



# Escape2

## Module 6 Collaborations and communities

*New methodologies for creative collaboration*

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## Training Course

How to Develop a Successful HQRTS  
(High Quality Rural Tourism Strategy)



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# Collaborations and communities in Rural Tourism

This module provides trainees with an informed and up to date theoretical basis and best practices on the development of collaborations in Rural tourism.

In order to provide a sequential syllabus, firstly the definitions and main characteristics of rural tourism networks will be presented, alongside the relation between a strong and cohesive strategy for rural tourism and the economic development of the region.

Moreover, through the lens of tourism value chain governance literature, the various actors of the network are analysed.

Finally, the novel methodologies for collaboration are presented: co-creation, coopetition, and collaborative economy.

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# Learning Outcomes

- Understand the definitions of Tourism Network
- Identify the different types of Tourism Networks
- Recognize the influence of tourism on local economic development
- Identify the challenges and opportunities for partnership networks
- Use a Value Chain tailored to tourism activities
- Identify novel methodologies of collaboration
- Apply new collaboration strategies and methods to rural tourism networks



# 01

## Defining Rural Tourism Networks



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*A form of partnership involving different interacting elements, which include tourists, enterprises, institutions and the host community.*

*Asero et al., 2017*

”

*Community tourism planning and policymaking is increasingly characterized by dynamic multi-actor interactions, complex power differentials and uneven resource and information exchange between actors and agencies.*

*Dredge, 2006*

# Tourism Networks

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Multi-stakeholder partnerships between private, public and nonprofit sector are the basis of local and rural tourism development strategies (Viira et al., 2019).

There are two main ways to study collaborations in terms of tourism planning (Dresden, 2006):

## Sociopolitical context of tourism planning

Defined by the analysis and examination of the sociopolitical context of tourism planning regarding, mainly, power dynamics, conflict, knowledge, labelling, and diverge identification of problems.

(Dresden, 2006)

## Critical analysis of collaborative planning

Study focused on developing consensual solutions between partners, emerging from diverse interests and conflicts in collaborative planning practices, acknowledging that power differentials and miscommunications affect the engagement of partners.

(Dresden, 2006)



**“The planning process is frequently characterised by conflict and messy decisionmaking” – critical analysis optic.**

Dresden, 2006

- 1. Powerful groups can dominate the process, namely by forging coalitions**
- 2. The need to label and categorize problems may hide essential issues**
- 3. Political decisions may lack the necessary data**
- 4. The planning may stay in the paper and not be followed, understood or accepted by the local actors**



*Governance concerns the way of governing, ruling or steering societies and can include multiple actors. From a horizontal perspective, tourism governance can be local, national or global and includes political, economic and administrative affairs. From a vertical perspective, governance is linked with management and interwoven with civil society.*

*Bichler, 2021*

# Tourism Networks

Types of networks in local tourism governance:



## Lead organisation-governed networks

Networks led by an organization that has a central role as a coordinator, promoting and enabling collaboration. In such cases power is centralized and decision making and communication is usually top-down

(Dredge & Beaumont, 2010).

# Tourism Networks

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Types of networks in local tourism governance:



## **Participant-governed networks**

Networks of collaboration between members with equal, or almost equal, power. Such networks tend to be decentralized, less formal, and dependent on the on the human and social capital of its members.

(Dredge & Beaumont, 2010).

# Rural Tourism Networks

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Types of networks in local tourism governance:



## **Local tourism organization (LTO) led industry network**

Networks led by an organizational body/structure developed specifically to conduct the administration of the network and endeavour governance activities, operating as the central point of communication, decision making, and coordination.

(Dredge & Beaumont, 2010).

# Rural Tourism Networks

Comparative Parameters of Governance: Identified throughout the literature, the following dimensions should be analyzed when considering the effectiveness of local tourism governance. These parameters should be analyzed dependent on the case study (Dredge & Beaumont 2010).

Dimension	Definition
<b>Positive cultures, constructive communication and engaged communities</b>	How the actors on the network communicate, engage with other people and organizations within their community and foster a positive collaborative culture in the network.
<b>Transparency and accountability</b>	How the transparency, both internal and external, is approached na visible; The existence of balance and checks and other means of accountability.
<b>Vision and leadership</b>	How the leadership and common vision of the network is defined and carry out by the different partners. The vision and leadership differ from membership consultation, community based and led by a particular partner.
<b>Acceptance of diversity, pursuit of equity and inclusiveness</b>	Diversity, equity and inclusiveness inside and outsider the partnership. A network can be inclusiveness for members but differ significantly yo non-members.
<b>Developing knowledge, learning and sharing expertise</b>	How the knowledge, expertise, and experience is shared between the members, other tourism stakeholders, and the wider community.
<b>Clear roles and responsibilities of participants, structures and processes of the network</b>	How the roles and responsibilities are shared and operationalized between participants. More organic networks tend to lack a clear definition and practice of these issues.



# Integration of locals in tourism governance

## **Classical** Tourism Governance design

Focus on Spatial design – physical planning and land use (Dredge, 1999)

## **Emerging** Tourism Governance design

Focus on integrating government, business and community into tourism governance to foster transparency, efficiency and accountability (Bichler, 2021)

## **Locals** Role

Focus on participatory approaches, inclusion of local residents on the design of tourism destinations beyond public and private actors (Bichler, 2021)

# Participation opportunities in tourism governance

Tourism governance can be analysed from different optics and areas of study, highlighting different issues and various opportunities for local involvement. Some examples:

## Sustainable Tourism

**Issue:** Community-based tourism (CBT) showcases a more efficient, accountable, and adaptable governance system.

**Opportunity:** The participation of communities in tourism management improves the local households' livelihoods and increased local awareness of the nature conservation.

(Qian et al., 2016)

## Community engagement

**Issue:** Top-down view of participation or nonparticipation is inadequate. Although, on paper, community may be involved, the complex dynamics and organization in practice don't follow the pattern. The community may also mistrust institutions.

**Opportunity:** Decentralize the governing processes and promote truly engaging models of participation that foster trust in institutions.

(Hewlett & Edwards, 2013)

## Adaptative governance

**Issue:** Changing political contexts and other circumstances alter tourism governance, given that state is the main influence over tourism governance.

**Opportunity:** Social learning, where actors ranging from private and public orgs to locals share knowledge and co-create.

(Bramwell & Lane, 2011)

# 02

## The benefits of rural tourism for local development

# Rural Tourism and Development

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The role of **tourism** on the study and theories of **regional economic development** is increasing. The underlying assumptions and benefits of a cohesive and informed strategy for local tourism closely relates to the economical and social benefits for the entire community.

The changes in the economic and social ecosystem of rural areas, namely through globalisation, financial crisis, and the over-exploitation of natural resources, transformed tourism into an essential source of development.

(Anderson, 2003; Quaranta et al., 2016).



*The strategic role of tourism in rural areas is essentially linked to the integration and valorization of territorial resources and the capacity to promote local community participation in processes of development. Communities, which constitute the socio-economic and environmental sphere in which tourism operates, play a fundamental role both in promoting the territory in its entirety and in guaranteeing the sustainability of processes of local development.*

*Quaranta et al., 2016*



# Advantages of Networks in Rural Tourism



**Complementary:**  
Interactions between actors, namely economic, develop complementary of territorial resources.  
(Petrou et al., 2007)



**Integrated Product:**  
The complementary nature of these interactions promote the creation of a regional integrated product.  
(Petrou et al., 2007)



**Value creation:**  
Mainly for SMEs, the networks allow for the improvement and use of innovation, knowledge, and resources, impossible otherwise. The promotion of trust and friendships also foster business and community building.  
(Denicolai et al., 2010)

# Rural Tourism Networks

Types of rural networks connected to tourism: (Petrou et al., 2007 & Huggins, 2001)



## Informal Networks

- Established through the already existing socio-economic structure of the region;
- Firms owners help each other to sustain benefits for all involved;
- The link and size of the network changes, but exchange of information and business links established;
- Based on trust and common goals and strategies, but lack the formalisation via institutions or agreements;
- Usually related to task-specific orientations.



## Formal Networks

- Usually established by local, national, and European institutions responsible for the tourism sector;
- May be contested or less effective in areas where informal connections are stronger;
- Offers the possibility for businesses to access more resources than they would otherwise;
- Reduces risk, through a formal link, providing more stable safety nets;
- Builds and fosters trust between businesses and industries;
- Has a more strategic and holistic view than informal networks.

# Rural Tourism Networks for development

Case Study “La Rete del Buon Vivere”:



## Geographical Area

The “Good Living Network” is situated in Italy, totalizing 1000 square km and including 27 municipalities.

(Quaranta et al., 2016).

## Brief Description

The territory economic activity has always been characterized by agricultural – with regular problems given the mountainous terrain – and connected artisanal business. Similar to other regions, a significant population decline is present, mainly due to job scarcity.

However, the region is rich in natural resources and a natural landscape. Moreover, tourism is a growing industry.

(Quaranta et al., 2016).

# Rural Tourism Networks for development

Case Study “La Rete del Buon Vivere”:



## Goal of the Network

Foster the multi-functionality of the rural area through synergies between actors – farms, tourism sector operators (hotels, B&Bs, agro-tourisms etc.) food and wine producers, craft businesses and between firms and micro-attractors of tourism in the territory.

(Quaranta et al., 2016).

## Objectives of the Network

- “Strengthening local networks;
- Diversifying and improving local productions and attractors;
- Strengthening the tourist attractiveness of the rural area;
- Promoting natural and cultural territorial resources;
- Promoting and valorizing local production chains;
- Integrated territorial promotion, as part of the Buon Vivere system”.

(Quaranta et al., 2016).

# Rural Tourism Networks for development

Case Study “La Rete del Buon Vivere”:



## Implementation

The network was implemented through a variety of actions: community awareness; research into the needs of productive sectors; intersectoral and intersectoral meetings between operators, both public and private; signature and commitment of the “Buon Vivere Pacts”, promotional and commercial agreements between regional actors – 9 participants from the agro-tourism and accommodations sector signed the pact. (Quaranta et al., 2016).

## Results

The network, through its activities, resulted in the definition of the main problems hampering local partnerships: trust issues, lack of awareness and knowledge of local actors on local products and services, and technical and economic barriers which were considered secondary in importance. In total, 1429 people participated in the meetings, and 69 pacts were signed.

(Quaranta et al., 2016).

# Two main challenges for Policy Makers

## Regional Networks



Increase the number of firms and businesses that join and develop networks, especially difficult for firms in rural-areas.

(Petrou et al., 2007)

Transform informal networks into formal ones, through the development of more cohesive and concrete structures.

(Petrou et al., 2007)



## In sum:

Rural tourism doesn't always translate to local economic development due to volatility, declining multipliers, limited number of entrepreneurs in rural areas, and unbalanced employment and income distributions.

(Sharma, 2014)

Networks between local actors are fundamental to make the most of local tourism to regional economic development, by guiding the investment decisions into sustainable and complementary forms, enhancing competitiveness, assisting the integration of business into market, nurturing the development of social capital, and others.

(Petrou et al., 2007)

# 03

## Tourism Value Chain: How to involve various actors

# The Tourism Value Chain

The Value Chain can be understood as a framework that defines the provision of services and products into a system composed of different subsystems, enabling the analysis of the outputs, inputs and processes of each subsystem.

(Porter, 1985)

## Destination Logic

“In this logic, the destination is analyzed as a composition or sequence of services that the tourists can benefit from during their entire holiday.

When examining the destination logic, the researcher “walks in the footsteps” of the tourists and assesses the impact”.

(Hjalagera, 2016)

## Supply Chain Logic

“Any single tourism product consists of a chain of production steps, where material and immaterial resources are added subsequently. At each step, new value is added to the product. When examining this logic, the researcher follows not the tourist, but the service/product through the production process”.

(Hjalagera, 2016)

# The Rural Tourism Value Chain

	Destination value chain Bonding resources, planification and unification of the product image	Supply value chain Bridging resources, creating value and innovations in tourism and other sectors
<b>Wildernesses, remote and protected areas, low population density rural zones, and abandonment zones</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guiding services that link sights, services and experiences into flows and packages .</li> <li>Self-service provision, retail, renting, angling permits, trails and related (paid) services .</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embedding tourism in extraction functions quarries, forestry, and hunting .</li> <li>Citizens/tourists science, investigative tourism, participation in well-being research projects .</li> <li>Media productions in connection with tours, for example, expedition bulletins</li> </ul>
<b>Agricultural and forestry landscapes and competition for resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Farm relaxation and participation in farm life activities</li> <li>Touring, animal-related well-being services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Healthy food development and subsequent new delivery systems that include tourism</li> <li>Bioenergy exploitation for well-being tourism products</li> </ul>
<b>Idyllic rural landscapes, closer to urban areas</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Artificial landscaping and the provision of catering, accommodation and other services in connection with sceneries</li> <li>Green and blue fitness areas and related services</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participative landscape arts and landscaping, creating and amending the landscapes for well-being .</li> <li>Urban or close-to-urban leisure husbandry—chicken, bees, etc.</li> </ul>

# Exercise: The Tourism Value Chain

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**One possibly way to analyse tourism value chain is trough the costumer flow model of value chain. In this exercise, trainees will choose a rural tourism product and place it into the appropriate stages of the value chain. Then at each stage of the value chain identify three opportunities of partnership with local, nacional and/or international organizations. The aim is to think about partnership and innovations opportunities at each stage while fostering an holistic view.**

**(Weiermair, 2006)**

# Tourism Value Chain

## Identify partnership opportunities

### Exercise:

Find at least 3 partnership opportunities in your value chain and detail, for each opportunity, **who** can be your partners, **how** the partnership would work and **why** the partnerships would benefit both you and your partner.

Travel information  
reservation and booking

Who:

How:

Why:



Transport into the  
destination

Who:

How:

Why:



Information in the  
destination

Who:

How:

Why:



Accommodation  
and food

Who:

How:

Why:



Transport  
in the destination

Who:

How:

Why:



Tourist attractions

Who:

How:

Why:



Return transport  
for the way home

Who:

How:

Why:



After sales  
service

Who:

How:

Why:



# 04

**New methodologies for  
collaboration: co-creation,  
coopetition, and collaborative  
economy**

# Co-production

There are various concepts regarding the elements of co-production:

(Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2020)

## Participation



Participation means being consulted, whereas in a co-production process actors are equal partners

## Co-Design



People who develop services/products/projects usually working with people who are the beneficiaries at a specific moment in time. Codesign can be part of co-production

## Co-Creation



The concept most similar to co-production. However, co-production aims to be a transformative tool for the functioning of organisations, while co-creation is associated with a specific intervention

## Co-Production

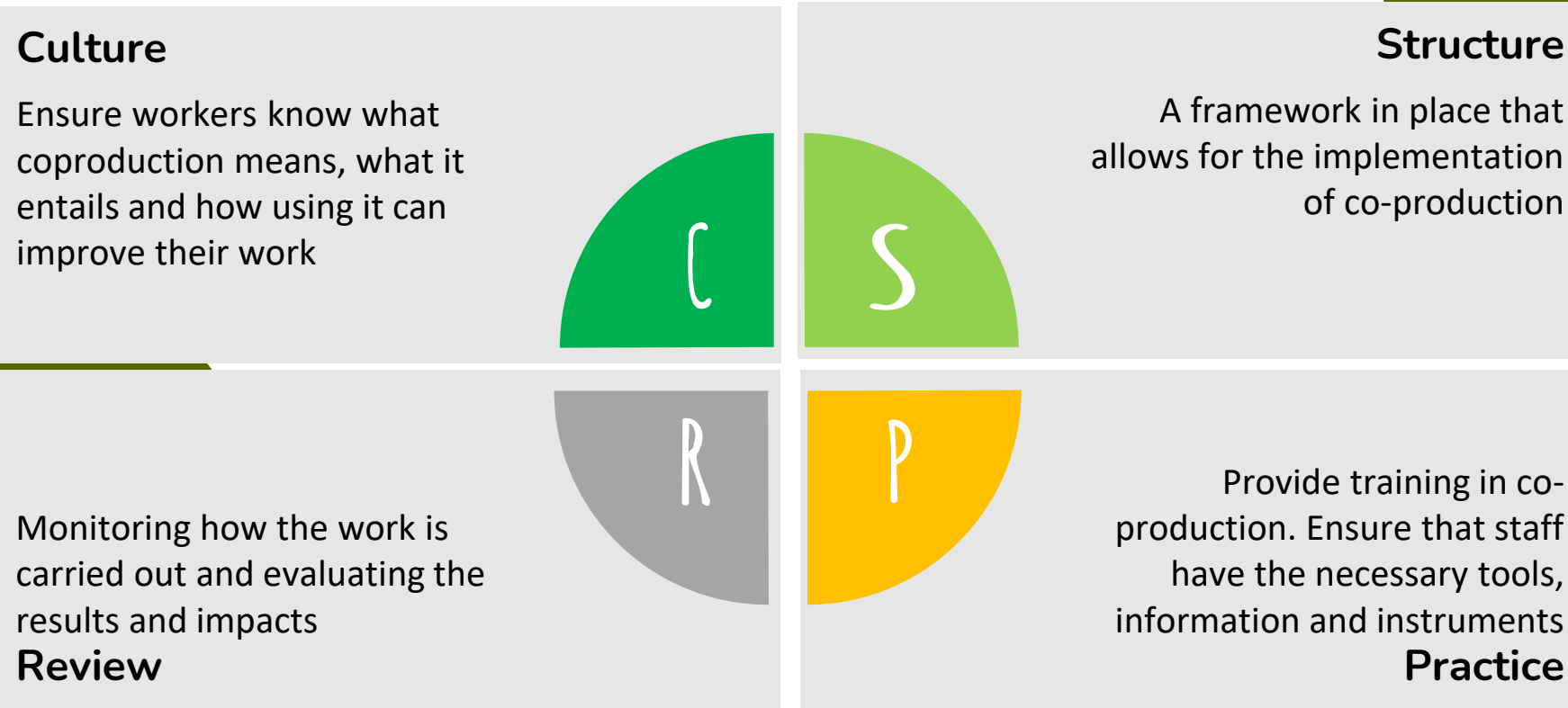


Equal partnership and collaboration between service providers and clients. Co-production is about recognising that the people who use services are experts themselves, rather than passive recipients

# Co-production

There are 4 essential components of a successful implementation of the co-production process:

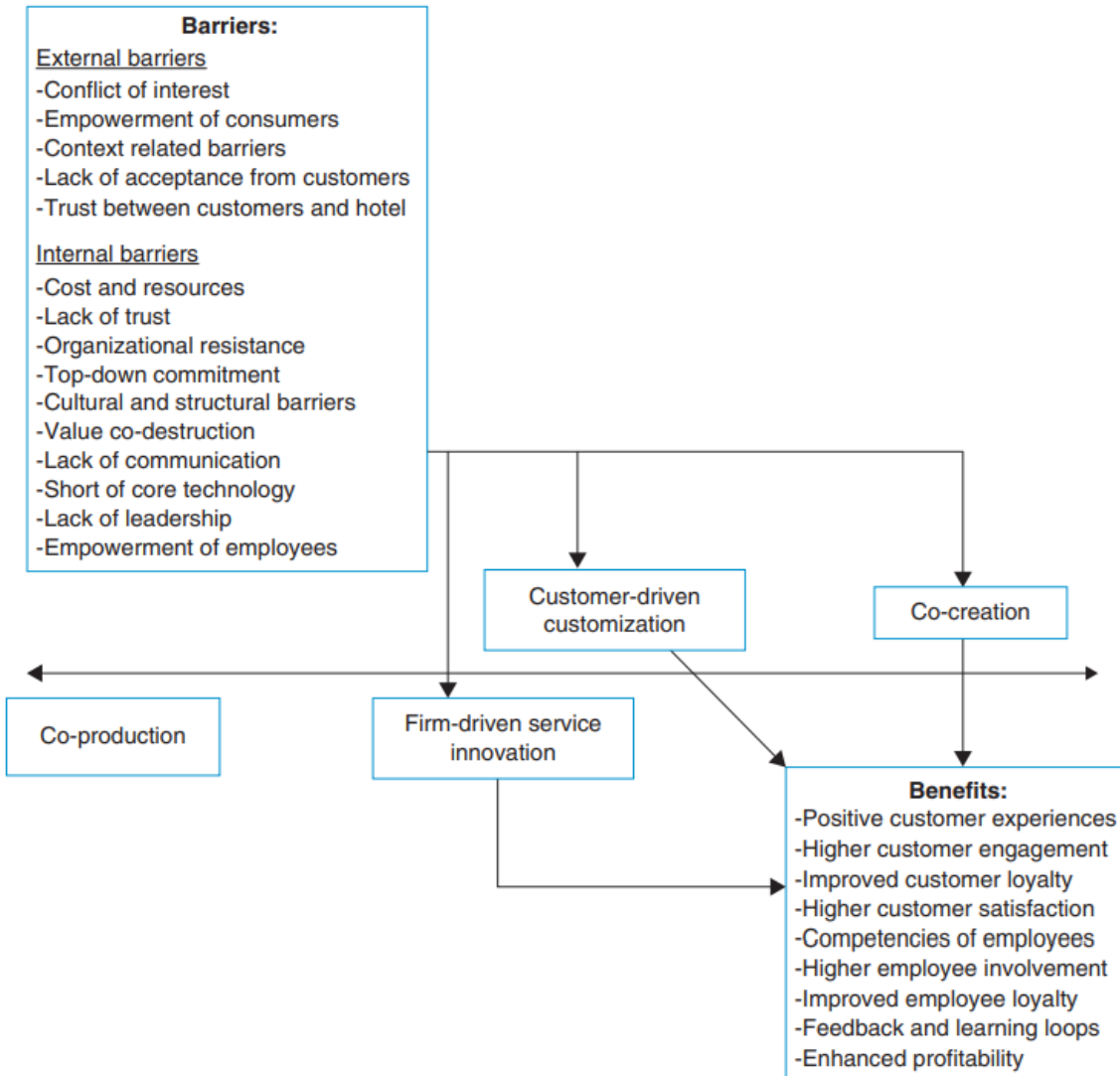
(Social Care Institute for Excellence, 2020)



# Co-creation and Co-production in tourism

In the tourism industry a continuum between co-production and co-creation is better suited to analyse it

(Chathoth et al., 2014)



“

To make this shift, tourism industry leaders will need to address resistance to change, provide a top-down commitment, break down internal structural barriers, and (once again) empower employees to find innovative ways to be able to consistently address the heterogeneous needs of individual consumers throughout the service process. Once these processes are designed, a systematic process-driven approach to co-creation should be developed. The result should be substantial benefits in the form of enhanced customer and employee experiences, engagement, loyalty and satisfaction, as well as ongoing organizational learning and, ultimately, enhanced profitability

”

Copied from Chathoth et al., (2014)

# Coopetition

**Coopetition is a hybrid simultaneous behavior of cooperation and competition within an organization, between organizations or networks.**

(Chim-Miki, 2020)

## Why coopetition in tourism?

Although not all tourism products and activities follow this trend, it is undeniable the paradox between the jointly partnerships carried out between tourism firms to develop and grow their business and the competitiveness to find new ways to expand and grow at the expense of other local businesses. The authors observed a spectrum of activities entailed to cooperation and competition in the tourism industry, summarized in 5 main dimensions:

(Fong et al., 2018).

Exploiting	Exploring	Bridging	Sharing	Boundary spanning
Competitive activities or practices undertaken in the pursuit of existing tourism reach, profit and expansion	A strategic action of competition that enables the firm to acquire scarcer resources, wanted by all most firms, for its economic and social development	The acquisition of resources and capabilities through different means of institutional network building.	An act sharing, showing trust and reciprocal exchange in the marketplace between firms.	Foster Innovation trough infomation sharing and other activities.

# Collaborative economy and tourism

**Collaborative economy can be defined as “an economy built on distributed networks of connected individuals and communities versus centralized institutions, transforming how we can produce, consume, finance, and learn”.**

(Botsman, 2013)

## In tourism

The study of collaborative economy and tourism is vast and can be assessed from innumerous optics. Nonetheless, the following graph presents a brief overview on the extent of collaborative opportunities in tourism from the consumer’s perspective with examples. (Dredge, D., & Gyimóthy, 2017).



Tourism and Collaborative Economy



<https://www.escape2project.org/>

**Case Study 1** Aldeias do Xisto, Portugal  
(Connecting to collaborations & communities)

[Homepage | Aldeias do Xisto](#)

**Case Study 2** Adventure Sligo & North West  
Wellness, Ireland  
(Connecting to collaborations & communities)

**Case Study 3** Associacio Valenciana de Turisme  
Ruralxuquer, Spain (Environmentally Sustainable  
Tour Company)

[ASSOCIACIO VALENCIANA DE TURISME RURALXUQUER](#)



*Environmentally Sustainable European  
Rural Tourism SME Case Studies*

# Additional Resources & Reading

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**Module 6 Complete  
Well Done!**

**Next is Module 7**  
*Environmental Sustainability*



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