraries**, enhancing the attractiveness of the overall tourism offer and extending visitor flows across regions.

The network of KACs plays a pivotal role in this process, acting as **interconnected nodes within a wider knowledge ecosystem**. Through regular exchanges, joint workshops and shared digital tools, KACs facilitate the circulation of knowledge, the dissemination of good practices and the replication of successful solutions. In this way, cross-pilot cooperation contributes not only to improving individual implementations but also to strengthening the coherence and scalability of the UCCST model at macro-regional level.

Furthermore, this collaborative dimension supports the development of **common standards and approaches** in relation to digitalisation, data sharing and service quality, which are essential for ensuring interoperability and long-term sustainability.

6.4 Lessons Learned

The implementation of the indicative small-scale actions across the TOURAL pilot regions provides a set of valuable lessons that are highly relevant for future scaling and replication efforts.

The first key lesson concerns the importance of **contextualisation and flexibility**. Although the UCCST model provides a common strategic framework, its effective application requires careful adaptation to local conditions, including socio-economic context, institutional capacity, infrastructure availability and cultural specificities. Regions that have aligned implementations closely with local assets and needs have demonstrated higher levels of feasibility and stakeholder engagement.

A second critical insight relates to the role of **stakeholder involvement and governance**. The experience confirms that early and continuous engagement of stakeholders significantly enhances the quality and acceptance of tourism services. In particular, the combination of Living Labs and KACs has proven effective in fostering collaboration, reducing fragmentation and supporting coordinated decision-making.

A third lesson is linked to the strategic importance of the **enablers**; especially connectivity, service quality, stakeholder collaboration and technological integration. The implementation process has shown that even when tourism assets and ideas are strong, limitations in these enabling factors can significantly constrain results. Addressing these gaps through infrastructure improvements,

training initiatives, governance strengthening and digital investments is therefore essential for unlocking the full potential of the UCCST model.

The experience also highlights the growing relevance of **digitalisation and innovation** as key drivers of tourism development. Tools such as virtual reality, digital platforms and data-driven services have demonstrated their capacity to enhance accessibility, enrich visitor experiences and support the diversification of tourism products. However, their effective deployment requires not only technological availability but also adequate skills and organisational capacity at local level.

Another important lesson concerns the need for **integration across tourism niches and value chains**. The most promising implementations are those that combine multiple dimensions (i.e. cultural, natural, scientific and social) into coherent and multidimensional offers. This integrated approach helps to reduce seasonality, attract diverse visitor profiles and increase the overall resilience of tourism systems.

Finally, the small-scale implementations confirm the importance of **gradual development and scalability**. Pilot actions should be seen not as isolated outputs but as part of an iterative learning process, in which testing, feedback and adaptation lead to progressively more mature and sustainable solutions. In this sense, KACs play a crucial role as long-term facilitators, ensuring continuity beyond the project lifecycle.

Overall, these lessons demonstrate that the combination of **analytical modelling, participatory co-creation and experimental implementation** represents a robust and transferable approach, capable of supporting sustainable and inclusive tourism development across diverse regional contexts.

7 Conclusion

Deliverable D3.3 concludes the work of Work Package 3 by consolidating, into a single integrated framework, the outputs of Task 3.4 (Action Plans for UCCST Model Implementation, led by the Municipality of Skopelos) and Task 3.5 (Regional Knowledge Awareness Centres and small-scale indicative services, led by the Abruzzo Region). Building directly on the conceptual UCCST model established in D3.1 and on the regional optimisation, sustainability and barrier analysis delivered in D3.2, the present deliverable translates these analytical foundations into an operational and locally owned basis for implementation across the six TOURAL pilot regions.

Under Task 3.4, the consortium has co-produced six Regional Action Plans for Nessebar (Bulgaria), the Danube Delta (Romania), the North Sporades / Alonissos (Greece), the Province of Teramo (Italy), Kutsurub (Ukraine) and Šimuni on the Island of Pag (Croatia). Each plan was developed jointly with the responsible pilot partners through a structured, multi-round co-production process, comprising a common reporting template, two full revision cycles, a structured review against the deliverable requirements and the WP3 indicator framework, and six dedicated alignment meetings. The plans follow a shared nine-component structure, enabling comparability across the macro-region while fully preserving the distinctive assets, governance arrangements and strategic priorities of each territory. Four cross-cutting analytical dimensions have been eventually defined for the task: the cost-effectiveness of off-season offerings, the strengths and opportunities of rural grids, the control of tourism flows and demand–offer balance, and joint promotion for economies of scale

Under Task 3.5, a Knowledge Awareness Centre has been established in each pilot region as the operational hub of the individualised UCCST model, and an initial portfolio of small-scale indicative services has been enacted as proof-of-concept experiences. Collectively, the regional contributions are aligned with the mandatory indicators set for the work package, documenting more than thirty unique regional assets, over twenty concrete tourism offerings across the four verticals, more than twenty-four implementation milestones with associated go/no-go decision points, and at least ten joint-promotion actions at inter-regional and macro-regional level.

Taken together, the Action Plans and the Knowledge Awareness Centres demonstrate that the UCCST model can be meaningfully individualised and brought to the threshold of implementation across markedly different regional contexts. A central insight emerging from the co-production process is the value of combining a common methodological backbone with genuine regional ownership: the shared template and indicator framework ensured coherence and comparability, while the alignment meetings and Living Lab activities ensured that each plan reflects the verified priorities and social acceptance of its own stakeholder community. This balance between standardisation and contextualisation is, in the consortium's assessment, the principal factor underpinning the robustness and transferability of the results.

The six pilot regions are, by design, at complementary stages of development, and the network of Knowledge Awareness Centres is intentionally configured to capitalise on this diversity. The more advanced centres, such as the fully operational flagship in Alonissos, provide working references and mentoring for those at upgrade, development or proto stages, supporting a progressive and mutually reinforcing roll-out across the macro-region. The consortium regards this staged maturity not as a uniform end-state to be claimed prematurely, but as a realistic and well-managed trajectory towards full operation.

Each pilot has also identified the specific enabling conditions most relevant to its own setting, and has paired them with concrete, forward-looking responses. In the Danube Delta, the recently established destination management organisation "Eco Delta Tulcea" provides the coordinating mechanism around which a county-level tourism strategy can be built. In Kutsurub, a digital-first approach allows the community to advance brand development, virtual heritage interpretation and capacity building in the present, with on-site offerings sequenced according to the evolving

security situation. In Šimuni–Pag, off-season product diversification and a formalised multi-stakeholder coordination mechanism respond to the strong seasonality and the multi-jurisdictional character of the destination. Across all regions, the consistent reuse of existing premises for the Knowledge Awareness Centres has kept capital expenditure low and concentrated investment in high-value digital solutions. The consortium considers that addressing these conditions openly, together with the measures designed to manage them, reinforces the credibility and resilience of the implementation pathway.

Finally, D3.3 is conceived as a bridge to the full-scale implementation phase rather than as an endpoint. The Action Plans establish the strategic and operational direction, while the Knowledge Awareness Centres and small-scale services generate early, tangible evidence and a structured body of lessons learned, regarding contextualisation and flexibility, stakeholder engagement and governance, the strategic role of enablers such as connectivity and digital readiness, and integration across tourism niches and value chains. These outputs feed directly into the activities of WP4, where the proof-of-concept experiences will be scaled, the Knowledge Awareness Centre network further consolidated, and the macro-regional cooperation between the Adriatic–Ionian and Black Sea areas deepened.