

# Academic Weekly Digest

## School of Hospitality & Tourism Management



### *What will be the European Union's 2050 tourism policy?*

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Prof Xavier Font and Dr Mireia Guix conducted a four-month consultation, contracted by the European Commission, to organise the stakeholder consultation for the 2020 European Tourism Convention, towards a European Agenda for Tourism 2050.

Aware of the importance of consultation at a time of substantial change, due to Covid-19, this was the first online consultation and an event of its kind conducted by the European Commission's tourism unit.

# An insider's view of the consultation process for the European Union's 2050 tourism policies

Prof Xavier Font

Covid-19 forced the consultation to happen online, unlike previous events taking place in person at the European Parliament. As consultants we were aware that stakeholder consultations serve as powerful legitimising devices upon the balance of participants, the quality of the process and its effective results.

For this assignment, we proposed a deliberative digital stakeholder consultation methodology based on an appreciative inquiry approach to materiality assessment. We learned how an interactive, online consultation enabled dynamism and co-creation. Appreciative enquiry introduced the human elements of ownership and legitimacy towards policy.



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**Online stakeholder consultation is fast, free, effective, efficient and democratic**

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The choice of topics, language and attitudes reframed problems into opportunities with shared responsibilities. Technology allowed to explore new forms of open, democratic and inclusive engagement, and materiality provided structure and transparency that legitimised the process. Our study shows how deliberative stakeholder consultation grows input, throughput and output legitimacy, and how appreciative inquiry facilitates dialogic, transparent materiality assessment. We demonstrate that dialogic materiality assessment is effective in agenda-setting for public policy.

## **Further Reading:**

Guix, M., & Font, X. (2022). Consulting on the European Union's 2050 tourism policies: An appreciative inquiry materiality assessment. *Annals of Tourism Research*.

Link: [bit.ly/3ASpiXP](https://bit.ly/3ASpiXP)