



## FINAL SUMMARY REPORT

### CALYPSO: WHAT FUTURE?

MALLORCA, 10<sup>TH</sup>-11<sup>TH</sup> JUNE, 2010

#### Workshop 1: Streamlining Stakeholder Initiatives towards Calypso

Rapporteur : Dr. Anya Diekmann, Université Libre de Bruxelles

The aim of the workshop was to analyze whether Calypso is beneficial for the Members States and how stakeholders can benefit of Calypso and how it fits into their work program.

#### *1. Is Calypso Beneficial for Member States?*

All three members States representatives recognized positive benefits of the Calypso preparatory action at two levels:

- At **national level** they appreciated the involvement of many different stakeholders and that due to Calypso, different actors were brought around one table fostering networking on a local and domestic level.
- At **European level** they appreciated the input through the exchange between the different countries for it allowed tackling national weaknesses and improving national practices. They also appreciated the development of a strong coordination at European level.

However the representatives of the 3 member states also expressed some requests and /or suggestions to improve the preparatory action of Calypso:

- Selection of beneficiaries of the Calypso program at national level
- Supply side (ex. Accommodation) quality criteria should be more specified
- Stronger integration of all sustainability aspects

#### *2. Can Calypso Benefit Stakeholders and Their Work Programmes?*

While recognizing the importance of the economic benefits of Calypso, stakeholders insisted on the reinforcement of some aspects related to their goals :

- A more 'social' approach placing the individual tourist in the centre of the program and maybe provide some educational support for the tourists
- Integrate more sustainability aspects
- Need for knowledge transfer between supply and demand side to lift barriers (an example was the lack of knowledge concerning the needs and expectations of disabled travellers on the supply side; but also the lack of information on specific supplies, such as medical services for disabled travellers)
- Benefiting of existing networks, such as NECSTOUR

In conclusion, along with the demand for a critical self-evaluation of the preparatory action, the need for concrete actions was highlighted. The concrete action should be built on the above mentioned issues:

- Quality
- Social values
- Sustainability
- Communication/exchange

Stakeholders insisted on the fact that not only they could benefit from Calypso, but that Calypso should benefit from them in order to develop these concrete actions.

## **Workshop 2: The Tourism Industry Viewpoint on Calypso**

**Rapporteur : Agnes Reti, Member of the TSG Group and Calypso Working Group**

During the world economic crisis the priorities of all governments are to boost the economy (industry, commerce, services) or at least to prevent further recession and to create jobs.

As tourism definitely is an important factor to create economic growth, it is vital to boost tourism. If people do not go on holidays, a large part of the market may disappear and together with it many other industries and services.

Key factor for the hotel industry is seasonality. Most of the accommodation is booked for July and August. Increasing demand in the low season will create more jobs whilst smaller organisations could also benefit from the Calypso project.

It was highlighted that 92% members of HOTREC employ less than 10 people. The industry wants to make profit, therefore a proper analysis of the cost/benefit element and the market is important.

As 42% of European citizens do not travel, there is definitely a market for the Calypso project.

Workshop panellists recommended to:

- flash out a strategy for Calypso for short and long term, focusing on 3 elements:
  - ✓ concentrate on efforts to facilitate travel for European citizens (everyone has right to holidays, there are different tools, we have to use them)
  - ✓ identify a policy that can be put in practice at EU, national and regional level
  - ✓ Calypso shall be a concept, but not that of tourism for the poor
- identify travel agencies and associations and their partners who wish to participate in the Calypso project
- identify destinations with proper facilities
- build up cooperation between governments, regions, local authorities, private actors and other players, strengthen synergies between public-private sector
- extend season in crisis
- create packages and promote them
- set up quality criterias and to respect them
- train employees of service providers to be able to offer high quality services and deal with Calypso target groups in appropriate manners (language issue is important)
- have right prices (market level prices or a bit below but with high level services that allow people to benefit from the Calypso project)

All these elements should reply to sustainability criterias.

Good practices were presented as follows:

#### 1) Inatel (Portugal)

A film was presented on their tourism program for all.

Benefits of the program: Elements other than pure business: lead to greater social cohesion, experience between the different segments of society, not stigmatising the participants of the project (not tourism for the poor).

Business elements: As long as prices are at market level, the project is advantageous for all participants. Good quality, good services are important. The business model: The more the tourist participating in the program earns, the more he/she pays for the same trip. Additional advantage: Who earns more, spends more at destination.

Benefits to the government: Additional VAT, income tax returns as consequences of creating more jobs, diminishing unemployment.

Benefits for tourists: Correct prices, high level services, price advantage for people with financial, social, etc. problems (Who earns more, pays more, who earn less, pays less for the same trip).

Benefits for the industry: Business plans based on clear turn over previsions, bigger turnover, more jobs, less seasonality.

## 2) IMSERSO (Spain)

Benefits of the program: 80 000 jobs have been created due to the Imsero program. If the program did not exist, 68% of hotels would have to close down in low season. High level of satisfaction on behalf of tourist (4 out of a scale of 5).

Benefits to the government: 100 Euros invested make 150 Euros through VAT, tax returns, jobs created, diminishing unemployment.

It is not a social expense for the state, it is more a social benefit!

In conclusion, panelists all considered important to fix as strategic goals of the Calypso project to create jobs, extend high season and to crate European Citizenship by getting people to holidays.

### **Workshop 3: Debating the Way Forward**

**Rapporteur : Thea Joldersma, Family Holiday Association, Calypso Working Group**

Panellists were invited to present proposals on the way forward, with the Chairman stating that the issue is complex, requiring a step by step approach. Stakeholders were requested to be 'ambitious' and put forward proposals that would give Calypso higher visibility.

A broad range of subjects was covered by the six speakers, this included:

#### *Two target groups*

- Senior tourism already in existence
- Youth tourism potential to expand

#### *Ways of providing a service*

- SEGITTUR promoting senior travel in Spain to participating Member States, which overcomes seasonality, creates employment and increases holiday participation
- Interrail initiatives promoting exchanges through unlimited rail travel across Europe. Initially just for young people it has been extended to seniors with (video) evidence of many now using it.

#### *Elements for successful and sustainable implementation*

- Calypso needs to be clear about eligibility, overcome barriers, raise awareness and connect demand and supply, incorporating issues raised by speakers on 10 June 2010
- Calypso needs to avoid mass tourism and include Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs)

- As Calypso shares common values with the agenda for sustainability there are opportunities to learn from established good practice and develop suitable assessment tools in a pilot project
- As Calypso is promoting low season tourism it can address the challenges identified in an 2008 employment conditions study which found that there are few permanent jobs in the sector and that training leads to a better quality product as well as happier tourists (increased satisfaction)
- A youth strategy and youth appeal will unleash the power of Calypso

*Key requirements for success*

- Clarity in the form of a Calypso strategy with clear operational objectives, costs and finance
- Political commitment not just at EU level but particularly from Member States and Regions

The following is a summary of the six presentations

1. *Javier Bustamante, SEGITTUR: 'How could Calypso benefit from the Europe Senior Tourism Experience?'*
  - Concrete proposals to overcome seasonality, create employment and increase holiday participation
  - 2020 target
    - Network of exchange
    - 5 million senior tourists
  - Requires political commitment on EC, Member States, regional and local level regarding the strategic, operational and financial aspects
2. *Mara Manente, Ciset, TSG Member: 'What measures could be undertaken to ensure a sustainable future for Calypso?'*
  - Proposals to guarantee added value of Calypso similar to sustainability agenda
  - 3 characteristics – demand for differentiation, tailor made services and diversification of portfolio
  - 5 areas - specify eligibility, remove barriers to participation, develop products, increase awareness and connect demand and supply through a web portal
3. *Jean Pierre Martinetti, Director, Cité de la Culture et du Tourisme Durable, Gréroux-les-Bains, TSG Member: 'What type of sustainability criteria could Calypso benefit from?'*  
Sustainable development of tourism requires:
  - Avoidance of mass tourism
  - Work at different levels including Small & Medium Enterprises (SMEs)
  - Widens travel horizons

As Calypso shares common values with the sustainability agenda pilot projects could share good practice and develop assessment tools to evidence benefits
4. *Jaime de Morena, Renfe Espana – D.G. Viajeros, Dirección de Comercial y Marketing: 'Interrail initiatives concerning Calypso target groups'*

Interrail started in 1972, then and now it promotes interchange and exchanges

- Offer of unlimited rail travel
- In 30 countries
- For a certain period from 3 days to a month

Age limit changed, business now includes 4% to over 60s (see website and DVD)

5. Anna Quartucci, EFFAT: 'Can Calypso contribute towards better employment conditions?'

Yes, as Calypso is promoting low season tourism it can address the challenges identified in an 2008 tourism employment conditions study across 27 EU Member States:

- few permanent jobs in the sector
- lack of mobility and low pay
- training leads to a better quality product which leads to happier tourists and increased satisfaction

6. *David Jones, WYSTECH, Calypso Expert Group Member: 'Is Calypso beneficial for the European youth travel market?'* changed to *'What can youth travel do for Calypso?'*

- Youth travel is unique 'not a holiday as such' but 'an ambition to learn, experience and engage'
- Very 'social' in the literal sense of socializing and not just at nights
- Follows Calypso principles of interest in and respect for others
- New type of social tourism that is sustainable and responsible
- Youth strategy and youth appeal will unleash the power of Calypso

## **Conclusions Reached on the Way Forward**

The European Commission will continue to give due importance to the social dimension of this initiative, but will also ensure that Calypso's potential to combat seasonality, contribute to job creation and enhance regional economies is nurtured through practical actions aimed at highlighting the economic value linked to increased tourism in the low season.

In this regard, the European Commission stressed that Calypso will be built in close cooperation with Member States, whilst benefiting from the collaboration and participation of the private sector (including the tourism industry) and NGO's. The Calypso project is not going to be a macro project: governments, regions, local authorities, the private sector have to work together. Different mechanisms might be developed further, since varied schemes in different parts of Europe might contribute to different solutions.

Following the Calypso Study and the Visibility Meetings Across Europe, many Member States have expressed a request for the European Commission to assist them further in order to ensure an adequate follow up of the Calypso action. The Commission will thus be issuing a Call for Proposals accordingly in Summer 2010.

Through this Call, the Commission proposes an initial concrete action seeking to give value added by supporting – even financially – Member States. It is intended as an intermediary step leading on to the 2011 Demand-Supply Platform, allowing Member States to strengthen internal structures (based on the Country Profiles developed within the Calypso Study), prior to evaluating how best to manage their own country's input within the platform. The development of criteria on sustainability, accessibility and income thresholds, amongst others, will also be encouraged.

## ERRATA

The short paragraph on Page 2 of this Report:

*"It was highlighted that 92% members of HOTREC employ less than 10 people. The industry wants to make profit, therefore a proper analysis of the cost/benefit element and the market is important".*

should read:

*"It was highlighted that the hospitality sector is mainly composed of SME (99%) which is one of the reasons of the industry interest in all kind of initiatives that favour demand in low season. However, HOTREC asks for a proper cost/benefit analysis to be carried out."*