

FROM PAST TO FUTURE

INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE TOURISM AS A SUSTAINABLE SOLUTION

4



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We live in an era characterized by constant urbanization and frenetic technological development, and this speed of technical change has rendered obsolete a whole series of sites with an industrial vocation that belong to the recent European (and other) past. There is therefore a growing awareness and desire to preserve and understand the industrial heritage.

These sites represent tangible evidence of the history of technological progress and changes in production methods.

While until recently former industrial sites were destined for abandonment and neglect, in recent years the perspective has changed: industrial heritage is increasingly recognized as a valuable resource for the present and the future.

There are various examples, scattered across the old continent, of innovative forms of reuse and reactivation of these places transformed into museums, cultural centers or multifunctional sites.



WICH ADVANTAGES...



Cultural connection and historical significance

Industrial heritage sites create a cultural connection with the society of the last two centuries. They witness the efforts, innovation and resilience of life during the industrial revolution, marking the history of an area economically, socially and culturally.



Promoting sustainable tourism practices:

Industrial heritage tourism offers the possibility of implementing a more sustainable tourism, away from well-known destinations and allowing the recovery of disused places. It offers an alternative to mass tourism, encouraging a more conscious exploration of historical and cultural landscapes.



Economic revitalisation

Communities close to disused industrial sites can benefit from the transformation of these places into tourist resorts. Economic depression is thus countered by the creation of new jobs, the promotion of local entrepreneurship and the revitalisation of surrounding neighborhoods.



Educational value

Industrial heritage sites act as living museums and offer rich educational opportunities. Visitors can learn more about the evolution of technology, past working conditions and social conditions brought about by industrialisation, thus promoting a deeper understanding of common history.

To make the most out of industrial tourism and its benefits, a delicate balance between conservation and adaptation is essential.

Careful planning and community involvement ensures the integration of these sites into the local culture and economy without compromising their historical significance.



UNESCO (UNITED NATIONS EDUCATIONAL, SCIENTIFIC AND CULTURAL ORGANISATION)

UNESCO emphasizes sustainable development and communities in the management of heritage sites. There are various criteria for establishing good conservation and promotion practices. Heritage sites are mainly located within or close to urban centres, they must therefore be integrated into a broader planning process that takes into account the economic, ecological and social context and programmes.

Although the UNESCO World Heritage Convention recognises cultural and natural beauty, there is no specific list or programme for industrial heritage. However, the UNESCO Modern Heritage Programme recognises 20th century heritage and organisations such as ICOMOS and TICCIH play a key role in the management and conservation of industrial heritage.

>UNESCO

ICOMOS (INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL ON MONUMENTS AND SITES)

ICOMOS, founded in 1965, is an international institution concerned with the care of cultural monuments. Over time, industrial monuments have been included in its lists, leading to the systematic management of this heritage.

ICOMOS plays a crucial role in the recognition and preservation of industrial heritage, assessing its historical significance and aesthetic characteristics. This organization is instrumental in providing guidelines for the future conversion of industrial heritage sites.

>ICOMOS

TICCIH (INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE)

The TICCIH, an international society dedicated to the study of industrial archaeology, focuses on the protection, promotion and interpretation of industrial heritage. Important charters such as the Nizhny Tagil Charter for Industrial Heritage and the Dublin Principles systematically define the status and modern interpretation of industrial heritage.

By including industrial heritage in the lists of protected cultural heritage, the TICCIH elevates its status, providing guidelines for historical significance, aesthetic characteristics and future conversion.

>TICCIH

THE BENEFITS OF INDUSTRIAL TOURISM

Industrial heritage tourism, with its focus on historical sites associated with industrialisation, offers a myriad of benefits spanning several sectors.

LOCAL ECONOMY

Job creation: especially in regions that have suffered economic decline due to the restructuring of traditional industries.

Local entrepreneurship: Tourism development supports local businesses by encouraging entrepreneurship among residents and investors.



HERITAGE CONSERVATION

Abandoned industrial buildings are transformed into historical monuments/open-air museums, preserving the cultural and historical identity of a region. This preservation effort ensures that the industrial past remains accessible to future generations.



AWARENESS OF ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT

Industrial tourism can promote awareness of the environmental impact that industries have had in the past and have today through changes in technology, difference in the use and type of resources and modes of production.

EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

Hands-on learning: Industrial heritage sites provide educational opportunities for various visitors, allowing them to explore historical working conditions, technological evolution and social changes brought about by industrialisation.

Tools for school education: Students, through targeted activities involving schools, can gain a deeper understanding of recent economic and social history through engaging experiences.



COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

The influx of tourists brings direct benefits to the local economy, and the involvement of the local community in the provision of welcome and guiding services improves the overall visitor experience.

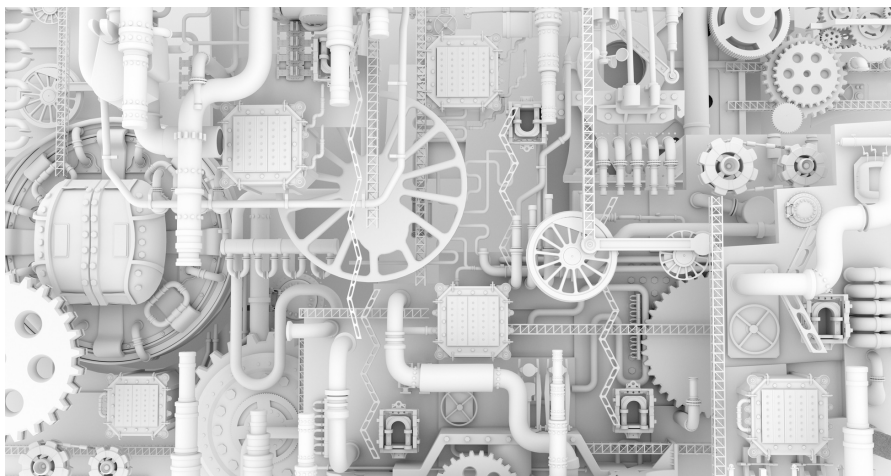


BRANDING FOR COMPANIES

Company/customer bonding: Companies that open their doors to visitors can offer interactive experiences that strengthen the bond between the brand and its customers.

Earnings: Admission tickets and on-site product sales provide monetary benefits to companies, allowing differentiation between visitor groups and potential collaboration opportunities.

Enhancing the tourism of industrial sites thus enables a holistic approach that brings benefits for several actors, for tourists who can choose less crowded and particular destinations, for investors who can bet on a fast-growing niche, for regions that can plan a new use and economic development for places that have fallen into disuse, and finally for local communities that will enjoy the new economic activities made possible by this type of tourism industry.



ERIH

European Route of Industrial Heritage is a tourism information network on Europe's industrial heritage.

Launched in 1999, the project is a fascinating journey through Europe's industrial past, linking key industrial heritage sites across the continent. With over 1,400 'anchor points' in 33 countries (these are the most historically important and attractive industrial heritage sites for visitors.), the ERIH offers a rich tapestry of mills, factories, mines and technological marvels. This unique trail invites travellers to explore the evolution of technology, innovation and social change that shaped Europe during the Industrial Revolution. From imposing smokestacks to historic manufacturing sites, the ERIH showcases the resilience, ingenuity and cultural heritage of industrial heritage, offering an immersive experience for history buffs and curious travellers alike.

>[ERIH](#)