

**TITLE: *Boosting the transition pathway of MSMEs in tourism with green and digital transformation***

**ACRONYM: TOURBO**

**Programme and call: Interreg Europe, 1st call. Deadline: 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022**

**Policy objective: 1. A smarter Europe; Specific objective: (iii) Sustainable growth and competitiveness of SMEs and job creation in SMEs, including by productive investments **Project abstract****

Small and medium-sized enterprises are crucial to the EU economy: they account for more than 99% of European businesses and provide two-thirds of private sector jobs. The COVID 19 pandemic, as well as digitalisation and climate change, have a significant impact on our economy, employment and society. Tourism related industries were most affected by the pandemic and faced major challenges to cope with the twin transition. Given the experience of the COVID 19 pandemic, the update of the EU Industrial Strategy highlighted the need to further accelerate the green and digital (twin) transition and increase the resilience of EU industrial ecosystems.

The impact of the pandemic has highlighted the importance of government resilience in the face of unexpected shocks and stresses. And it has also demonstrated the transformative role of digital technologies in helping the public sector solve urgent challenges and remain resilient during a crisis. Regions are currently facing two critical issues when it comes to managing the tourism sector: leveraging the benefits of digital transformation and ensuring the implementation of sustainable tourism policies. **The twin transition will reinforce sustainability with technology, and enable sustainable digital transformation for European tourism related MSMEs.**

This project will identify and exchange good practices for improving the twin transition in Tourism related MSMEs (like small hospitality businesses, restaurants, small local handicrafts, small museums, other tourism service providers, etc.) towards Industry 4.0. The use of digital approaches and new technology solutions can help accelerate sustainability policies while creating more responsive, intelligent and inclusive governmental strategies.

**Project duration:**

**Phase 1 Duration:** 36 Months **Start date** 01/01/2023 **End date** 31/12/2025. Improving the policy instruments addressed.

**Phase 2 Duration:** 12 Months **Start date** 01/01/2026 **End date** 31/12/2027. Monitoring the improvement.

**Main Activities:**

- Analysis on financial and non-financial instrument supporting the twin transition of Tourism MSMEs
- Interregional good practices' exchange meetings
- Peer to peer activities
- Study visits and participation in other partners' performances and regional activities with target groups (coinciding with the interregional meetings)
- Meetings and activities with the local stakeholders' groups in each partner region
- Elaboration of Action Plans
- Policy Learning Platform contributions and exchange

- Communication and dissemination of project results
- Monitoring and analysis of Action Plans results (phase 2)

**Main Outputs:**

- Identification of good practices and new methodologies for promoting twin transition /innovation in tourism related MSMEs.
- Design of new Action Plans.
- Increased capacities of the organizations involved and the stakeholders identified in each region.
- Increased capacities of staff and professionals working in the participant and stakeholders' organizations, including policymakers.

**Policies addressed:**

Policies at regional level addressing the innovation / twin transition support for Tourism. The policies will be addressed according to the identification by each participating partner in the corresponding regions.

**Confirmed Partners:**

- Bremerhaven (Germany) - NORTH
- Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Finland) - NORTH
- Chamber of Commerce of Vratsa (Bulgaria) - EAST
- Chamber of Commerce of Seville (Spain) - SOUTH
- PORA Regional Development Agency of Koprivnica Križevci County (Croatia) – SOUTH

**Potential additional partners:**

- Design & Crafts Council Ireland (pending - tbc)
- Regional Authority in Poland – EAST
- Regional Authority in Italy or Greece - SOUTH
- A Regional Authority from France, Ireland or Netherlands - WEST

**Associated Partners (to be invited according to the policy instruments to be tackled in each region):**

- Regional Government of Andalusia / Province Government of Seville (Spain)
- Lapland County (Finland)
- Region of Vratsa - tbc (Bulgaria)

**Budget:** 1.8 M € (estimation)

**Cofinancing:** EU 80%, own cofinancing 20% (for public bodies)

Leadpartner:

**Chamber of Commerce of Seville** (Spain)

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Communication partner: Lapland University of Applied Sciences (Finland)