

O.3.1 Integrated Tourism Action developed



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Content

1. Introduction.....	1
2. From pilot guidelines to Integrated TESTEAT tourism action.....	2
2.1. Definition of the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action	3
2.2. Purpose and Scope of This Document.....	3
2.3. Integration with TESTEAT Solutions and Strategic Outputs	6
3. Core pillars of the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action.....	7
3.1. Inclusive gastronomy framework	7
3.2. Local value chains integration.....	8
3.3. Circular & sustainable event design	9
3.4. Participatory governance	10
3.5. Skills & Knowledge transfer.....	11
3.6. Rural urban integration	11
4. Structural components of the Integrated Tourism action.....	13
4.1. Visitor journey model.....	13
4.2. Mandatory components	14
4.3. Optional components	15
4.4. Data collection framework	15
4.5. Communication model	16
5. Operational Implementation framework.....	17
5.1. Preconditions.....	17
5.2. Step by step process	18
5.3. Minimum quality standards	19
5.4. Governance & sustainability checklist.....	20
6. Adaptation matrix.....	22



6.1. Structural integrity across context types	26
6.2. EU added value and cross border relevance.....	27
7. Risk assessment & mitigation.....	30
8. Conclusion and future outlook.....	32
Annex 1. Stakeholder mapping matrix	34
Annex 2. Inclusive menu checklist.....	38
Annex 3. Local producer cooperation template	41
Annex 4. Sustainability compliance checklist	43
Annex 5. Event data collection minimum dataset	47
Annex 6. Communication planning matrix.....	50
Annex 7. Pilot readiness self-assessment tool	52



1. Introduction

The TESTEAT project was conceived as a cross-border response to the growing need for sustainable, inclusive, and territorially rooted tourism development in the Adriatic area. Building upon the region's rich intangible enogastronomy heritage, the project aimed not only to promote traditional food culture, but to reinterpret and adapt it to contemporary tourist expectations, including dietary diversity, circular economy principles, and year-round experiential formats.

The development of the integrated tourism action followed a structured and iterative process across Work Package 3:

D.3.1.1 – Guidelines for the Creation of an Integrated tourism action established the initial conceptual and operational framework for pilot implementation. These guidelines defined key principles such as inclusivity in gastronomy, cooperation with local producers, environmental responsibility, participatory event design, and coherent communication strategies.

D.3.2.1 - Pilot actions were subsequently implemented across multiple Italian and Croatian territories, testing different formats (festivals, educational workshops, curated itineraries, thematic events) adapted to local contexts while aligned with common TESTEAT values.

D.3.3.1 – Joint Report of Implemented Pilot Actions at Project Level provided a cross-partner evaluation of these pilots, identifying strengths, operational gaps, inconsistencies in data collection, and areas requiring standardization and structural consolidation.

The present document represents the final consolidation phase of this process. It transforms tested pilot experiences and evaluation findings into a structured, transferable, and operationally robust integrated tourism action. The document also explains how pilot actions contributed to the testing, refinement, and future scaling of project-level solutions and strategic approaches, particularly in relation to O1.1 and O4.1.



2. From pilot guidelines to Integrated TESTEAT tourism action

Although the pilot actions were primarily event-based in format, their strategic function extended beyond isolated activities. Each pilot served as a proof of concept to test how intangible enogastronomy heritage can be:

- Integrated with modern dietary needs and “free-from” food trends,
- Embedded within local value chains and short supply systems,
- Designed according to circular economy and environmental sustainability principles,
- Delivered through participatory and community-oriented approaches,
- Connected to vocational training and skills development,
- Used as a driver for balanced rural-urban tourism development.

The evaluation phase demonstrated that while these elements were successfully tested, long-term impact requires clearer operational standards, stronger producer cooperation mechanisms, standardized data collection, and defined governance structures.

Therefore, the transition from pilot events to an integrated tourism product requires moving from flexible guidelines toward a consolidated and structured development framework.

The TESTEAT Integrated tourism action is not limited to organizing gastronomic events. It represents a comprehensive approach that combines:

- Experience design,
- Stakeholder coordination,
- Inclusive culinary practices,
- Circular and sustainable event management,
- Territorial branding,
- Educational and participatory components,
- Monitoring and continuous improvement mechanisms.



2.1. Definition of the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action

The model is built upon six interconnected pillars:

1. Inclusive Gastronomy Framework
2. Local Value Chain Integration
3. Circular and Sustainable Design
4. Participatory Governance and HUB Logic
5. Skills Development and Knowledge Transfer
6. Rural–Urban Connectivity and Territorial Balance

These pillars form the foundation for the structural architecture and operational toolkit presented in the following chapters.

2.2. Purpose and Scope of This Document

This document serves three main objectives:

1. Consolidation – To synthesize lessons learned from pilot implementation and evaluation into a coherent and refined model.
2. Standardization – To define minimum quality standards and operational requirements necessary for developing integrated enogastronomic tourism actions aligned with TESTEAT principles.
3. Replication and Transferability – To provide a practical framework, including matrices and checklists, enabling other territories to apply and adapt the model beyond the project's lifetime and across different geographical and institutional contexts.

By moving beyond descriptive reporting and toward a structured implementation toolkit, the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action contributes to long-term sustainability, policy alignment, and cross-border cooperation in enogastronomy-based tourism development.



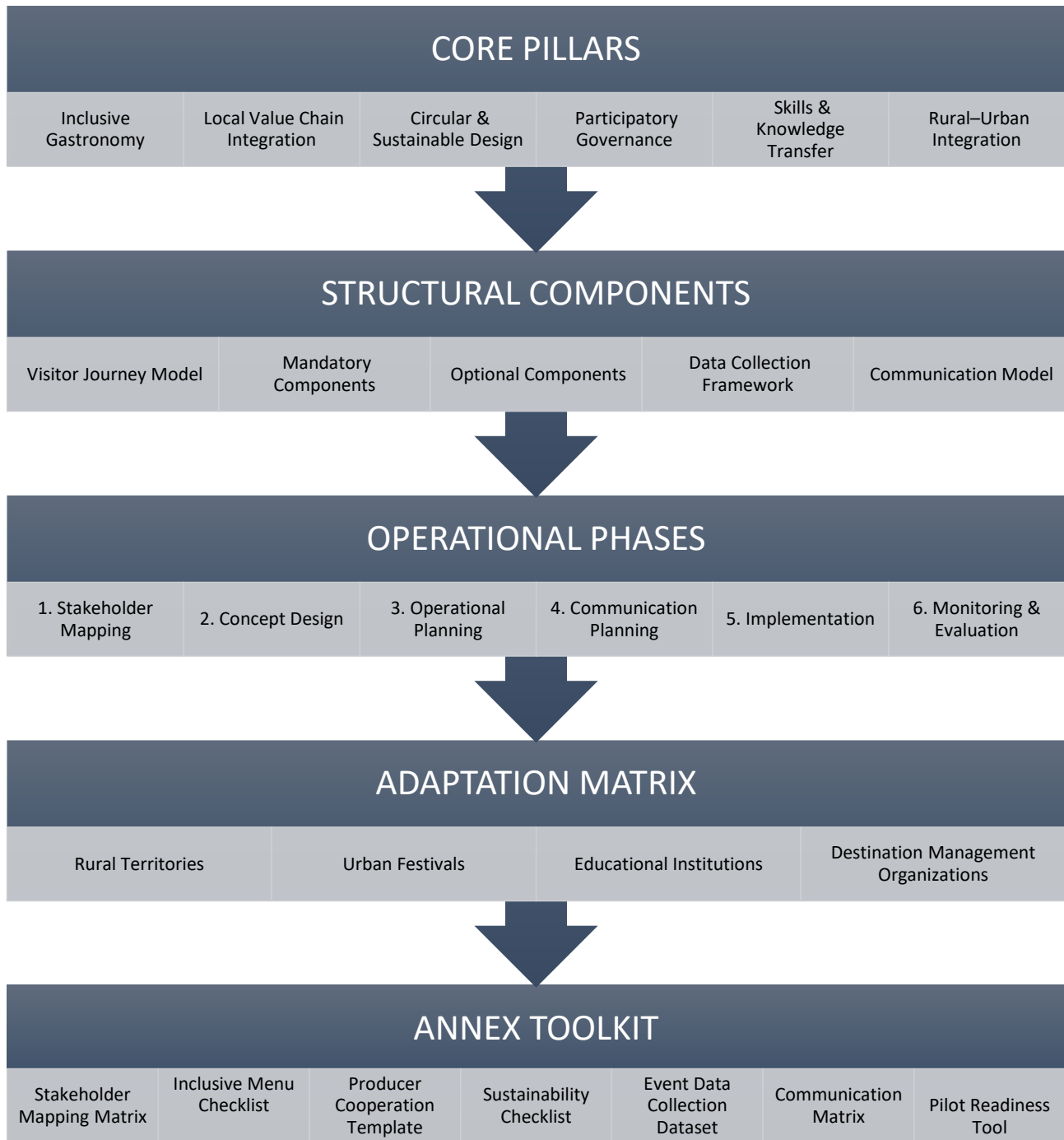
To ensure structural coherence, methodological clarity, and long-term transferability, the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action is designed as a layered development framework. It moves beyond descriptive pilot reporting and establishes a structured system that connects strategic principles with operational instruments.

The model is not defined by a specific format, territorial scale, or event type. Instead, it is defined by structural compliance. Whether implemented as a rural itinerary, urban festival, educational program, or destination-level initiative, the integrity of the model depends on the consistent application of its foundational pillars, structural components, and implementation standards.

Each layer of the model performs a specific function. The core pillars define the normative and qualitative direction. Structural components translate these principles into minimum compliance requirements. Operational phases ensure methodological consistency during implementation. The Adaptation Matrix enables contextual flexibility without compromising structural integrity. Finally, the Annex Toolkit provides concrete instruments for verification, monitoring, and replication.

The diagram below presents the architectural logic of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action and illustrates how strategic values are systematically translated into operational practice.





2.3. Integration with TESTEAT Solutions and Strategic Outputs

Output 3.1 Integrated Tourism Action developed is directly linked to the testing, refinement, and future scaling of the TESTEAT project solution and strategic framework. The pilot actions implemented under WP3 served as practical testing environments for concepts developed within Output 1.1. (TESTEAT Online tool), particularly in relation to inclusive gastronomy, adaptation of traditional recipes to modern dietary needs, stakeholder engagement, and communication with tourism actors and visitors.

Through these pilot actions, partners explored how digital and methodological solutions can support the development of integrated enogastronomic tourism experiences. The insights gained contributed to the refinement of the integrated tourism model presented in this document, especially in areas such as visitor journey design, inclusive menu standards, data collection, communication planning, and the integration of sustainability measures.

At the same time, Output 3.1 provides a concrete operational basis for the development of Output 4.1. (TESTEAT Strategy and Action plan) The model, together with its defined minimum quality standards, adaptation matrix, and annex toolkit, offers practical guidance for establishing long-term governance structures, ensuring stakeholder involvement, and enabling the replication and scaling of the approach.

In this context, pilot actions functioned both as testing grounds for project-level solutions and as a bridge between practical implementation and strategic planning. The evidence collected through their implementation and evaluation supports the further refinement and transferability of the TESTEAT approach across diverse rural and urban contexts within the cross-border area and beyond. This confirms that pilot actions contributed not only to testing but also to the validation and future scaling potential of TESTEAT solutions and strategic outputs.

3. Core pillars of the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action

The TESTEAT Integrated tourism action is built upon six interdependent pillars. Each pillar represents a structural component of the model and defines minimum qualitative standards that must be embedded into any tourism action developed under the TESTEAT framework. These pillars ensure that enogastronomy heritage is not treated as a static cultural asset, but as a dynamic driver of sustainable, inclusive, and territorially balanced tourism development.

The six pillars are mutually reinforcing. An action cannot be considered fully aligned with the TESTEAT Integrated tourism action if one of these structural components is entirely absent. For each pillar, practical implementation tools are provided in the Annex section of this document.

3.1. Inclusive gastronomy framework

The Inclusive Gastronomy Framework represents a shift from traditional food-centered tourism toward a model that recognizes dietary diversity as an integral part of contemporary visitor expectations.

Modern tourism demand increasingly includes vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, lactose-free, reduced-sugar, and other “free-from” dietary preferences. These needs are not limited to medical conditions but reflect lifestyle choices, ethical concerns, religious practices, and health awareness trends.

Within the TESTEAT model, inclusivity in gastronomy is understood as:

- Proactive adaptation rather than reactive accommodation,
- Mainstreaming inclusive options instead of treating them as exceptions,
- Transparent communication regarding ingredients and preparation methods,
- Responsible handling of allergens and cross-contamination risks.

Minimum model requirements include:



- Availability of clearly labeled inclusive menu options,
- Basic internal protocol for dietary adaptations,
- Visible communication of allergen information,
- Staff awareness and training regarding inclusive food handling.

The Inclusive Gastronomy Framework ensures accessibility, enhances visitor trust, and expands the potential target audience of the tourism product.

To facilitate structured implementation and internal verification of compliance, organizers should use:

- **Annex 2 – Inclusive Menu Checklist**, which provides operational criteria for menu design, labeling, and allergen management;
- **Annex 7 – Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool**, which enables organizers to assess whether inclusive gastronomy standards are adequately integrated prior to implementation.

3.2. Local value chains integration

Local Value Chain Integration is a foundational pillar of the TESTEAT model. Enogastronomy heritage can only be authentically valorized when it is directly connected to local producers, farmers, fishers, artisans, and small-scale agri-food businesses. The model promotes:

- Short supply chains (“zero-kilometer” sourcing),
- Seasonal ingredient prioritization,
- Transparent traceability of origin,
- Direct collaboration between producers and hospitality actors.

Local value chain integration generates multiple impacts:

- Economic resilience of rural areas,
- Reduction of environmental footprint through minimized transport,
- Preservation of traditional knowledge and production methods,



- Enhanced authenticity of the visitor experience.

Under the TESTEAT model, cooperation with local producers must move beyond symbolic inclusion. It should involve structured collaboration mechanisms, visibility of producers within the tourism action, and documented sourcing practices. This pillar transforms gastronomy from a consumption activity into a territorial development strategy.

Organizers are encouraged to apply **Annex 3 – Local Producer Cooperation Template** which supports formalization of collaboration modalities, traceability documentation, and visibility arrangements.

3.3. Circular & sustainable event design

Sustainability within the TESTEAT model extends beyond environmental awareness; it is embedded into the operational design of tourism actions.

Circular & Sustainable Event Design includes:

- Elimination or reduction of single-use plastics,
- Use of recyclable or reusable materials,
- Responsible waste separation and management,
- Food waste minimization through portion planning and monitoring,
- Energy-efficient infrastructure use,
- Promotion of sustainable mobility options.

Food circularity is a central element of this pillar. Recipe design, ingredient selection and preparation methods should aim to maximize resource efficiency and reduce waste throughout the lifecycle of the product. By embedding circular principles into event design and tourism product development, the TESTEAT model aligns with EU Green Deal objectives and broader environmental policy frameworks.



Sustainability measures must be visible and communicated to participants, reinforcing educational value and raising awareness of responsible consumption. To ensure structured planning and monitoring of sustainability measures, organizers should refer to:

1. **Annex 4 – Sustainability Compliance Checklist**, which provides a practical framework for verifying environmental and circular economy measures before and during implementation;
2. **Annex 6 – Communication Planning Matrix**, to ensure sustainability efforts are effectively communicated as part of the event narrative and branding.

3.4. Participatory governance

Participatory Governance reflects the TESTEAT commitment to co-creation and stakeholder engagement. Tourism development is not conceived as a top-down activity but as a collaborative process involving:

- Local producers,
- Hospitality operators,
- Educational institutions,
- Tourism boards,
- Public authorities,
- NGOs and community groups.

The TESTEAT HUB logic serves as a structural mechanism for stakeholder coordination and shared ownership.

Participatory governance ensures:

- Local relevance and territorial authenticity,
- Stronger community acceptance,
- Knowledge exchange across sectors,
- Long-term sustainability beyond project funding.



At minimum, the model requires structured stakeholder mapping, defined roles and responsibilities and mechanisms for collaborative planning and feedback, therefore, organizers are encouraged to use **Annex 1 – Stakeholder Mapping Matrix** to systematically identify and engage relevant actors. This pillar transforms tourism actions into community-based development platforms rather than isolated promotional events.

3.5. Skills & Knowledge transfer

The sustainability of integrated tourism action depends on human capital. The Skills & Knowledge Transfer pillar addresses the structural challenge of workforce shortages and competency gaps identified in both Italy and Croatia.

The TESTEAT model integrates:

- Vocational education activities,
- On-site learning through pilot implementation,
- Collaboration with tourism and hospitality schools,
- Knowledge exchange between experienced professionals and students,
- Awareness raising on circular economy and inclusive gastronomy practices.

Tourism actions under the TESTEAT model should include at least one structured educational or capacity-building component, ensuring that knowledge generated during the action remains within the territory.

This pillar strengthens long-term competitiveness and supports intergenerational transfer of culinary and hospitality skills.

3.6. Rural urban integration

The final pillar ensures territorial balance and smart redistribution of tourism flows. The TESTEAT model recognizes that enogastronomy heritage is often rooted in rural production areas, while tourism consumption frequently concentrates in urban or coastal zones.



Rural–Urban Integration promotes:

- Connection between production sites and consumption venues,
- Inclusion of peripheral or lesser-known areas in tourism circuits,
- Curated itineraries linking farms, markets, educational centers, and urban restaurants,
- Activation of under-visited neighborhoods or inland destinations.

This pillar contributes to:

- Reducing territorial disparities,
- Diversifying tourism offers beyond peak-season hotspots,
- Strengthening rural economies,
- Creating multi-nodal tourism experiences.

Integrated tourism under the TESTEAT model is therefore spatially balanced, connecting producers, communities, and visitors across rural and urban environments.



4. Structural components of the Integrated Tourism action

The TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action translates its six core pillars into a structured set of operational components. These components define how an integrated enogastronomic tourism product must be designed, implemented, monitored, and communicated.

While flexibility is allowed in format and territorial adaptation, the structural integrity of the model must be preserved. The elements defined in this chapter represent the minimum architecture required for alignment with the TESTEAT framework.

The integrated tourism offer under the TESTEAT framework is therefore not defined by format (festival, workshop, itinerary, etc.), but by structural compliance with the components outlined below. A tourism action may vary in scale, duration, and territorial setting, but it must respect the mandatory components to be considered aligned with the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism Action.

4.1. Visitor journey model

The integrated tourism action must be designed around a clearly structured visitor journey rather than isolated activities.

A TESTEAT-based tourism action should consider the full experiential cycle:

1. **Pre-Experience Phase**

- Information access and transparent communication
- Visibility of inclusive options
- Awareness of sustainability values
- Easy registration and access

2. **On-Site Experience Phase**

- Authentic interaction with local producers and heritage elements
- Inclusive gastronomic offering



- Visible sustainability practices
- Participatory and educational components

3. Post-Experience Phase

- Feedback collection
- Knowledge retention and dissemination
- Continued engagement through digital tools or follow-up activities.

The visitor journey must reflect coherence between narrative, food offer, stakeholder involvement, and sustainability practices. It should not function as a sequence of disconnected activities but as an integrated territorial experience.

4.2. Mandatory components

To ensure structural integrity and model consistency, any TESTEAT-based integrated tourism action must include at least the following mandatory components:

- **1 inclusive food adaptation protocol** (documented internal procedure ensuring inclusive menu design and allergen transparency)
- **1 documented cooperation model with local producers** (formal or semi-formalized collaboration mechanism ensuring traceability and visibility)
- **At least 3 sustainability measures** (e.g., plastic reduction, waste separation, food waste minimization, sustainable mobility promotion, energy-efficient infrastructure)
- **Participatory stakeholder component** (structured involvement of local actors, institutions, or community groups)
- **Visibility and communication framework** (consistent branding, narrative coherence, sustainability messaging)
- **Basic data collection system** (visitor numbers, engagement indicators, satisfaction feedback).

These components represent the minimum compliance threshold of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism Action. To verify structural compliance prior to implementation, organizers should



complete **Annex 7 – Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool**, which consolidates the mandatory components into a structured pre-implementation checklist.

4.3. Optional components

While mandatory components ensure structural compliance, optional components allow for territorial creativity and contextual adaptation. Optional components may include:

- Curated rural-urban itineraries,
- Educational workshops or vocational training modules,
- Thematic dinners or pop-up formats,
- Cultural or artistic programming,
- Digital integration through the TESTEAT online tool,
- Collaboration with dietary advocacy or sustainability-focused organizations,
- Multimedia storytelling elements.

Optional components enhance depth, visitor engagement, and territorial differentiation but cannot substitute mandatory structural elements.

4.4. Data collection framework

A structured data collection system is essential to ensure monitoring, evaluation, and long-term sustainability of the integrated tourism action. Each tourism action must collect, at minimum:

- Total visitor numbers (active and passive participants),
- Stakeholder categories involved,
- Basic satisfaction indicators,
- Documentation of sustainability measures applied,
- Evidence of inclusive gastronomy implementation,
- Educational or skills-related engagement indicators (where applicable).



The data collection process must remain proportionate to the scale of the action while ensuring comparability and replicability across territories. To standardize this process and ensure consistency, organizers must apply **Annex 5 – Event Data Collection Minimum Dataset**. This annex provides a structured template enabling cross-territorial benchmarking, future policy alignment, and impact assessment. Data collection is not merely a reporting requirement but a core element of model validation and continuous improvement.

4.5. Communication model

Communication is not treated as a promotional afterthought but as a structural component of the integrated tourism action. The communication model must ensure:

- Consistent TESTEAT branding and EU visibility,
- Clear articulation of sustainability and inclusivity values,
- Transparent information about dietary adaptations,
- Visibility of local producers and territorial identity,
- Balanced outreach toward professionals and the general public.

Communication must be structured across three phases:

1. Pre-event awareness,
2. On-site engagement and storytelling,
3. Post-event dissemination and legacy communication.

To structure communication planning and ensure coherence across channels and stakeholder groups, organizers must use **Annex 6 – Communication Planning Matrix**. This annex provides a framework for defining target groups, key messages, channels, timing, and monitoring indicators.



5. Operational Implementation framework

The Operational Implementation Framework translates the structural components of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action into a practical application process. While the model allows territorial flexibility, implementation must follow a structured logic to ensure quality, coherence, and replicability. This chapter defines the necessary preconditions, the step-by-step implementation pathway, minimum quality standards, and governance requirements for sustainable continuation beyond individual actions.

5.1. Preconditions

Before initiating the development of a TESTEAT-based integrated tourism action, organizers must verify that essential territorial and organizational preconditions are met.

These preconditions include:

1. Territorial Preconditions

- Presence of identifiable local enogastronomic heritage assets,
- Availability of at least a minimal network of local producers or food-related stakeholders,
- Basic infrastructure suitable for hosting tourism activities.

2. Institutional Preconditions

- A coordinating body or lead organization responsible for implementation,
- Clear internal allocation of roles and responsibilities,
- Commitment to applying inclusive and sustainability principles.

3. Operational Preconditions

- Capacity to document cooperation with producers,
- Capacity to implement at least three sustainability measures,
- Ability to collect basic visitor and stakeholder data.



5.2. Step by step process

The implementation of a TESTEAT-based integrated tourism action should follow a structured sequence of phases:

1. Phase – Stakeholder Mapping and Engagement

- Identify producers, hospitality actors, educational institutions, NGOs, and public bodies
- Conduct initial consultations
- Define roles and collaboration modalities

Note: Use Annex 1 – Stakeholder Mapping Matrix and Annex 3 – Local Producer Cooperation Template

2. Phase – Concept Design and Territorial Framing

- Define narrative and thematic focus
- Integrate inclusive gastronomy requirements
- Embed sustainability measures into event design
- Define rural–urban linkages

Note: Consult Annex 2 – Inclusive Menu Checklist and Annex 4 – Sustainability Compliance Checklist

3. Phase – Operational Planning

- Develop detailed implementation timeline
- Allocate responsibilities
- Secure producer agreements
- Confirm educational or participatory components

Note: Verify structural compliance using Annex 7 – Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool

4. Phase – Communication and Visibility Planning

- Define target groups
- Prepare pre-event communication



- Align sustainability and inclusivity messaging

Note: Use Annex 6 – Communication Planning Matrix

5. Phase – Implementation

- Deliver visitor journey across pre-, on-site, and post-experience phases
- Ensure visibility of producers and sustainability measures
- Monitor inclusive gastronomy compliance
- Document implementation

6. Phase – Monitoring and Evaluation

- Collect visitor and stakeholder data
- Assess compliance with mandatory components
- Identify improvement areas

Note: Apply Annex 5 – Event Data Collection Minimum Dataset

This phased approach ensures that the model remains structured while allowing adaptation to different territorial scales and formats.

5.3. Minimum quality standards

Beyond structural components, the TESTEAT model requires adherence to minimum qualitative standards across implementation.

These standards include:

- **Authenticity:** Local heritage must be genuinely represented, not symbolically referenced;
- **Transparency:** Ingredient origin, dietary adaptations, and sustainability practices must be clearly communicated;
- **Inclusivity:** At least one structured inclusive food adaptation protocol must be applied and documented;



- **Sustainability:** At least three environmental or circular measures must be implemented and visible;
- **Participation:** Stakeholder engagement must be documented and active.
- **Measurability:** Data must be collected and retained for monitoring and replication purposes.

Compliance with minimum standards should be validated prior to implementation using **Annex 7 – Pilot Readiness Self-Assessment Tool**, and post-implementation through **Annex 5 – Event Data Collection Minimum Dataset**.

5.4. Governance & sustainability checklist

Long-term impact depends on governance continuity beyond a single event or project cycle. The Governance & Sustainability dimension requires:

1. Defined Leadership Structure

- Clear designation of coordinating body,
- Defined operational and strategic roles,

2. Financial Sustainability Considerations

- Identification of potential funding sources,
- Integration with local tourism strategies,
- Exploration of revenue-neutral or low-cost formats,

3. Stakeholder Continuity

- Maintenance of stakeholder database,
- Periodic follow-up meetings or HUB activities,
- Integration into existing territorial initiatives,

4. Knowledge Retention

- Documentation of lessons learned,
- Archiving of data and templates,
- Integration into educational curricula or training modules.



Italy – Croatia



To support governance planning and long-term continuity, organizers should:

- Maintain updated stakeholder mapping (Annex 1)
- Use structured evaluation data (Annex 5)
- Periodically reassess readiness and compliance (Annex 7)



6. Adaptation matrix

The TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action is designed as a transferable and adaptable framework rather than a territory-specific event concept. Its structure allows implementation across diverse territorial, institutional, and operational contexts within and beyond the cross-border area. The Adaptation Matrix below illustrates how different types of territories and institutional actors can apply the model while respecting its mandatory structural components.

Context Type	Strategic Focus	Mandatory Components Application	Recommended Optional Components	Key Risk Factors	Mitigation Approach
Small rural territory	Strengthening local producers, activating peripheral areas, reducing seasonality	- Inclusive gastronomy implemented through adapted traditional recipes - Cooperation model formalized with local farmers/artisans (short supply chain emphasis)	- Farm visits and curated rural itineraries - Educational workshops for youth	- Limited infrastructure - Small stakeholder base - Limited marketing reach	- Scale-appropriate formats - Use of low-cost and modular event design



Italy – Croatia



		• Minimum three sustainability measures (e.g., zero-plastic policy, food waste reduction, local sourcing) • Participatory governance through village-level stakeholder meetings • Basic communication plan using local and regional channels • Simple but structured data collection	• Collaboration with local schools		• Cooperation with regional tourism boards for promotion
Urban festival context	High visitor engagement, visibility, brand positioning	• Inclusive gastronomy mainstreamed across multiple food providers • Formal agreements with selected local producers • Sustainability measures embedded into logistics (waste stations, reusable systems)	• Multi-location programming • Multimedia storytelling • Collaboration with sustainability	• Dilution of sustainability standards due to scale • Difficulty ensuring inclusive protocol compliance across vendors	• Centralized compliance checklist • Vendor agreements requiring adherence to



Italy – Croatia



		• Participatory governance via open calls and curated programming • Structured communication across digital and traditional media • Quantitative data collection with digital tools.	advocacy groups		TESTEAT standards • On-site monitoring system
Educational Institution (Vocational School / University)	Skills development, knowledge transfer, applied learning	• Inclusive menu design integrated into curriculum • Collaboration with local producers for training purposes • Sustainability measures embedded into practical learning • Participatory governance via student involvement	• Public demonstration events • Joint events with local tourism operators • Research-based evaluation components	• Overemphasis on education without territorial integration • Limited external visibility	• Combine educational activities with public-facing events • Engage local tourism stakeholders from early



Italy – Croatia



		• Internal communication strategy and dissemination of outcomes • Structured data collection focusing on educational impact			planning stages
Tourist Board / Destination Management Organization	Destination branding, product integration, smart redistribution of flows.	• Development of inclusive gastronomy standards across partner restaurants • Structured cooperation model with certified local producers • Destination-level sustainability guidelines • Stakeholder engagement platform (e.g., destination HUB) • Integrated communication strategy aligned with destination branding • Standardized visitor and stakeholder data collection	• Seasonal thematic itineraries • Cross-promotion between rural and urban nodes. • Integration with digital destination tools	• Over-commercialization reducing authenticity • Superficial producer integration	• Quality certification mechanism aligned with TESTEAT standards • Transparent traceability communication • Regular stakeholder evaluation meetings



6.1. Structural integrity across context types

Regardless of territorial scale, institutional capacity, or format of implementation, certain structural principles of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action remain non-negotiable. These elements form the minimum integrity threshold of the model and ensure that adaptation does not lead to dilution of its core values.

First, **at least one documented inclusive food adaptation protocol** must be in place. Inclusivity cannot remain declarative; it must be operationalized through clear internal procedures covering menu adaptation, allergen transparency, and responsible handling practices. This guarantees that dietary diversity is structurally embedded rather than occasionally accommodated.

Second, **at least one documented cooperation model with local producers** is required. Authentic enogastronomy tourism cannot exist without traceable territorial integration. Whether through formal agreements, structured partnerships, or documented sourcing practices, collaboration with local producers must be visible, verifiable, and functionally integrated into the tourism offer.

Third, **a minimum of three sustainability measures** must be implemented. Sustainability must extend beyond communication messaging and be reflected in concrete operational actions such as waste reduction, circular food practices, plastic minimization, sustainable mobility promotion, or energy-efficient infrastructure. These measures ensure alignment with broader environmental responsibilities and EU policy objectives.

Fourth, **structured stakeholder participation** is mandatory. Tourism development under the TESTEAT model is conceived as a collaborative process involving producers, hospitality actors, educational institutions, local authorities, and community representatives. Stakeholder engagement must be organized, documented, and meaningful, reinforcing territorial ownership and long-term sustainability.



Fifth, **a visibility and communication framework** must be established. Communication is not limited to promotion but serves as a tool for transparency, education, and narrative coherence. Sustainability measures, inclusive gastronomy practices, and local producer involvement must be clearly communicated to visitors and stakeholders alike.

Finally, **a basic data collection system** must be operational. Without structured data, impact cannot be assessed, lessons cannot be consolidated, and replication cannot be evidence-based. Even in small-scale contexts, minimum visitor and stakeholder indicators must be recorded to ensure comparability and accountability.

Together, these elements safeguard the structural integrity of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action. They ensure that territorial adaptation enhances contextual relevance without compromising compliance with the model's foundational principles.

6.2. EU added value and cross border relevance

The Adaptation Matrix demonstrates that the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action is not bound to a specific format, geography, or institutional structure. Instead, it operates as a scalable framework applicable across diverse European contexts while maintaining structural coherence.

The model **functions across different territorial scales**, from small rural communities to complex urban festival environments. Its structural requirements remain stable, while implementation intensity and format can vary according to local capacity and strategic priorities.

It actively **supports rural revitalization and urban innovation**, directly contributing to balanced territorial development. In rural areas, the model strengthens short supply chains, activates peripheral zones, and reinforces local economic resilience. In urban settings, it introduces structured sustainability standards, inclusive gastronomy practices, and stronger producer integration into high-visibility tourism formats.



The model further **integrates education and professional development**, responding to shared cross-border challenges related to workforce shortages and skills gaps in the hospitality and tourism sectors. By embedding vocational training and knowledge transfer components into tourism actions, it supports long-term competitiveness and sectoral resilience.

Importantly, the TESTEAT framework aligns directly with the Interreg Programme priority **“Culture and tourism for sustainable development.”** The model operationalizes this priority by:

- Valorizing intangible cultural heritage through structured enogastronomic experiences,
- Embedding environmental responsibility and circular economy principles into tourism design,
- Promoting inclusive access and community participation,
- Encouraging cross-border cooperation and knowledge exchange,
- Supporting territorial cohesion and diversification of tourism flows.

The emphasis on sustainability, inclusivity, and participatory governance reflects broader EU policy directions, including the European Green Deal, sustainable consumption strategies, and territorial cohesion objectives.

Furthermore, the model **enables policy alignment and future cross-border replication**. Because it defines minimum structural standards and provides operational tools (checklists, matrices, and data frameworks), territories beyond the initial project area can adopt and adapt the approach while maintaining methodological integrity.

By providing a structured yet flexible implementation system, the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action contributes to:

- Long-term territorial resilience,



Italy – Croatia



- Diversification and de-seasonalization of tourism offer,
- Strengthened cooperation between rural and urban nodes,
- Sustainable valorization of intangible enogastronomy heritage,
- Increased cross-border cohesion and policy consistency.

In this way, the model moves beyond event-based experimentation and establishes a transferable European framework for inclusive, sustainable, and culturally grounded tourism development.



7. Risk assessment & mitigation

The implementation of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action may encounter contextual, operational, institutional, or financial risks depending on territorial scale, stakeholder capacity and governance structures. Risk assessment is not intended to limit adaptation, but to ensure proactive planning, structural consistency and long-term resilience of the model. Identifying potential risks in advance allows territories to preserve the integrity of the framework while adapting it to local realities.

Identified risk	Risk description	Potential impact	Mitigation approach
Structural dilution risk	During territorial adaptation, some mandatory components may be partially implemented or treated as symbolic rather than operational (e.g., sustainability measures applied only superficially, informal producer cooperation without traceability)	Loss of model coherence, reduced credibility, weakened transferability	Clear internal verification of structural compliance prior to implementation, designation of a responsible coordinator for model integrity, and systematic review of minimum components before launch
Limited stakeholder engagement	Low participation of producers, educational institutions, or community actors due to fragmented coordination, lack of perceived benefit, or limited institutional capacity	Reduced authenticity, weak territorial ownership, limited long-term impact	Early stakeholder involvement in the design phase, transparent communication of mutual benefits, and structured collaboration processes that promote shared ownership rather than one-off participation
Insufficient sustainability implementation	Environmental and circular economy measures are communicated but not meaningfully embedded into operational practice	Reputational risk, misalignment with sustainability objectives,	Integration of sustainability measures into logistical planning from the outset, clear allocation of responsibilities, and visible



		diminished policy relevance	on-site demonstration of implemented practices
Limited capacity for inclusive gastronomy	Organizers or food providers lack sufficient knowledge, training, or infrastructure to implement inclusive gastronomy standards safely and consistently	Reduced visitor trust, exclusion of certain groups, potential reputational damage	Basic staff orientation on inclusive practices, realistic scope definition of offered adaptations, and transparent communication of implemented standards
Weak monitoring and impact measures	Failure to collect structured data limits the ability to evaluate outcomes, demonstrate impact, and improve future iterations	Reduced policy relevance and limited capacity for cross-territorial benchmarking	Designation of a responsible monitoring role, integration of data collection into planning rather than post-event reporting, and periodic review of collected information to inform improvement
Financial and resource constraints	Limited financial or human resources, particularly in small or peripheral territories, may restrict scale or continuity	Reduced quality, limited stakeholder engagement, difficulty maintaining sustainability measures	Modular design of tourism actions, prioritization of high-impact low-cost measures, and integration into existing territorial initiatives to reduce operational burden
Over – commercialization risk	In high-visibility or urban contexts, commercial interests may overshadow authenticity, sustainability, or local producer integration	Superficial implementation, erosion of heritage value, weakened territorial identity	Clear definition of quality standards, transparent sourcing communication, and periodic stakeholder evaluation of alignment with core model principles

Risk management should be embedded within governance structures and revisited before each implementation cycle. It should function as a mechanism for continuous improvement rather than as a one-time assessment. By proactively identifying and addressing potential risks, the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action strengthens its operational resilience, policy relevance, and long-term transferability across diverse European contexts.



8. Conclusion and future outlook

The TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action represents the consolidation of a structured cross-border learning process. What began as a set of pilot-based experimental actions has evolved into a coherent and transferable development framework for inclusive and sustainable enogastronomy-driven tourism.

Through the progression from initial guidelines, pilot implementation, and joint evaluation, the project has moved beyond isolated event formats toward a structured model that defines clear operational standards, minimum compliance thresholds, governance principles, and monitoring mechanisms. This transition marks a shift from experimentation to institutionalized methodology.

The model demonstrates that intangible enogastronomy heritage can serve not only as a cultural asset, but as a strategic development tool capable of:

- Strengthening local value chains and rural economies,
- Integrating inclusive food practices into mainstream tourism,
- Embedding circular economy principles into event and product design,
- Enhancing stakeholder cooperation and territorial governance,
- Supporting skills development and long-term sector resilience.

By defining structural components, operational phases, adaptation pathways, and risk mitigation mechanisms, the TESTEAT framework ensures that sustainability, inclusivity, and authenticity are not optional features but embedded standards.

Importantly, the model directly contributes to the Interreg Programme priority “Culture and tourism for sustainable development.” It operationalizes this priority through practical tools and governance mechanisms that support cross-border cooperation, territorial cohesion, and policy alignment.



The adaptability of the model across rural territories, urban contexts, educational institutions, and destination management organizations confirms its scalability and long-term relevance. Its structured yet flexible architecture enables replication beyond the initial project territories while preserving methodological integrity.

Looking forward, the sustainability of the TESTEAT model depends on:

- Continued stakeholder engagement beyond project funding cycles,
- Integration into local and regional tourism strategies,
- Periodic reassessment and refinement based on collected data,
- Ongoing cross-border knowledge exchange and institutional cooperation.

The TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action does not represent the conclusion of a project, but the establishment of a durable framework. It provides territories with a practical instrument to align heritage valorization, sustainability standards, inclusive gastronomy practices, and participatory governance within a coherent tourism development strategy.

In doing so, it contributes to building a more resilient, balanced, and future-oriented European enogastronomy tourism ecosystem.



Annex 1. Stakeholder mapping matrix

Purpose

This matrix supports systematic identification, categorization, and prioritization of stakeholders relevant to the development of a TESTEAT-based integrated tourism action. It ensures structured engagement and prevents ad hoc collaboration.

Instructions for Use

1. Identify all relevant actors in the territory (public, private, educational, civil society).
2. Categorize them by sector and level of influence.
3. Assess their interest and potential contribution.
4. Define engagement strategy.
5. Review and update before each implementation cycle.



Italy – Croatia



Stakeholder Mapping Matrix

Stakeholder Name	Sector	Role in Tourism Ecosystem	Level of Influence (Low/Medium/High)	Level of Interest (Low/Medium/High)	Potential Contribution	Engagement Strategy	Priority Level (1-3)	Responsible Person



Stakeholder Categories (Reference Guide)

Local producers (farmers, fishers, artisans)

Hospitality operators (restaurants, hotels, caterers)

Educational institutions (vocational schools, universities)

Public authorities (municipalities, regional bodies)

Tourism boards / DMOs

NGOs / associations

Cultural institutions

Media partners

Engagement Strategy Options

Inform (newsletter, info meeting)

Consult (feedback sessions)

Collaborate (co-design activities)

Co-implement (shared operational responsibility)



Italy – Croatia



Strategic partner (long-term cooperation)

Review Section

Date of mapping: _____

Responsible coordinator: _____

Next review date: _____

Key risks identified in stakeholder landscape:



Annex 2. Inclusive menu checklist

Purpose

This checklist supports the structured implementation of inclusive gastronomy standards within TESTEAT-based Integrated Tourism Action. It ensures that dietary adaptations, allergen transparency, and responsible food handling are operationalized rather than treated symbolically.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete this checklist during menu planning phase.
2. Verify compliance before event implementation.
3. Assign responsibility for each action where required.
4. Document corrective measures if any item is marked 'No'.
5. Retain the checklist as part of event documentation.

Inclusive Menu Compliance Checklist

Requirement	Yes	No	Corrective Action Needed	Responsible Person
At least one clearly labeled vegetarian option available				
At least one clearly labeled vegan option available				
Gluten-free option available (if				



Italy – Croatia



feasible within concept)				
Lactose-free option available (if feasible within concept)				
All allergens clearly indicated (menu or display)				
Staff informed about ingredients and allergens				
Cross-contamination risks assessed and minimized				
Internal adaptation protocol documented				
Inclusive options communicated in promotional materials				
Scope and limitations of adaptations clearly communicated to visitors				

Compliance Summary

Total Yes responses: _____

Total No responses: _____



If more than two critical requirements are marked 'No', corrective actions must be implemented before proceeding.

Verification Section

Date of verification: _____

Verified by: _____

Signature: _____



Annex 3. Local producer cooperation template

Purpose

This template supports the structured documentation of cooperation between tourism organizers and local producers within the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action. It ensures traceability, transparency, and meaningful territorial integration.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete one template per producer or group of producers.
2. Define cooperation scope clearly before implementation.
3. Ensure traceability of supplied products.
4. Clarify visibility arrangements and communication rights.
5. Archive the document as part of event documentation.

1. Producer Information

Producer Name: _____

Legal Form (if applicable): _____

Contact Person: _____

Address / Location: _____

Type of Production (e.g., dairy, meat, vegetables, wine): _____

2. Scope of Cooperation

Products Supplied: _____

Quantity / Volume (estimated): _____

Seasonal Availability: _____

Delivery Method and Timeline: _____



3. Traceability & Sustainability

Origin of Products Confirmed: Yes / No

Production Method (e.g., organic, traditional, certified): _____

Sustainability Aspects (short supply chain, low transport, etc.): _____

4. Visibility & Communication

Producer name/logo visible during event: Yes / No

Producer participation on-site (presentation, tasting, etc.): Yes / No

Inclusion in promotional materials: Yes / No

5. Roles & Responsibilities

Organizer Responsibilities: _____

Producer Responsibilities: _____

6. Duration of Cooperation

Single event / Seasonal cooperation / Long-term partnership

Start Date: _____

End Date (if applicable): _____

7. Signatures (if formalized)

Organizer Representative: _____

Signature: _____

Producer Representative: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Annex 4. Sustainability compliance checklist

Purpose

This checklist supports the structured implementation of environmental and circular economy principles within TESTEAT-based Integrated Tourism Action. It ensures that sustainability measures are operationally embedded rather than communicated symbolically.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete this checklist during the planning phase of the tourism action.
2. Mark each item as Yes, No, or Not Applicable.
3. Define corrective actions for any critical item marked 'No'.
4. Ensure at least three sustainability measures are implemented (minimum requirement).
5. Retain the completed checklist for monitoring and documentation purposes.

Waste Management

Requirement	Yes	No / N.A.	Corrective Action / Notes
Waste separation system implemented on-site			
Food waste monitoring and minimization measures applied			
Clear signage for waste disposal provided to visitors			



Italy – Croatia



Materials & Plastics

Requirement	Yes	No / N.A.	Corrective Action / Notes
Single-use plastics reduced or eliminated			
Reusable or recyclable serving materials used			
Printed materials minimized or replaced by digital formats			

Food Circularity

Requirement	Yes	No / N.A.	Corrective Action / Notes
Seasonal and local ingredients prioritized			
Portion planning implemented to reduce waste			
By-products or surplus ingredients reused where feasible			

Energy & Infrastructure



Italy – Croatia



Requirement	Yes	No / N.A.	Corrective Action / Notes
Energy-efficient equipment used where possible			
Natural lighting or low-energy lighting prioritized			
Infrastructure optimized to minimize energy consumption			

Mobility & Logistics

Requirement	Yes	No / N.A.	Corrective Action / Notes
Local suppliers prioritized to reduce transport footprint			
Sustainable mobility options communicated to visitors			
Shared transport or logistics optimization applied			

Compliance Summary

Total sustainability measures implemented: _____

Minimum requirement met (at least 3 measures): Yes / No



If minimum requirement is not met, additional sustainability measures must be defined before implementation.

Verification Section

Date of review: _____

Reviewed by: _____

Signature: _____



Annex 5. Event data collection minimum dataset

Purpose

This dataset defines the minimum data requirements for monitoring, evaluating, and benchmarking TESTEAT-based Integrated Tourism Action. It ensures comparability across territories and supports evidence-based improvement and policy alignment.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete this dataset within 7 days after event implementation.
2. Assign one responsible person for data consolidation.
3. Use estimations only when exact figures are not available (mark clearly as estimate).
4. Retain dataset for future benchmarking and reporting.
5. Review results before planning next implementation cycle.

1. General Event Information

Event Title: _____

Location (City / Region): _____

Date(s): _____

Type of Format (festival / workshop / itinerary / other): _____

Lead Organizing Body: _____

2. Visitor Data

Indicator	Value
Total number of visitors (active participants)	
Estimated passive visitors (if applicable)	
Number of registered participants	
Estimated % of non-local visitors	
Estimated % of repeat visitors	



Italy – Croatia



3. Stakeholder Involvement

Stakeholder Category	Number Involved
Local producers	
Hospitality operators	
Educational institutions	
Public authorities	
NGOs / Associations	
Other partners	

4. Inclusive Gastronomy Indicators

Indicator	Value / Description
Number of inclusive menu options offered	
Type of adaptations implemented (vegetarian, vegan, gluten-free, etc.)	
Any incidents or feedback related to dietary adaptations	

5. Sustainability Indicators

Indicator	Value / Description
List of sustainability measures implemented (minimum 3 required)	
Waste separation system implemented (Yes/No)	
Plastic reduction measures applied (Yes/No)	
Local sourcing share (estimated %)	
Sustainable mobility measures communicated (Yes/No)	



6. Education & Knowledge Transfer Indicators

Indicator	Value
Number of students involved	
Number of professionals trained	
Educational sessions organized (number)	
Description of knowledge transfer component	

7. Qualitative Feedback & Lessons Learned

Main strengths observed:

Main challenges encountered:

Improvement actions for next cycle:

Verification Section

Date of data consolidation: _____

Responsible person: _____

Signature: _____



Annex 6. Communication planning matrix

Purpose

This matrix supports the structured planning, implementation, and monitoring of communication activities within TESTEAT-based Integrated Tourism Action. It ensures coherence between sustainability values, inclusivity principles, territorial branding, and stakeholder visibility.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete this matrix during the planning phase.
2. Define key messages aligned with sustainability and inclusivity principles.
3. Assign responsible persons for each communication action.
4. Define measurable indicators (KPIs) for each channel.
5. Review performance after implementation and document lessons learned.

Communication Planning Matrix

Target Group	Key Message	Communication Channel	Timing (Pre / During / Post)	Responsible Person	KPI / Indicator	Status



Reference Target Groups

Local community
Tourists (domestic)
Tourists (international)
Local producers
Hospitality operators
Educational institutions
Public authorities
Media representatives
Sustainability-oriented audiences

KPI Examples

Number of social media impressions
Number of registrations generated through campaign
Media mentions secured
Engagement rate (%)
Website visits
Newsletter open rate (%)
On-site visibility compliance (Yes/No)

Post-Implementation Review

Main communication strengths:

Main communication challenges:

Improvement actions for next cycle:



Annex 7. Pilot readiness self-assessment tool

Purpose

This self-assessment tool verifies whether a planned tourism action complies with the minimum structural and qualitative standards of the TESTEAT Integrated Tourism action. It must be completed prior to implementation to ensure structural integrity and readiness.

Instructions for Use

1. Complete this assessment before final confirmation of the event.
2. Mark each criterion as Yes, Partially, or No.
3. If any mandatory criterion is marked 'No', corrective action is required before proceeding.
4. The coordinating body must validate the final assessment.
5. Archive the completed tool as part of official documentation.

Structural Compliance Assessment

Criterion	Yes	Partially	No	Corrective Action Required	Responsible Person
Inclusive food adaptation protocol documented					
At least one documented cooperation model with local producer(s)					
Minimum three sustainability measures defined					



Italy – Croatia



Stakeholder engagement structure defined					
Visitor journey (pre/on-site/post) clearly structured					
Communication plan defined					
Basic data collection system prepared					
Roles and responsibilities clearly assigned					
Governance and follow-up mechanism defined					

Assessment Summary

Total Yes: _____ Total Partially: _____ Total No: _____

Decision Status (circle one): READY FOR IMPLEMENTATION / CONDITIONAL
(CORRECTIVE ACTION REQUIRED) / NOT READY

Risk Reflection

Main risks identified before implementation:

Mitigation measures defined:

Validation

Date of assessment: _____

Lead Coordinator: _____

Signature: _____

