



José Luís BRAGA *, **André CAMPONÊS** **, **João Pinto COELHO** **,
Miguel PEREIRA *, **Óscar Lima SILVA** ***

TOWARDS A SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT MODEL OF THE *FESTA DOS TABULEIROS*

Abstract. The key goal of this conceptual paper is the creation of a sustainable management model of the *Festa dos Tabuleiros* (FT) event that provides a quality experience to the visitors without threatening the social, cultural and environmental integrity of the territory. Action research methodology has been used to improve the way the Tomar municipality organises and promotes the FT. In order to establish this model, it is necessary to determine the agents and relationships that underlie the production system of this event, aiming to improve the quality of its offer and the experience it provides to visitors as well as the sustainability of its production and consumption processes. In this sense, the development of the model will be based on four tasks: (1) stock-taking, interpreting and exhibiting cultural resources; (2) identifying, involving, analysing and educating stakeholders; (3) benchmarking of good practices in event sustainability; and (4) managing and monitoring the model. Hence, this paper aims to contribute to the safeguarding of the FT and to the sustainable development of the municipality and the region. This intent is

* José Luís BRAGA, Miguel PEREIRA, CIDI – Research, Development and Innovation Center of the European Institute of Higher Studies (IEES), Rua Universitária - Medelo, Apartado 178, 4824-909 Fafe, Portugal; CiTUR – Centre for Tourism Research, Development and Innovation, Polytechnic of Leiria; e-mails: jose.braga@iees.pt, miguel.pereira@iees.pt, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7668-5200>, <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-1373-3599>

** André CAMPONÊS, João Pinto COELHO, Techn&Art – Technology, Restoration and Art Enhancement Center, Polytechnic Institute of Tomar, Tomar, Portugal; Tourism and Culture Division of the Tomar Municipality, Tomar, Portugal; e-mails: fernandocampones@cm-tomar.pt, joacoelho@cm-tomar.pt, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3896-4238>, <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7168-3393>

*** Óscar Lima SILVA, Instituto Superior Politécnico GAYA (ISPAYA), Avenida dos Descobrimentos, 333, 4400-103 Vila Nova de Gaia, Portugal; Techn&Art – Technology, Restoration and Art Enhancement Center, Polytechnic Institute of Tomar, Tomar, Portugal; e-mail: osilva@ispgaya.pt, ORCID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0109-1050>



achieved through the creation of a sustainable tourist-cultural management model that promotes the study, protection, enhancement, and dissemination of this event, as well as the creation of efficient and innovative solutions in an integrated way.

Key words: event management, *Festa dos Tabuleiros*, sustainability, action research, Tomar municipality.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourist activity, when related to heritage, highlights and sells it as an iconic beacon of a place, region, country or even a continent (Richards and Wilson, 2004). In this respect competition between cities has been increasing, converting them into “consumer goods” (Remoaldo and Ribeiro, 2017), mainly due to the process of economic and cultural globalisation, when heritage is used as a differentiating factor for territories.

Heritage, tourism and the strengthening of community relations with a territory can be strategic tools (Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, 2010). Events have been seen by official tourism entities as a strategic product, as they allow destinations to differentiate their tourist supply from that of their competitors. The planning and organisation of events make it possible to attract tourists, and can enable urban renewal and improve the image and infrastructure of a destination (Getz, 2008).

Artistic/cultural events were considered one of the ten strategic assets of national tourism by the 2027 Strategy of the Tourism of Portugal, given that the events contribute to “boosting local economies in low-density territories, helping to expand tourism throughout the year and throughout the territory” (Turismo de Portugal, 2017, p. 49). The same document has established “events that contribute to the tourist promotion of the territories, the valorisation of local economies, their endogenous products and their stories and traditions” as priority projects (idem., p. 59).

Therefore, the *Festa dos Tabuleiros* (FT), one of the largest festivals in the world, having received in 2019 more than half a million visitors (IPDT, 2019), is part of this strategy. However, there is a great lack of studies on this event and this paper aims to fill that gap. Accordingly, this paper aims to contribute to the safeguarding of the FT and to the sustainable development of the municipality and the region, through the creation and application of a sustainable management model (Flores Ruiz, 2014), which promotes the study, protection, enhancement, and the dissemination of the referred cultural manifestation. It also aims to create efficient and innovative solutions in an integrated way with the local community and with the different public and private partners that are part of the territory (Silva, 2017).

The FT occurs in a specific social, economic, cultural and environmental context, and like other events it generates impacts. In the wake of the 1987 Brundt-

land Report (United Nations, 1987), it is important to understand the sustainability of development that allows present generations to satisfy their needs for improving living conditions, without compromising the satisfaction of the needs of future generations (Sharpley and Telfer, 2015). The present research, while seeking to recognise, estimate and measure these impacts, will aim to develop a management model that allows to maximise the positive effects and minimise the negative ones (WTO, 1998), helping this event to contribute to the well-being of the local community and stakeholders not only in the short term, but also long-term (Holmes *et al.*, 2015). This paper will combine quantitative and qualitative approaches improving the validity of the research (Finn *et al.*, 2000). This is substantiated in a triangulation (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004) of methods (quantitative and qualitative), an interdisciplinary triangulation (different fields of research, namely tourism, heritage, geography, economics, and marketing) and an information triangulation (using a variety of primary and secondary data sources: document analysis, visual evidence, questionnaires, image-based interviews, the Delphi technique, focus groups, and Geographic Information Systems), directed at the stakeholders of the FT, aiming to improve the quality of the experiences provided by the festival organisation.

2. EVENTS AND SUSTAINABILITY

Depending on their scale, events may be classified as mega-events, hallmark events, large events, and regional or local events (Getz, 2008). The number of events and festivals has seen a substantial increase in the last two decades, since these enable destinations to reposition and differentiate themselves from their competitors (Ministry of Tourism of Brazil, 2010). The level and nature of the generated impacts of events vary according to their dimension and the resources involved (Remoaldo *et al.*, 2016). Events can enhance or depreciate critical assets such as the social, financial, natural, and human capital of a destination (Anderson and Lundberd, 2013). The positive and negative impacts can occur in three levels (economic, sociocultural and environmental) (Richards and Wilson, 2004).

Regarding the positive economic impacts, they can consubstantiate themselves in an increase of profits, job opportunities, and investment in infrastructure and equipment. Events can, however, generate negative economic effects through inflation, real estate speculation, and opportunity costs (Marujo, 2015). Socio-cultural benefits produced by events are verifiable in the revitalisation of traditions and preservation of cultural identity, in the increase of local community participation, and the improvement of life quality (Marujo, 2015; Fong *et al.*, 2017). However, in social terms, events can also have detrimental effects for communi-

ties, such as gentrification, criminality, vandalism, harmful changes in values and customs, and the commodification of culture (Backman, 2018).

At the environmental level, events can promote an environment's protection, increase environmental consciousness, and encourage urban renewal. In contrast, they can create a rise in atmospheric, sound or visual pollution, an increase in traffic, problems with accessibility and parking, and overcrowding of the event's enclosures (Fong *et al.*, 2017).

The measurement of the economic impact of events has been conducted by authors referring to methodologies such as an estimate of the direct, indirect and induced multiplier effects of income and employment, as well as cost-benefit analysis methods and models of general balance (WTO, 1998).

But when it comes to socio-cultural impacts, the establishment of cause-effect relations that explain the recorded mutations has proved to be more delicate. According to Getz and Page (2016), the intangible socio-cultural effects and the long-term social and cultural cumulative event legacy still need to be measured and evaluated in an efficient way. In turn, the carbon and ecological footprints are methodologies of the environmental impact that demand to be applied.

The concept of sustainability has been permeating tourism since the 1980s. According to Getz (Dredge and Whitford, 2010), sustainable events are not those that last indefinitely, but those which play social, cultural, economic, and environmental roles that are valued by a community. The same author has called for the development of a sustainable paradigm that is not grounded exclusively in the economic value of events. The concept of sustainable development raised by the World Commission on Environment and Development in the Brundtland report of 1987 (United Nations, 1987) holds the notion of human progress guided to the maintenance and improvement of living standards without compromising the ecosystem, on which life on Earth depends. This paper aims to establish a sustainable management model for the FT that ensures that the negative effects of this event are minimised whilst the social, economic, cultural, and environmental benefits are maximised.

Sustainability has been aggregating value not just to the image of events, but also to their promoters and sponsors. Sustainable events include activities that apply sustainability principles not just in their conceptualisation, but also in their preparation and realisation (Holmes *et al.*, 2015). This typology of events gives special relevance to the safeguarding of three pillars of sustainability: economic, environmental, and social. These same principles are found in the ISSO 20121:2012 standard (APCER, 2012) regarding the certification of companies associated with event organisation. This standard aims to "identify, reduce and eliminate potentially negative impacts of events, as well as [...] maximise its positive impacts through better planning" (Idem, para. 4).

According to Misener and Mason (2006) (as cited in Taks, 2013) events can contribute to social capital formation if they put community values at the centre of decision-making processes, and if they involve various stakeholders, es-

pecially from the community in event-related activities. According to the same authors, events, especially those that are not mega-events and that take place in small towns, should also empower local communities to operate changes. Communication and mutual learning processes are also valued by the same authors. Talavera, Al-Ghamdi and Koç (2019) have also emphasised the development of social capital by mega-events through “initiatives to integrate locals, expatriates, and visitors in a harmonic environment of friendly understanding, respect, and cultural exchange” (p. 18), whereas Gaffney (2013) has considered events to be sustainable when they include “long-term urban planning, post-event venue use, social equity or democracy in their discursive frames” (p. 3929).

3. FESTA DOS TABULEIROS

The FT can be classified as a hallmark event, that is, a recurring event which, in a sense, is a synonym of the city of Tomar (Sousa and Ribeiro, 2018; Fernandes and Carvalho, 2018). It is possible to say that there is an overlap between the spirit and philosophy of the event, the place, and the local community. Nonetheless, events are tourism products of ephemeral attraction that cities hold for a limited period (Molina, 2013). Even more in this case, since the FT is only held quadrennially. This circumstance does not invalidate that there is an intensive flux of national and international visitors in the year of the event – as it is perceptible in the number of entrances to a city monument, the Church of Holy Mary, in a festivity year (2015).

Recently, IPDT (2019) calculated 700.000 visitors and 11.9 million euros of direct impact in the 2019 edition of the FT. In this context, the average spending of national visitors was estimated at 49.63 euros and its international counterpart at 118.44 euros. The same document noted that 97% of the residents considered that this event had a positive impact on the region’s dynamics.

The FT presents a unique model within the festivities in honour of the Holy Spirit that occur around Pentecost, the central date of the Christian calendar. The distinctive elements are related to the format of the offerings, the trays, which represent the payment of promises to the Divine (see Figure 1), constituting one of its central symbolic aspects. The cult consists of a wide context of detailed ritual ceremonies, both of religious character and festive expression, beginning with the *Cortejo das Coroas* on Easter Sunday, the *Cortejo de oferendas*, and culminating with the generalised distribution of foodstuffs, the *Pêza*. To this we must add the participation of all the parishes of the municipality and the complementary activities that are part of it – the Boys’ Parade, the Boys’ Games, the Butler’s Parade, Partial Parades, Popular Ornamented Streets, and Popular Games. With its different types of great richness and complexity (for example, from coronations

to banquets and *bodos*, and also parades) it is spread all over mainland Portugal, with particular incidence in the regions of Extremadura and Beira, and also on the islands of Madeira and the Azores (Dionísio *et al.*, 2020).



Fig. 1. Festa dos tabuleiros (festival of the trays)

Source: author's image.

4. MANAGEMENT MODEL TO ACHIEVE THE SUSTAINABILITY OF THE FESTIVAL

The present research intends to deploy the action research methodology to the FT. Action research is an approach in which researchers and participants in the unit of analysis collaborate in diagnosing a problem and developing a solution (Bryman, 2012). In this context, action research is a methodology aimed at promoting change in an organisation (Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). Hence the model presented here intends to contribute to improving the planning and organisation of the FT event.

Thus, action research presupposes the constant collection and analysis of data gathered within the scope of the FT, as well as the implementation of a management model and the application of the results obtained in the improvement of the action of the event's stakeholders in order to change their operating model (Ritchie and Goeldner, 1994).

One of the general goals of this research will be to develop a management model to achieve the sustainability of FT, through the study and, subsequent-

ly, optimisation of the cultural, social, economic, and environmental dynamics associated with this heritage manifestation (Flores Ruiz, 2014). The challenges associated with this model present an opportunity to provide continuity to a heritage manifestation, which is only experienced and celebrated every four years. It is intended, as such, to aggregate attractiveness to an event that, by its quadrennial periodicity, presents a three-year hiatus which is here intended to be filled (WTO, 2011).

The FT, in its last edition, generated a considerable economic impact and a substantial media outreach, as well as general satisfaction (IPDT, 2019). Nonetheless, this event, which received around 700,000 visitors, also produced some negative impacts, including environmental, visible, for instance, in the accumulation of trash in restaurants, or economic, such as price inflation of food products in some establishments during the period of the event. The sustainable management model that the researchers intend to implement will draw from the shared vision of the key stakeholders of the FT (Martins, Mota and Braga, 2020).

Stakeholders are here understood as the groups or individuals affected by this event. It is intended to obtain their support for the adoption of sustainable good practices. The stakeholders will include sponsors, official tourism entities (at the local, regional, and national levels), tourism entrepreneurs, volunteers, community groups, and the media associated with the event, among others. However, it seems clear that sensibilities and interests are different among stakeholders and unanimity is not always possible. Nevertheless, it is necessary for the goals and intentions of all stakeholders of the event to agree for the success of this model.

Two groups of stakeholders, primary and secondary, can be distinguished. The former can be defined as people and organisations without which the event could not be held. The latter are composed of groups and individuals that are not directly involved in the event but can have a significant impact on it. A key goal of the current research is the creation of a sustainable management model of the event that provides a quality experience to the visitors, without, however, threatening the social, cultural, and environmental integrity of the territory (Braga and Silva, 2022; Fong, May-Chiun, Songan, Nair, 2017).

The achievement of this objective is, however, dependent on the way the event is managed. By aiming to establish a management model that can be replicated in other events, the researcher is aware that this tourism product is particularly complex, since it is transversal and fragmented, and is based on a value chain formed by a diverse group of independent agents (hotels and restaurants, café owners, local communities, the municipality, the organising commission, etc.), and by the territory in which it occurs. The proposed model implies planning, coordination, and articulation of all these stakeholders in search of solutions to improve the economic, social, cultural, and environmental sustainability of the FT. To reach this goal, the researchers and institutions that are involved in this research intend to learn in depth the nature of this tourism-cultural manifestation.

As such, they plan to identify, involve, analyse, and educate the event's stakeholders, that is, the supply and demand of the event (Task 2), the visitors that are willing to engage in an authentic experience, and the tourism trade agents, the set of services that are provided by the stakeholders in the place of the event to satisfy visitor needs. A key aspect of this management model will be the strategic planning of the FT (minimising potential negative impacts and maximising the economic benefits of the tourist destination, as well as encouraging a more positive response from the local community towards tourism in the long term) (Future Trends, 2011). The intention is to provide local and regional promotional agents with sustainable strategic planning of the event (see Fig. 2) that is capable of reaching balance and coherence between the different stakeholder actions.

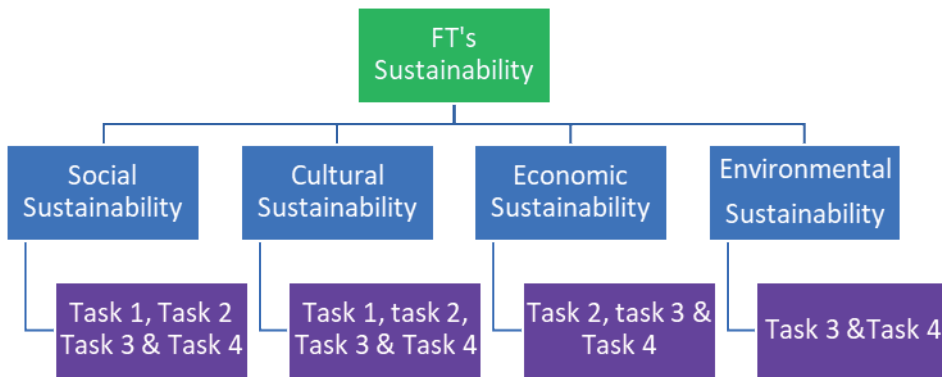


Fig. 2. Operationalisation of the Model

Source: own work.

For that end, an inventory of the cultural resources of the FT will be made (Task 1), emphasising its specificities and characteristics, as well as the attractions that this tourism product offers. The aim is to diagnose the limitations and attributes of the space in which it is held, analysing the positive and negative characteristics of this tourism-cultural manifestation, and ensuring the preservation of the heritage and the physical environment in which it is held.

In order to establish this model, it is necessary to determine the agents and relationships that underlie the production system of this event, aiming to improve the quality of its offer and the experience it offers to visitors, as well as the sustainability of its production and consumption processes, and, finally the improvement of the FT's competitive positioning, but above all the safeguarding its unique and irreplicable Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH).

Within tourism literature, this conceptualisation falls in the scope of sustainability models (Flores Ruiz, 2014). To reach sustainability of a tourism product, management models need to be based on three fundamental aspects: natural and

cultural conservation, economic viability, and social equity of development, considering that each of these elements follows a different path to reach the same goal (Holmes *et al.*, 2015).

5. OPERATIONALISING THE MODEL

In this sense, the development of the current model will be based on four tasks: (1) stock-taking, interpreting and exhibiting cultural resources; (2) identifying, involving, analysing, and educating stakeholders; (3) benchmarking of good practices in event sustainability; and (4) managing and monitoring the model. Each task will include the application of methodologies and will develop action strategies to diagnose the necessities regarding the cultural, economic and environmental sustainability of the FT.

Regarding Task 1, the main goal will be the study, stock-taking and safeguarding of the FT, considering the dynamic dimensions of the past and evaluating the contemporary aspects of this heritage manifestation. To do so, a holistic and democratic approach will be adopted in the definition of what is cultural heritage, applying participative community intervention methodologies and considering the manifestations of the ICH. These are an integral part of the everyday life of individuals and groups that preserve them according to their own ways of evaluation and safeguarding.

Following this, in Task 2, the aim will be to identify and analyse the needs of stakeholders through methodologies such as focus groups, questionnaires, interviews, and the Delphi technique. With the knowledge produced by the focus groups and the Delphi technique, a series of workshops and seminars will be conducted aimed at bridging the gaps identified by the population and analysed as relevant for training, resulting in a change towards the adoption of good practices. Task 3 aims at benchmarking the best environmental sustainability practices in events at the national and international levels. As a result of the application of this methodology and the correspondent transference of knowledge, the application of new digital technologies and geographical information systems is expected, as to improve the experience and satisfaction of FT visitors. A strict articulation with Tasks 1, 2 and 3 is expected when it comes to the identification of stakeholders and surveying strategic priorities by region, municipality and parish.

Task 4 will comprise the management and monitoring of the model activities. The goals of this task will be: (a) accompanying the accomplishment of the outlined actions in tasks 1, 2 and 3; (b) gathering the information produced in Tasks 1, 2 and 3; (c) collaborating in the resources management; (d) writing the necessary reports; and (e) organising general meetings. This task will contribute to a better organisation of the collected information.

5.1. Task 1: Stock-taking, interpreting and exhibiting cultural resources

This task aims to contribute to the study, stock-taking and safeguarding of the FT, considering the dynamic features of the past and evaluating the contemporaneity of this heritage expression.

To this end, a holistic and democratic approach is adopted in the definition of what the cultural heritage is, using participatory community intervention methodologies and considering that ICH expressions are an integral part of the daily lives of the individuals and groups who preserve them according to their own enhancement and safeguarding practices. In articulation with Task 2, the researcher seeks to understand the importance of socio-cultural agents (local notable persons, social scientists, local associations, media, parish councils, and the municipality), who have played a central role in the new dynamics of the FT, placing themselves locally as mediators between reality scales. The task is guided towards three goals: (1) to preserve the legacy of the FT and to develop the community's sense of belonging towards its local history; (2) to safeguard and enhance the FT material, immaterial, and historical-cultural heritage; and (3) to produce pedagogical content to contribute to education and heritage enhancement. The starting point will be the identification of extant literature regarding the FT in historical, national, and international documents and regarding similar cultural phenomena.

To support the elaboration of exhibitions and scientific papers, an inventory matrix for the registration of information and a digital repository for storage and access of information in a practical and uniform way will be created. Interviews will be conducted to gather collective and individual biographies. Through oral testimonies, an attempt will be made to map meanings and the memories of a given object or collection, evaluating the diversity of perspectives and identity self-knowledge.

Through a multidisciplinary approach, the following activities aim to contribute to change the state of the art, stock-taking and spreading cultural, scientific and technical knowledge in collaboration with partners, populations, and communities, in order to share the benefits resulting from the implementation of the model: the accomplishment of itinerant thematic exhibitions in the municipality of Tomar, with traditional and interactive contents; the creation of an online platform that enables the dissemination and promotion of the FT as a heritage phenomenon, empowering and revitalising traditional arts and crafts and providing access to indispensable information to the identification of the ICH and the definition of safeguard strategies; the operationalisation of training actions in the municipality of Tomar for the transmission of traditional arts and crafts associated with the FT, which integrate craftsmen and new creative industries; and the organisation of a national seminar regarding the ICH and FT itself and the elaboration of didactic publications about the FT.

5.2. Task 2: Identifying, involving, analysing and educating stakeholders

A stakeholder analysis will be conducted in order to identify which actors are involved in the FT. The understanding is that a stakeholder is any group or person whose interests may affect or be affected by the outcomes of an event. Hence, the objective is to identify the social, economic, and cultural actors (in articulation with Task 1) involved in the planning and execution process of the FT.

The analysis of the stakeholders is a participatory investigative method in which researchers propose to: (1) identify the stakeholders; (2) classify them, and (3) verify the relationships between them. To identify a stakeholder, it is necessary to understand who engages with a certain aspect of the organisation, management or execution of the event. To do this, it is advisable to use qualitative methods, such as the focus group method.

Focus groups aim, in a relaxed atmosphere, to acquire information on an investigative theme by utilising a qualitative methodological tool, such as a semi-structured interview (Ritchie and Goeldner, (1994); Altinay and Paraskevas, 2008). After the implementation of the focus groups, a classification of the stakeholders and their inter-relationships will follow. Through the latter it will be possible to identify, from the stakeholders' point of view, what the needs of the festival are, the positive and negative points, and how to improve the social, economic, cultural, and environmental management of the event under consideration, and the participation of the local community. This task will be monitored by researchers assigned to Task 4.

It is also expected the use of the Delphi methodology to obtain the critical opinion of specialists or experts in specific areas (which may be relevant for Tasks 2 and 3). These experts will be selected according to their high knowledge of the subject or research area. This is a method of collecting opinions from a group of experts through a series of questionnaires that are answered in successive rounds anonymously and with as much autonomy as possible in order to reach a final consensus on the subject under study. This qualitative technique is very flexible and can give additional rigour by addressing the types of questions and issues that are difficult to research using more conventional methods.

Apart from using the focus group and the Delphi technique, semi-structured interviews to the different agents of the tourism supply sector and visitor surveys are planned, aiming to maximise their satisfaction with the event, in a triangulation of qualitative and quantitative methodologies. The definition of the indicators and agents of the tourism supply to be studied will follow the recommendations of the Tourism Satellite Account of the National Institute of Statistics (INE, 2016).

Once the main constraints related to the referred event are identified, analysed and ascertained, the next step will be the integrated planning of workshops or seminars (common to Tasks 1, 2, and 3) and their implementation with the target

audience considered in the previous processes, in order to respond to the gaps most glaring throughout the diagnosis derived from the application of the methodologies mentioned above, with the perspective that this training will be able to mitigate and even, hopefully, eliminate them.

5.3. Task 3: Benchmarking of good practices in event sustainability

Benchmarking is a systematic and continuous process of measuring and comparing organisation practices with those of world leaders, in order to obtain information that helps improve its level of performance (Clarke and Raffay, 2013).

Accordingly, this task aims to implement a sustainable quality management of the FT in order to achieve the first objective of this model, which is the maximisation of positive impacts and the minimisation of negative ones at the economic, socio-cultural, and environmental levels.

In order to achieve this objective, an analysis and evaluation of the structure of the event industry in Portugal, Europe, North America, and Asia will be necessary. This task foresees a comparative analysis between hallmark events, in whose typology the FT is inserted. It may also be possible to establish virtuous synergies with other similar events in Europe.

The researchers in charge of this task, in order to make an evaluation and benchmarking of similar events, will have to study and analyse them in depth, looking for reliable information (comparators) that will enable them to extend their knowledge about the best practices in events, having as the objective the subsequent transference of the acquired knowledge for the benefit of the stakeholders of the FT (it is foreseen in this scope an articulation with Task 2).

Special emphasis will be put on best practices in terms of flow management (one of the negative impacts of the festival) with the possibility of creating strategically located honey pots (Williams, 1998). These should act as interceptors in planned locations of the event, consisting of car parks, information spots, and food and beverage stands. Thus, themes such as spatial zoning and the concentration and dispersion of visitors will be specially highlighted, seeking to adopt the best national and European practices in this matter.

Therefore, face-to-face visits to events that offer success stories are planned in order to assess the state of the art regarding the quality of these tourism products. This activity is, therefore, articulated with Task 4 regarding the adoption of a conceptual model of benchmarking of hallmark events. In this scope, it is intended to accomplish several reports regarding the technical visits made and an audio guide that can be downloaded to mobile phones from this device (i.e. the Interactive Panel with Augmented Reality) or from platforms such as Audite. These will be provided in several languages (e.g. access according to the MOATI Model). The use of simple QR code technologies is also foreseen, which will lead to simple textual information

(without the need for Internet access), together with links to a website, images or videos. The intention is to associate these ideas to the principles of environmental preservation and accessible tourism.

Regarding the management of visitor flows at the FT, these can be undertaken through mobile phone geolocation, so the researchers can produce flow maps, through points (each point on the map would be a mobile phone), having access only to the device IP and to the mobile phone number at the most. Thus, data privacy would be always safeguarded and with this method the researchers could create interactive maps using SIG tools. These flow maps can be generated later to support the studies and conclusions or in real time (e.g. release an online interactive map, via the institutional page of the event and via the potential APP specific to the FT and also, in an integrated way, in interactive urban panels together with the City Council of Tomar).

5.4. Task 4: Managing and monitoring the model

Given the characteristics of this model, it is necessary to manage and monitor the planning in order to meet and fulfil the expectations of all groups involved – formally and informally: institutions, entrepreneurs, associations, tourists and visitors, local community, etc. Therefore, it is essential to articulate the research process, with the social partners, in order to ensure the pursuit of the proposed and expected lines. To this end, it is essential to monitor and evaluate the development of the tasks that comprise this model, in order to gather a global perspective of the action in progress and, if necessary, adopt corrective measures in an objective and efficient way.

The purpose of this task is to constantly monitor all the activities inherent to and resulting from the implementation of the model, in order to provide an updated dataset to the entire research team, whenever necessary. It is understood that this information is crucial to correct any anomalies or unexpected situations, given the planned application, as well as to optimise the use of available resources.

It is intended to conduct the “Management and monitoring of the model” through actions directed towards the collection and systematisation of information on the activities developed within the different tasks of the model, the holding of meetings with representatives of the tasks, and the reporting, shared with the whole team, aiming at sustainable planning during the course of this research.

6. FINAL REMARKS

Sustainability has become a global concern, particularly in the tourism industry. Hence, mass tourism must be avoided because it tends to be insensitive to the social, environmental, and economic impacts of tourism on communities.

Sustainable planning and organisation of the FT, considering good governance criteria, will be able to create policies that can guarantee the maximisation of benefits to local communities while minimising negative impacts (WTO, 1998).

The management model to achieve the sustainability of the event will balance the socio-economic needs of the communities with the demands of visitors and the tourism industry, while conserving the environment and cultural resources of the community. Therefore, the sustainable development of the FT can avoid the negative effects of tourism on the local community and is based on four dimensions: social, cultural, economic, and environmental sustainability (see Fig. 2).

The present model intends to be a strategy to fight the imbalances caused by the tourist seasonality associated with the FT. It is also intended to improve the international perception of the image of the FT and of Tomar as a tourist destination (WTO, 2011).

Finally, it will be important to attract tourist segments more receptive to the global development goals, namely goal 11 (“Sustainable Cities and Communities”); goal 12 (“Responsible Consumption and Production”), and goal 17 (“Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”) (United Nations, n.d.).

The limitations of this text are due to the fact that it is still a conceptual paper without the proper empirical concretisation. Nevertheless, the author believes that it can become a guiding document for a future project, to be undertaken by local development organisations and actors, in order to intensify the multiplying effects arising from the FT, but also to implement the 4 dimensions of sustainability associated with this event (cultural, economic, environmental, and social) so that the impact of the FT is not confined to a little more than one week every 4 years, but can become an enduring tourist product of Tomar.

One of the challenges that the researchers will face is the communication, promotion and dissemination of the results of the model implementation, which is an essential tool in the relationship, not only among the partners, but above all within the society in terms of mobilisation and public information. The model’s digital platforms will be constantly updated with information about the project development stages, as well as with intermediate results. The results of the model implementation are expected to take 3 years to implement, which corresponds to the interval between two FT editions.

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