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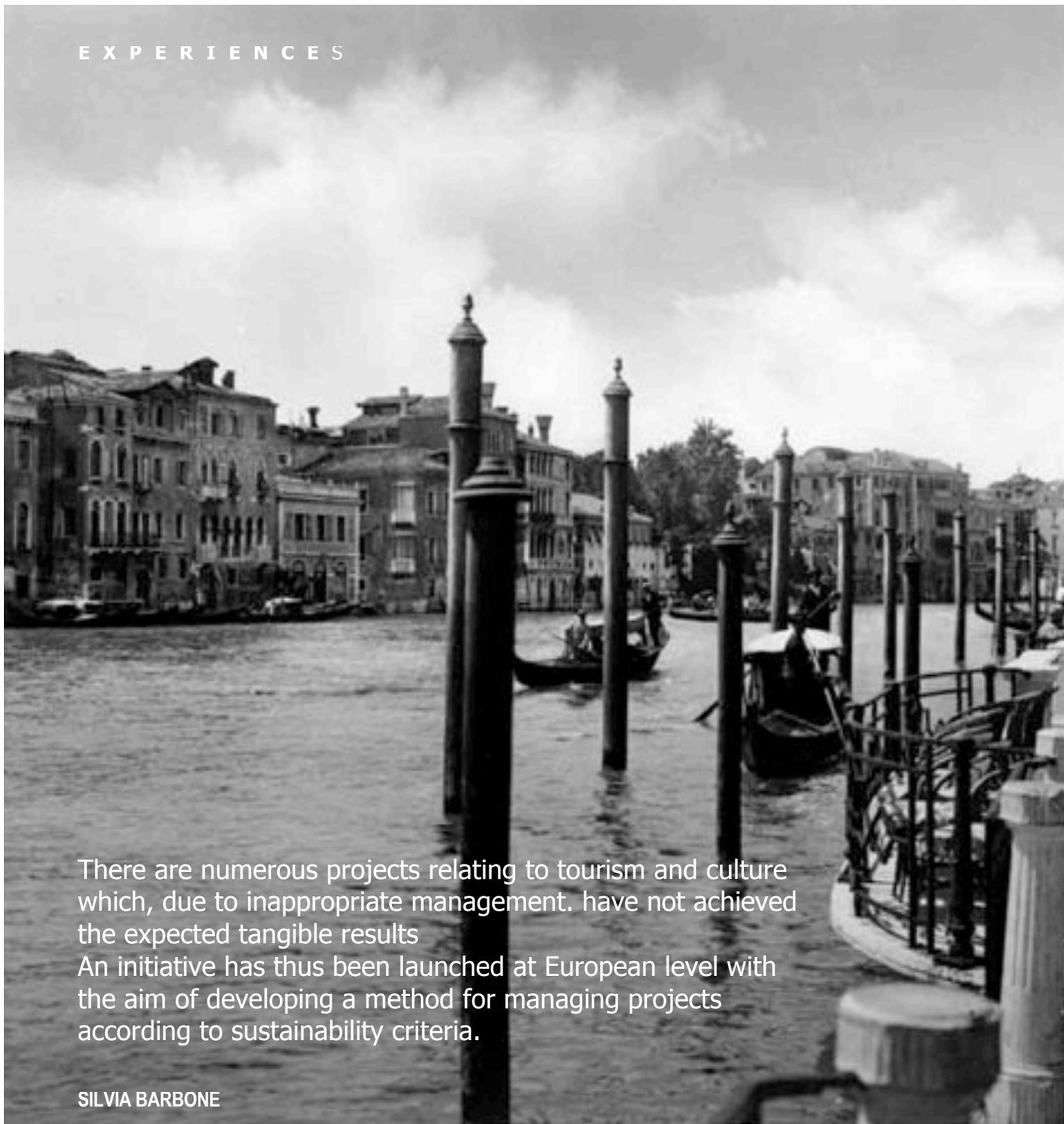
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There are numerous projects relating to tourism and culture which, due to inappropriate management, have not achieved the expected tangible results. An initiative has thus been launched at European level with the aim of developing a method for managing projects according to sustainability criteria.

SILVIA BARBONE

MANAGEMENT

Project Management and Sustainable Development

This Combination forms the basis of PM4ESD (*Project Management for European Sustainable Development*), an initiative financed by the European Commission and managed by a public-private partnership which aims to develop an international Project Management methodology in two key sectors of sustainable development: tourism and culture.

Frigento, a small municipality in the Province of Avellino, chose to start in (within?) its own territory to introduce innovation in governance that would have an impact on the development of tourist and cultural destinations and which is, above all, European innovation. It established an international partnership consisting of public and private organisations which discussed the need to develop a European project management strategy, which could guide local authorities in their daily march towards sustainability and be an operational tool for implementing strategic guidelines on the sustainability of tourism drawn up by international institutions like the World Tourism Organisation. The starting point was a joint reflection: tourism and culture can create an economy and social growth if managed with a sustainable approach to methodology and not just content. This starts from the assumption that in order to make local authorities sustainable, it is not enough to install solar panels, create a list of restaurants which use local produce or provide incentives for intelligent transport. A management system that guarantees sustainable action must also be implemented.

Based on these observations, the idea of creating the Project Management for European Sustainable Development brand was born, for adoption within Europe, both by local and by national governments, by companies and by all stakeholders operating in the tourism and cultural sectors.

PM4ESD is a management method which is deployed whenever an organisation, whether public or private, needs to launch a project. It provides a guarantee for local authorities that the project will be transformed into concrete actions with clearly defined roles and responsibilities and that these actions will have a real local impact.

It helps local authorities and companies to govern transparently and not to forget that every action must have corresponding benefits.

THE PM4ESD PROJECT

Some of the basic elements which represent its frame of reference are:

- PM4ESD is intended to develop a Project Management “certification” model which tourism and cultural organisations, both private and public, will be able to adopt as a management model;
- PM4ESD is aimed at two targets: organisational contexts and project managers. The former (ministries, local authorities, tourist boards, museums, parks, foundations, trade associations and companies) may decide to adopt PM4ESD as a methodology for organising, managing and monitoring projects in an effective and efficient way; project managers, on the other hand, will be able to obtain certification and apply the method;
- PM4ESD is a project financed by the European Lifelong Learning programme, devised by the European Commission for financing all of the initiatives falling within the “Education and Training” theme;

- PM4ESD originates from the transfer of a best practice, or from the adaptation of Prince2, one of the most widespread international project management methodologies;
- PM4ESD is a two-year project, running from October 2009 until September 2011, which will allow the development, testing and validation of the methodology. After its conclusion, the courses and promotion of the brand will begin.
- PM4ESD is thus both a project management methodology and a European project.

We shall illustrate the methodology below, presenting the most innovative aspects and the procedures for obtaining certification as a Project Manager in European Sustainable Development. At the same time, PM4ESD shall be analysed from the perspective of an initiative funded within the context of a European Community programme.

THE METHODOLOGY

PM4ESD arose from an analysis of the territorial requirements relating both to policies for the devising and management of sustainable initiatives and to the training requirements of those entities managing the territories.

Tourism and culture are developing to an ever greater degree through the realisation of projects, in the sense of innovative and evidently sustainable special interventions. Destinations and local communities should be able to grow by realising such initiatives. Indeed, there are an enormous number of European experiences in this sense, both large and small. These range from the execution of a large museum, as in Bilbao, to the organisation of a major event, such as the Olympic Games, to the creation of the brand “European destinations of excellence”: Strong experiences which have completely changed and are changing the geography of tourist destinations and the positioning of locations within Europe. Moving on to less well-known initiatives which are often realised in extremely famous and unique places within the world, we may cite the “Intervention for the upgrading and promotion of Major Cultural Attractors” of Pompeii, the purpose of which was to promote the emergence of the destination through the so-called systemic approach. The initiative was supposed to present a development opportunity for the “minor” assets linked to it and for the local populations, but unfortunately, as in other cases, it did not produce sustainable results, did not increase the attractiveness to tourists and did not create a market for tourism and culture.

Why is it then that so many projects and so many investments have not always led to the desired outcomes? Often, the problem lies not in the idea but in its transformation into action or in the lack of cohesion between organised initiatives and the territories which host them..

We could construct a wide-ranging case history of uncompleted projects: ranging from devising a tourism-cultural system on paper which does not actually work in reality, to staging events to promote the relaunching of an area for cultural/tourism purposes, but leaves us with only the advertising boards or simply the memory of what happened. And very often, it is this which makes the difference, with the virtuous territories being those with management capacity.

There is therefore an increasing need to view Project Management as the key to achieving sustainable development in the tourism-cultural sector and to guaranteeing tangible development for regions from an environmental, economic

and social perspective. As a qualified process and a complete methodology which allows the expected results to be achieved, from design to execution to monitoring of the impact of the project, PM4ESD is moving in this direction. It aims to be a sustainable management tool intended for initiatives covered by both Public Sector authorities and private organisations. It is a practice to be adopted for participatory, transparent and “virtuous” management. It is not a bureaucratic certification of quality, there are neither controls by certifying bodies nor stickers to be bought. It is a question of expertise.

All of the European initiatives provide for the establishment of a cross-border partnership. In order to participate in the European programme, it is necessary to establish one which involves at least three countries and brings together different types of partners (universities, research centres, local authorities, small- and medium-sized companies, trade associations, etc.).

PM4ESD involves 5 countries (Italy, the United Kingdom, Turkey, Poland and Austria) and 8 partners. The leading partner and the coordinating partner who promoted the initiative are, respectively: the Municipal Authority of Frigento in the Province of Avellino and Jlag LLtd, a communications, research and training company, specialising in tourism and culture, with headquarters in London and Brussels. The partnership is completed by:

- Camigliati Scuola di Management Territoriale (Camigliatello Silano, Cosenza, Italy)
- QRP. Management Methods International (Como, Italy)
- Chamber of Commerce of Istanbul (Istanbul, Turkey)
- Edinburgh Chamber of Commerce (Edinburgh, United Kingdom)
- University of Lodz (Lodz, Poland)
- Auxilium, an association specialising in governance policies (Steiermark, Austria)

On completing the project, provision is made for an “entrepreneurial” spin-off from the partnership, and, depending on the project results, a facility shall be created to deal with PM4ESD training and certification.

In order to support the proposal, a network of institutional bodies involved during the planning phase of the initiative has also been created. This network includes Centro Studi del Touring Club Italiano, Federazione Italiana Editori Giornali and a number of organisations operating at local level, such as Comunità Montana Ufita, Confindustria Cosenza, Legambiente Campania, Proloco Frigentina and Gal Alta Irpinia.

The partnership shall be responsible for managing the initiative, but the network will be fundamental for the success of the results: it will be actively involved and expanded over the entire duration of the project, at both Italian and at international level. It will represent the “moment of truth”, which will lead to full certification of the PM4ESD methodology. On completing the project, the Partnership and Network will form a single body. Indeed, one of the final objectives is to create a proper Think Tank on the issue.

THE TARGET AUDIENCE

The target audience for PM4ESD is represented, on the one hand, by public and private European organisations which fall within the tourism/cultural sector and which decide to adopt the methodology, and on the other, by project managers who decide to obtain certification. The role of the organisations is to adopt “PM4ESD” as a project management methodology for the management of their own projects.

Ministries, tourist boards, local authorities, foundations, museums, trade associations, development agencies and national parks will be involved from the very beginning, being invited to take part during the experimental phase of the methodology. In a second phase, the methodology will be exported, or rather, also disseminated in other countries. Policy makers, project managers, entrepreneurs, self-employed professionals, students and directors of public sector authorities will be able to obtain certification through the PM4ESD training course.

Hence, organisations will adopt PM4ESD, whereas individuals will obtain PM4ESD certification.

FROM PRINCE 2 TO PM4ESD

PM4ESD is based on Prince2 best practice: PProjects IN Controlled Environments2, an internationally-recognised Project Management methodology. This method, which originated in the British public sector and which is widely used in the Dutch and Swedish ones, as well as by the private organisations of the European Community. We seek to summarise here all of the most innovative aspects of Prince 2 and hence of PM4ESD.

The Prince2 method provides that each project is divided into phases which are easy to organise, allowing efficient control of resources and regular monitoring.

The various roles and responsibilities involved in directing a project are fully identified and are adaptable both to the complexity of the project and to the capacities of the organisation.

In the language of Prince2, a project is defined as “a management environment that is created for the purpose of delivering one or more business products according to a specified Business Case”. Two key principles emerge:

- Prince2 is a methodology based on products rather than actions.
- The strength of a project is based on its Business Case.

Products represent the instruments for evaluating the effectiveness of a project. They are the start and the result of each project. Without products, there is no project.

The Business Case is a sort of “Business Angel”: it is the basic document which with which comparisons must constantly be drawn. It is a document which is renewed over time, being adapted to results and to possible changes. It contains the reasons behind the adoption of an initiative, its benefits, risks and the times involved. But what are the advantages for an organisation which decides to adopt Prince2, and hence PM4ESD? Ten reasons are listed below:

1. It is a flexible method applicable to every context;
2. Prince2/PM4ESD can be taught;
3. It is a method based on project best-practise experience;
4. It focuses on quality for the entire duration of the project;
5. It defines roles and responsibilities;
6. It includes risk management techniques;
7. It is a method which motivates and encourages people to be proactive;
8. It is an internationally recognised method;
9. It focuses on the objectives and results to be achieved;
10. It is a low-cost but high impact procedure.

Training and certification in PM4ESD will be aimed at everyone regularly involved in the management of tourism and cultural projects.

This is a professional rather than company certification. A body, a company or an association may decide to manage their initiatives freely following this methodology. The certification is free to use but does require an accredited project manager. Organisations may decide to manage projects according to the PM4ESD model, and hence choose whether to promote such certification internally, or to rely on an external expert.

Certification and the training process provide for two levels, as in Prince2: Foundation and Practitioner.

Through the Foundation course and certification, the general structure of the method is learned, together with the approach and terminology which characterise PM4ESD. This process is thus intended for anyone who must acquire the skills to work in a PM4ESD environment, e.g. in the capacity of a project officer or communications manager. On the other hand, the second level is necessary for acquiring all of the skills for using PM4ESD in project management. The PM4ESD Practitioner Project Manager will be able to adapt the methodology to the specific case and use it to coordinate the entire project. For example, a municipal tourist office could decide to certify its most active staff members at Foundation level, and recruit an external Practitioner Project Manager, or to arrange for certification of the directors at Practitioner level. Both certifications, Foundation and Practitioner, may be obtained by passing two examinations taken on completing two- or three-day training courses respectively. Study of the PM4ESD manual is essential for passing these examinations. On completing the project, training packages will be developed and training will shift from lectures or individual tuition to online study.

PM4ESD within the Life Long Learning programme.

PM4ESD is an example of how European strategies may be transformed into concrete actions and opportunities for regions and companies. If, on the one hand, the European Commission draws up strategies and programs, assigning financial resources for each area considered as fundamental for cohesion and competitiveness within Europe (agriculture, research, training, energy, environment, ICT, etc.), on the other, the private and public organisations of the 27 member states create cross-border partnerships and implement initiatives with a tangible impact at European level.

PM4ESD is a “Leonardo project”, one of the sub-programmes provided by Life Long Learning¹, the principal programme of the European Commission for training and education. It is established as an “Innovation Transfer” project. The partnership chose Prince2 as an innovative product to be transferred and adapted to the tourism and cultural context. The vehicle for this transfer will be the creation of the PM4ESD manual and the development of a PM4ESD training course, certified by the competent bodies.

PM4ESD will develop training courses and certification which will establish Project Management and the Project Manager as key elements for sustainable development within Europe.

CONCLUSIONS

The initiative was launched in October 2009. The current phase, involving the collection and analysis of best practices in tourism and cultural management, is of strategic importance for the subsequent transfer of methodology from Prince2 to PM4ESD. In parallel to this, efforts are being made to increase the membership of the PM4ESD network and promote dialogue with the training systems of the countries involved. Project Management for European Sustainable Development thus seeks to develop itself as the standard methodology to be used for Project Management in the tourism and culture sectors. It seeks to be an easy method which facilitates the management of tourism/cultural projects and broadens their impact. It seeks to be European certification which is recognised by the training systems of member states and associates, which organisations may adopt as a guarantee of sustainable management.

¹ The Life Long Learning programme makes provision for four subprogrammes, each one targeting different subjects: Leonardo, Comenius for schools, Erasmus for higher education, Grundtvig for adult education. Some are managed directly by the European Commission and others by national agencies. For further information, please consult: <http://ec.europa.eu/education/>