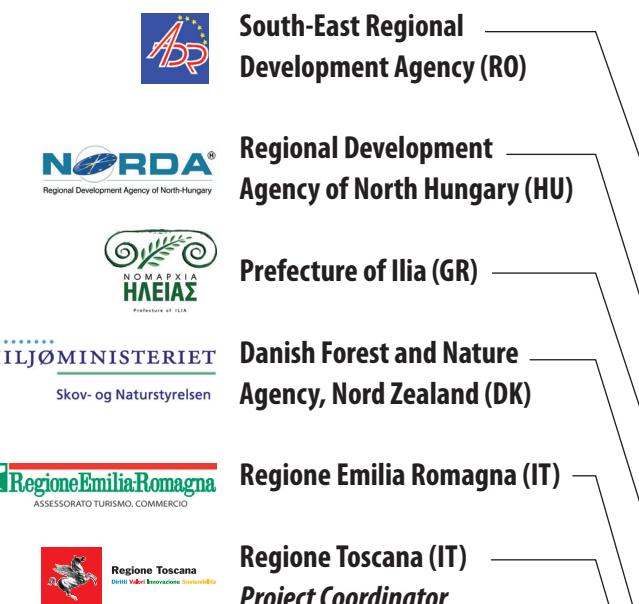


Contact:

Regione Toscana
Directorate General for economic development
Coordination Area for tourism, trade and the tertiary sector
Via di Novoli, 26 - 50127 Florence (Italy)

Contact person: Ms. Maria Luisa Mattivi
Tel: 0039.055.4385135
Fax: 0039.055.4383141
E-mail: info@ernestproject.eu



The 12 ERNEST Partners

ERNEST
European Research NEtwork
on Sustainable Tourism

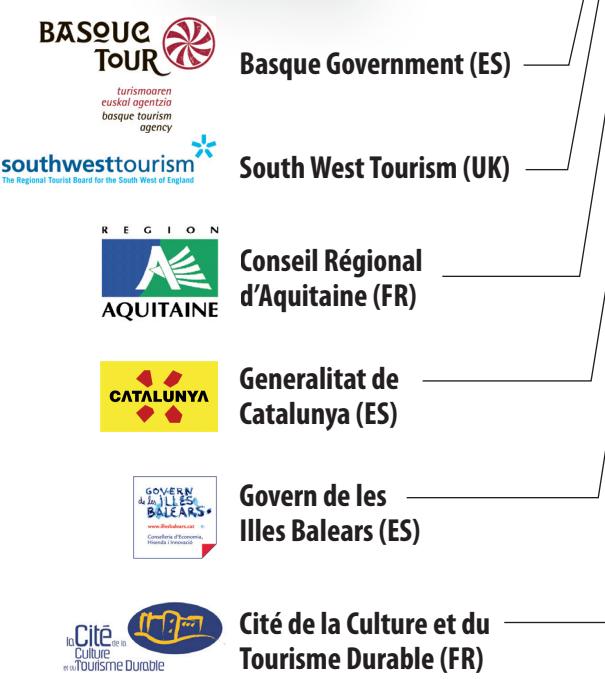
EUROPEAN COMMISSION
European Research Area

SEVENTH FRAMEWORK
PROGRAMME



For more information please refer to:
www.ernestproject.eu

The information included in this brochure reflects only the author's views. The Community is not liable for any use that may be made of the information contained therein.



printed on ecological Ecocertified paper

Working to develop a framework for the coordination of regional research programmes on sustainable tourism

The **ERNEST** project is financed by the European Union's Seventh Framework Programme, within the Coordination of National and Regional Activities Theme (ERA-NET Scheme).

About ERNEST project

In Europe, tourism is a fundamental economic sector. We are witnessing an evolution in the tourism market dominated by considerable growth. Policies for tourism development that have been implemented so far do not always take into consideration the principle of social and environmental sustainability, and instead concentrate on short to medium term economic gain.

From the literature available on sustainable development and tourism it emerges that research and innovation to promote and ensure sustainable tourism is an important current theme, but in Europe the fragmentation of research activities is limiting our potential to deliver.

ERNEST is based on the idea that

in the long run, **sustainability is a competitiveness gain**, and that

the ERA-NET* tool, with its plan of action evolving over time from the initial exchange of information, to the cooperation of research programmes, to the coordination of joint actions, to the launching of the joint call, can be useful for addressing the issues of research fragmentation and will add value and encourage a **common approach to sustainable tourism**.

The **ERNEST project addresses the issue of sustainable development of the tourism sector through coordination and collaboration among regional research programmes on sustainable tourism** through the development of a framework. Within this platform **regions will share and build on research work already underway at regional level and make it more productive and efficient through exchange and through the planning and implementation of joint activities**.

*What's an ERA-NET?

The ERANET scheme is one of the tools from the European Commission's Seventh Framework Programme (FP7). The scheme constitutes an important activity in the drive towards the creation of the European Research Area (ERA) via the improved coordination of national and regional research programmes of EU Member States and Associated States.

Each ERANET project is comprised of a group of beneficiaries belonging to different countries (typically, national and/or regional programme owners or programme managers), which commit themselves to working together on a common theme.

ERNEST Action plan

The ERNEST proposal attempts to go beyond the individual regions progress in the field of sustainable tourism, bringing the actors together to coordinate and add value to their individual activities.

The networking and mutual opening of research programmes will follow a long term and flexible approach over 48 months.

ERNEST will enable coordination amongst actors with a common shared vision on sustainable tourism, thus offering the chance to share the work already underway at regional level and to take it further, to make it more productive and efficient through exchange and through the planning and implementation of joint activities. The work plan of the ERNEST project follows the "step-by-step" approach typical of the ERA NETS:

- **information exchange** (systematic exchange of information & best practice);
- **definition, preparation and implementation of joint activities** (including common learning sessions, commonly defined action plans & the pooling of resources between regional, national and community programmes);
- **funding of transnational research** (by means of one joint call).

Ernest project – fact sheet

Name of the project	European Research Network on Sustainable Tourism
Acronym	ERNEST
Project number	219438
Theme and type of action addressed by FP7- Work programme	Coordination of regional and national activities ((ERA-NET scheme) – Coordination actions. ERNEST is a horizontal ERA NET action, not directly linked to one specific cooperation theme but with much European added value
Starting date	01 September 2008.
Duration of the project	48 months
Keywords	Tourism, sustainability, research, social dialogue, measurement, cooperation, collaboration, joint activities



Specific project objectives

The main **project objectives** are as follows:

- to exchange information and knowledge on regional structures and research programmes;
- to identify within the research programmes those elements related to social dialogue and measurement of tourism impact;
- to define and implement joint research activities on sustainable tourism according to common needs, particularly concentrating on training, information exchange and evaluation at an interregional level;
- to fund joint interregional research on sustainable tourism through joint calls for funding;
- to promote efficient regional and interregional cooperation, including public-private partnership;
- to define common long-term strategies in line with EU policy on the sustainable development of tourism

Duration and main stakeholders

The project started in September 2008 and has a **4 year**-duration. It will be implemented through 3 thematic and 4 horizontal work packages, to ensure the achievement of the project objectives.

The project activities will directly or indirectly involve:

- public authorities;
- research institutes;
- service providers (tourism and other related sectors e.g. energy, waste management services, transport)
- enterprises connected to or operating in tourism;
- associations or organisations working with the tourism sector;
- related European networks;
- local residents;
- tourists

Research areas

10 strategic sustainable tourism research areas

- have been identified for analysis during the ERNEST project;
- Impact of transport
- Residents' quality of life
- Quality of work
- Widening the geographical and seasonal tourism offer
- Active conservation of cultural heritage
- Active conservation of environmental heritage
- Active conservation of distinctive identities of destinations
- Reduction and optimisation of natural resource use with particular reference to water
- Reduction and optimisation of energy consumption
- Reduction of waste and better waste management

Expected impact of ERNEST project

- Increased coordination of regional research programmes on sustainable tourism reducing the fragmentation of research activities;
- Development of mutual learning and exchange among partners;
- Support and tools for the project partners to take on tasks collectively on the issue of sustainable tourism;
- Promotion of the tourism sector and improved support for research programmes in the partner regions as a result of the exchange of information and best practice;
- Effective cooperation between the project partners and other stakeholders in order to implement interregional joint calls;
- Dissemination of the project objectives and results at regional, national and European level

The outputs of the different activities of Ernest project will be published on the web site www.ernestproject.eu