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## D4.1 Destinations' Recruitment Process Report

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# Document Information

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# List of Acronyms

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Abbreviation / acronym	Description
CC	European Competence Centre
DG Grow	Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs
DMOs	Destination Management Organisation
EC	European Commission
EEA	European Economic Area
EEN	Enterprise Europe Network
EYE	Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs
ETC	European Travel Commission
ETOA	European Tourism Association
NEST	Network of Education on Sustainable Tourism
NTO	National Tourism Office
T	Task
WP	Work Package



# Executive Summary

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This document is a deliverable submitted as part of the D3HUB project, which is funded by the European Commission under its Pilot Projects & Preparatory Actions (PPPA) Programme.

This Deliverable describes the destination recruitment process preceding the testing phase of the Competence Centre's support scheme within a selection of destination pilots. As stated in the D3HUB proposal, T4.3 will test the theoretical support scheme, empowering at least 30 destinations across Europe. To ensure the robustness of the testing phase, a diverse selection representing a varied set of destinations in terms of geography, data proficiency, governance level, and destination typology needed to be ensured. To this extent, T4.1 started by identifying important quota criteria to be followed during pilot selection.

This deliverable mainly aims to provide transparency on the selection process of the participating destinations. The document outlines every step of the selection process, starting from the contextualisation and operationalisation of the pilots. Potential topics—identified as significant contemporary challenges across the European tourism ecosystem—were preselected by the D3HUB consortium as a long list of potential topics. Via an online poll on the D3HUB LinkedIn page, destinations and other stakeholders could list their priorities, after which a final selection of four topics was made.

These four topics served as the clusters for further development of the pilot programme. It was conceived as a peer-learning programme with interventions from internal and external experts to guide the capacity-building process. Five scoring criteria were selected after agreeing on the pilot operationalisation: the basic eligibility criteria for EU membership—or EEA membership, plus Switzerland—and organisational form, and the previously mentioned quota criteria. These were proposed as the basis for merit-based scoring and were meant to identify intrinsic motivations and managerial capacities to cooperate in the peer-learning scheme.

The pilot context and operationalisation, eligibility criteria, quota criteria, and scoring criteria were all detailed within an open call for pilots, which was launched on 15 October 2024 and remained open – after extension – until 15 December 2024. The call for pilots was extensively disseminated via various European conferences and network events, dedicated D3HUB webinars, direct emails to stakeholders, newsletters, and social media. A total of 81 expressions of interest were initially received. After removing doubles and ineligible applications, the sample comprised 68 European destinations.

All applications were then reviewed independently by three reviewers on the scoring criteria – each time representing three different D3HUB partners – thereby ensuring that any potential conflict of interest was avoided. The final scores were averaged, and in case of significant discrepancies (i.e., differences over 30%), differences were discussed in a consensus meeting. The final merit-based scoring led to an initial ranking. This evaluation was then followed by a quota-based reweighting which was initiated to ensure that the pilot selection would be sufficiently diverse according to the pre-established quotas. The final ranking was then used to select the highest-scoring applicants.

Since the D3HUB proposal placed minimum requirements on the number of pilot destinations (30), but no maximum requirements, the consortium ultimately agreed to invite 40 destinations into the pilot programme. The final selection of candidates shows a proper balance in geography, proficiency, governance level, and destination typology. It has been evenly distributed across the four clusters of the peer-learning programme.

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# 1 Introduction

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## 1.1 Purpose of the document

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This deliverable provides a detailed account of the selection criteria employed to identify and recruit the destinations participating in the D3HUB Competence Centre (CC) testing phase as part of Work Package 4 (WP4) of the D3HUB project. It outlines the rationale behind the established selection criteria, the specific mechanisms used to assess applications, and the structure of the open call for pilot destinations. By detailing these aspects, the document aims to illustrate how the selection framework aligns with the overarching goals of the D3HUB initiative and ensures a representative and effective cohort of pilot destinations.

In addition to elaborating on the selection methodology, this deliverable also highlights the communication and outreach strategy deployed to disseminate information about the open call across the European tourism ecosystem. This includes an overview of the targeted communication channels, stakeholder engagement efforts, and promotional activities designed to maximise awareness and participation from a diverse range of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs).

Beyond outlining the selection criteria, the deliverable serves a second critical function: ensuring transparency in the scoring and selection process that ultimately determined the final list of 40 pilot destinations. It provides a step-by-step account of the evaluation procedures, detailing the methods used to assess and rank applications, the role of expert reviewers, and the consensus-building process that guided the final decisions. By documenting these elements, the deliverable aims to reinforce the selection process's integrity, fairness, and strategic intent.

## 1.2 Structure of the document

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Following this introductory section, Section 2 of this deliverable provides a comprehensive overview of the decision-making process within the D3HUB consortium that led to the formulation of the open call for pilot projects. This section specifically examines the rationale behind the selection of topical clusters and their alignment with the pilot programme's overarching operationalisation strategy.

Section 3 details the eligibility requirements for prospective applicants, outlining the predefined quotas established to maintain a balanced distribution of pilots across different regions and destination typologies. Furthermore, this section elaborates on the structured scoring framework employed to facilitate an initial ranking of applications, ensuring a fair and transparent selection process.

Section 4 examines the dissemination strategy implemented for the open call, describing the outreach methods and communication channels utilised to attract and engage potential candidates. Additionally, this section provides an account of the application submission process, including key milestones and procedural steps undertaken.

Finally, Section 5 presents an in-depth discussion of the multi-phase evaluation process and the final selection outcomes. This includes a detailed account of the assessment methodology, the criteria used to refine the candidate pool, and the procedures followed to ensure the validity and reliability of the selection process. The section concludes with an overview of the final allocation of pilot projects, reflecting the strategic objectives of the D3HUB initiative.

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## 2 Identification of pilot topics and pilot operationalisation

### 2.1 Pilot operationalisation approach

The pilot phase of D3HUB is the central element of WP4, which aims to test the European Competence Centre theoretical support scheme to solve common and contemporary destination challenges with data, tools, and capacity-building. In the D3HUB proposal, the testing phase, as T4.3 under WP3, was provisionally described as empowering at least 30 destinations in systematic measurement for sustainable tourism policy-making, involving experts to deliver capacity-building modules while fostering collaborative knowledge in data-driven marketing and management. Dissemination activities discussed and mentioned were workshops, webinars, peer-to-peer exchanges, one-stop-shop learning materials, a dashboard, and tools.

In the first year of the project, pilot operationalisation was discussed in detail among the consortium partners, focussing on three interdependent key aspects: (i) Selection of sustainable tourism challenges and topics, (ii) Integration of experts, and (iii) Workflow processes for capacity-building and dissemination.

Since sustainable tourism management includes many different challenges and data needs, to provide a focused approach and allow for efficient use of available resources—both internal expertise and opportunities for hiring external consultants—the decision was made to concentrate the pilot testing phase on a select number of topics—or clusters. The procedure followed for this topical selection is further explained under title 2.2. The final list of topics, organised by clusters, directly affects experts' choice, which is central to T2.3.

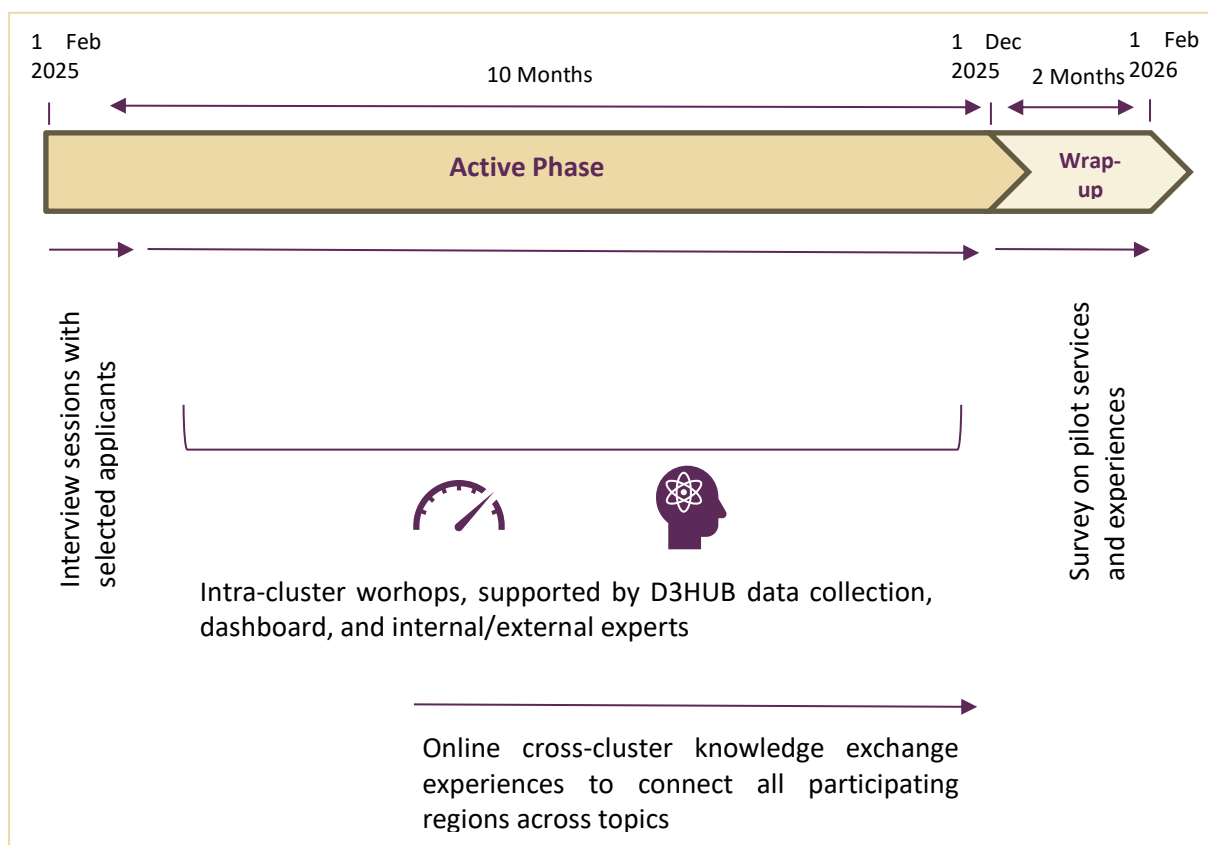
As proposed, these experts will play a central role in the Competence Centre by providing content and knowledge to foster peer learning. Experts can be internal, employed by project partners, and external scientists, practitioners and consultants. It was decided that an internal talent map would be drafted as a first step, linked to the selection of clusters. This would allow for the identification of internal expert knowledge per topic, as well as knowledge gaps that need to be filled by external domain or methods experts.

The third aspect with regard to pilot operationalisation relates to the capacity-building approach. It was decided to organise the capacity-building activities around the selected clusters by combining multiple pilot destinations within the same topical clusters. The clusters are co-led by two consortium partners who will provide organisation support and potential subject or methodological expertise. Within each cluster, a series of webinars and workshops will be organised, bringing together all cluster participants around a central topic and providing capacity training via an internal or external expert. The organisation in a limited number of clusters was proposed due to its unique opportunity for peer-learning activities, which would not be possible within a one-on-one consultancy approach. Furthermore, there is an added workflow efficiency to bringing multiple destinations together around shared subjects of interest. Furthermore, to allow for cross-cluster knowledge exchange as well, communal workshops are foreseen, where all selected pilots are invited to participate so that learnings do not stay within individual clusters but might also influence other topics/topic participants and generate further synergies. Figure 1 outlines the suggested workflow, accounting for an onboarding stage at the beginning of the pilot phase. A consortium partner individually interviews selected candidates to introduce the workflow, establish needs and interests, discuss data availability and sharing agreements, etc. Furthermore, at the end of the one-year pilot programme, a wrap-up period is foreseen to collect feedback from participants, which would help to evaluate the services offered by the Competence Centre during the pilot phase period. A final aspect worth mentioning, and visualised in Figure 1, is the role of the D3HUB dashboard – and associated data collection – which provides support for the data-driven approach taken within the workgroup sessions.

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Figure 1: Suggested pilot operationalisation workflow



## 2.2 Cluster selection

### 2.2.1 Initially identified destination challenges

As mentioned in title 2.1, a limited number of potential destination challenges were identified as potential cluster topics, foreseen to provide the organisational framework for the pilot phase. In the first stage, the consortium partners internally drafted a long list of subjects of interest at the general assembly meeting in Marbella on 9-10 July 2024. Seven topics were listed, which align closely with contemporary literature on salient tourism destination challenges (Dimanche & Andrades, 2024:

- 1) Managing balance between residents and visitors;
- 2) Dealing with short-term rentals;
- 3) Climate change mitigation and adaptation;
- 4) Improving the quality of employment, retention/attraction of talent, and employment policies in tourism;
- 5) Redistributing tourism flows in space and time;
- 6) Standard measurement guidance for sustainability plans;
- 7) Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourists.

### 2.2.2 Stakeholder survey and final cluster list

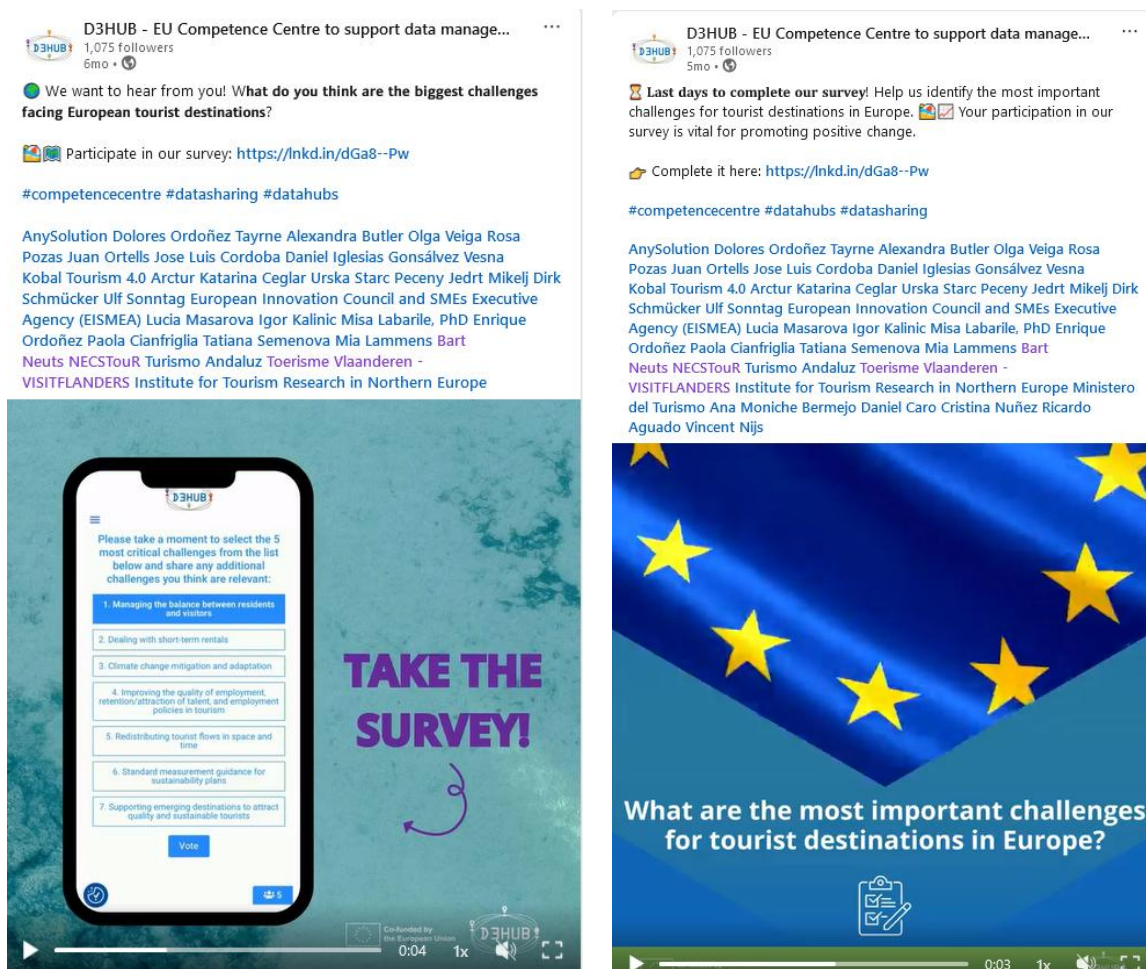
The longlist was then presented to the wider tourism ecosystem via an online survey on the LinkedIn channel of the D3HUB project. Stakeholders were invited to vote on the comparative relevance of each topic for their destination, also allowing for additional ideas by asking for any other comments or aspects/challenges that tourist destinations are facing where the use of data would be beneficial. The LinkedIn post was shared in July 2024, with two reminders sent in August to allow the process to be

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completed before the development of the open call for pilots. Figure 2 showcases the original invitation and final reminder used in this dissemination action.

Figure 2: Invitation to the survey (left) and final reminder (right)



The results of the online poll are outlined in Figure 3. Two topics scored comparatively somewhat lower. Dealing with short-term rentals received 18 votes (9%), and standard measurement guidance for sustainability plans received 21 votes (10%). Next, three topics were selected by about 15% of the respondents: supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourists (28 votes, 14%), improving the quality of employment, retention/attraction of talent and employment policies in tourism (31 votes, 15%), and climate change mitigation and adaptation (32 votes, 16%). Two topics were prioritised by nearly 20% each: redistributing tourist flows in space and time (37 votes, 18%) and managing the balance between residents and visitors (38 votes, 19%).

Ultimately, after internal discussion, it was decided to select four clusters and not to follow the hierarchy strictly since the fourth-highest (improving the quality of employment, retention/attraction of talent and employment policies in tourism) and fifth-highest (supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourists) received close to the same amount of votes. Therefore, priority was given to the latter topic. This choice was inspired by the need to accommodate destinations at various stages of development and data proficiency. Thus, including a topic specifically aimed towards emerging destinations can ensure the relevance of the Competence Centre for destinations that might

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not yet be dealing with other challenges related to overtourism and tourist pressures on local destination resources.

Figure 3: results of the stakeholder poll on destination challenges



The peer-learning programme, therefore, ultimately proposed four clusters to tackle various contemporary challenges within European tourism destinations of different sizes and contexts. The cluster leaders provided an initial description of each cluster and added it to the open call for pilots. The purpose was not to define a final and complete overview of contents for each cluster but to provide a general understanding of the underlying philosophy and expected directions to be taken during the peer-learning programme.

About the first cluster, managing the balance between residents, visitors, and stakeholders, the pilot aims to balance the needs of residents with the demands of visitors, especially in tourist-heavy areas, focusing on the efficient use of shared resources. The pilot seeks sustainable solutions that benefit both residents and visitors, aligning with the vision of "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit." A list of potential workshop subjects was proposed as follows:

- Understanding population and tourism dependency: Analysing tourism's economic and employment impacts through dashboards and official statistics.
- Tourism intensity and density: Studying the ratio of tourists to locals across different areas of the destination.
- Impact of Short-Term Rentals: Addressing the issue of short-term rentals on housing costs and potential displacement of locals.
- Resident attitudes: Exploring concerns around housing, cruises, traffic, noise, accessibility, inclusivity, and safety using focus groups, surveys, and/or sentiment analysis.
- Cultural preservation, protection, conservation: Exploring concerns about tangible and intangible cultural preservation and protection under the influence of tourist visitation.
- Forecasting and prediction: By using data models and AI, scenarios for different situations of visitor numbers, housing pressures, and resource demands can be analysed.

In the second cluster, climate change mitigation and adaptation, pilots are expected to focus on aligning tourism with climate action goals, introducing the following potential areas of research:

- Glasgow Declaration commitment: Providing support/information about commitment to the global climate action framework outlined in the Glasgow Declaration.

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- Tourism Climate Action Plan (CAP): Providing support/information for implementing a Tourism CAP that aligns with the destination's broader climate action plan to support the entire regional economy.
- Mitigation indicators: Developing compatible indicators with the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system to track progress in reducing tourism's carbon footprint.
- Carbon Footprint calculation: Establishing methods to measure and reduce the carbon footprint of tourism activities.
- Tourism sector competencies: Identifying areas where destinations can take direct action, such as energy management, water conservation, waste management, solar panel installations, and using sensors (noise and pollution measurement, etc.) for personalised impact metrics to promote sustainable behaviours.
- Future data integration: Exploring the integration of PMS (Property Management System) data with European data spaces for water, waste, and energy management.
- Adaptation indicators: Creating indicators to measure the effectiveness of adaptation efforts in the tourism sector.

The third cluster, on redistributing tourist flows in space and time, addresses the uneven temporal and spatial distribution of tourists and aims to provide strategies for managing tourism volumes, improving efficiency, and promoting balanced tourism growth across destinations. Challenges such as seasonality, crowding, and overtourism will be confronted along the following proposed lines of work:

- Tourism Intensity and Density: Studying the ratio of tourists to locals and their presence in different areas of the destination.
- Seasonality analysis: Using techniques such as time series analysis and the Gini index, patterns in tourism peaks and off-seasons will be identified. This data can guide policies that manage seasonality, using official sources to benchmark regions and incorporating local contexts (NUTS2 level).
- Impact on employment and local resources: Examining the relationship between tourist flows and job creation, helping destinations better understand how to balance tourism with local economic growth.
- PMS Data Integration: Leveraging Property Management System (PMS) data to gain insights into tourist flows and optimise management. Future integration with European data spaces for water and energy will support a comprehensive analysis.
- Forecasting and prediction: Using data models and AI, different scenarios can be created to assess the impacts of potential interventions or expected future trends.

The fourth and final cluster focuses on supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism. The content of this topic is aimed more towards European destinations that have not yet experienced issues with overtourism or demand constraints and instead strive towards growing responsibly. The following subjects could be explored:

- Profiling 'quality tourists': Based on data insights, visitors who respect and protect local culture and engage in sustainable activities can be targeted better.
- Monitor environmental, socio-economic, and cultural impacts: Creating and monitoring indicators to track the effectiveness of sustainable tourism strategies, integrating already existing initiatives at the destination level.
- Integrating with regional and global tourism frameworks: Ensuring that emerging destinations can benefit from global sustainability initiatives while maintaining local identity and autonomy.
- Collaboration: Promoting collaboration with other destinations to share best practices and strategies for sustainable tourism development.
- Community perceptions and interests: Conduct focus groups and surveys to understand community expectations and concerns about tourism, aligning development with local aspirations.

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## 3 Eligibility criteria, quotas and scoring criteria

This chapter presents three categories of criteria that were used in the pilot selection process. The first element, the eligibility requirements, described the set of parameters that applicants needed to adhere to to be included in the pilot programme potentially. General requirements related to the country of residence and organisational form are discussed under title 3.1. Eligible candidates were further selected based on two additional criteria: selection quotas and selection scoring criteria. The former is important to ensure that the selection of candidates is sufficiently balanced and varied to represent the broad European tourism landscape. Therefore, targets and maxima thresholds were chosen for geographical representation across regions and countries, proficiency level in data use, governance levels, and destination typologies. Different from the quotas, the selection scoring criteria aimed to select the most impactful pilot candidates within the confines of the quotas. Therefore, These criteria provided a ranking of applications on which quotas could be applied.

The selection process based on these criteria was as follows: (i) check eligibility, (ii) score and rank participants, (iii) apply quotas top-down from highest to lowest score, and (iv) re-rank participants after quota weighting. This process will be explained in more detail under Title 5; here, we first discuss each criterion in more detail.

### 3.1 Organisational and country-based eligibility

The D3HUB pilot community and peer-learning scheme targets decision-makers and data professionals at the local, regional, and national levels of tourism administration. Therefore, as an organisational eligibility criterion, candidates needed to be a destination management organisation or government administration involved in tourism planning and development at the local, regional, or national level and of public or semi-public organisational form. This would ensure that data-driven approaches can also potentially translate into destination management and governance. Destinations were considered at all levels of tourism management, from municipal/urban to cooperative networks of municipalities, tourist regions, provinces, and countries.

Applicants from any of the 27 European member states were eligible. This included Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, and Sweden. Furthermore, the call was extended to the list of countries of EEA members (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway) and Switzerland.

### 3.2 Selection quotas to ensure participant balance and variety

As mentioned previously, the selection process of pilot participants aimed to establish relevant selection quotas on geographic representation, DMO proficiency levels, variety in governance levels, and destination typologies to ensure a broad representation of European DMOs and tourist ecosystems within the pilots. In this section, these key selection quotas will be discussed, which aimed to ensure selection diversity.

#### 3.2.1 Geographical representation across regions and countries

Since a balanced geographical representation was considered essential for a European-funded project, two quota-based regional selection criteria were introduced: regional balance and country-specific maxima. At a macro-regional level, countries were divided into four geographical areas, with the target to select at least four DMOs from each area. The regions and associated countries were defined as follows:

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- Northern Europe: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden (+ Iceland and Norway as non-EU member states)
- Western Europe: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands (+ Switzerland and Liechtenstein as non-EU member states)
- Southern Europe: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain
- Eastern and Central Europe: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

On a country-by-country basis, a second quota placed a maximum on the number of pilot participants originating from the same member state. The selection aimed to include no more than three pilot destinations from each country. Exceptions to this quote were foreseen in cases where not enough proposals were received to fulfil these regional or country-specific requirements.

### 3.2.2 Proficiency level in data use

The European Competence Centre should serve destinations at different levels of experience and data proficiency, providing a low-barrier entry to data-driven destination management throughout Europe. Therefore, to ensure that the developed service portfolio sufficiently addresses the needs of all types and levels of DMOs, the pilot phase needs to be tested by destinations with varied proficiency levels. DMOs were classified into three proficiency levels (basic, medium, and proficient), based on both a self-reported experience level during the expression of interest and through the assignment of an estimated level calculated as a result of reported data collection and data-driven policies. These data included: (1) overnight stays, (2) tourist expenditure/tourism revenue, (3) arrivals, (4) resident satisfaction/acceptance, (5) guest satisfaction, (6) length of stay, (7) occupancy rates, (8) results of campaign activities, (9) destination image/brand awareness, (10) stakeholder satisfaction, (11) number of tourist beds, (12) (online) bookings, (13) seasonality, (14) number of visitors at Tourist Information Centres, (15) emissions/carbon footprint, (16) employment in tourism, (17) average Daily Rate (ADR) of accommodations, (18) Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR), (19) number of day trips, (20) accommodation establishment registry (providers/beds), (21) registry of tourism businesses, (22) data on residents' perception of tourism, (23) number of enterprises and resources with service quality or sustainability certifications, (24) regional spread of tourism demand, (25) number of flights, (26) tourism tax income, (27) tourist routes within the destination, (28) other (please explain which).

Of this expansive list of indicators, six were identified as being particularly high-level data: emissions/carbon footprint, number of flights, number of day trips, registry of tourism businesses, data on residents' perception of tourism, and regional spread of tourism demand. To determine proficiency levels, the combination of the number of datasets and availability of complex data was used as a guiding principle as follows:

- Basic: Candidates that collected less than 9 of the listed indicators were considered to be at the basic level;
- Medium: Candidates that collected nine different listed datasets or candidates that collected 10 or more datasets with no more than two complex indicators were considered medium.
- Proficient: Candidates who collected at least 10 different types of data and collected at least 3 of the advanced datasets were considered proficient.

The reason for having both a self-assessed proficiency level and a calculated proficiency level was to ensure proper distribution across profiles since it was expected that many destinations would be inclined to self-report as medium-proficient. This will be further discussed later when an overview is given of the actual candidate selection process.

The quota target for proficiency levels was set at a minimum of 5 DMOs per proficiency level to allow for a sufficient basis of different profiles.

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### 3.2.3 Variety in Governance Levels

This criterion was included to ensure the inclusion of DMOs from different governance levels—local, regional, and national—to provide a diverse representation of tourism management structures. This diversity allows the Competence Centre’s services to be adaptable and relevant to all DMOs, regardless of administrative context, size, and internal support structure. The selection prioritised a balanced representation that also somewhat reflects the differences in population quantity. Three levels were identified, with different prospective target quotas:

- City/Municipal/Subregional Level: 7 DMOs minimum
- Regional Level: 5 DMOs minimum
- National Level: 2 DMOs minimum

As a special case, the subregional level was described as “Groups of municipalities that collectively form a tourist destination with an established formal governance or management structure.”

This approach reflects the varied landscape of European tourism governance, acknowledging the large number of municipalities, a moderate number of regions, and fewer national entities. The 7:5:2 ratio is a practical balance that ensures all governance levels are fairly represented, focusing on those most actively involved in tourism management while still incorporating the strategic insights of national DMOs. While the established quotas are the targets D3HUB strived for, again, exceptions were foreseen in the case where not enough proposals would be received to fulfil all governance-level quotas.

### 3.2.4 Representation of Destination Typologies

Since challenges related to sustainable destination management and associated data requirements can be dependent on the typology of destinations, a third selection quota was meant to ensure sufficient inclusion of different destination profiles to allow for testing the Competence Centre’s support scheme across a variety of destinations with different characteristics and user profiles. To select the different types of tourism destinations, the classification used in the EU Tourism Dashboard (Batista et al., 2021) was used, distinguishing between six tourism typologies: urban (or city tourism), coastal, nature, rural, snowy mountain, and mixed. Candidates were referred to the EU Tourism Dashboard to identify their assigned typology (if available). If not available, they were asked to self-identify.

The pilot selection aimed to include at minimum five rural, five urban, two coastal/island, two nature, and two snowy mountain destinations, again with the caveat that the quota could be violated in case where not enough proposals were received to satisfy all requirements.

### 3.2.5 Summarizing overview of quota criteria

Table 1 provides a summarising overview of all quota criteria discussed previously. While the quotas have an important goal of assuring variety and balance, it should be noted that four – or five if we count the two quotas on geographic representation separately – different quotas might lead to data sparsity since certain characteristics might be correlated among candidates. So, in case the expression of interest is not sufficiently large, the consortium maintained the right to violate certain quotas to reach the minimum goal of 30 pilot destinations for the peer-learning programme.

Table 1: Selection quota criteria description and expected outcomes

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Selection quota criteria	Description	Expected objective
Geographic representation	Balance and ensure the participation of 4 European regions: Northern Europe, Western Europe, Southern Europe, Eastern and Central Europe. Ensure that no country is overrepresented.	At least 4 DMOs from each area. No more than 3 pilot destinations will be selected from each Member State.
Proficiency level in data use	Ensure representativeness in the participation of destinations with different types of data literacy: basic, medium and proficient level.	At least 5 DMOs for each proficiency level.
Variety in governance level	Consideration of the different levels of governance existing in the management of tourist destinations.	At least 7 DMOs at city/municipal/subregional level, 5 DMOs at regional level, and 2 DMOs at national level.
Representation of destination typologies	Ensure the representation of the different main typologies of tourist destinations existing in Europe.	At least 5 rural, 5 urban, 2 coastal/island, two nature, and two snowy mountain destinations.

### 3.3 Selection scoring criteria for candidate ranking

The quota selection criteria were meant to ensure that the pilot phase includes a diverse range of participants in terms of geography, governance, typology, and data proficiency. However, these criteria cannot identify preferences among candidates – e.g., there would be no reason to prefer a candidate at ‘basic’ proficiency level over a candidate at ‘medium’ proficiency level on itself. Therefore, to further refine the selection process, merit-based scoring criteria were included.

Candidate forms gathered information on participant motivations, destination strengths and assets, policy landscape, networking goals, and expertise. This information helped to prioritize participants who can actively contribute to the peer-learning process. Additionally, interested DMOs were requested to submit a Management Commitment/Support Letter, signed by the organization’s management – or sometimes the alderman or provincial deputy – to formally confirm the DMO’s commitment to the D3HUB pilot phase. The five selection scoring criteria were all given an equal weight of 20, leading to an initial total score on 100.

#### 3.3.1 Key motivations and destination goals

The first criterion evaluated the motivation to join the D3HUB pilot programme and the extent to which the DMO’s objectives align with the project’s goals. Priority was given to DMOs where tourism plays a significant role in the territory and where participation in the pilot reflects a clear commitment to action. The assessment considered the DMO’s understanding of the D3HUB objectives, the relevance of tourism at the destination, the level of motivation and commitment to achieving results, and the suitability of the organization for participation in the Competence Centre.

#### 3.3.2 Destination strengths and assets

Since the peer-learning programme revolves around specific destination challenges, the second criterion examined how well a DMO’s existing territorial challenges align with the programme’s focus areas – and in particular the primary cluster of interest selected by the candidate. Participants were to be selected based on a demonstrated need for support, where participation in D3HUB can help

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leverage strengths and assets to address these challenges. The evaluation considered the DMO's background in relation to the programme's topics, its capacity to meet destination goals through existing strengths, and the added value that D3HUB could bring in unlocking its potential.

### 3.3.3 Local policy landscape and available resources

For data-driven transformations to be effective, the third criterion assessed the local policy landscape and available resources. It is essential that DMOs are integrated within the local tourism ecosystem and operate within a policy framework that supports data-driven green and digital transformation objectives. Selection took into account the presence of relevant policies at the local, regional, or national level, the existence of complementary initiatives (especially EU-level ones), the added value of D3HUB within the existing policy context, the potential to mobilize key stakeholders, and the commitment to further developing sustainable tourism indicators.

### 3.3.4 Network ambitions

Networking ambitions formed the basis of the fourth criterion, recognizing the importance of peer collaboration in the D3HUB pilot. The assessment considered a DMO's motivation to engage in cross-destination collaborations, its participation in existing networks, and its capacity to outline actions that can be implemented through a cooperative approach at the Expression of Interest (EOI) stage. Both a history of network participation and a demonstrated willingness to pursue future joint initiatives were to be taken into account.

### 3.3.5 Staff availability and expertise

Finally, the fifth criterion focused on staff availability and expertise, given that the success of the pilot programme depends on the active engagement of selected participants. DMOs were evaluated based on the availability of a team with relevant expertise, the completeness of the team composition, the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders, and the allocation of sufficient resources to support D3HUB activities. The presence of multidisciplinary teams was viewed as an asset, reinforcing the programme's holistic approach to tourism management.

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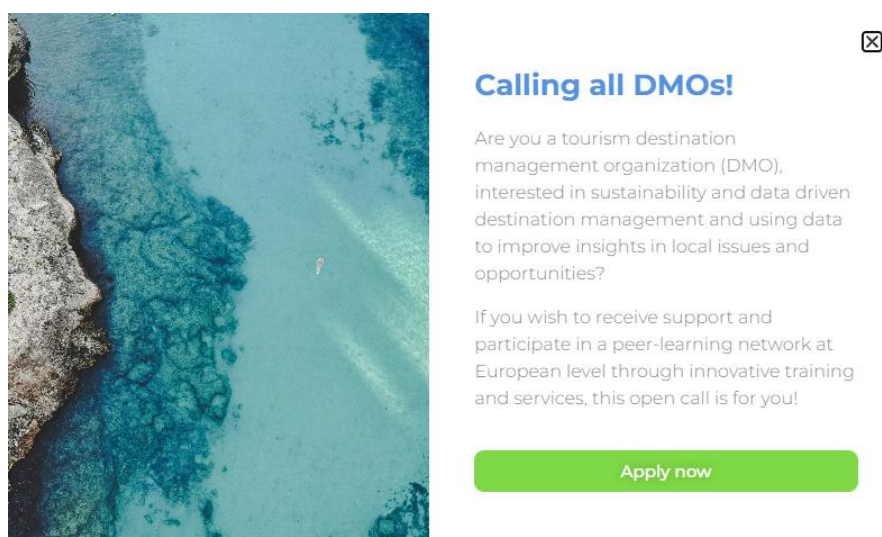
## 4 Dissemination and application procedure

### 4.1 Dissemination strategies and channels

#### 4.1.1 Open call for pilots

An open call for pilots was launched on October 10<sup>th</sup>, 2024 on the 'Calls' section of the project website ([https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?page\\_id=83](https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?page_id=83)). In order to guide users to the call, a pop-up was created that appeared as soon as a visitor entered the website, to inform users about the call (see Figure 4). At a later stage, a second pop-up was used to communicate that the deadline for the expression of interest had been extended (see title 4.2.1).

Figure 4: Pop-up shown to visitors to the website



A brief summary of key points of the call document was provided on the website, including the following sections:

- Who is this call for?
- What is this call about?
- Why take part?
- Benefits for participants?
- How will the selection process work?

Within the last section, a link was provided to the pdf-version of the full document, as well as a separate link to a Management Commitment Letter template.

The call document, included in Annex 1, consisted of a description of the D3HUB project in general, the pilot programme in particular, the eligibility criteria, application steps, expectations, and selection/evaluation process. Prospective candidates were provided with an overview of the expected timeline and learning trajectory, and expected commitments of candidates were explicated so as to ensure motivated and active applicants. The open call for pilots further included a sample Management Commitment Letter in Annex, which could be used by candidates for evidencing organisational commitment and support.

Accompanying the call document, the website further offered a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section in order to handle common queries, while contacts were provided in case of more detailed and individual questions.

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#### 4.1.2 Presentation of call on conferences, workshops and network events

Table 2 provides an overview of conferences, workshops and network events where the call for pilots was introduced. While the official launch of the call for pilots was on 14/10/2024, coinciding with the Tourism Stakeholder Event of the European Commission's Directorate-General for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship & SMEs (DG GROW)<sup>1</sup>, a few events predated this official launch. At these earlier events, awareness was created in advance of the actual expression of interest.

Most of the conference and workshop presentations outlined below focused on broader topics – either specifically about D3HUB or on data-driven destination management in general – and included reference to the call for pilots. However, a few events were specifically organized in order to promote the D3HUB call for pilots, namely:

- The D3HUB DMOs call webinar, organized by the consortium and presented by ANYSOL on 30/10/2024;
- An online information event in German, organized by NIT on 06/11/2024 specifically for interested German DMOs;
- An online information event in Italian, organized by MITUR on 18/11/2024 and focusing on Italian DMOs.

Table 2: Conferences, workshops, network events

Event name	Date	Location	D3HUB partner
International Seminar on Sustainable Tourism Indicators: Data-Driven Strategies for Destinations	13/09/2024	Vienna, Austria	FLAND, NIT, TURAND
'Towards a Smart Tourism' workshop	30/09/2024	Matera, Italy	ARCTUR
S4 Decision Committee	1-3/10/2024	Online	TURAND
Tourism and Cultural Heritage session, EUSPA User Consultation Platform event	08/10/2024	Online	ANYSOL
Technical Support Instrument (TSI) Dissemination Event	11/10/2024	Marbella, Spain	TURAND, ANYSOL
Tourism Stakeholder Event of DG GROW	14/10/2024	Brussels, Belgium	Presented by Misa Labarile, DG Grow
T4T Expert Group, NECSTouR Board of Directors Meeting	14-16/10/2024	Brussels, Belgium	NECSTOUR, TURAND
EUROMED-Dialogue4Tourism online conference	15/10/2024	Online	ANYSOL
TIS 2025: Tourism Innovation Forum	23-25/10/2025	Seville, Spain	TURAND, ANYSOL
CityDNA Autumn Conference	15-18/10/2024	Bruges, Belgium	Flavie de Bueil, DMOs and Ecosystem Board
D3HUB DMOs call webinar: ANYSOL with Segittur online event	30/10/2024	Online	ANYSOL
Blue Islands Innovation Summit event	31/10/2024	Lanzarote, Spain	ANYSOL

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KowSwnKnuW8>

Event name	Date	Location	D3HUB partner
'Innovation in Tourism Destinations' session at the Azores Tourism Summit	31/10/2024	São Miguel, Portugal	ARCTUR
Online information event in German language (15 participating German DMOs)	06/11/2024	Online	NIT
Online information event in Italian language for Italian DMOs	18/11/2024	Online	MITUR
Slovenia Tourist Board workshops, 1-on-1 discussions, calls with Slovenian, Austrian, and Croatia DMOs	01/11/2024	Online	ARCTUR
Global Data Spaces Connect	13/11/2024	Vienna, Austria	ARCTUR
Digital Tourism Conference	14/11/2024	Padua, Italy	ARCTUR
Days of Slovene Tourism	18-19/11/2024	Laško, Slovenia	ARCTUR
Sun and Blue Congress	20-22/11/2024	Almería, Spain	TURAND, NECSTOUR
Knowledge Network workshop with Flemish stakeholders	22/11/2024	Brussels, Belgium	FLAND
EDIH Network Annual Summit event	26/11/2024	Brussels, Belgium	ANYSOL
'Unlocking the Power of Data to Shape the Future of Travel' webinar	27/11/2024	Online	ANYSOL
UN Tourism Affiliated Member Meeting	27/11/2024	Madrid, Spain	TURAND
SMART Tourism BG conference	28/11/2024	Sofia, Bulgaria	ANYSOL
Cumbre de Espacios de Datos Gaia-X event	02/12/2024	Madrid, Spain	ANYSOL

#### 4.1.3 Dissemination via newsletters, social media, and direct contacts

The call for pilots was further disseminated via the newsletters of different consortium partners. The consortium project coordinator ANYSOL devoted a section of the 8 November 2024 newsletter to the D3HUB call, also further featuring news on the Q&A webinar which was to be organized<sup>2</sup>. Contacts within the D3HUB contact database were also sent a reminder about the Q&A webinar. In the following newsletter, published on 17 December 2024, the closing of the call was announced<sup>3</sup>.

NIT published their newsletter on 25 October 2024, providing information on the application process and deadline for the expression of interest, as well as referring to the online information event to be taking place on 6 November 2024. With a reach of around 13,000 recipients, of which half are DMOs, every relevant German DMO would have had the opportunity to be informed<sup>4</sup>. Visit Flanders mentioned the call for pilots of the D3HUB project in their October newsletter, sent to relevant tourism operators and Flemish DMOs on 22 October 2024<sup>5</sup>. ARCTUR presented the opportunities of the call via

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?mailpoet\\_router&endpoint=view\\_in\\_browser&action=view&data=WzE0LCI3YTM0MjU5MmQzMGEiLDAsMCwxMSwxXQ](https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?mailpoet_router&endpoint=view_in_browser&action=view&data=WzE0LCI3YTM0MjU5MmQzMGEiLDAsMCwxMSwxXQ)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?mailpoet\\_router&endpoint=view\\_in\\_browser&action=view&data=WzEzLCJiNGNhYWlyYmViODAiLDAsMCwxMywxXQ](https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/?mailpoet_router&endpoint=view_in_browser&action=view&data=WzEzLCJiNGNhYWlyYmViODAiLDAsMCwxMywxXQ)

<sup>4</sup> <https://archive.newsletter2go.com/?n2g=om24s5if-y2gybl92-l2i>

<sup>5</sup> <https://mautic.toerismevlaanderen.be/email/preview/1856>



a news article on their website, posted on 24/10/2024<sup>6</sup>. NECSTOUR disseminated the call for pilots via their members newsletter on three occasions on 16/10/2024, 30/10/2024, and 13/11/2024<sup>7</sup>.

D3HUB partners furthermore leveraged their contacts via bilateral communications, direct e-mail and reminders. Significantly, NECSTOUR contacted the European Travel Commission (ETC), the European Tourism Association (ETOA), and the Network of Education on Sustainable Tourism (NEST), as well as NECSTOUR partners and ToTLab premium partners, to ensure a wide dissemination among the members of these professional networks. Furthermore, NECSTOUR had direct communication with a number of local and regional DMOs, among which in Spain, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands, Greece, Bulgaria, and Portugal. NIT informed their network of German-speaking and Northern/Eastern European contacts about the possibilities offered by the pilot programme and the call procedure through October and November. MITUR contacted the members of the Interministerial Committee, which included countries such as Denmark, France, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Slovenia, Malta, Portugal, Spain, Estonia, and Cyprus, as well as all Italian regions' representatives, together with some direct contacts with other international DMOs. Visit Flanders discussed the open call for pilots with representatives of all Flemish art cities, the city of Brussels, and all DMOs at province level, while also establishing direct contacts with other international DMOs in their network.

A final significant dissemination activity took place via the social media channels of the consortium partners. Below is a collection of all posts related to the call. In many cases the original post on the main D3HUB channel was further shared on the social media channels of the partner organisations. In these cases, the links provided in Table 3 refer to the original post, mentioning the D3HUB partners who further shared the post, but without providing these additional links for brevity. In general, posts were published on a weekly basis to keep the audience informed and to maximize outreach to as many interested DMOs as possible. With the exception of ARCTUR, who distributed all their posts on Facebook and LinkedIn, all posts of other consortium partners were limited to LinkedIn as social media channel.

Table 3: Social media dissemination

Topic	Date	Author	Shared	Link
DMOs call and application	14/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL, NECSTOUR, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251492682437382144">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251492682437382144</a>
Launch of DMOs call at the Tourism Stakeholder Event	14/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL, NIT	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251617145594212352">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251617145594212352</a>
DMO call and application	14/10/2024	TURAND		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251519259250413568">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251519259250413568</a>
D3HUB presentation and DMOs call at EUROMED-Dialogue4Tourism online conference	15/10/2024	D3HUB		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251895095073931264">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7251895095073931264</a>
DMO call and application	17/10/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7252679773024337920">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7252679773024337920</a>

<sup>6</sup> <https://tourism4-0.org/a-call-to-european-dmos-embrace-innovation-sustainability-and-data-driven-tourism/>

<sup>7</sup> [https://140390763.hs-sites-eu1.com/live-from-brussels-necstour-news-1731485487224?ecid=&utm\\_source=hs\\_email&utm\\_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9RcOQ4SKSS70WBltRbgtqkRxsqIqAMpFjhk9JwVM\\_vUFwEbeVwtSgDE4eT735gD8u3ga1](https://140390763.hs-sites-eu1.com/live-from-brussels-necstour-news-1731485487224?ecid=&utm_source=hs_email&utm_medium=email&hsenc=p2ANqtz-9RcOQ4SKSS70WBltRbgtqkRxsqIqAMpFjhk9JwVM_vUFwEbeVwtSgDE4eT735gD8u3ga1)

Topic	Date	Author	Shared	Link
DMO call and application	19/10/2024	FLAND		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255216503682134017">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255216503682134017</a>
DMOs call and application	21/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL, NECSTOUR, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254435684927606784">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254435684927606784</a>
D3HUB and call presentation at CityDNA Autumn Conference	23/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254760952305258496">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254760952305258496</a>
D3HUB video mentioning the DMOs call	23/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255149395224973313">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255149395224973313</a>
DMOs call reminder	23/10/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254726026310680577/">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7254726026310680577/</a>
DMOs call and application	28/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257026800776609792">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257026800776609792</a>
DMOs call and application	29/10/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid02vgxkGoYMcXvWaZYrJ89q9xUEyotQKgfrv6AXYFnAptJCzN7M8yhXGh3VCgn4QHJgl">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid02vgxkGoYMcXvWaZYrJ89q9xUEyotQKgfrv6AXYFnAptJCzN7M8yhXGh3VCgn4QHJgl</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257115486918688768">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257115486918688768</a>
D3HUB and Segittur online event for the DMOs Call	30/10/2024	D3HUB	ANY SOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257396849253175297">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7257396849253175297</a>
D3HUB and DMOs call presented at "Innovation in Tourist Destinations" session at the Azores Tourism Summit	05/11/2024	D3HUB		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259490672364175361">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259490672364175361</a>
Q&A webinar for DMOs call and registration	06/11/2024	D3HUB	NIT, NECSTOUR, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259849925310464000">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259849925310464000</a>
Q&A webinar for DMOs call and registration	06/11/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid02kXSotoUvGuCVy9DS56gKJFTpbGZBh88rzTSFWpS6Dc9hN553ysUBLuweoaQhKGel">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid02kXSotoUvGuCVy9DS56gKJFTpbGZBh88rzTSFWpS6Dc9hN553ysUBLuweoaQhKGel</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259869486944579584">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7259869486944579584</a>
Q&A webinar for DMOs call and registration	11/11/2024	D3HUB	NECSTOUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7261745133686034433">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7261745133686034433</a>
Q&A webinar for DMOs call and registration	11/11/2024	ANY SOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7261750803235753985">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7261750803235753985</a>



Topic	Date	Author	Shared	Link
Q&A webinar for DMOs call	12/11/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262001031377547264">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262001031377547264</a>
D3HUB participation in European Tourism Forum	13/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262463844659159042">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262463844659159042</a>
Q&A webinar for DMOs call and registration	14/11/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262787692717895680">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7262787692717895680</a>
Summary post Q&A webinar DMOs call	19/11/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL, ARCTUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7264550392246452224">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7264550392246452224</a>
D3HUB and DMOs call at the Digital Tourism conference held in Padua	19/11/2024	D3HUB		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7264640490971545601">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7264640490971545601</a>
D3HUB webinar in Italian language video link	19/11/2024	MITUR		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tatiana-semenova-b3610539_dmos-innovation-tourismdevelopment-activity-7264591657700884480-C1IU/?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop">https://www.linkedin.com/posts/tatiana-semenova-b3610539_dmos-innovation-tourismdevelopment-activity-7264591657700884480-C1IU/?utm_source=share&amp;utm_medium=member_desktop</a>
DMOs call Q&A video link	21/11/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7265313598741106689">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7265313598741106689</a>
Participation in Sun&Blue congress	21/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7265320062138404864">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7265320062138404864</a>
Participation in TIS – Tourism Innovation Summit	23/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255157465548242944">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7255157465548242944</a>
Extended DMOs call	26/11/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL, NIT, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267119856192299009">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267119856192299009</a>
Extended DMOs call	26/11/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid0bn4GHfXGLiGMFPGv94rmAynAXRb8CphpwSk4vHuY3ZmZcEXZzfaMf5hrDxNmBgb7l">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid0bn4GHfXGLiGMFPGv94rmAynAXRb8CphpwSk4vHuY3ZmZcEXZzfaMf5hrDxNmBgb7l</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267123305009082369">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267123305009082369</a>
DMOs call Q&A video link	26/11/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid022UEPT7iyozAGwJZtW85SibcCXPg9LwMQCKhmWEV5tUwCU1DtYddaLnLou8bVAnDI">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid022UEPT7iyozAGwJZtW85SibcCXPg9LwMQCKhmWEV5tUwCU1DtYddaLnLou8bVAnDI</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267078101367496705">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267078101367496705</a>
EDIH Network Summit	26/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267184975790186498">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267184975790186498</a>
SmartTourism.BG conference	27/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267558759722323970">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267558759722323970</a>
DMOs call reminder	28/11/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267881915720892417">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267881915720892417</a>

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DMOs call reminder	29/11/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid0fEgAVxyFkpUU7f2CRtChVUmS6XFGznzEeAVueXR5bXTRqAiQNoT5v1mik7TbLW16l">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid0fEgAVxyFkpUU7f2CRtChVUmS6XFGznzEeAVueXR5bXTRqAiQNoT5v1mik7TbLW16l</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7268180593148919808">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7268180593148919808</a>
Webinar: Unlocking the power of data to shape the future of travel	28/11/2024	ANYSOL		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267916171721494528">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7267916171721494528</a>
DMOs call reminder	03/12/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7269687254950846464">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7269687254950846464</a>
Announcing closure of DMOs call	16/12/2024	D3HUB	ANYSOL, NECSTOUR, MITUR	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7274331004494901248">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7274331004494901248</a>
Announcing closure of DMOs call	16/12/2024	TURAND		<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7285710944578473985">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7285710944578473985</a>
Announcing closure of DMOs call	17/12/2024	ARCTUR		<a href="https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid07WNmRaHuxiYsBP2bUoMoAriBPihyZAc7hn51fRtWdTm6snLAV7YWhZfU25UM7vF7l">https://www.facebook.com/tourism4.0/posts/pfbid07WNmRaHuxiYsBP2bUoMoAriBPihyZAc7hn51fRtWdTm6snLAV7YWhZfU25UM7vF7l</a> <a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7274700364753367041">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7274700364753367041</a>

Finally, the support of European Institutions to disseminate the call has also been noteworthy, with the European Innovation Council and SMEs Executive Agency (EISMEA) promoting the call internally, as well as participating in the general presentation of the call during the D3HUB webinar on 30/10/2024. The call was further published and spread through the Enterprise Europe Network (EEN) and the Erasmus for Young Entrepreneurs (EYE) channels.

## 4.2 Application procedure

### 4.2.1 Submission dates

The open call for pilots was launched on 14 October and initially expected to stay open until the 1<sup>st</sup> of December 2024, keeping the possibility open to extend the deadline in case of a slow expression of interest process. One week before the original deadline, considering the state of applications up until that point, the internal decision was made to extend the deadline by two weeks, until December 15, 2024. As seen in the overview provided on dissemination activities, the extension was widely communicated both directly via organizational networks, and via social media.

### 4.2.2 Use of online submission system

An online submission form was set up via the EU Surveys tool, as built by DG DIGIT, with links to this submission form<sup>8</sup> included in dissemination actions about the call. All potential candidates were required to use this tool, not allowing for alternative forms of a submission of interest, in order to allow for transparency and a proper overview of the flow of information and dates of submission. An exception was made for the requirement to upload the Management Commitment Letter. While the

<sup>8</sup> [https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB\\_CallForPilots](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB_CallForPilots) (survey no longer active)

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online form foresaw a function to upload files, due to the existing size limits of the system, not all candidate participants were able to upload this letter via the online module. In those cases, while the remainder of the submission form was still required to be uploaded through the system, the Management Commitment Letter could be sent by email to the project coordinator.

#### 4.2.3 Structure of online submission form

The layout of the online submission form is included in Annex 2. After a short introduction and a required informed consent agreement, main application contacts were asked, specifically name, job title, organisation, and email address.

Given the quota requirements that were established previously, the next sections of the form collected the information needed to be able to test and set the quotas at a later stage. Beginning with general organisational descriptives, participants were asked to describe the type of organisation they represented, choosing between a list of (i) Destination Management Organisation (DMO), local level (e.g., city, town, community); (ii) Destination Management Organisation (DMO), regional level; (iii) Destination Management Organisation (DMO), state/national level; (iv) Other. Next, candidates needed to indicate in which EU member state they are located, with a radio button for candidates not located in a EU member state.

The next section inquired about the level of data provision and data collection. First, respondents were asked to self-describe the level of data proficiency of their organisation between the choices low, medium, high, or unknown. In the following question a large list of multiple choice checkboxes was provided with data examples (see Figure 5), with the express purpose to get a better understanding on effective data experience so that proficiency could be scored by the consortium as well, rather than purely relying on self-selection.

A final section related to the established quotas queried the destination typology, asking for a description of the landscape of the destination as a choice between (i) Urban; (ii) Rural; (iii) Coastal; (iv) Snowy mountain; (v) Nature; (vi) Mixed. Respondents were referred to the EU Tourism Dashboard<sup>9</sup> for a correct designation of their region – if available. A second question within this segment – which was unrelated to the quota criteria but interesting for the general characterisation of candidates, related to the percentage of tourism-related employment in the destination with approximate categories of (i) Less than 20%; (ii) >2 to 5%; (iii) >5 to 7.5%; (iv) >7.5 to 10%; (v) >10 to 15%; (vi) More than 15%; (vii) Don't know.

<sup>9</sup> <https://tourism-dashboard.ec.europa.eu/?lng=en&ctx=tourism>

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Figure 5: Applicant form question on current data collection

\* For which of the following indicators do you collect data?

<input type="checkbox"/> Overnight stays	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of visitors at Tourist Information Centres
<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist expenditure/tourism revenue	<input type="checkbox"/> Emissions/carbon footprint
<input type="checkbox"/> Arrivals	<input type="checkbox"/> Average Daily Rate (ADR) of accommodations
<input type="checkbox"/> Resident satisfaction/acceptance	<input type="checkbox"/> Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR)
<input type="checkbox"/> Guest satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of day trips
<input type="checkbox"/> Length of stay	<input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation establishment registry (providers/beds)
<input type="checkbox"/> Occupancy rates	<input type="checkbox"/> Registry of tourism business
<input type="checkbox"/> Results of campaign activities	<input type="checkbox"/> Data on residents' perception of tourism
<input type="checkbox"/> Destination image/brand awareness	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of enterprises and resources with service quality or sustainability certifications
<input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder satisfaction	<input type="checkbox"/> Regional spread of tourism demand
<input type="checkbox"/> Number of tourist beds	<input type="checkbox"/> Number of flight movements (arrivals and departures)
<input type="checkbox"/> (Online) bookings	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourism tax income
<input type="checkbox"/> Seasonality	<input type="checkbox"/> Tourist routes within the destination

Are there any other indicators, not listed above, for which you collect data? If so, please explain which.

Following the quota-related form questions, candidates could then highlight their interest in the D3HUB peer-learning programme topics, by first of all declaring their priority topic as one of (i) Managing the balance between residents and visitors; (ii) Climate change mitigation and adaptation; (iii) Redistributing tourist flows in space and time; (iv) Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism. Furthermore, respondents were asked to indicate whether or not they would be interested in any of the other topics on offer, in case of unavailability of their priority topic, adopting an ordinal scale between: priority topic, very interested, interested, not interested.

The next section was meant to collect the necessary information to assess the scoring criteria and queried the motivations and ambition to participate. All questions allowed for a free text input of 2000 characters. Seven questions were posed:

1. What are your objectives and expectations for joining the D3HUB peer-learning pilot community? Do you envision a pathway towards implementation of research results at the end of the D3HUB pilot programme? Please elaborate on how your participation in this programme would reflect a clear commitment to action.
2. What are the main territorial challenges your destination faces in terms of tourism and its development? Please explain how participation in the programme might assist in addressing these challenges.
3. Do the challenges the D3HUB pilot programme wishes to study link with existing local/regional/national policy and accompanying resources? If yes, please provide examples of policy and/or strategy documents.
4. Do you envision an integration of relevant local stakeholders during the pilot programme? If so, how do you expect to engage with your stakeholders?
5. Have you participated in existing European or local networks with other destinations before? If yes, please elaborate. What do you hope to gain from the network opportunities offered by the D3HUB peer learning programme?
6. What resources (financial, human, technical) does your DMO have access to that can support participation in the D3HUB pilot? How will these resources contribute to the success of your involvement in the programme?

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7. Please list any experiences/examples/best practices of data-driven destination management and green and digital transitions in which your organisation is involved.

The combined answers to these questions can provide the necessary information for the assessment of the scoring criteria highlighted under title 3.3. Key motivations and destination goals were covered by questions 1 and 6, destination strengths and assets could be inferred through questions 2 and 7, the local policy landscape and available resources were linked with questions 3 and 4, network ambitions were the scope of question 5. The final scoring criteria on staff availability and expertise relates to the final part of the questionnaire.

In the final part of the online form, the institutional commitment was assessed, asking to provide a positive statement on institutional commitment, including a signed letter. Furthermore, the candidates were asked to list the team members of their organisation they expected to involve, including departments and expertise.

Some final checkboxes were included at the form, to ensure that all candidates were aware of – and comfortable with – the working language being English, and to receive their express agreement on sharing destination data with the D3HUB consortium and the EU in as far as the data is of non-confidential, non-commercial nature.

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## 5 Evaluation process and final selection

After the open call for pilots was closed on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, the D3HUB consortium started the evaluation process in order to come to a final list of selected candidates by January 15<sup>th</sup>, 2025. During the evaluation process, various social media posts, as listed in Table 4, kept submitted parties up-to-date on the process.

Table 4: Social media posts during evaluation stage

Topic	Date	Author	Shared	Link
Back in action and selection process	07/01/2025	D3HUB	ANYSOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7282360674628886530/">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7282360674628886530/</a>
Reminder of selection results on 15 January	10/01/2025	D3HUB	ANYSOL	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7283784712567857153/">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7283784712567857153/</a>
Post on selection of candidates	15/01/2025	D3HUB	ANYSOL, DG Grow	<a href="https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7285254658812448768">https://www.linkedin.com/feed/update/urn:li:activity:7285254658812448768</a>

In the next sections, the different steps taken during the evaluation process are explained in detail, from pre-screening to expert assessment, quota weighting and final candidate selection. Throughout the process, any potential conflicts of interest were carefully guarded and decisions were never taken on individual basis but came as a result of multi-evaluator scoring, an objective quota script, and consensus decisions.

### 5.1 Phase 1: Pre-screening of applications

In the initial stage 81 submissions (82 minus one trial version) were tracked in the system. A first analysis already revealed four double submissions. Such doubles were removed and only the most recent versions of such applications were maintained, leading to a list of 77 potential candidates. The initial stage of the evaluation process was the pre-screening phase, where applications were reviewed against the mandatory and eliminatory requirements. This step ensured that only applicants who fulfilled the essential administrative and legal requirements moved forward. During this stage, each submission was checked to confirm that all required documents and information had been provided. Candidates who failed to meet these essential criteria were excluded from the process. Given the eligibility criteria that were adopted, a number of submissions could not be withheld for the following reasons:

- One submission came from outside the EU member states, EEG-countries or Switzerland.
- Two submissions came from private organisations without DMO status.
- Six submissions lacked an institutional commitment and Management Support Letter.

This led to a final eligible sample of 68 candidate destinations. Some main characteristics of these potential candidates, are highlighted in Table 5. As can be seen, there is an imbalance in regional representation, with only three applicants situated in Northern Europe, with Eastern and Central Europe having 11 candidates, Western Europe 15 candidates, and Southern Europe 39 candidates, with in particular Spain seeing high representation. In terms of proficiency levels, it was expected that a majority of organisations are at a medium level of data proficiency and that is reflected among the candidates. There are, however, still a good number of low and high proficiency candidates. Similar patterns are found in terms of governance and typology where it is to be expected that national level DMOs and snowy mountain regions would be less represented given their smaller number in the total

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tourism ecosystem population. In general, the diversity in the sample appeared sufficient for a balanced selection process and quota application.

Table 5: Characteristics of eligible candidates

Geography	Proficiency	Governance	Typology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Eastern and Central Europe (11):</b> Bulgaria (2), Czech Republic (4), Slovak Republic (1), Slovenia (4)</li> <li>- <b>Northern Europe (3):</b> Finland (1), Sweden (1), Norway (1)</li> <li>- <b>Southern Europe (39):</b> Croatia (2), Greece (2), Italy (12), Portugal (3), Spain (20)</li> <li>- <b>Western Europe (15):</b> Austria (4), Belgium (7), Germany (2), Netherlands (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low (8)</li> <li>- Medium (46)</li> <li>- High (14)</li> </ul> <p>Estimated proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low (13)</li> <li>- Medium (38)</li> <li>- High (17)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State, national (2)</li> <li>- Regional (26)</li> <li>- City, town, community (38)</li> <li>- Other (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rural (10)</li> <li>- Urban (13)</li> <li>- Coastal/island (13)</li> <li>- Nature (8)</li> <li>- Snowy mountain (3)</li> <li>- Mixed (21)</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Phase 2: Expert assessment of applications

### 5.2.1 Expert assignment and potential conflicts of interest

After the pre-screening phase, the applications that passed the eliminatory requirements moved on to the expert evaluation phase. This phase involved a detailed assessment of each candidate's application by internal reviewers, based on the predetermined scoring criteria meant to assess the strength of the different proposals. Expert reviewers consisted of staff members of the D3HUB consortium partners. Multiple reviewers were involved per partner. Each candidate was reviewed by three different partners, leading to three independent review scores per submitted proposal. In order to avoid any conflicts of interest, a first assignment of reviews was made on 17/12/2024, taking into account a few guiding principles, namely:

- D3HUB partners were not to review any candidate from their own country. Therefore, Spanish candidates were not reviewed by ANYSOL or Turismo Andalusia. Belgian submissions were not reviewed by Visit Flanders. Italian candidates were not reviewed by MITUR. Slovenian candidates were not reviewed by ARCTUR, and German candidates were not assessed by NIT.
- D3HUB partners were not to review any candidates that were part of their network. This specifically related to NECSTOUR, where it was ensured that staff members of NECSTOUR were not assigned any reviews of their own partner organizations.

After initial assignment of review roles, D3HUB partners had the opportunity to declare any further conflict of interest they could experience, after which such cases were reassigned to another partner organization. The final assignment was as follows: ANYSOL conducted 33 reviews, NECSTOUR was responsible for 32 reviews, TURAND assessed 34 candidates, Visit Flanders committed to 33 reviews, NIT finished 31 reviews, MITUR committed to 10 reviews, and ARCTUR took responsibility of 31

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reviews, for a total review count of 204 assessment reports. Reviews were submitted by January 6<sup>th</sup> 2025 the latest.

### 5.2.2 Scoring templates

Since every proposal was evaluated independently by three different reviewers, and multiple reviewers and partners were involved in the review process, a standard evaluation sheet was produced, together with assessment scales for each of the five criteria. The evaluation sheets, added in Annex 3, collected standard information on the D3HUB evaluator (name and organization), the applicant (candidate id and organisation name), and for each of the five scoring criteria – i.e., (i) Key motivations and destination goals, (ii) Destination strengths and assets, (iii) Local policy landscape and available resources, (iv) Network ambitions, (v) Staff availability and expertise – a general description and instructions were provided, and reviewers were asked to give a motivated score between 0 and 20 on each criteria.

For each of the criteria, a general assessment scale was provided to assist reviewers in their scoring. The assessment scale is attached in Annex 4 and highlighted key aspects that a candidate form should include – or exclude – in order to be considered on a scale from excellent (18 to 20), to very good (16 to 17.9), good (14 to 15.9), average (10 to 13.9), or below average (0 to 9.9).

### 5.2.3 Averaging and discussion on outlier scores

After having received and centralized all scores, simple averages were calculated from the combined scores per application. Any proposal for which the rating spread exceeded 30% was discussed on a consortium consensus meeting that took place on January 7<sup>th</sup>, 2025 where differences in interpretation were discussed on the basis of the motivations for scoring different criteria of the projects. After discussion scores were revised to within an acceptable consensus range. The largest discrepancy between highest and lowest score was 27, with the smallest scoring difference being 2. On average, the range was 14.0 percentage points.

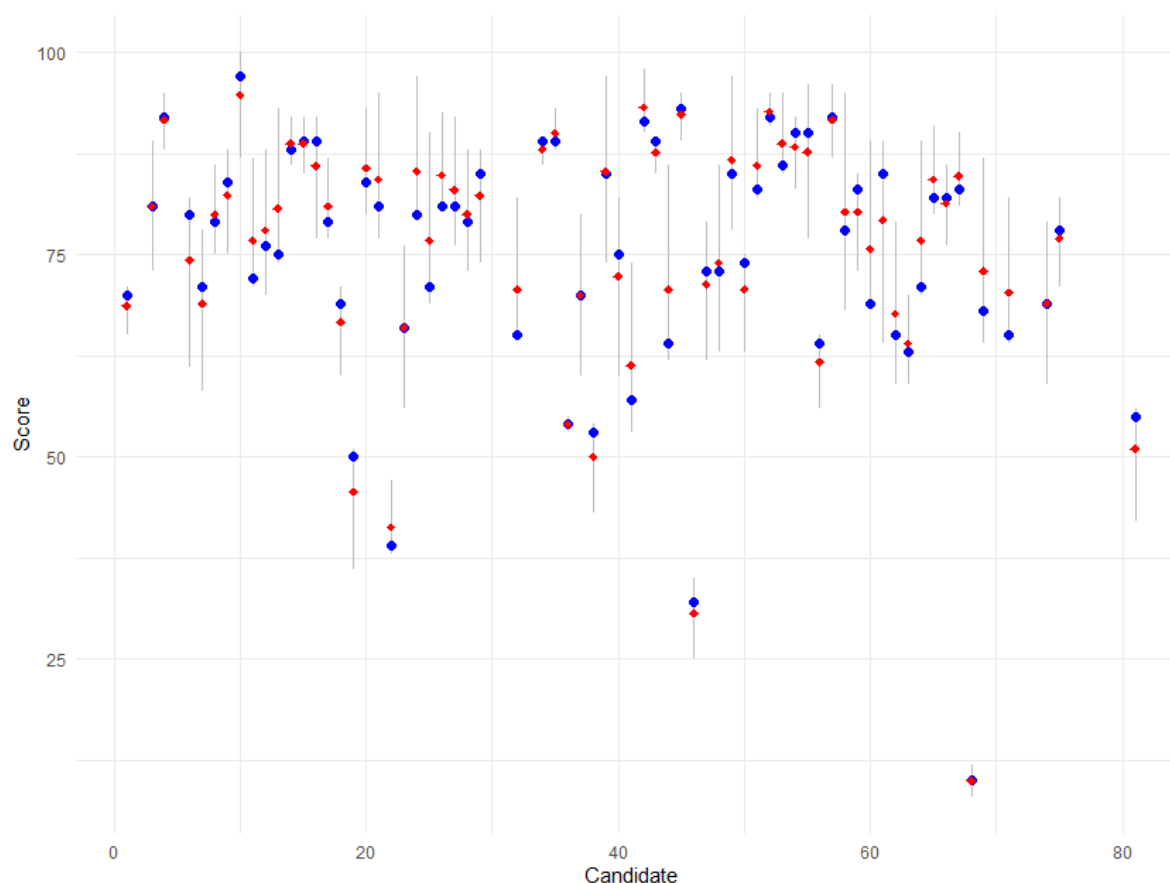
Figure 6 below shows a graphical representation of the range of scores received for the different candidate submissions. In the figure, the red squares represent mean values, while blue dots represent the middle score, and the length of the grey lines represents the range between maximum and minimum score. Therefore, if the blue dot is closer to the top of the grey line, this means that two out of three scores were relatively higher. Conversely, if the blue dot is closer to the bottom of the grey line, two out of three reviewers tended to provide lower scores to the candidate. In general, strongest consensus appears for both the lowest scoring and the highest scoring candidates, with proposals that are somewhat more in the middle having comparatively larger ranges.

After the final consensus meeting a candidate ranking from highest to lowest could be established. The maximum average score was 94.7, with the lowest score being 10.0. On average, the submissions were considered ‘good’ on average, with a mean score of 75.6 across all candidates and a standard deviation of 15.1.

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Figure 6: Range of scores after consensus review process



## 5.3 Phase 3: Application of quota criteria

### 5.3.1 Stepwise scripted quota application

After the thorough assessment based on predefined scoring criteria described above, final scores were determined on a scale from 0 to 100. This initial scoring led to a preliminary ranking from highest to lowest-scoring application. Next, the established quota criteria needed to be applied, since it could not be assumed that the purely merit-based ranking would lead to the needed diversity in destination profiles. Therefore, in the next stage, a quota-based stepwise reweighing adjustment took place in order to ensure that the pre-defined quota would be fulfilled to the best extent and proper diversity across pilots was maintained. However, before following through with the quota-based stepwise reweighing procedure, the four candidates with a score below 50% were excluded for further consideration, starting the next phase with 64 remaining candidates.

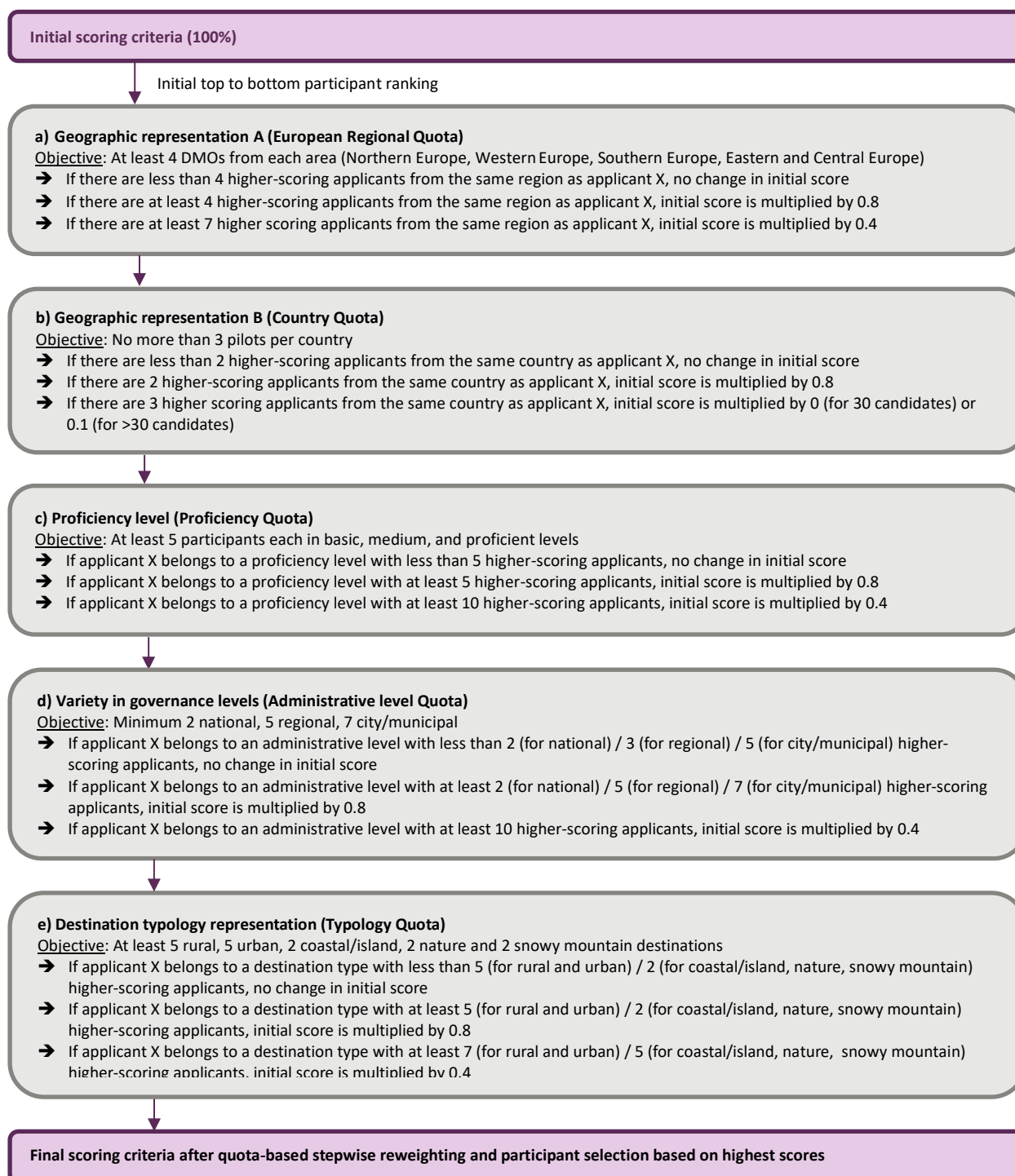
The stepwise process entailed that highest-scoring applicants were included first and added to the pool of selected candidates. With every new selection, the applicant profile was compared to the current pool of selected candidates in terms of geography, proficiency level, governance level, and destination typology. In case where a prospective applicant showed much similarity with already selected pilots, weights were applied in order to reweight their initial score so as to give preference to other candidates who could ensure a more diverse set of pilot destinations. The exact weights that were applied for each situation are outlined in the flowchart of Figure 7. The final score for each candidate was then the result of:

$$\text{Final score} = \text{Initial score} \times W_{\text{geo1}} \times W_{\text{geo2}} \times W_{\text{prof}} \times W_{\text{gov}} \times W_{\text{typ}}$$

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With the values of  $W_{geo1}$ ,  $W_{geo2}$ ,  $W_{prof}$ ,  $W_{gov}$ ,  $W_{typ}$  being dependant on the characteristics of the pool of already selected participants<sup>10</sup>. The weights were assigned via an automated script, written in R.

Figure 7: Selection weights flowchart



<sup>10</sup> For example: assuming an applicant from a region having less than 4 countries represented, from a country with 2 candidates already selected, at a basic proficiency level which is still underrepresented (<5 candidates already selected), representing a local-level DMO (with 7 local-level DMOs already selected), and being an urban destination, which is overrepresented (7 candidates of urban profile), then the final score would be:  $80 \times 1 \times 0.8 \times 1 \times 0.8 \times 0.4 = 20.48$ .

### 5.3.2 Selection results

After the quota-based reweighting, a new ranking was produced that respected the merit-based scoring while ensuring the diversity needs that were set out in the quotas and are needed for properly validating the service portfolio across a range of geographies, typologies, and contexts. After running the script, the thirty best-scoring applicants – with the strict geographical limitation of maximum three candidates per country – are characterized in Table 6. While the diversity in candidates is acceptable, not all of the stated objectives could be maintained due to the relatively small candidate profiles to select from. As can be seen, in terms of regional spread, the region of Northern Europe did not achieve the minimal target of 4 participants, due to their only being 3 initial submissions from Northern European Countries. In terms of country-representation, there are 15 different countries represented, with no member state having more than three candidates. Proficiency-levels were not evenly distributed, but basing the analysis on the estimated proficiency-profiles, the minimum target of 5 participants per proficiency-level was achieved. Similarly, governance-profiles followed the minimal quota requirements of a 2-5-7 distribution between national, regional, and local DMOs. Finally, in terms of the typology of destinations, urban (3 instead of the targeted 5) and snowy mountain (1 instead of 2) were slightly underrepresented. However, the mixed category can cover a range of typologies, potentially including these subdivisions.

Table 6: Characteristics of 30 selected candidates

Geography	Proficiency	Governance	Typology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Eastern and Central Europe (6):</b> Czech Republic (3), Slovak Republic (1), Slovenia (2)</li> <li>- <b>Northern Europe (3):</b> Finland (1), Sweden (1), Norway (1)</li> <li>- <b>Southern Europe (12):</b> Croatia (2), Greece (1), Italy (3), Portugal (3), Spain (3)</li> <li>- <b>Western Europe (9):</b> Austria (3), Belgium (3), Germany (1), Netherlands (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Medium (23)</li> <li>- High (7)</li> </ul> <p>Estimated proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low (5)</li> <li>- Medium (16)</li> <li>- High (9)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State, national (2)</li> <li>- Regional (16)</li> <li>- City, town, community (12)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rural (5)</li> <li>- Urban (3)</li> <li>- Coastal/island (5)</li> <li>- Nature (3)</li> <li>- Snowy mountain (1)</li> <li>- Mixed (13)</li> </ul>

Even though the initial selection of candidates therefore provided a diverse distribution that quite closely followed the stated quota objectives, since the D3HUB proposal targeted ‘a minimum of 30’ pilots, there was a possibility to extent the pilot programme towards a slightly larger group of participants. After internal discussion, this was deemed favourable for a few reasons. First of all, a larger peer-learning group would provide more opportunities for learning from best practices within the different cluster groups. Secondly, by expanding the size of the clusters, contingency was built into the next phase in cases where one or more candidates would not remain actively involved. Finally, expanding the list of candidates would allow for an improved diversity of pilots. Therefore, it was

decided to allow 40 pilots into the programme. To this extent, the script was rerun with 40 pilots in mind, slightly relaxing the geographical limitations of having maximum three candidates per country. This relaxation of the hard threshold was needed because the pool of candidates did not contain enough geographic variance to increase the pilot programme by 10 more pilots, without leading to a violation of the country-limit.

## 5.4 Final candidate selection

### 5.4.1 Characteristics of selected candidates

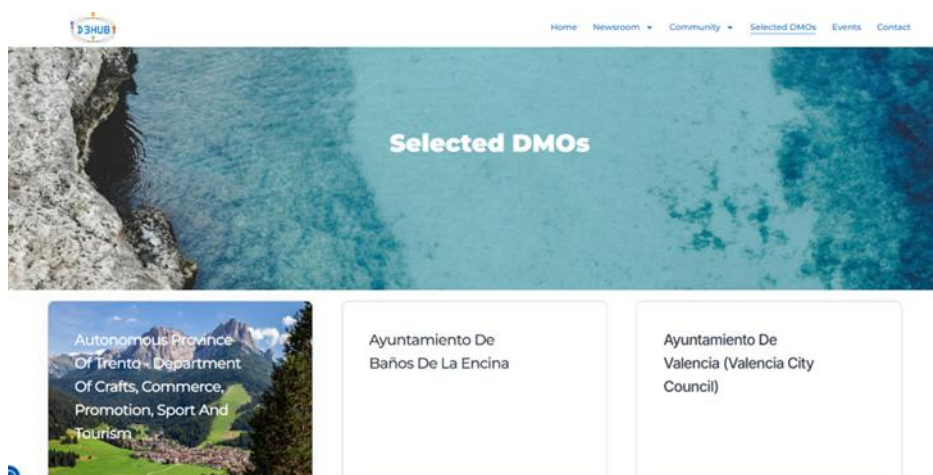
The characteristics of the final selection of 40 candidates are described in Table 7. In terms of regional spread, Northern Europe remains underrepresented. This could, however, not be solved due to a lack of expressions of interest from Northern European DMOs. By increasing the size of the pilot programme, the pilots now represent 16 different countries, with the inclusion of a Bulgarian pilot, while also seeing a rise in Slovenian, Italian, Spanish, and German participants. There is also an improved representation of low and high data-proficient DMOs, and a growth in the number of regional and local governance levels. In terms of destination typologies, the larger sample now ensures the participation of more than five urban destinations.

Table 7: Characteristics of 40 selected candidates

Geography	Proficiency	Governance	Typology
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- <b>Eastern and Central Europe (8):</b></li> <li>- Bulgaria (1), Czech Republic (3), Slovak Republic (1), Slovenia (3)</li> <li>- <b>Northern Europe (3):</b> Finland (1), Sweden (1), Norway (1)</li> <li>- <b>Southern Europe (19):</b> Croatia (2), Greece (1), Italy (5), Portugal (3), Spain (8)</li> <li>- <b>Western Europe (10):</b> Austria (3), Belgium (3), Germany (2), Netherlands (2)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low (1)</li> <li>- Medium (30)</li> <li>- High (9)</li> </ul> <p>Estimated proficiency</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Low (7)</li> <li>- Medium (20)</li> <li>- High (13)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- State, national (2)</li> <li>- Regional (19)</li> <li>- City, town, community (17)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Rural (6)</li> <li>- Urban (6)</li> <li>- Coastal/island (8)</li> <li>- Nature (4)</li> <li>- Snowy mountain (2)</li> <li>- Mixed (13)</li> </ul>

The selected candidates were informed in person and their selection was announced on the D3HUB website where a specific section was prepared, showcasing the name of each destination, a photograph and a link to the destination's website (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: D3HUB webpage on the selected DMOs for the pilot programme



#### 5.4.2 Assignment of candidates to pilot clusters

A final step to complete the destination recruitment process was the assignment of destinations to one of the four topical clusters on which the pilot programme will be based. When looking at the priority interests of the 40 selected DMOs, there were noticeable imbalances, with the topic of redistribution of visitor flows being prioritized 23 times. Eight candidates had selected the support for emerging destinations in the attraction of sustainable tourism as priority topic, while six destinations selected balancing residents and visitors as a main interest. Finally, three destinations chose the climate change mitigation and adaptation topic over the other clusters. In order to avoid large imbalances and small cluster sizes, a simple assignment based on priority topics could therefore not be followed.

Nevertheless, almost all candidates showed a high interest in multiple other clusters as well, therefore, even if the priority topic could not be selected, every destination could be assigned to a pilot for which the DMO had shown at least a high interest. In cases where a high interest was shown across more than two topics, the application forms were revisited in order to assign destinations to the fields which seemed to most closely align with the destination's challenges and strategic plans. The final distribution per cluster is provided in Table 8. In the final distribution, managing the balance between residents and visitors will have 10 participants, the cluster on climate change mitigation and adaptation includes 10 destinations as well. Redistributing tourist flows in space and time is slightly larger with 12 participants. Finally, the topic on supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism will be organized for 8 destinations.

Figure 9: Distribution of selected pilot participants by clusters

Cluster	DMOs
Managing the balance between residents and visitors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Municipality of Arouca (Portugal)</li> <li>- Ljubljana Tourism (Slovenia)</li> <li>- Autonomous Province of Trento (Italy)</li> <li>- SalzburgerLand Tourismus GmbH (Austria)</li> <li>- Ayuntamiento de Baños de la Encina (Spain)</li> <li>- Romantischer Rhein Tourismus GmbH (Germany)</li> <li>- Oberösterreich Tourismus GmbH (Austria)</li> <li>- City of Dubrovnik (Croatia)</li> <li>- Visit Kosice (Slovak Republic)</li> <li>- Algarve Tourism Board (Portugal)</li> </ul>

Cluster	DMOs
Climate change mitigation and adaptation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Promoción Exterior de Lanzarote, SA (Spain)</li> <li>- Westtoer Apb (Belgium)</li> <li>- Valencia City Council (Spain)</li> <li>- Merk Fryslân (Netherlands)</li> <li>- Voralberg Tourismus GmbH (Austria)</li> <li>- Visit Skåne (Sweden)</li> <li>- Ibiza Town Hall (Spain)</li> <li>- Hradec Králové Regional Tourism Board (Czech Republic)</li> <li>- Šalek Valley Tourist Board (Slovenia)</li> <li>- Azores DMO (Portugal)</li> </ul>
Redistributing tourist flows in space and time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Visit Bruges (Belgium)</li> <li>- CzechTourism (Czech Republic)</li> <li>- DMO Tourism Bohinj (Slovenia)</li> <li>- Benissa City Council (Spain)</li> <li>- Zagreb County Tourist Board (Croatia)</li> <li>- Spolek Beskydhost (Czech Republic)</li> <li>- Costa del Sol Tourism &amp; Planning (Spain)</li> <li>- Lapland North Destinations Ltd (Finland)</li> <li>- Contursa – Turismo de Sevilla (Spain)</li> <li>- Málaga City Council (Spain)</li> <li>- Ente Turismo Langhe Monferrato Roero (Italy)</li> <li>- Visit Zuid-Limburg (Netherlands)</li> </ul>
Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Varna municipality (Bulgaria)</li> <li>- Rhodes Tourism Promotion Organization (Greece)</li> <li>- Destinazione Turistica Emilia – Visit Emilia (Italy)</li> <li>- Scheldevallei National Park (Belgium)</li> <li>- Islands of Sicily DMO (Italy)</li> <li>- Northern Norway Tourist Board (Norway)</li> <li>- GrimmHeimat NordHessen/Regionalmanagement Nordhessen GmbH (Germany)</li> <li>- Municipality of San Benedetto del Tronto (Italy)</li> </ul>

## 6 Conclusion

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This report set out to provide an overview of the selection process for the destinations that will participate in the D3HUB peer-learning pilot programme. The document is written in order to provide full transparency on each step of the selection process, and outlines each aspect of the process, from (i) initial ideation of the pilot operationalization, to (ii) the content of the open call for pilots, (iii) the dissemination of the call for pilots throughout European networks, (iv) the application process, (v) the evaluation, and (vi) the final selection.

The open call for pilots was distributed through many sector events, D3HUB networks, and social media channels and reached a wide European audience. While the subject attracted significant attention, and the extended call deadline allowed for a larger expression of interest, the candidate list – which contained 68 eligible submissions – was somewhat skewed geographically, with a lower interest coming from Northern European destinations. There were also limited submissions from the state/national level, although this was to be expected due to the smaller number of national DMOs – as compared to regional or local DMOs.

The evaluation process combined a merit-based scoring – based on averaging three independent reviewer scores – with selective quota criteria meant to ensure diversity in the participating destinations in terms of geography, data proficiency, governance level, and destination typology. This procedure led to a sufficiently balanced selection of ultimately 40 participants that will participate in the peer-learning programme and will provide a proper basis for testing the support scheme of the Competence Centre across a range of destination typologies and contexts.

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## 7 Annex 1: Open call for pilots



### OPEN CALL FOR PILOTS

Related WP	WP4	Document Reference	Call for Pilots
Related Deliverable(s)	D4.1, D4.2	Dissemination Level (*)	Public

Project consortium – Coordinator: ANYSOLUTION– ANYSOL (ES)			
ASSESSORIA JURIDICA BALEAR SL	AE – ASUBA (ES)	NETWORK OF EUROPEAN REGIONS FOR COMPETITIVE AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM ASBL	BEN – NECSTOUR (BE)
EMPRESA PÚBLICA PARA LA GESTIÓN DEL TURISMO Y DEL DEPORTE DE ANDALUCÍA SA	BEN – TURAND (ES)	MINISTERIO DEL TURISMO	BEN – MITUR (IT)
INSTITUT FÜR TOURISMUS- UND BADERFORSCHUNG IN NORDEUROPA GMBH	BEN – NIT (DE)	ARCTUR RACUNALNISKI INZENIRING DOO	BEN – ARCTUR (SI)
TOERISME VLAANDEREN	BEN – FLAND (BE)		

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## 1. The D3HUB Pilot Peer-Learning Community

In the framework of the D3HUB – Tourism of Tomorrow Data-Driven-Destinations Hub project<sup>1</sup>, funded under the call PPPA-2022-TOTOLAB – EU Competence Centre to support data management in tourism destinations, the D3HUB consortium is building a community of passionate local, regional and national destination management organisations (DMOs) in order to co-design and test a competency support scheme. The objective is “to test the European Competence Centre theoretical support scheme by a critical mass of destinations to solve real challenges with real data and tools”. Within the framework of the D3HUB, the “support scheme” refers to the portfolio of services that the future Competence Centre will offer to European tourist destinations such as consulting, training and capacity building, project development or actions for the dissemination of knowledge and best practices, among others. Therefore, 30 applicants will be selected and organised in clusters around four topical destination challenges. Each cluster will be facilitated by members of at least two D3HUB consortium partners, based on the internal talent map and supported by selected external experts. The 30 selected applicants will participate in a peer-learning scheme of 12 months, a programme made up of online activities, intending to foster collaboration and knowledge transfer between participants.

The community will exchange and learn methodologies, tools, and practices fostering green and digital destination transformations through a data-driven approach supported by data collection and dashboard visualisation. Starting from the shared challenges linked to a variety of tourism ecosystems, the selected participants will be at the heart of a learning journey that will focus on adopting data for decision-making and sustainable destination development.

Applications to join the D3HUB pilot community can be submitted by completing the online form at [https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB\\_CallForPilots](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB_CallForPilots) until 1 December 2024, 18:00 CET.

<sup>1</sup> See project website <https://www.d3hub-competencecentre.eu/>

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## 2. The D3HUB project in a nutshell

D3HUB stands for Data-Driven Destinations Hub. The overarching goal of D3HUB is to assist tourist destinations (composed of DMOs, SMEs, and public-private stakeholders) in finding the right technologies, frameworks, tools, and methodologies for adopting a data-driven management approach and measuring their sustainable development by identifying the right data sources for defining sustainable indicators. The Competence Centre will develop a support scheme aimed at increasing data proficiency and contributing to competency-building to assist in data interpretation and sharing.

<b>Title of project</b>	Tourism of Tomorrow Data-Driven Destinations Hub
<b>EU call</b>	PPPA-2022-TOTOLAB
<b>Service</b>	EISMEA.1.02-SMP/SME Pillar
<b>Starting date</b>	15/11/2023
<b>Duration</b>	36 months
<b>Coordinator</b>	AnySolution SL (ES)
<b>Partners</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assessoria Juridica Balear SL (ES) (<i>Affiliated Entity</i>)</li> <li>Network of European Regions for Competitive and Sustainable Tourism ASBL (BE)</li> <li>Empresa Pública para la Gestión del Turismo y del Deporte de Andalucía, SA (ES)</li> <li>Ministero Del Turismo (IT)</li> <li>Institut für Tourismus- und Bäderforschung in Nordeuropa GmbH(DE)</li> <li>Arctur Racunalniski Inzeniring DOO (SI)</li> <li>Toerisme Vlaanderen (BE)</li> </ul>

Europe is undergoing a significant transformation in its economy and society by promoting a green and digital shift within the EU's industry and ecosystems to enhance sustainability, competitiveness, and long-term resilience. In the tourism sector, the European Commission, in collaboration with key players in the tourism ecosystem, has developed the Transition Pathway for Tourism<sup>2</sup>. This plan outlines key actions, targets, and conditions to help the sector meet these goals. Notably, the pathway focuses on areas such as digitalisation and upskilling, with specific objectives like: (i) improving data-sharing practices to foster innovative tourism services and better manage destinations sustainably; and (ii) investing in workforce skills to ensure a qualified labour pool and attractive career opportunities within the ecosystem. These objectives highlight some of the main challenges facing the tourism sector, including: (i) limited data availability, standardisation, and interoperability between tourism stakeholders and destinations; (ii) a lack of knowledge, skills, and resources for stakeholders to successfully navigate the digital transition and fully leverage new technologies and existing data; and (iii) the absence of a unified framework for sustainability monitoring, along with the need for effective management tools to address seasonality and tourism density.

The above-mentioned challenges are especially relevant for DMOs at various levels, many of which are struggling to incorporate the right technologies needed to improve their data-driven destination management and determine which indicators to use for destination monitoring and sustainability measurement. The D3HUB project was selected after a competitive selection procedure to complete a 36-month project with the main objective to design, test, pave the way and sustain a self-sustainable European Competence Centre to support tourism destinations and their ecosystems (with special attention to SMEs) in their data-driven green and digital transition as well as to increase collaboration

<sup>2</sup> Directorate-general for Internal Market, Industry, Entrepreneurship and SMEs (2022). *Transition Pathway for Tourism*. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. Doi: 10.2873/344425

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and knowledge transfer between tourism stakeholders and tourism destinations. D3HUB is designing actions to foster leadership and partnership of European DMOs as crucial elements for overcoming these challenges that will be the core of the support scheme that will be developed and tested within 30 diverse pilots during the project's runtime. The objective is to join forces with each other, the D3HUB consortium partners and a selection of external experts, through active involvement in a peer-learning scheme and capacity-building activities. The analysis of relevant data sources and the development of tailor-made dashboards that will be developed during the pilot phase, will support this strategy. These destinations will further help to finetune a service portfolio that can support all European destinations and their DMOs in their data-oriented, green, and digital transition.

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### 3. What's on offer?

Peer-learning and knowledge transfer are central to the D3HUB pilot approach. Local, regional and/or national Destination Management Organisation representatives will learn from and reflect on experiences gained during the pilot activities that aim to provide data-driven insights on a selection of destination challenges. Selected applications will enter a training and partnership programme of 12 months. There is no budget foreseen for participation. D3HUB cannot cover any potential expenses. No travel or face-to-face meetings are foreseen, with the entire training programme being developed online. The only expense to be taken into account is, therefore, a dedication of staff time.

The peer-learning programme focuses specifically on four central clusters, outlining a variety of challenges that destinations might be confronted with:

#### 1. Managing the balance between residents, visitors, and stakeholders

This cluster for pilots aims to balance the needs of residents with the demands of visitors, especially in tourist-heavy areas. We propose to explore the following lines of work:

- Understanding Population and Tourism Dependency: analysing the economic and employment impacts of tourism through dashboards and official statistics.
- Tourism Intensity and Density: studying the ratio of tourists to locals and their presence in different areas of the destination.
- Impact of Short-Term Rentals: addressing the issue of short-term rentals driving up housing costs and displacing locals by using AI and data from different short-term rental providers to assess their effects.
- Resident Attitudes: exploring concerns around housing, cruises, traffic, noise, accessibility, inclusivity, and safety using focus groups, surveys, and sentiment analysis.
- Cultural preservation, protection, conservation: exploring concerns about tangible and intangible cultural preservation and protection under influence of tourist interest and visitation.
- Forecasting & Prediction: By using data models and AI, creating scenarios for different situations of visitor numbers, housing pressures, and resource demands.

The goal is to manage imbalances caused by tourism, focusing on the efficient use of shared resources. The pilot seeks sustainable solutions that benefit both residents and visitors, aligning with the vision of "Better Places to Live, Better Places to Visit."

#### 2. Climate change mitigation and adaptation

This cluster for pilots focuses on aligning tourism with climate action goals. We propose to explore the following lines of work:

- Glasgow Declaration Commitment: Provide support/information about commitment to the global climate action framework outlined in the Glasgow Declaration.
- Tourism Climate Action Plan (CAP): Provide support/information for implementing a Tourism CAP that aligns with the destination's broader climate action plan to support the entire regional economy.
- Mitigation Indicators: Develop compatible indicators with the Measurement, Reporting, and Verification (MRV) system to track progress in reducing tourism's carbon footprint.
- Carbon Footprint Calculation: Establish methods to measure and reduce the carbon footprint of tourism activities.
- Tourism Sector Competencies: Identify areas where destinations can take direct action, such as energy management, water conservation, waste management, solar panel installations, and using sensors (noise and pollution measurement, etc) for personalized impact metrics to promote sustainable behaviours.
- Future Data Integration: Explore the integration of PMS (Property Management System) data with European data spaces for water, waste, and energy management.

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- **Adaptation Indicators:** Create indicators to measure the effectiveness of adaptation efforts in the tourism sector.

### 3. Redistributing tourist flows in space and time

This cluster for pilots will address the uneven distribution of tourists across time and space, tackling challenges like seasonality, crowding, and overtourism. We propose to explore the following lines of work:

- **Tourism Intensity and Density:** This involves studying the ratio of tourists to locals and their presence in different areas of the destination.
- **Seasonality Analysis:** Using techniques such as time series analysis and the Gini index, we will identify patterns in tourism peaks and off-seasons. This data will guide policies that manage seasonality, using official sources to benchmark regions and incorporating local contexts (NUTS2 level).
- **Impact on Employment and local resources:** We'll examine the relationship between tourist flows and job creation, helping destinations better understand how to balance tourism with local economic growth.
- **PMS Data Integration:** We'll leverage Property Management System (PMS) data to gain insights into tourist flows and optimize management. Future integration with European data spaces for water and energy will support a comprehensive analysis.
- **Forecasting & Prediction:** By using data models and AI, creating scenarios for different situations

This pilot will provide strategies for managing tourist volumes, improving efficiency, and promoting balanced tourism growth across destinations.

A researcher (for the measurement part) and a practitioner (for the management part) will moderate the cluster.

### 4. Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism

This cluster for pilots aims to help emerging destinations attract quality tourism. We propose to explore the following lines of work:

- Develop profiles of "quality tourists" based on data insights, targeting visitors who respect and protect local culture and engage in sustainable activities.
- Create and monitor environmental, socio-economic, and cultural impact indicators to track the effectiveness of sustainable tourism strategies integrating those already existing initiatives running in the destinations.
- Support emerging destinations in integrating with regional and global tourism frameworks, ensuring they benefit from global sustainability initiatives while maintaining local identity and autonomy.
- Promote collaboration with other destinations to share best practices and strategies for sustainable tourism development.
- Conduct focus groups and surveys to understand community expectations and concerns about tourism, aligning development with local aspirations.

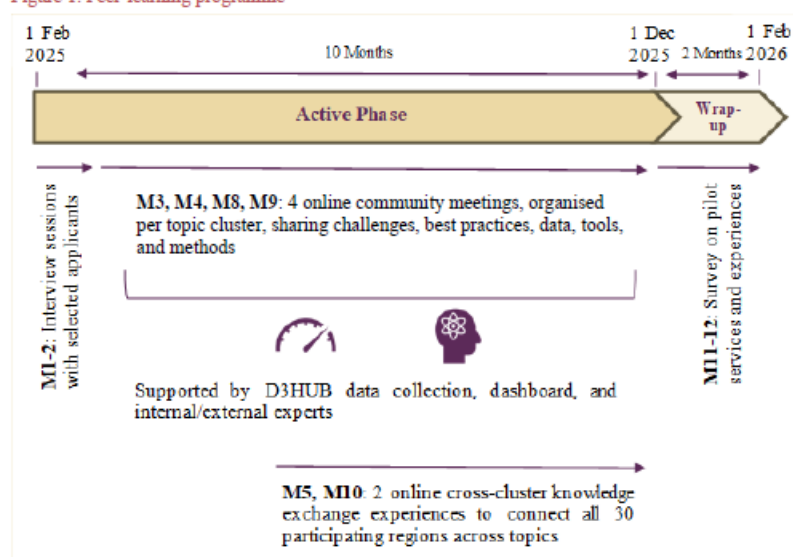
For successful applicants, the peer-learning programme will start on 1 February 2025 and run for 12 months, including an Active phase (months 1 to 10) and a Wrap-up phase (months 11 to 12). After that, members of the D3HUB consortium will conduct an internal evaluation phase. The foreseen peer-learning programme and structure are outlined in Figure 1.

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Figure 1. Peer-learning programme



The peer-learning program includes:

1. Interview sessions (February 2025 – March 2025)

The 30 selected applicants will first be interviewed by a member of one of the consortium partners within the first month. The objective is to gather information on the local context, the challenges and experiences linked to the pilot topic, and the available data and/or research that might be shared with the D3HUB consortium and within the peer-learning activities. The interview will also cover specific learning needs and expectations in order to help shape the peer-learning activities.

2. Measurement of sustainability indicators (February 2025 - May 2025)

As part of the services, a common methodology for measuring tourism sustainability will be developed, and relevant indicators will be collected to assess and monitor economic, social, and environmental sustainability, allowing for the measurement, monitoring, and benchmarking of pilot destinations.

3. Additional data collection and data visualisation (February 2025 – December 2025)

An open standard data dashboard will be populated for the 30 participating destinations, combining open data with additional data provided by the destinations themselves, to further support data-driven management decisions within the participating regions.

4. Four online community meetings (April 2025 – December 2025)

Representatives of DMOs will be clustered according to selected priority topics. Per topic, four online community meetings of approximately 2 hours will be organised, envisioned to take place in April, May,

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September, and October 2025. These meetings will provide a space for dialogue to exchange ideas and best practices on methodologies, tools, data interpretation techniques, and data sharing approaches, both among partners and by inviting external speakers with specific expertise of interest.

#### 5. Cross-cluster knowledge exchange (June 2025, November 2025)

To ensure that knowledge of cross-cluster relevance does not remain fragmented, in addition to the topical-based community meetings, two online cross-cluster knowledge exchanges will be organised, estimated to take place in June and November 2025. These exchanges will summarise best practices across topics, identify shared learnings and best practices, and create a community of data-driven destinations.

#### 6. Survey on pilot scheme services and experiences (December 2025 – January 2026)

To validate the D3HUB Competence Centre support scheme, participants will be invited to complete an online survey to outline their experiences during the peer-learning program.

#### 7. Webinar series (June 2025 – August 2025)

Organised by the D3HUB consortium and internal/external experts will select particularly relevant topics, tools, and methodologies for a webinar series. These webinars will be exclusively aimed at and limited to the participating pilot destinations.

The peer-learning clusters' more detailed content will be defined at a later stage, in accordance with the needs and expectations identified via the participant interviews. In addition to the activities that will take place specifically within the pilot activities, the D3HUB consortium might provide additional competence-building activities that are open but not exclusive to pilot participants.

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## 4. Why join?

### Engage in a peer-learning programme for decision-makers and researchers

At least 30 selected DMOs, representing various administrative levels and tourism-related characteristics, will have access to a peer learning program which includes:

- A solution-driven approach to common tourism destination issues, leveraging existing and new data.
- First-hand access to tools, methodologies, and resources adopted in the frame of the project by experts of the consortium.
- Exchanging best practices in data availability, data collection, data sharing, and interpretation for planning and policy purposes.
- Identifying opportunities within the wider European ecosystem, such as the European Tourism Data Space and the EU Tourism Dashboard.
- Quarterly online community meetings between pilot representatives and members of D3HUB, establishing a vibrant, collaborative environment.
- Webinar series on relevant topics and methodologies.
- Cross-cluster knowledge exchange to share best practices for handling diverse tourism challenges.

### Be inspired by data

The D3HUB's project and peer-learning pilot scheme will support destinations with a selection of destination sustainability indicators and further assist in identifying data sources and proposing quantitative/statistical and/or qualitative tools to translate existing data—either publicly available or based on sets of data provided by applicants—into evidence-based policies directed at problem solutions.

### Improve destinations through data-driven understanding

Learn how to identify and interpret relevant data, focusing on solving challenges at a destination level and supporting sustainable, green, and digital transitions. The D3HUB pilot participants will be able to follow closely how different destinations make use of data for data-driven destination management, with its opportunities and challenges, receive support from external experts, and reflect on how this data-driven management approach contributes to the creation of sustainable and flourishing destinations.

### Shape the European Competence Centre for Tourism of the future

The D3HUB project aims to test the viability and procedure of a self-sustaining Competence Centre for Tourism. As such, the pilots are crucial in identifying the existing needs at various levels and testing the optimal approach for general competency building. Participation in the pilot scheme and reflection on this process will help shape the future of a competence centre that is useful and valuable for all European Destination Management Organizations and its wider tourism ecosystem.

### Increase the visibility of your work and destination

Working closely with your peers in a European network, many of which are tackling similar challenges, participants will be able to provide inputs and showcase their own best practices. This content will be featured on a dedicated webpage and the consortium's social media channels that will be updated regularly according to the activities carried out. With a large network of EU stakeholders, D3HUB will ensure considerable visibility of your successful data-driven destination management strategies and innovations.

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## 5. Eligibility criteria

### Who can apply?

The D3HUB pilot community and peer-learning scheme targets decision-makers and data professionals at the local, regional and national levels of tourism administration. We are looking for organisations with a commitment to improve the sustainability of their destination to smart data-driven destination management. The applicant needs to be:

- A destination management organisation or government administration involved in tourism planning and development at local, regional, or national level.
- A public or semi-public entity.
- Based in one of the EU member states<sup>3</sup>.
- Committed to active participation in the D3HUB peer-learning scheme (certificate of attendance provided).

### Which countries are eligible?

Applicants from a country in one of the 27 European member states are eligible. The list of eligible countries is Austria, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, The Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden.

The possibility is left open to expand the list of countries to the EEA members (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), as well as Switzerland, if considered positive for the aim and impact of the project.

### What is the ideal profile of an applicant organisation?

- The current level of data literacy or data competency is not important. The call is open for advanced destinations and destinations currently only adopting basic data collection and interpretation. What is more relevant is a commitment to learning and sharing challenges, experiences, and innovative ideas.
- Interest in actively participating in the D3HUB peer-learning scheme, with a clear commitment to participate in the peer-learning programme (see section 6).
- Interest in data and its opportunities to design data-driven destination management strategies, as well as opportunities for data sharing across ecosystems.

<sup>3</sup> Candidates might also be selected from countries of the EEA members (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), as well as Switzerland, if considered beneficial for the aim and impact of the project.

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## 6. How to apply?

### Where to apply?

To apply for the pilot phase, destinations must fill out the online form available at the following link:  
[https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB\\_CallForPilots](https://ec.europa.eu/eusurvey/runner/D3HUB_CallForPilots).

### Application procedure

- A central point of contact for each organization needs to be provided for any communication regarding the call.
- A letter of intent, signed by the person responsible for the entity, must be uploaded.
- Each destination chooses a preferred cluster among the 4 clusters in which they wish to participate during the pilot phase, i.e., (i) managing the balance between residents and visitors, (ii) climate change mitigation and adaptation, (iii) redistributing tourist flows in space and time or (iv) supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism. Each candidate also has the opportunity to declare an interest in any of the other clusters as well.
- While each destination will be assigned to one cluster only, it is planned to carry out initiatives during the pilot to exchange experiences and best practices between the different clusters.
- Ideally, and to get the most out of the pilot, the chosen topic should correspond to a challenge that the destination is currently experiencing. Therefore, DMOs are asked to provide a motivation for their selection.

### Application deadline

All proposals must be submitted within the deadline, December 1<sup>st</sup> 2024, by 18:00 CET.

### Contact for questions regarding the open call

Questions regarding this open call can be directed to [d3hub@anysolution.eu](mailto:d3hub@anysolution.eu).

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## 7. Expected commitment

### Minimal participant commitment requirements

Establishing a minimum level of commitment from all participants is essential to ensuring the smooth execution of the pilots. This commitment will help maintain clear communication, timely task delivery, and overall project success. Outlining these expectations aims to foster accountability and collaboration throughout the process.

The minimal commitment requirements are:

- **Dedicated Project Team:** Each destination must assign a dedicated team responsible for the pilot's execution. This team should consist of local, regional or national government representatives, tourism professionals, and community stakeholders to ensure balanced decision-making.
- **Each participating DMO is required to designate a dedicated Project Coordinator.** This individual will serve as the primary point of contact for the pilot, responsible for receiving all communications, coordinating resources, and ensuring the timely execution. The Project Coordinator will also facilitate internal collaboration between stakeholders and ensure the DMO remains aligned with the project's objectives and timeline. This role is critical to maintaining a clear and efficient flow of information between the project team and the destination.
- **Regular Attendance to Meetings:** Participants are required to attend all scheduled meetings to ensure continuous progress and active involvement in the project.
- **Timely Submission of Documentation:** All requested documentation, including progress reports, surveys, and other relevant materials, must be submitted promptly as per the project timeline.
- **Active Collaboration:** Destinations must actively collaborate with other pilot participants, sharing insights, challenges, and best practices to enrich the collective learning experience.
- **Access to Data and Resources:** Participants must be willing to provide necessary local data, such as visitor statistics, resident feedback, and data with regard to sustainable destination development, to support project analysis and outcomes. Participating DMOs agree that non-confidential, non-commercial data will be shared with the EU.
- **Communication Plan:** The D3HUB consortium will provide an engagement plan to ensure that relevant stakeholders, including residents and local businesses, are informed and engaged throughout the pilot.
- **Commitment to the Implementation:** Selected destinations should be ready to assess implementation pathways of pilot outcomes and integrate recommendations into long-term tourism strategies.

A signed letter outlining these minimal requirements is mandatory for application. Additional commitments proposed in the application, such as stronger team involvement or deeper local engagement, will be positively evaluated.

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## 8. How are applicants selected?

As mentioned previously, the D3Hub project seeks to select 30 Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) to participate in a 12-month peer-learning pilot program. The selection process of pilot participants aims to establish relevant selection quotas on geographic representation, DMO proficiency levels, variety in governance levels, and destination typologies in order to ensure a broad representation of European DMOs and tourist ecosystems within the pilots. Within the confines of the established quotas, further scoring criteria will be adopted based on motivations and goals, destination strengths and assets, local policy landscape and available resources, networking ambitions, and staff availability and expertise. The stepwise quota-based selection process is outlined in the flowchart in Figure 2 at the end of the document and aims to ensure both merit and diversity in the selection. In the following sections, first the selection quotas will be discussed, aiming to ensure selection diversity. Next, the merit-based scoring criteria are outlined. The final section then highlights the evaluation and selection process to be followed.

### 8.1. Selection Quota overview

The selection of pilot DMOs will take into account four key criteria to ensure appropriate selection diversity: geographic representation, proficiency levels, governance, and destination typology. Each of these aspects are outlined below, with reference to proposed selection quotas.

#### 1. Geographical representation across European Regions and Countries

To ensure a balanced representation across Europe two quota-based regional selection choices will be introduced:

- a. The selection will be divided into 4 geographical areas, with an aim to select at least 4 DMOs from each area.
  - Northern Europe: Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Ireland, Latvia, Lithuania, Sweden
  - Western Europe: Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Luxembourg, Netherlands
  - Southern Europe: Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Malta, Portugal, Spain
  - Eastern and Central Europe: Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia

The possibility is left open to expand the list of countries to the EEA members (Iceland, Liechtenstein, Norway), as well as Switzerland, if considered positive for the aim and impact of the project.

- b. The selection will aim to include no more than 3 pilot destinations from each Member State<sup>4</sup>.

#### 2. Proficiency level in data use

DMOs will be classified into three proficiency levels (basic, medium, and proficient), and for each level, at least 5 DMOs will be selected<sup>5</sup>. The proficiency level will be assessed based on the participants' current experience with data, which will be self-reported via the expression of interest. Following indicators, data and reports can be indicative examples of data-driven policy actions:

- Overnight stays
- Tourist expenditure/tourism revenue
- Arrivals
- Resident satisfaction/acceptance
- Guest satisfaction

<sup>4</sup> With the exception of not receiving enough proposals to fulfil all country quotas.

<sup>5</sup> With the exception of not receiving enough proposals to fulfil all proficiency level quotas.

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- Length of stay
- Occupancy rates
- Results of campaign activities
- Destination image/brand awareness
- Stakeholder satisfaction
- Number of tourist beds
- (Online) bookings
- Seasonality
- Number of visitors at Tourist Information Centres
- Emissions/carbon footprint
- Employment in tourism
- Average Daily Rate (ADR) of accommodations
- Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR)
- Number of day trips
- Accommodation establishment registry (providers/beds)
- Registry of tourism businesses
- Data on residents' perception of tourism
- Number of enterprises and resources with service quality or sustainability certifications
- Regional spread of tourism demand
- Number of flights
- Tourism tax income
- Tourist routes within the destination
- Other (please explain which)

Based on self-reporting of the use of the above indicator/data list, proficiency levels will then be assigned to each candidate as such:

- a. **Basic Level:** To qualify as Basic, a DMO must be characterised by:
  - Indicators/Data Used: DMO uses less than 5 indicators.
  - Field of Activity: Focused mainly on promotion and marketing with limited data usage for decision-making.
  - Policy Application: No specific examples of data-driven policy actions.
- b. **Medium Level:** To qualify as Medium, a DMO must meet one of the following criteria:
  - Indicators/Data Used: DMO uses more than 5 indicators.
  - Field of Activity: Includes data analysis, support for policymakers, sustainable transformation, or advanced strategic planning.
  - Policy Application: Can provide at least one example of how data has been used to inform a specific policy or strategic action.
- c. **Proficient Level:** To qualify as Proficient, a DMO must meet more than one of the following criteria:
  - Indicators/Data Used: DMO uses more than 5 indicators.
  - Field of Activity: Includes data analysis, support for policymakers, sustainable transformation, or advanced strategic planning.
  - Policy Application: Can provide at least one example of how data has been used to inform a specific policy or strategic action.

### 3. Variety in governance levels

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This criterion ensures the inclusion of DMOs from different governance levels—local, regional, and national—to provide a diverse representation of tourism management structures. This diversity allows the Competence Centre's services to be adaptable and relevant to all DMOs, regardless of their administrative context.

The selection will prioritize balanced representation:

- City/Municipal/Subregional<sup>6</sup> Level: 7 DMOs minimum
- Regional Level: 5 DMOs minimum
- National Level: 2 DMOs minimum<sup>7</sup>

This approach reflects the varied landscape of European tourism governance, acknowledging the large number of municipalities, a moderate number of regions, and fewer national entities. The 7:5:2 ratio is a practical balance that ensures all governance levels are fairly represented, with a focus on those most actively involved in tourism management, while still incorporating the strategic insights of national DMOs.

#### 4. Representation of destination typologies

Since challenges related to sustainable destination management, and associated data requirements, can be dependent on the typology of destinations, a third selection criterion is meant to ensure inclusion of urban, rural, coastal/island, and mountainous destinations within the 30 pilots. This will allow for testing the Competence Centre's support scheme across a variety of destinations with different characteristics and user profiles.

To select the different types of tourism, it is proposed to use the classification used in the [EU Tourism Dashboard](#) that distinguishes six tourism typologies: urban (or city tourism), coastal, nature, rural, snowy mountain, and mixed<sup>8</sup>. The pilot selection will aim to include at minimum five rural, five urban, two coastal/island, two nature, and two snowy mountain destinations.<sup>9</sup>

Table 1 below summarizes the key quota selection criteria and their expected objectives within the D3HUB pilot programme.

Table 1. Selection quota criteria description and expected outcomes

Selection quota criteria	Description	Expected objective
Geographic representation	Balance and ensure the participation of 4 European regions: Northern Europe, Western Europe, Southern Europe, Eastern and Central Europe. Ensure that no country is overrepresented.	At least 4 DMOs from each area. No more than 3 pilot destinations will be selected from each Member State.
Proficiency level in data use	Ensure representativeness in the participation of destinations with different types of data literacy: basic, medium and proficient level.	At least 5 DMOs for each proficiency level.

<sup>6</sup> Groups of municipalities that collectively form a tourist destination with an established formal governance or management structure.

<sup>7</sup> With the exception of not receiving enough proposals to fulfil all governance level quotas.

<sup>8</sup> Source: JRC. Methodology: Batista, E., Silva, F., Barranco, R., Pigaiani, C., & Lavalle, C. (2021). A new European regional tourism typology based on hotel location patterns and geographical criteria. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 89: 103077. doi:10.1016/j.annals.2020.103077.

<sup>9</sup> With the exception of not receiving enough proposals to fulfil all destination typology quotas.

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Variety in governance level	Consideration of the different levels of governance existing in the management of tourist destinations.	At least 7 DMOs at city/municipal/subregional level, 5 DMOs at regional level, and 2 DMOs at national level.
Representation of destination typologies	Ensure the representation of the different main typologies of tourist destinations existing in Europe.	At least 5 rural, 5 urban, 2 coastal/island, two nature, and two snowy mountain destinations.

## 8.2. Selection scoring criteria

The quota selection criteria will ensure a pilot selection that is sufficiently heterogeneous in geography, governance, typology, and data proficiency. In order to further select participants based on a ranking of merits, within the confines of the set quotas, candidacy forms will collect information on participant motivations, destination strengths and assets, policy landscape, networking ambitions, and availability and expertise to prioritise participants that can actively contribute to the peer-learning process. Additionally, interested DMOs must submit a Management Commitment/support Letter signed by the political leader responsible for the destination. This letter, following the predefined Template/Content Guide (Annex 1), will formally confirm the DMO's commitment to the requirements outlined in the scoring criteria. Therefore, five criteria will be scored on a total initial score of 100. Later, in the evaluation phase, stepwise weighting will be applied based on the established quotas (as discussed further below).

### 1. Key motivations and destination goals (20%)

The first scoring criterion assesses the motivation to join the D3HUB pilot programme and the alignment of the DMO objectives with the goals of the D3HUB project. Priority will be given to DMOs where tourism is a relevant aspect of the territory and participation in the pilot programme translates in a clear commitment to action.

### 2. Destination strengths and assets (20%)

Since the peer-learning pilot programme is structured around a number of destination challenges, in this scoring criterion, the alignment of the DMO and its existing territorial challenges is assessed against the topical choice in order to consider participants with a clear felt need whereby the D3HUB pilot participation can leverage strengths and assets against existing issues.

### 3. Local policy landscape and available resources (20%)

For data-driven transformations to take place at a destination level, it is important that DMOs are integrated and cooperate closely with the local tourism ecosystem and that there is a policy framework in place with clear data-driven green and digital transformation objectives to be pursued. This will ensure that the efforts of the D3HUB pilot have a higher chance of leading to actual change.

### 4. Network ambitions (20%)

A relevant aspect of the D3HUB pilot peer-learning programme is the network opportunity provided to European DMOs. As such, motivation to collaborate and actively participate in the network is an important consideration and can be shown both by a historic integration in existing networks and by a willingness for future shared endeavours.

### 5. Staff availability and expertise

Since the success of the D3HUB pilot programme depends on active involvement of the selected candidates, staff availability, expertise, and available resources will be considered during the selection

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process. Any involvement of cross-departmental teams will be positively evaluated as well, considering the multidisciplinary nature of tourism.

Table 2 provides a schematic overview of the five selection scoring criteria discussed above that will be adopted in order to score each application on its initial merits.

Table 2. Selection quota criteria description and expected outcomes

EOI quality, potential and relevance, scoring criteria	Weight in initial score	Assessment elements
Key motivations and destination goals	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Understanding of the D3HUB objectives and alignment between DMOs expectations and D3HUB services;</li> <li>Relevance of tourism at the destination;</li> <li>Level of motivation and commitment to reach results;</li> <li>Fitness for purpose of organisation interested in participating in the Competence Centre.</li> </ul>
Destination strengths and assets	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequacy of DMOs background vis à vis D3HUB topics and challenges;</li> <li>Potential of the DMS to address destination goals based on the existing strengths and assets and existing territorial challenges;</li> <li>Demonstrated added value of D3HUB in unleashing DMO potential.</li> </ul>
Local policy landscape and available resources	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Existence of a relevant local/regional/national policy framework and accompanying resources;</li> <li>Existence of additional complementary initiatives, especially at EU level;</li> <li>Evidence of added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework;</li> <li>Potential to mobilise relevant stakeholders for the purpose of building local ecosystem;</li> <li>Potential and commitment to further develop sustainable tourism indicators.</li> </ul>
Networking ambitions	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Motivation to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations;</li> <li>Participation in existing networks;</li> <li>Capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the EOI stage.</li> </ul>
Staff availability and expertise	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Availability of team with relevant expertise;</li> <li>Full composition of team;</li> <li>Evidence of involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders;</li> <li>Allocation of sufficient resources to D3HUB.</li> </ul>

### 8.3. Evaluation process

The first phase of the evaluation process is the pre-screening stage, during which the applications will be assessed based on a set of compulsory and eliminatory requirements. This stage ensures that only candidates who meet the basic administrative and legal requirements proceed to the next phase. This way, each application will be reviewed to verify that the necessary documents and information have been submitted. Any candidate failing to meet the compulsory requirements will be eliminated from the process. Notifications of non-compliance will be sent to these candidates, explaining the reasons for their elimination.

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After the pre-screening phase, the applications that pass the eliminatory requirements will move on to the expert evaluation phase. This phase involves a detailed assessment of each candidate's application based on the predetermined scoring and quota criteria mentioned above. The evaluation and selection process will aim to ensure a heterogeneous representation of the European tourist ecosystem in terms of geography, proficiency level, governance level, and destination typology, where necessary applying weights to ensure a proper balance in pilot participants.

The evaluation will be conducted by a panel of internal experts from the project consortium and potentially with the assistance of a pool of external experts, if needed. Following the individual evaluations, a consensus meeting will take place, during which all scores and evaluations will be discussed and harmonized. This process is aimed at ensuring a consistent application of the evaluation criteria and resolving any significant differences in expert opinions.

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## 9. Annex 1: Management Commitment Letter Template

Interested DMOs must submit a Commitment Letter to be signed by the political leader responsible for the destination following a pre-defined Template/Content Guide:

Commitment Letter Template/Content Guide

[DMO Letterhead]

[Date]

To the D3Hub Selection Committee,

---

Subject: Commitment Letter for Participation in the D3Hub Pilot Program

Dear Members of the D3Hub Selection Committee,

As the [Title of Political Leader, e.g., Mayor, Regional Minister, or National Director] of [Destination Name], I hereby express our strong commitment to participate actively in the D3Hub Pilot Program. This letter outlines our dedication to the program and confirms our intention to collaborate fully with the D3Hub initiative.

### 1. Commitment to the D3Hub Pilot Program Objectives

- Description: State your understanding of the D3Hub project's objectives and how your destination aligns with these goals. Emphasize the importance of data-driven decision-making and sustainable tourism management as key priorities.

### 2. Active Participation and Resource Allocation

- Description: Confirm the commitment of the DMO to participate in all planned activities, including peer-learning sessions, data-sharing initiatives, and collaborative projects with other DMOs.

### 3. Designation of Responsible Team and Resources

- Description: Identify the specific team members or departments that will be involved in the D3Hub activities, ensuring they have the time and resources needed to contribute effectively.

### 4. Support for Data-Driven Policy Development

- Description: Highlight the destination's commitment to integrating data-driven insights into policy-making and strategic tourism management. Provide any past examples if relevant.

### 5. Collaboration and Knowledge Sharing with Other DMOs

- Description: State your commitment to collaborating with other DMOs in the program, sharing knowledge, best practices, and working together to address common challenges.

### 6. Sustainability and Long-term Engagement

- Description: Express your destination's commitment to continuing the principles and practices learned through D3Hub beyond the pilot program.

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## 7. Authorization and Commitment Confirmation

- Description: A clear statement of authorization from the political leader, affirming the commitment of the destination to the D3Hub Pilot Program.

Example: "As the [Title of Political Leader], I fully endorse our DMO's participation in the D3Hub Pilot Program and confirm our commitment to fulfilling all responsibilities outlined above."

---

Sincerely,

[Name of Political Leader]

[Title, e.g., Mayor, Regional Minister, National Director]

[Destination Name]

[Contact Information]

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## 8 Annex 2: Online submission form

Draft ID: e37371dd-6f97-4b1d-b61c-6602508e3e6a  
Date: 30/01/2025 21:15:10



### D3HUB Call For Pilots - Tourism of Tomorrow via Data-Driven Destinations

Fields marked with \* are mandatory.

#### Introduction and Consent

Submit your application to join the D3HUB pilot programme by entering your data and preferences until 15 December 2024, 18:00 CET.

By clicking "submit", I agree to the D3HUB consortium processing the data received through this registration form for the purpose of the organisation of the open call for pilot participants to join the D3HUB Competence Centre pilot programme.

☐ I agree with the terms of service

#### Main application contact

\* First name

|1

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• Last name

• Job title

• Organisation

• Email

## Information on organisation

• Which type of organisation do you represent? Please choose the most appropriate answer

- ☐ Destination management Organisation (DMO), local level (e.g. city, town, community)
- ☐ Destination Management Organisation (DMO), regional level
- ☐ Destination Management Organisation (DMO), state/national level
- ☐ Other

• In which EU member state are you located?

- ☐ AT - Austria
- ☐ BE - Belgium
- ☐ BG - Bulgaria
- ☐ HR - Croatia
- ☐ CY - Cyprus
- ☐ CZ - Czechia
- ☐ DK - Denmark
- ☐ EE - Estonia
- ☐ FI - Finland
- ☐ FR - France
- ☐ DE - Germany
- ☐ EL - Greece
- ☐ HU - Hungary
- ☐ IE - Ireland
- ☐ IT - Italy
- ☐ LV - Latvia
- ☐ LT - Lithuania
- ☐ LU - Luxembourg

- ☐ MT - Malta
- ☐ NL - Netherlands
- ☐ PL - Poland
- ☐ PT - Portugal
- ☐ RO - Romania
- ☐ SK - Slovak Republic
- ☐ SI - Slovenia
- ☐ ES - Spain
- ☐ SE - Sweden
- ☐ NONE - I am not located in a EU member state

## Level of data proficiency

• How would you describe the level of data proficiency of your organisation?

- ☐ Low
- ☐ Medium
- ☐ High
- ☐ Don't know

• For which of the following indicators do you collect data?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Overnight stays                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of visitors at Tourist Information Centres   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist expenditure/tourism revenue | <input type="checkbox"/> Emissions/carbon footprint  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Arrivals                            | <input type="checkbox"/> Average Daily Rate (ADR) of accommodations  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Resident satisfaction/acceptance    | <input type="checkbox"/> Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR)   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Guest satisfaction                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of day trips   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Length of stay                      | <input type="checkbox"/> Accommodation establishment registry (providers/beds)                                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Occupancy rates                     | <input type="checkbox"/> Registry of tourism business  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Results of campaign activities      | <input type="checkbox"/> Data on residents' perception of tourism  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Destination image/brand awareness   | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of enterprises and resources with service quality or sustainability certifications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Stakeholder satisfaction            | <input type="checkbox"/> Regional spread of tourism demand   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Number of tourist beds              | <input type="checkbox"/> Number of flight movements (arrivals and departures)                                      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> (Online) bookings                   | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourism tax income  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Seasonality                         | <input type="checkbox"/> Tourist routes within the destination   |

Are there any other indicators, not listed above, for which you collect data? If so, please explain which.

## information on destination

• What kind of landscape best describes your destination? Please consult the [EU Tourism Dashboard](#) for the correct designation of your region, if possible.

- ☐ Urban ☐ Rural  
☐ Coastal ☐ Snowy mountain  
☐ Nature ☐ Mixed

• What is the percentage of tourism-related employment in total employment in your destination (approximately)?

- ☐ Less than 2% ☐ >10 to 15%  
☐ >2 to 5% ☐ More than 15%  
☐ >5 to 7.5% ☐ Don't know  
☐ >7.5 to 10%

## Interest in D3HUB pilot scheme

• The D3HUB peer-learning programme will be organised around a selection of destination challenges.

Which of these topics is of **most** interest to you?

- ☐ Managing the balance between residents and visitors  
☐ Climate change mitigation and adaptation  
☐ Redistributing tourist flows in space and time  
☐ Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism

In case your preferred topic is unavailable, would you still be interested in any of the other subjects as an alternative?

	Priority topic	Very interested	Interested	Not interested
• Managing the balance between residents and visitors	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Climate change mitigation and adaptation	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Redistributing tourist flows in space and time	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
• Supporting emerging destinations to attract quality and sustainable tourism	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Motivation/Ambition

- What are your objectives and expectations for joining the D3HUB peer-learning pilot community? Do you envision a pathway towards implementation of research results at the end of the D3HUB pilot programme? Please elaborate on how your participation in this programme would reflect a clear commitment to action.

2000 character(s) maximum

- What are the main territorial challenges your destination faces in terms of tourism and its development? Please explain how participation in the programme might assist in addressing these challenges

2000 character(s) maximum

- Do the challenges the D3HUB pilot programme wishes to study link with existing local/regional/national policy and accompanying resources? If yes, please provide examples of policy and/or strategy documents.

2000 character(s) maximum

- Do you envision an integration of relevant local stakeholders during the pilot programme? If so, how do you expect to engage with your stakeholders?

2000 character(s) maximum

- Have you participated in existing European or local networks with other destinations before? If yes, please elaborate. What do you hope to gain from the network opportunities offered by the D3HUB peer learning programme?

2000 character(s) maximum

- What resources (financial, human, technical) does your DMO have access to that can support participation in the D3HUB pilot? How will these resources contribute to the success of your involvement in the programme?

2000 character(s) maximum

- Please list any experiences/examples/best practices of data-driven destination management and green and digital transitions in which your organisation is involved.

2000 character(s) maximum

### Institutional commitment

- Would your participation in the D3HUB pilot programme be backed by an institutional commitment?

☐ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unsure

- In case your organisation is selected for the peer-learning programme, which team members from within your organisation do you expect to involve? Please provide information on departments and expertise.

2000 character(s) maximum

### Additional information

• Would you like to receive a certificate of attendance at the end of the pilot peer-learning scheme?

☐ Yes ☒ No

☐ I understand that the working language of the pilot programme will be in English

☐ By responding to this call for pilots, I understand that in case of positive selection I commit to take part in all the activities offered by the peer-learning programme

☐ I agree to share destination data with the D3HUB Consortium and the EU in as far as this data is of non-confidential, non-commercial nature

☐ By responding to this call for pilots, I agree to be contacted by the D3HUB consortium for the purpose of applicant selection

**Complete**

Thank you for your interest in D3HUB and its pilot programme. Your submission is now complete.

#### Contact

[Contact Form](#)

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## 9 Annex 3: Scoring sheet template

### D3HUB pilot selection - Evaluation sheet

#### 1) Information on D3HUB evaluator

Organization of evaluator	SELECT FROM DROPDOWN
Name of evaluator	

#### 2) Information on applicant

Candidate id number	SELECT FROM DROPDOWN
Organisation	

#### 3) Selection scoring criteria

##### 3.1 Key motivations and destination goals

The first scoring criterion assesses the motivation to join the D3HUB pilot programme and the alignment of the DMO objectives with the goals of the D3HUB project. Priority will be given to DMOs where tourism is a relevant aspect of the territory and participation in the pilot programme translates in a clear commitment to action.

Instructions	Motivation for score	Score (on 20)
Assess information given to <b>Q6.1</b> and <b>Q6.6</b> , as well as the relevance of tourism in the destination in <b>Q4.2</b>		

##### 3.2 Destination strengths and assets

Since the peer-learning pilot programme is structured around a number of destination challenges, in this scoring criterion, the alignment of the DMO and its existing territorial challenges is assessed against the topical choice in order to consider participants with a clear felt need whereby the D3HUB pilot participation can leverage strengths and assets against existing issues.

Instructions	Motivation for score	Score (on 20)
Assess information given to <b>Q6.2</b> and <b>Q6.7</b>		

##### 3.3 Local policy landscape and available resources

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For data-driven transformations to take place at a destination level, it is important that DMOs are integrated and cooperate closely with the local tourism ecosystem and that there is a policy framework in place with clear data-driven green and digital transformation objectives to be pursued. This will ensure that the efforts of the D3HUB pilot have a higher chance of leading to actual change.

<i>Instructions</i>	<i>Motivation for score</i>	<i>Score (on 20)</i>
Assess information given to <b>Q6.3</b> and <b>Q6.4</b> .		

### 3.4 Network ambitions

A relevant aspect of the D3HUB pilot peer-learning programme is the network opportunity provided to European DMOs. As such, motivation to collaborate and actively participate in the network is an important consideration and can be shown both by a historic integration in existing networks and by a willingness for future shared endeavours.

<i>Instructions</i>	<i>Motivation for score</i>	<i>Score (on 20)</i>
Assess information given to <b>Q6.5</b> .		

### 3.5 Staff availability and expertise

Since the success of the D3HUB pilot programme depends on active involvement of the selected candidates, staff availability, expertise, and available resources will be considered during the selection process. Any involvement of cross-departmental teams will be positively evaluated as well, considering the multidisciplinary of tourism.

<i>Instructions</i>	<i>Motivation for score</i>	<i>Score (on 20)</i>
Assess information given to <b>Q7.1</b> and <b>Q7.2</b>		

<b>TOTAL SCORE</b>	<b>0</b>
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## 10 Annex 4: Assessment matrix

1. Key motivations and destination goals				
Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
Score between 18 to 20	Score between 16 to 17.9	Score between 14 to 15.9	Score between 10 to 13.9	Score between 0 to 9.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal shows an excellent alignment between the DMOs expectations and D3HUB services</li> <li>Tourism has a high relevance for the destination, as shown from its importance in local employment</li> <li>The DMO is highly committed to reach results at the end of the D3HUB pilot</li> <li>The DMO is excellently organised for the participation in the Competence Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal shows a very good alignment between the DMOs expectations and D3HUB services</li> <li>Tourism has a high relevance for the destination, as shown from its importance in local employment</li> <li>The DMO shows very good commitment to reach results at the end of the D3HUB pilot</li> <li>The DMO is well-organised for the participation in the Competence Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal shows a good alignment between the DMOs expectations and D3HUB services</li> <li>Tourism has above-average relevance for the destination, as shown from its importance in local employment</li> <li>The DMO shows good commitment to reach results at the end of the D3HUB pilot</li> <li>The DMO is decently organised for the participation in the Competence Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal shows an average alignment between the DMOs expectations and D3HUB services</li> <li>Tourism has average relevance for the destination, as shown from its importance in local employment</li> <li>The DMO shows some commitment to reach results at the end of the D3HUB pilot</li> <li>The DMO is not so well-organised for the participation in the Competence Centre</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The proposal shows insufficient alignment between the DMOs expectations and D3HUB services</li> <li>Tourism has below-average relevance for the destination, as shown from its importance in local employment</li> <li>The DMO shows minor commitment to reach results at the end of the D3HUB pilot</li> <li>The DMO is not well-organised for the participation in the Competence Centre</li> </ul>

2. Destination strengths				
Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
Score between 18 to 20	Score between 16 to 17.9	Score between 14 to 15.9	Score between 10 to 13.9	Score between 0 to 9.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DMOs background is strongly relevant with relation to the selected D3HUB topic</li> <li>The Destination exhibits excellent potential to address existing territorial challenges</li> <li>The proposal strongly demonstrates the added value of D3HUB in expanding the DMO potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DMOs background is relevant with relation to the selected D3HUB topic</li> <li>The Destination exhibits very good potential to address existing territorial challenges</li> <li>The proposal demonstrates the added value of D3HUB in expanding the DMO potential to a very good extent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DMOs background is relevant with relation to the selected D3HUB topic</li> <li>The Destination exhibits good potential to address existing territorial challenges</li> <li>The proposal demonstrates the added value of D3HUB in expanding the DMO potential to a good extent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DMOs background is somewhat relevant with relation to the selected D3HUB topic</li> <li>The Destination exhibits some potential to address existing territorial challenges</li> <li>The proposal demonstrates the added value of D3HUB in expanding the DMO potential to some extent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The DMOs background is not relevant enough with relation to the selected D3HUB topic</li> <li>The Destination exhibits limited potential to address existing territorial challenges</li> <li>The proposal demonstrates the added value of D3HUB in expanding the DMO potential to an inadequate extent</li> </ul>

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3. Local policy landscape				
Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
Score between 18 to 20	Score between 16 to 17.9	Score between 14 to 15.9	Score between 10 to 13.9	Score between 0 to 9.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a significant number local/regional/national policy frameworks and accompanying resources available</li> <li>• Convincing evidence is provided on the added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework</li> <li>• There is excellent potential to mobilize relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a very good number of local/regional/national policy frameworks and accompanying resources available</li> <li>• Good evidence is provided on the added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework</li> <li>• There is very good potential to mobilize relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are a good number of local/regional/national policy frameworks and accompanying resources available</li> <li>• Evidence is provided on the added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework</li> <li>• There is good potential to mobilize relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are some local/regional/national policy frameworks and accompanying resources available</li> <li>• Some evidence is provided on the added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework</li> <li>• There is some potential to mobilize relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There are almost no local/regional/national policy frameworks and accompanying resources available</li> <li>• Little to no evidence is provided on the added value of D3HUB with regard to the existing policy framework</li> <li>• There is limited potential to mobilize relevant stakeholders in the ecosystem</li> </ul>

4. Network ambitions				
Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
Score between 18 to 20	Score between 16 to 17.9	Score between 14 to 15.9	Score between 10 to 13.9	Score between 0 to 9.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows excellent commitment to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations</li> <li>• The DMO shows an excellent track record in participating in existing networks and other EU initiatives</li> <li>• There is an excellent capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the end of the pilot stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows a strong commitment to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations</li> <li>• The DMO shows a strong track record in participating in existing networks and other EU initiatives</li> <li>• There is a strong capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the end of the pilot stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows a good commitment to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations</li> <li>• The DMO shows a good track record in participating in existing networks and other EU initiatives</li> <li>• There is a good capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the end of the pilot stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows some commitment to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations</li> <li>• The DMO shows a modest track record in participating in existing networks and other EU initiatives</li> <li>• There is some capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the end of the pilot stage</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows insufficient commitment to collaborate with other DMOs and engage in cross-destination collaborations</li> <li>• The DMO does not show a track record in participating in existing networks and other EU initiatives</li> <li>• There is limited capacity to identify actions to be implemented through a collaborative approach at the end of the pilot stage</li> </ul>

5. Staff availability and expertise				
Excellent	Very good	Good	Average	Below average
Score between 18 to 20	Score between 16 to 17.9	Score between 14 to 15.9	Score between 10 to 13.9	Score between 0 to 9.9
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows availability of an excellent interdisciplinary team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• The proposal describes the team with excellent detail</li> <li>• There is excellent evidence of the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders</li> <li>• The proposal shows a proper allocation of resources to D3HUB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows availability of a very good interdisciplinary team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• The proposal describes the team with very good detail</li> <li>• There is very good evidence of the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders</li> <li>• The proposal shows a proper allocation of resources to D3HUB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows availability of a good interdisciplinary team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• The proposal describes the team with good detail</li> <li>• There is good evidence of the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders</li> <li>• The proposal shows a relatively proper allocation of resources to D3HUB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal shows availability of a limited interdisciplinary team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• The proposal describes the team with average detail</li> <li>• There is limited evidence of the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders</li> <li>• The proposal shows a relatively proper allocation of resources to D3HUB</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The proposal does not show availability of an interdisciplinary team with relevant expertise</li> <li>• The proposal does not describe the team with any detail</li> <li>• There is a lack of evidence of the involvement of cross-departmental stakeholders</li> <li>• The proposal does not show a proper allocation of resources to D3HUB</li> </ul>

## 11 References

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