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# Cross Cultural Evaluation Methodology

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## Cool Noons

Cool Noons is an innovative project for the way it addresses an urgent and underestimated issue such as the evolution of urban tourism towards a more sustainable model. Five pilot cities will be innovative solutions to improve the visitor experience of tourists and residents during the hottest hours of the day. The tools and methods used combine scientific accuracy, pragmatism and creativity, thanks to the diversity of the partners involved.

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Mission: Enhancing sustainable tourism

Programme priority: Greener MED

Specific Objective: RSO2.4: Promoting climate change adaptation and disaster risk prevention, resilience, taking into account eco-system based approaches

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## Introduction

Interreg is a key European Union (EU) instrument that strengthens cooperation between regions and countries within the EU. As part of the EU's Cohesion Policy, Interreg plays a vital role in promoting regional development, cohesion, and reducing economic disparities. The selected and funded projects, in order to comply with the main objective of Interreg, must provide an integrated toolkit that will allow the results of the projects to be applicable and transferable to other similar challenges faced by different countries. Making project results and toolkits transferable to all countries is crucial, allowing them to be adapted and adopted by multiple countries, increasing the project's impact.

It is clear, that not all EU countries face the same challenges and not with the same intensity. Still there are some global principles such as climate change, resilience and sustainability that need to run as horizontal axis across all projects, developing or research initiatives. Every country, region or municipality (NUTS 1, NUTS 2, NUTS 3) according to the intensity of the problem they are facing and the levels of advancement in every one of the principles will adapt the suggested toolkit and apply the COOL NOONS principles in a specific route. The resulting methodology will allow for scaling solutions to global problems, ensuring that successful initiatives can be implemented in diverse contexts.

Cross cultural evaluation and transferability are core elements in fostering international cooperation, enabling countries to engage in an open dialogue to co-create solutions, share knowledge, resources, and best practices. The planning process is more creative and participatory, which is a necessary condition for any multi-stakeholder field such as urban planning for tourism development. The creating of real traceable networks in the urban and rural environment, as well as conceptual networks in the participants mental maps, creates a sense of community and a common platform initiating the discussion. By adopting a common framework, countries can work together more effectively to address global challenges such as climate change, public health, and economic development.





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Developing a universal framework that can be applied cross-culturally can be more cost-effective than creating multiple country-specific versions. Data collection and the analysis of the current state of each route, in the case of COOL NOONS, along with the special requirements and characteristics that may occur in the different locations or governance systems. The data collection phase and process cannot be completely eliminated in the future applications of the methodological framework that will result from COOL NOONS, but it can be considerably easier and less costly. When solutions are transferable, and cross-cultural challenges are proactively included in the process, countries can avoid duplicating efforts, saving time and resources.

To conduct a relevant cross-cultural evaluation methodology for pilot territories, ensuring adaptability across different social and cultural contexts while facilitating project transferability, a comprehensive approach integrating various techniques and frameworks is essential. Developing a cross-cultural evaluation framework is essential to effectively assess project performance across different territories. This framework should include both quantitative and qualitative indicators, providing a comprehensive view of the project's impact.

The aim of the proposed methodology is to create a guidebook for territories that wish to apply the COOL NOONS toolkit in their area that will allow them to choose between the different interventions the one that is best applicable to their case scenario. In order to do that, they need to be able to identify similarities in their environment, similarities in the challenges that they are facing and similarities in the governance system in their own country. This will lead other countries and territories to be able to choose the scenario (that derives from the pilots of COOL NOONS) that best fits their profile. It is important to set this methodology and guide for other countries and territories with the overall aim of achieving applicability of the chosen intervention scenario and effectiveness for the case specific challenges.

The three main pillars for assessment are:

1. Cultural differentiation assessment. COOL NOONS is essentially a project redesigning an urban neighborhood, to provide freshness for users, emphasizing on tourist.





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2. Stakeholders: The relevant public and private bodies that will benefit and/or participate in the project including both locals and tourists.
3. Urban Governance: The urban management eco-system that makes the interventions feasible and applicable.

## Steps in Cross Cultural Evaluation Methodology

Creating a cross-cultural evaluation methodology for pilot territories involves designing a flexible and adaptable framework that respects and incorporates the unique social and cultural contexts of each pilot territory while maintaining consistency to facilitate project transferability. Here's a step-by-step guide to developing such a methodology:

### 1. Preliminary Research and Context Analysis

Objective: Understand the social and cultural contexts of each pilot territory.

**Cultural Profiling:** Conduct in-depth research to create cultural profiles of each territory. This includes understanding local customs, values, languages, social structures, and key cultural practices. The cultural profile of tourists is equally important and can be identified by examining the place of origin, reason for travelling, arrivals, transportation to and from the destination and transportation within the destination.

**Stakeholder Mapping:** Identify and map key stakeholders, including community leaders, local authorities, and cultural groups. Additionally, identify and map key tourism stakeholders like tour operators, international chains operating in the area, tourist information centers.

**Climate profiling:** Climate data for each territory needs to be examined in order to assess the need for fresh paths, the time of year that these paths are mostly needed and the extend of intervention required.





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## 2. Establish a Core Evaluation Framework

Objective: Develop a consistent core evaluation framework that can be adapted to local contexts.

**Define Objectives:** Clearly outline the objectives of the evaluation, ensuring they are broad enough to be applicable across different contexts. This part will assess the similarities as established in step 1 and will determine the objectives for the intervention. It is important to assess and understand the expected results in every different COOL NOONS path and set objectives that best fit the specific path in a specific territory. This part is related to the expected results and the actual feasibility of applying the COOL NOONS methodology in any given country path or scenario.

**Key Indicators:** Establish a set of core indicators that measure the project's probability of success. The impact, outcomes, and processes are well measured by the methodological framework described in Del. 1.1.1. Cost combined with the expected results (value for money) is another key indicator for deciding to apply the COOL NOONS methodology in a different location. These should be flexible enough to be adapted to local contexts.

**Methods and Tools:** Choose a range of quantitative and qualitative methods (e.g., surveys, interviews, focus groups, participatory observation) and tools (e.g., questionnaires, data collection apps) that can be used across different territories. As with the pilots in COOL NOONS, all counties and territories that decide to adopt the COOL NOONS toolkit, it is important to collect location specific data. As the pilots will run these methods and tools in their COOL NOON paths, a report should be provided to help monitor, audit and refine these methods and tools for other localities.

## 3. Local Adaptation and Customization

Objective: Customize the core framework to fit the local context of each pilot territory.





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**Local Indicators:** Develop additional local-specific indicators in collaboration with local stakeholders to ensure relevance. Compare the chosen cool paths against a set of criteria for each territory. Open air or enclosed path, a path along the main route for locals, central or peripheral path, points of tourism interest along the path, tourism services and amenities along the path, urban route or park route.

**Language and Communication:** Translate all materials into local languages and the origin languages of the main tourism flows. In this process, it is important to ensure cultural appropriateness in terms of language use and communication styles.

**Pilot Testing:** Conduct pilot tests in each territory to refine and adjust the evaluation methods and tools based on feedback

## Questionnaire for Assessing Cultural Acceptance and Adaptivity of COOL NOONS Paths

### Section 1: Demographics and Context

#### 1. Location and Demographics:

- What is the name of your city and country?
- What is the population of your community/area?
- What are the main cultural or ethnic groups in your area?
- What are the main places of origin of tourists in your area?
- How many tourists do you have in your area (at least one overnight stay)?
- How many day visitors do you have in your area?
- Which are your busiest months of the year regarding tourism?



## 2. Role and Involvement:

- Which are the main non-government stakeholders in your community (e.g., local resident, community leaders, urban planner's association, cultural organization, environmental organisations)?
- How involved are these stakeholders in the local decision-making process (participatory planning)?

### Section 2: Urban Environment Assessment

- What means of public transportation do you have in your area (e.g., bus, subway)?
- How much urban green do you have in your area and what type (e.g., trees on every street, urban parks, small scale neighborhood parks)?
- Do you have balconies or other building features providing shade in your area?
- What percentage of your road network is pedestrianized?
- What percentage of your road network is roads of more than 2 lanes?
- Do you have an urbanized peri-urban area?
- How many permits for new buildings do you have per year in your area?
- Is the number of new permits increasing, decreasing or more or less stable?

### Section 3: Assessing Climate Conditions

- How would you describe the local climate (e.g., hot, humid, dry)?
- What are the main environmental challenges in your area (e.g., heatwaves, lack of green spaces)?
- Which are the hottest periods (months) in your areas?
- Which are the highest temperatures in your area?
- How many days per/year do you have heatwaves?

### Section 4: Assessing Governance Model and Community Involvement

- Describe the process of implementing and urban design intervention such as COOLNOONS in your area.





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- How involved are community members in the planning and implementation of urban cooling projects?

Not involved, Slightly involved, Moderately involved, Very involved, Extremely involved

- How important is the use of sustainable materials and practices in creating cool paths in your community?

Not important, Slightly important, Moderately important, Very important, Extremely important

- How important is the incorporation of local cultural elements (e.g., art, symbols, traditional materials) in urban projects like COOLNOON paths?

Not important, Slightly important, Moderately important, Very important, Extremely important

## Conclusion

By following the above-mentioned steps, COOL NOONS can develop a cross-cultural evaluation methodology that is adaptable to different social and cultural contexts, ensuring both the relevance of the evaluation in each pilot territory and the transferability of the project's findings and best practices across various regions.

Creating a questionnaire in the form of a checklist for pilots will assess the adaptivity of urban interventions of COOL NOONS in different countries involves gathering detailed information on various aspects such as cultural relevance, community needs, environmental considerations, and local acceptance. Assessing similarities and challenges will ensure the effectiveness of applying the COOL NOONS results in other countries and will in turn make it a valuable toolkit for increasing satisfaction of tourists and locals from their urban environments.

