Networking sites and supporting the sustainable development of the territories thought cultural tourism: education and structuring cooperation
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The first UNESCO/UNITWIN[1] "CULTURE, TOURISM, DEVELOPMENT[2]" held in Rimini between 21 and 23 September 2007, was realized with the support of Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna (Faculty of economics of Rimini High school for tourism sciences), University of Paris 1 Pantheon Sorbonne.

The main topic of this first workshop was " Networking sites and supporting the sustainable   development of the territories thought cultural tourism: tools, education and structuring cooperation."

The objective of this UNESCO/UNITWIN meeting was:

to work on themes relating to the networking of sites (including World heritage sites) in order to provide the world Heritage Centre, the decision-makers and actors in filed with methods and tools for sustainable territorial management by giving prominence to culture and cultural and natural heritage;

to take stock of the new challenges in distance learning (e-learning) and network's potential means of establishing a resource centre and an operational skills platform to improve knowledge, offer training for capacity building and be

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[1] UNITWIN is the abbreviation for the UNIVERSITY TWINNING and networking scheme. The Programme was established in 1992 following the relevant decision of the General Conference of UNESCO taken at its 26th session.

The UNITWIN/UNESCO Chairs Programme was conceived as a way to advance research, training and programme development in higher education by building university networks and encouraging inter-university cooperation through transfer of knowledge across borders. Since it was set up in 1992 the programme has aroused great interest among Member-States.

Today 631 UNESCO Chairs and 60 UNITWIN Networks are established within the Programme, involving over 770 institutions in 126 countries. The UNITWIN portal contains full information on UNESCO Chairs and UNITWIN Networks covering 70 disciplines and identifies the contact persons, partners, events and publications for each one.
http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=41557&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

[2] UNESCO Chair in Cultural Tourism (476), established in 1999 at the University of Paris I Panthéon - La Sorbonne, (France) wants to persuiter these Objectives:

☑ To promote a complete system of research, training, information and documentation activities in order to contribute to the formulation of cultural tourism strategies for sustainable development, i.e. ensuring the long-term conservation of the sites, the participation of local populations in the projects as well as in the repercussions of tourism while facilitating the dialogue between cultures.

☑ To contribute to the sub-regional, regional and interregional co-operation between high level internationally recognized researchers and professors and the teaching and research staff of the University

You could find more information here
http://portal.unesco.org/education/en/ev.php-URL_ID=3008&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html

established as a service provider and a centre of excellence to take up external calls for tender.

The workshop was organized in three different thematic areas:
 Tourism development and networking cultural sites and route
The challenges of distance training and e-learning
Functioning of the network

In each areas the participants discussed about specific key issue that you could find summarized in the following table

Tourism development and networking cultural sites and route	working in a network, which raises practical problems The clash of underlying rationales of cultural tourism and culture Impact assessment is unsatisfactory: situations must be evaluated as a whole A gap exist between the wide range of techniques and the knowledge available and the means and willingness to manage sites and the level of training of local actors
The challenges of distance training and e-learning	Harmonize the vocabulary and help all stakeholders to speak the same language List available experts in order to facilitate harmonization and coordination Collect data on both the positive and negative impacts of tourism at on-site level, on local populations, the environment etc. Analyse the data in order to establish a link between the impact assessed and the management method
Functioning of the network	Creation of an e-learning module, on the management of sustainable tourism at cultural sites Research-action project on the methodology of cultural routes and itineraries Establishment of the skills platform

More and detailed information of these issues could by find in the final report published from Alma Mater Studiorum University of Bologna and school for tourism sciences, the report was readable in two languages English and France, and it based on preparatory documents, presentation and notes provided by participant.

The report is very useful to understand in which the network's universities partner are thus required to contribute, as Unesco's partners, to the achievement of the objectives and ideals of the United Nations in building a more caring world, in which respect for cultural diversity goes hand with sustainable development in aspiring to peace (H. Barrè, Unesco, World Heritage Centre).