



EUROPEAN CITIES MARKETING

THE DMMO COVID-19 CONTINUITY CHECKLIST  
AN ECM GUIDE FOR SUSTAINABLE RECOVERY

APRIL 2020

INDUSTRY PARTNER:  
**TOPOSOPHY**  
PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY



**EUROPEAN CITIES MARKETING**  
MEET EUROPEAN CITIES

# A message from Toposophy

TOPOSOPHY is pleased to bring you this Continuity Checklist in partnership with European Cities Marketing. We understand the challenges that our friends and colleagues in Europe's cities are facing at this unprecedented time, and we want you to know that you can count on our support.

The passion each of us has for our places, combined with a strong spirit of friendship and cooperation is what has always made ECM a lively and highly effective place to address common challenges together. This has never been more relevant than today. We hope that this Checklist and further initiatives by ECM will help to guide you and engage all of your local partners in moving forward towards a better tomorrow.

For the last 10 years TOPOSOPHY has carried out projects and offered integrated solutions in 20+ countries across 4 continents. We have been global thought leaders in destination development, management and marketing, and a trusted advisor to a range of international organizations.

If you're looking to draw up a recovery plan, target local business support, develop a broader understanding of the external environment or bring your city to life through targeted event planning, TOPOSOPHY can support you every step of the way.

**Destination intelligence - Strategic foresight and policy making**  
**Placemaking leadership - Marketing & branding - Event making**

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# TOPOSOPHY

PLACE MAKING & MARKETING AGENCY

# Foreword:

## Petra Stušek, ECM President

There is no denying this is a critical time for DMMOs everywhere; everything we do - every social media message, newsletter and event we create will be seen through the lens of the Covid-19 crisis and sharply assessed for its purpose and sensitivity. It is also more important than ever that we accomplish our role as leaders in supporting our local communities and businesses, putting them on the path to a sustainable recovery. This Continuity Checklist is intended to help you take the right decisions and learn from the experience of others. It spans an extensive period precisely because the process of recovery is expected to be long, uneven and unpredictable.




Petra Stušek,  
ECM President

## A New Tomorrow

ECM wants to continue to empower the conversation during this unprecedented situation with “A New Tomorrow”. In response to the needs of our members, and following their input we have launched this communication series to discuss the future challenges faced by DMMOs, caused by the current situation. The purpose of this is to share ideas and challenges, find inspiration in new practice and different approaches carried out by DMOs, and envision together, with all of you, a new future of destinations rebuilt, and conventions reimaged. Together we want to serve our cities, meet new traveler preferences and behavior, and repurpose DMOs to create a new tomorrow (you can read more about our approach on page 42).

On behalf of ECM I would like to thank TOPOSOPHY for producing this Checklist. You can be assured that the whole ECM Board and operations team are working hard to support our members with a range of new initiatives and we look forward to sharing more with you in the months to come. As ever, I wish you all strength, solidarity and good health!



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# Introduction: planning for a new tomorrow, today



**Perspective.** If there is one thing the Covid-19 epidemic is teaching us about, it is perspective. This crisis is presenting us with frequent personal and professional challenges which none of our ancestors ever encountered, no matter which corner of Europe we are in. Yet here we are, experiencing a global crisis that is forcing us to take a new perspective on many elements of daily life, and that includes the work we do and the role our organisations play in the daily life of our cities. In short, destination management and marketing organisations (DMMOs) and convention bureaux<sup>1</sup> everywhere now find themselves at a unique point in history. Already, most of us have been given the task of doing exactly the opposite of our transitional role: we've been asked to send visitors home, dissuade more from coming. We've also watched with a heavy heart as our hotels, airports, restaurants, venues and attractions close their doors, jobs are lost, local residents stay indoors, and our streets fall silent.

*“Crises may be out of your control, but your response to them isn’t.  
- Be a trusted partner in troubled times.”*

*ECM Manifest on the Future of DMOs (2017)*

In 2017 ECM, in partnership with TOPOSOPHY, sets out a *Manifest for the Future of DMOs* with eight bold statements that set out a vision for what DMOs could and should become. The final of these statements warned of “The New Normal” a world in which “crises of every kind have become the new norm, causing in just a few hours, the kind of damage that can take years of recovery”. Covid-19 has now spread around the world on a time scale that is being measured hour by hour, day by day. Its impact on the economy and global society, however, is likely to be felt for at least a generation.

However, the purpose of this paper is not to generate more heart-stopping headlines. As a network of professional globally-minded people who care about our cities and the people who live in them, it is time to share insights that will help us to help those around us: our colleagues, local entrepreneurs, political decision makers, visitors and of course, our local communities. This DMMO Continuity Checklist is part of a series of activities ECM is undertaking to assist its members to navigate the challenges of today and prepare for a new tomorrow.

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<sup>1</sup> In this Checklist, the acronym “DMMOs” is used for brevity and consistency to refer to DMOs/DMMOs/CVBs/NTOs that form the community of members of European Cities Marketing

# A chance to pause and restart

Yes, the travel, tourism and meetings industries have been hardest hit, but at the same time, the Covid-19 outbreak is already teaching us a lot about our cities and our own organisations: What is the inherent appeal of our places when you subtract the people and our thriving hospitality and retail sectors? What are our core strengths and how can we be most useful to our cities? What has tourism brought to our cities beyond jobs and visitor spending? What tasks could we pick up, and what could we leave behind?

We expect this epidemic to accelerate many trends in consumer demand, the world of work and public policy that were already driving major changes in European DMMOs. Could this crisis offer us a chance to restart our approach, and help guide our cities towards a better, healthier and happier tomorrow?



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# Rewriting the crisis manual



In recent years, our work has increasingly become shaped by the new normal, responding to the effects of extreme weather, terrorist attacks and political shocks, both far away and close to home. In spite of this, international tourism arrivals have continued to grow, with European cities seeing a 4.1% annual rise in bednights between 2014 and 2018<sup>2</sup>. Fuelled by affordable flights and easy booking, both leisure and business travel have outperformed the economic cycle, and when shocks have occurred, recovery has, on the whole, followed swiftly.

However, the Covid-19 pandemic is different. With borders closed, airlines grounded and citizens living in lockdown conditions in most of the world's major travel source markets and destinations, the International Monetary Fund has called it "a crisis like no other", with an economic impact more severe than the previous 2008 global financial crisis and the great depression<sup>3</sup>.

## Milestones on the road to recovery

Understandably, there is much speculation about how the recovery process will look. In broad terms, the speed and shape of recovery depends heavily on the interaction of two overarching factors: the public health response to containing the virus, and the economic policy response to the impact of these public health measures<sup>4</sup>. The differing measures taken at different stages from country to country, and their ultimate impact on the spread of the virus is an early indication of how uneven the road to recovery will be. Yet one lesson has already become clear: for sustained economic stability to return to our cities, it will first be necessary to eradicate the coronavirus both at home and in our most important source markets.

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<sup>2</sup> *European Cities Marketing Benchmarking Report (2019)* shows continuous growth of European city tourism.

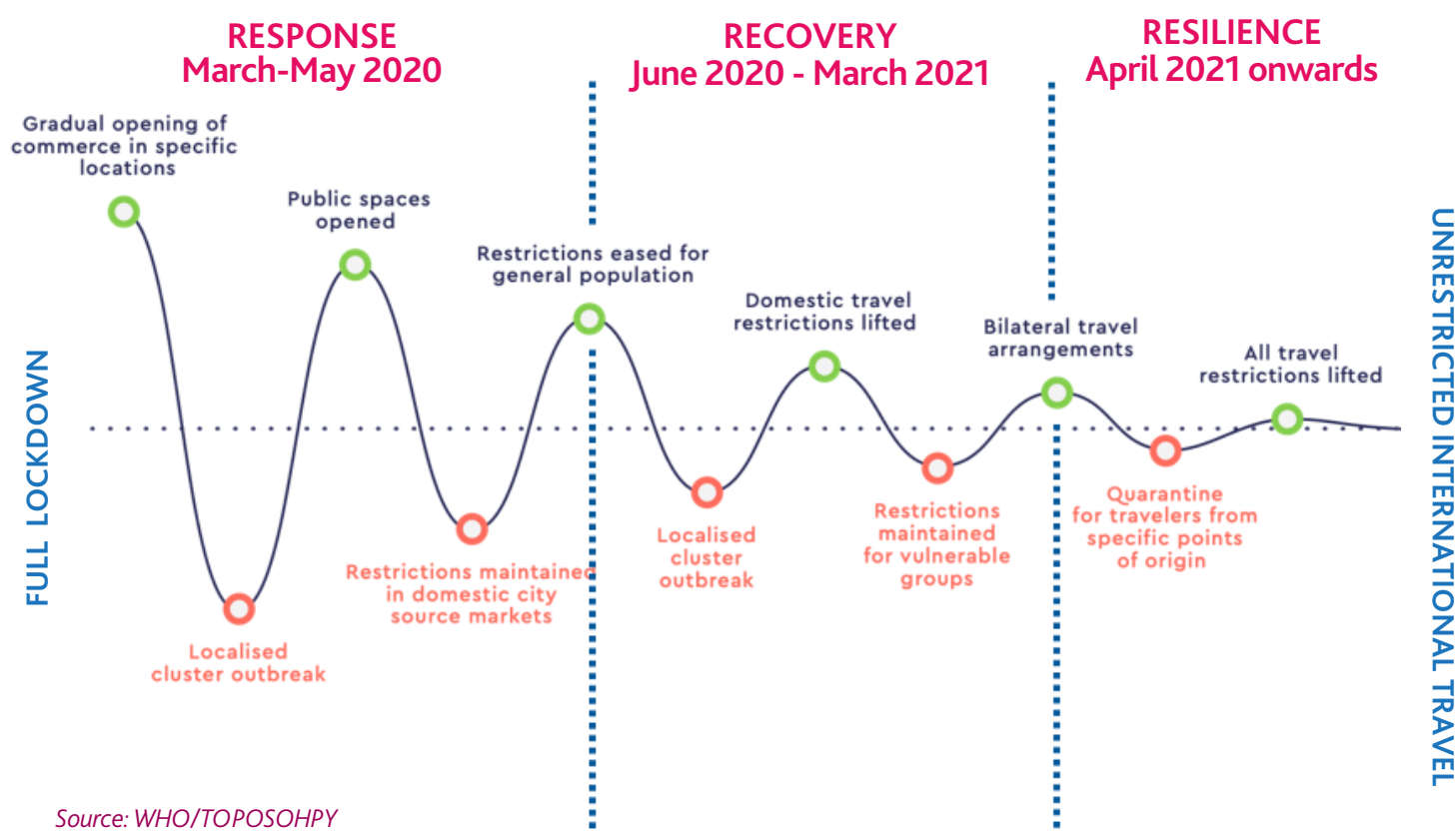
<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum (2020), COVID-19 sparked an economic crisis "like no other" - but these measures can help now: WHO, IMF

<sup>4</sup> McKinsey&Company (2020), Getting ahead of the next stage of the coronavirus crisis

# The pattern of recovery

The graph below, adapted from the World Health Organisation's guide to pandemic response phases, shows an assumptive model of how public health measures are likely to impact the return to stability for Europe's tourism sector. The line traces a gradual progression from instability (caused by a full lockdown) towards relative stability, where international travel is unrestricted and the tourism industry can plan ahead with a greater degree of certainty. Crucially, the recovery period may be extended in certain places as restrictions are lifted and then reintroduced in order to contain sporadic outbreaks of Covid-19 or to protect citizens in high-risk groups or locations.

## Milestones on the road to tourism resilience 2020-2021



At the time of writing, it is expected that most European countries will impose public health restrictions through to the end of May 2020 at the earliest, to be eased gradually through the summer months. As a vaccine is not currently expected until mid-2021, the period of gradual recovery is likely to extend through the remainder of 2020 into early 2021, by which time a substantial number of bilateral travel agreements may be in place, but international travel will still face restrictions such as travel bans from certain countries or quarantine requirements for travellers.

This model also **assumes** that:

- The exact period of response and recovery will differ by country and region as measures are imposed and lifted at different times, with differing results
- There is no significant major outbreak again during 2020, requiring the widespread public health measures to be re-imposed (e.g. national lockdown)
- A vaccination programme in 2021 is widespread and effective enough to contain outbreaks in Europe's major source markets

## What can we expect during the recovery?

Based on the way travel restrictions have been imposed, we can assume that the recovery will be characterized by:

- A gradual, stop-start pattern of growth as restrictions are lifted and imposed again, in order to contain sporadic outbreaks
- Bilateral travel agreements between individual countries, requiring travellers to undergo increased compliance checks (such as frequent border controls and proof of travel history or immunity certificates), later moving to
- Initial demand from local residents, followed by a gradual increase in domestic visitors, then loyal markets in neighbouring countries (subject to the bilateral agreements described above), leading to eased restrictions on international arrivals
- A reduction in supply, due to business closure or reduced capacity due to public health restrictions
- Reduced airline capacity compared to previous years as some airlines either cease operations or operate on reduced schedules
- A knock-on effect for DMMOs, as city tax and membership income receipts are reduced, and public spending comes under pressure

Whichever pattern of recovery ultimately takes shape, it is reasonable to assume that at the very least Europe is likely to see a sharp recession from Q1-Q3 2020, and only returning to growth in early 2021. However, the crisis could extend through to 2023 if the virus resurges continually around the world, and restrictive measures are imposed and released in waves<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>4</sup> WEF (2020) video: *The Economic Impact of Coronavirus, Explained*

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# Imagining the day after



As we have already seen, the phrase “back to normal” will not apply in the post-Covid-19 world. Rather than imposing major changes on people and places from one day to the next, instead it seems clear that the coronavirus outbreak will accelerate many of the shifts in demand and supply that have been underway for many years now. Just as DMMOs have been in their own process of transformation in recent years, the Covid-19 pandemic is likely to speed up changes here too. The diagram below highlights some of the shifts we can expect to see post-Covid-19.

## Where are we heading?

While there is a clear need for us to bring our cities back to life, many will rightly ask “what are we really aiming for, through recovery?” The global climate emergency is still an urgent reality. Vulnerable citizens could become even more so in the event of an economic downturn. Competition for public funding will become more intense. Our task will be to focus minds on our cities’ long-term social and economic goals more intensely, and show that we are meeting the city’s broader interests more than ever before. Only by doing this, can we be confident of putting our cities on a stable path to sustainable recovery.

### The Place

- Adapt shared spaces to allow people to feel comfortable in the presence of strangers
- Measures to improve crowd flows and avoid bottlenecks, including digital wayfinding
- Good air quality as an essential ingredient to quality of life polluted air
- Need to address structural issues e.g. decline of the retail sector
- Quality of life, health and wellbeing of local people considered as an attractive asset for attracting talent, visitors etc
- Find ways to support creatives and small business owners by granting use of public space/disused property
- Use routes and itineraries as a way to spread visitors out and promote outdoor discovery

### Our purpose and vision

- Focus on balanced, sustainable growth
- Renew our focus on the value of our local communities, local talent, contributing to local wellbeing
- Widen our role to attract talent, investment and support cultural creativity
- Nurture civic pride and engagement with local events
- Encourage spending that stays in the local economy
- Interpret data to understand and forecast visitor behaviour
- Become the nucleus of a network: connecting and mobilising partners, opening doors, supporting training, sharing insights

## Citizens' expectations

- Self-rewards and micro-experiences
- Maximize value from deals and loyalty schemes
- Escape to fresh air; parks, beaches, open spaces
- Stronger desire to support local jobs and businesses
- Flexibility to cancel/rebook in case of unexpected changes
- Clarity and transparency around public health measures
- High-quality cleaning and maintenance of all public spaces, rooms, seats...
- Humanity and understanding by the companies they buy from: "not just a number"

## Industry approach

- Increase 'contactless' customer service (kiosks, avatars, voice activation, key apps)
- Personalised messaging with a friendly, human touch
- Keep customers engaged and loyal through personalised promotions
- Renewed focus helping customers to care for their health and wellbeing
- Reliance on OTAs for visibility and insights
- Rapid integration of virtual meetings into business events
- Increased use of contactless ticketing, near-field communication and technology to allow virtual attendance at live events
- Reliance on data to show pattern of recovery
- Investment in high-grade, online tours and events
- Increased attention to cleaning and sanitising shared spaces
- Digitalise and outsource business management, increase remote working

## Contextual challenges

- Pressure to drive demand and return quickly to pre-crisis levels
- Lack of liquidity among SMEs, reduced capacity to co-fund campaigns, pay membership fees etc
- Ongoing need to support transition to zero-carbon
- Increased scrutiny of our goals: Growth for the sake of it, or for a purpose?
- Balance the need for placemaking through events, with health concerns and restrictions
- The need to generate tax revenue from visitors to help cover the impact of their visit, while seeking to avoid stifling growth at the right time and in the right places







# CASE STUDIES: ECM Members showing the way forward





A number of organisations across the ECM member network have mobilised their staff and resources in recent weeks to mitigate the impact of Covid-19 on residents and local businesses. Here we present a selection of examples:

### **Amsterdam Partners takes virtual visitors on 360-degree tours**

Visitors to the [iamsterdam](#) website are invited to take virtual tours of the city and surrounding area from the comfort of their homes. Beyond the city's limits, visitors can explore inside a windmill, step onto a fishing boat and stroll through a tulip field thanks to a collection of videos that take visitors on a virtual tour. As well as offering official information on local public health measures, Amsterdam and Partners also guides local residents on restaurants that have remained open for takeaway food and offers a guide to movies that have featured the city in the past, which are all to be found on its Dutch "At home in Amsterdam" site.

### **Bringing Barcelona's culture to people around the world**

Turisme de Barcelona has launched its #BarcelonaVisitsYou campaign across its channels. With the intention to inspire travellers and to #VisitBarcelonaFromHome, the campaign is aimed at the city's main markets, in five languages (Chinese, English, French, Spanish and Catalan). The city's tourism businesses are encouraged to use and share the posts, used to show off various aspects of the city's culture. Turisme de Barcelona is also helping locals and potential visitors to support the city's Hospital Clínic by enabling them to donate while sending virtual rose to friends and family, as a virtual celebration of the city's traditional Sant Jordi street festival.

### **Poznań partners with other major Polish cities for their #CityWillWait campaign**

Since the beginning of March 2020, the largest municipal tourist organizations in Poland: Gdańsk, Łódź, Poznań and Warsaw have cooperated intensively to counteract the negative effects of the crisis caused by the spread of coronavirus. The common #CityWillWait campaign promotes museums and galleries, virtual walks, virtual city tours, access to digital archives, video recordings, examples of lessons and workshops for children and youth and educational materials for teachers and parents. The city of Poznan has also acted to help channel residents' support for healthcare workers and the elderly, as well as guiding locals on restaurants that are serving takeaway meals.

### **Neighbourhood solidarity in Berlin**

Several platforms have been set up in the German capital to help local citizens to help each other with daily tasks during the lockdown, including tasks such as dog walking, childcare and shopping. New initiatives such as this have been translated into English and shared on VisitBerlin's blog.

**Online Streaming and Live concerts:** as well as making the collections of major Berlin museums available online, VisitBerlin has helped to promote various other initiatives such as streaming services from local cinemas and prepaid gift vouchers.

Furthermore, as a city famous for its nightlife, top Berlin clubs have set up an online platform where fans of the city's clubbing scene can still enjoy their favourite DJs and artists, wherever they are in the world. Live theatre plays, classical music concerts and even daily training or yoga sessions are some of the additional services that the city is offering to its citizens and potential visitors.

### **Engaging and entertaining locals: Geneva, Switzerland**

Geneva Tourism has launched a series of tips to help locals and potential visitors get the best of what the city has to offer, from home. The organisation's dedicated #stayathome website has put together a wide range of tips, including recipes from famous chefs and small businesses and ways to entertain children while working from home. The website has also put together free content from the city's events including the famous International Film Festival and Forum on Human Rights.

### **'#WeStandTogether' in Hamburg**

Hamburg Tourism Board in partnership with the Ministry of Economic Affairs, the Hamburg Chamber of Commerce and other city organisations has launched an online forum #wirstehenzusammen ("we stand together"). The aim of the forum is to help the city's tourism businesses be proactive in sharing ideas, advice and experience and support each other through collaboration. So far, topics discussed have included how to deal with reductions in working hours and drastic cuts in business.

### **Business guidance and support: The Tourism and Hospitality hub, Manchester**

Marketing Manchester has established a dedicated platform that aims to address the concerns of visitors, local citizens, and businesses. Some services are specifically dedicated to helping citizens who have lost their job as a result of the current lockdown by connecting them with local businesses, while others offer businesses free tourism & hospitality support webinars on a daily basis, allowing staff to access upskill and training services. Furthermore, Marketing Manchester has also introduced the "Pay It Forward" initiative which tries to help local enterprises by giving them a platform where citizens can buy gift vouchers.

### **The go-to place for trusted information: Kaunas, Porto and Malta**

The city of Kaunas in Lithuania has a dedicated page where residents can find answers to a wide variety of questions and challenges concerning health, businesses, education, travelling, and quarantine in Lithuania. Malta Tourism Authority has introduced a dedicated info service via email, while VisitPorto offers a live chat service via the website or WhatsApp to orientate visitors and help them understand the public health measures and their effect on visiting the city.

### **Motivational messages of resilience and hope: Madrid**

Recently the tourism board of Madrid published an emotive video addressing the difficult times which the Spanish capital is facing and encouraging unity and solidarity among its inhabitants in order to see an end to the crisis.

### **Engaging with visitors through social media: Visit Monaco**

Various destinations have introduced hashtag campaigns, stimulating previous visitors to share their travel experiences. Visit Monaco, for example is sharing photos with the hashtag #visitmonaco, while Paris is encouraging Parisians to share photos of the French capital from their windows and use the hashtags #ParisFromMyWindow and #ParisJeTaime. During the lockdown, the city's tourist office will be posting a daily selection of photos on its social media pages.

### **Gothenburg's Manifesto**

The city of Gothenburg has introduced a campaign focused on supporting local businesses and communicating the value of the local industry for the whole city. The target market is local residents and the main idea is to stimulate staycations, participation in cultural events online or just supporting the local shops. Gothenburg has also launched a campaign which aims to inspire locals to support local businesses through short videos.

### **London & Partners supports businesses with learning opportunities**

London & Partners is running a series of virtual seminars on business leadership and resilience to support businesses across the capital to adapt to the changing business environment and prepare their strategy for recovery. Held weekly, the seminars aim to coach business leaders on how to navigate the economic uncertainty caused by the Covid-19 outbreak and are held in partnership with Silicon Valley Comes to the UK, an organisation dedicated fueling growth of the online entrepreneurial ecosystem. Results and takeaways from the seminars are posted on London & Partners' social media channels.

### **Virtual Vienna - helping visitors to see the city in a new light**

The Vienna Tourist Board has created a range of content to help curious minds to see the Austrian capital differently. Interviews with renowned Viennese artists and academics as well as behind-the-scenes views of the city's main attractions, help potential visitors and local residents to understand what the city has to offer. Visitors to the site can also find out how to cook famous Viennese recipes and discover all of the museums and attractions in the city that offer virtual tours.

**For more inspiration and cases, please visit our Collaborative Dashboard, follow our Webinars and read our monthly updates! (For ECM members only).**

**More information is available on [www.europeancitiesmarketing.com](http://www.europeancitiesmarketing.com).**

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# About the DMMO Continuity Checklist

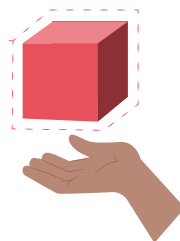


The following Continuity Checklist for DMMOs is presented in three stages: **response, recovery and resilience**. At each stage, actions are categorised by the following areas of activity:

#### POLICY MAKING & ADVOCACY



#### PRODUCT & SERVICE DEVELOPMENT



#### HR & BUSINESS OPERATIONS



#### PLACE MAKING AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT



#### RESEARCH & INTELLIGENCE



#### MARKETING AND COMMUNICATIONS



Guided by the milestones presented on page 9, as well as their own research and local considerations, DMMOs must choose their own triggers that will signal the change from one phase to the next.









# The DMMO Continuity Checklist:

## RESPONSE PHASE

At this critical stage, many will be looking to us for vision, leadership and assurances about the future, but our responsibility starts at home, with our employees and our local communities. In this respect, decisive action is necessary for ensuring stability today and planting the seeds of innovation for tomorrow. Now is the time to demonstrate our commitment to the welfare of those around us by getting involved in supporting our tourism, culture and events sectors, that are under immense strain. This has of course become increasingly important for DMMOs in recent years, but now it is essential.

Beyond this, we must maintain a constant flow of communication with a range of stakeholders including local political decision makers and external partners such as the travel trade. Here we can play a key role in collecting and sharing insights on the impact of Covid-19, in order to facilitate fast decision-making and preparation for recovery.

 <b>Policy Making &amp; Advocacy</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Set up a task force including public and private sector representatives to review Covid-19 implications for the visitor economy			
Provide regular updates to decision makers on the impact of Covid-19 on the visitor economy			
Provide advice on policy/fiscal measures that can be taken to relieve pressure on tourism sector businesses			
Update all policies relating to the health and safety of future event participants			

 <b>HR &amp; Business Operations</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Reconsider organisational structure and reassign colleagues in order to assist with critical tasks			
Set up remote working tools (project management platforms, virtual meeting software, team communications), carry out training and set guidelines on using these			
Carry out regular welfare calls to check on colleague wellbeing and address concerns			
Research and set up online training/refreshers courses to help staff re-skill during down-time			
Identify other areas of business operations that can be reduced or stopped in order to save costs and environmental impact			



## Research & Intelligence

Not started

Underway

Complete

Monitor the impact of Covid-19 on the visitor economy using:

- Organisation's own data (e.g. retail sales of city cards and merchandise, attendance at visitor information centre)
- Partners' data (e.g. number of visitor bookings, footfall analytics)
- Surveys of partner organisations and local businesses

Develop scenarios for further event postponements and map out alternative dates for scheduled events

Monitor the effect of the Covid-19 outbreak in key geographical markets and relevant shifts in travel sentiment (e.g. intention to travel in 2020 Q3 and Q4, interest in specific activities)


Schedule regular updates of a trend analysis on Covid-19 implications for the behaviour, preferences and expectations of key visitor segments


Undertake scenario planning in order to assess the possible economic, operational and strategic impacts on your destination, and in turn to amend your destination strategy.


Develop or enhance partnership and communications with local airports to gather intelligence on airlines' plans to resume operations, and support airlines' decisions where necessary

Establish mechanisms to rapidly collect information from reliable sources to inform key decisions.



 <b>Place Making and Community Support</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
<p>Advise the city authorities on use of public spaces and identify risks or opportunities in using them for treating patients/helping the vulnerable or key workers</p>			
<p>Support city authorities on carrying out awareness campaigns around public health measures (lend human resources, or use own channels for relaying important information)</p>			
<p>Address any cases of negative publicity relating to public health and the city brand</p>			
<p>Set up online forum for affected businesses to exchange ideas, advice and experience, and to encourage proactive leadership</p>			
<p>Use the organization's website and social media to drive resident spend toward local businesses. These could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Guides to restaurants serving takeaway/delivery food</li> <li>- Guides to a wide range of food and beverage outlets, retailer shops and attractions using online shops</li> <li>- Prepaid voucher scheme (including employee tips) to support closed restaurants, bars etc</li> </ul>			
<p>Coordinate hospitality sector's response to supporting key workers and vulnerable people (e.g. donating equipment, preparing food, providing rooms...)</p>			
<p>Set up a support network or welfare fund for valued groups who've been affected (artisan chefs, musicians...)</p>			

 <b>Marketing and Communications</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Develop/refresh the communications plan and strategy based on empathetic language and balanced messaging on triggering emotions and expectations ahead of the recovery period			
Set out a business support hub including practical information, educational resources, timely updates and opportunities for business that wish to share their own stories/initiatives			
Provide both visitors and citizens with practical information on aspects such as public transportation, event cancellations and postponements, open/closed attractions, current regulations, neighbourhood assistance etc			
Ensure all venues are providing clear, up to date advice about event postponements and cancellations. Relay clear advice to visitors about cancellations			
Maintain regular contact with professional conference organisers and destination management companies to update them on public health measures and venue closures			
Relay official guidance in multiple languages relevant to main markets, with links through to official sources			
Use social media to help visitors and citizens virtually explore the destination through activities that relate to the city's own unique quirks and way of life. These could include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Virtual tours</li> <li>- Live broadcasts (e.g. yoga classes in a great location, or live feeds of scenic spots or performances)</li> <li>- Interactive content for kids</li> <li>- Recipes from well-known chefs, food and drink masterclasses</li> </ul>			
Share information about business support, community initiatives, visitor guidance and virtual activities through all channels (e.g. corporate website, partner websites, social media, industry newsletter)			
Develop campaigns to support awareness of the essential roles of meetings, conventions, exhibitions and business events and leisure tourism as drivers of recovery			

 <b>Product/service Development</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Lend physical assets (space in information centres, vehicles) to governmental authorities dealing directly with tackling Covid-19 and treating patients			
Offer incentives to event organisers such as free tours, city passes or venue discounts in order to avoid cancellations			
Connect meeting planners with local voucher/pre-paid schemes to promote advanced payment for goods and services			
Donate any appropriate stock from information centres or merchandise to vulnerable groups or key workers			
Support hospitality and tourism businesses in getting online and provide regulatory guidance in setting up online deliveries			

# DMMOs are providing community support and engagement in times of crisis

As citizens have found themselves under lockdown conditions and businesses and attractions have been forced to close, many DMMOs around Europe have taken action to support local residents and businesses in different ways. The diagram below shows some of the attributes that make DMMOs uniquely placed to play this important role:



# Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, measures taken by DMMOs include:

- Helping to coordinate support by the hospitality sector for key workers and vulnerable people
- Relaying city schemes to support people in need
- Generating enthusiasm about staying and spending local, and;
- Showing off the city's best assets online to a global audience.

What started out as solidarity in a time of crisis has the potential to become something much more durable, as DMMOs have the opportunity to capture and nurture this local audience in the future too. Some good examples of DMMOs' support for their local community are shown on pages 17-19.





# The DMMO Continuity Checklist:

## RECOVERY PHASE



There will be many conflicting demands on DMMOs at this stage, as different interest groups vie for influence over public funds and strategic priorities. However, we must inspire confidence and be the key player that unites our partners around a shared vision that answers the question: “What will a successful recovery look like for our city?” How can we prioritise our work, in order to steer towards a more sustainable future?

We must also manage expectations of what's achievable and desirable as public health measures are gradually lifted, while staying alert to trends in demand. Demand for public resources will be intense, while meetings, conferences and leisure tourism will be only one of the economic sectors seeking government support and prioritisation. This makes it more important than ever to demonstrate how these sectors can contribute to the city's lasting recovery and develop in a more sustainable, community and environmentally-friendly way.


It's time to ask how has Covid-19 changed the way consumers approach their travel decisions?


How could/should businesses adapt to this?

 <b>Policy Making &amp; Advocacy</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Define key priorities and objectives for the recovery period as shaped by the work of the Task Force.			
Identify and advocate for policy measures (e.g. stimulus packages, partnership schemes, infrastructure investments) that will help accelerate recovery in the tourism sector			
Agree and clearly communicate new KPIs for recovery.			
Identify local community support programmes to be supported as an ongoing strategic priority ('baked in' to the core strategy)			
Coordinate with health services in order to relay public health measures to tourism industry and address any doubts/concerns over applying rules			
Gradually re-introduce any membership or service fees that were suspended and introduce incentives for new members to join			
Reward event organisers who postponed their event to the recovery period (e.g. complimentary municipal reception, discounted bednights, venue discount, free tours, hospitality discounts)			

 <b>HR &amp; Business Operations</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Provide regular information to staff on strategy and recovery measures, and set up clear channels of communication to address specific concerns			
Set up programme to switch from personal meetings with suppliers and travel trade to virtual meetings and use of project management tools			
 <b>Research &amp; Intelligence</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Carry out a destination supply audit to evaluate how the Covid-19 has affected the city's capacity to host visitors (i.e. evaluate loss of major businesses or attractions)			
Use data collected during response period to carry out economic impact assessment			
Monitor emerging patterns of demand in visitor behaviour (e.g. health concerns, changes in search and booking patterns)			
Monitor patterns of mobility for tourism businesses and popular public spaces in order to understand demand and adopt specific rules where necessary			
Use trends and footfall evaluation to adapt recovery strategy and inform service development			




 <b>Product/service Development</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Introduce initiatives (e.g. gift vouchers, special discounts) to stimulate demand for local businesses			
Offer property space and equipment to support local charities supporting vulnerable people			
Work with attractions that may be adversely affected by public health measures in order to mitigate these and ensure clear communication with visitors			
Reduce minimum delegate numbers and other parameters required for a conference to receive municipal support, in order to stimulate demand			
Adopt extra layers of planning and protocols with government agencies to ensure public health protection at events			
Facilitate connections between event organisers and local charities to ensure events can support vulnerable local people (e.g. food or financial donation)			
Develop planning checklist to help local businesses and event organisers strengthen their capacity to deliver virtual events and under the city brand, in the city's virtual venues			
Reward key workers with city cards and other leisure incentives			

 <b>Place Making and Community Support</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Bearing in mind sensitivities about health and crowded spaces, reassure visitors by adopting clean certifications, improving building design and crowd management systems			
Advise city authorities on transformation of public spaces based on healthy lifestyle and social distancing guidelines			
Advise city authorities, businesses and attractions on urban design interventions that will help visitors feel more comfortable mixing with strangers			
Support local businesses through procurement measures and encourage others to do the same (incl. local media companies and content creators)			
Establish a community-focused campaign showing the benefits of tourism and encouraging residents to welcome visitors			
Encourage VFR <sup>5</sup> to build domestic traffic and while align with people's need to visit family following any lockdown			
Support the initiatives of local attractions to attract residents			

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<sup>5</sup> Visit Friends and Relatives

 <b>Marketing and Communications</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Engage local business partners ahead of any external marketing activity in order to generate a clear team approach to recovery			
Develop public information campaign targeted at local residents and domestic visitors encouraging responsible visitor behaviour (e.g. Hygiene in popular locations, queuing...)			
Develop communications checklist to help event organisers inform visitors with clear guidance about public health measures/how to stay safe			
Develop and communicate new KPIs for recovery			
Adopt SEO and content strategy that focuses primarily on local resident market			
Set new targets for future paid media campaigns			
Provide clear, reassuring guidance regarding opening times (e.g. attractions, museums) to help visitors plan their journeys			
Transmit future-oriented market messages			
Uncover the unique value proposition of your destination and align with the immediate needs of your customers			





# The DMMO Continuity Checklist:


## RESILIENCE PHASE

Now that some stability has returned, it's time for everyone to learn lessons from the crisis and recovery period, and for us to adjust our strategy in order to improve our response in the future. Looking ahead, it's never been more important to leave behind old tasks and take on new roles in order to achieve the sustainable growth we have talked about for so long.

It's time to ask, what do our stakeholders value us most for? What hidden strengths did we discover? What did we learn about the local market? Do we depend too much on specific markets? Looking ahead, how can we nurture our (new) local audience to achieve our long-term goals? How can our team work more efficiently online? What new goals can we establish that will support the long-term sustainable development of the places we serve?


 <b>Policy Making &amp; Advocacy</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Develop an advocacy agenda based on evidence collected during response and recovery phase			
Reassess policy relating to the use of city tax and propose revisions where necessary, in order to support long-term sustainable growth objectives			
Review destination key performance indicators and introduce new KPIs around environmental and social sustainability (i.e. Covid-19 as an opportunity to reset goals)			

 <b>HR &amp; Business Operations</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Develop staff training and skills programmes around new strategic priorities for post-Covid-19 (e.g. in data science, understanding AI in travel, planning and modelling place management)			
Avoid downsizing by working with city government to develop career mobility schemes for DMMOs colleagues (e.g. in the areas of city marketing, planning, event management, etc)			

 <b>Research &amp; Intelligence</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Carry out a post Covid-19 impact analysis using all data collated during response and recovery periods			
Make an economic impact assessment for use in local and national advocacy programmes			
Update destination risk assessment relating to health crises, to inform future scenario planning			
Research and develop risk/crisis management plans relating to business and leisure events, and develop protocols for further outbreaks			
Work with industry to build stronger understanding of visitor profiles that offer highest return on investment			
Develop a new set of KPIs setting new targets for sustainable growth and measuring impact. Set up partnership that will enable measurement over the long-term			

 <b>Product/service Development</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Set up long-term City Card discount scheme to reward key workers, seniors and other adversely affected by the Covid-19 epidemic			
Work with major attractions to develop ongoing online programme (virtual tours, exhibitions, classes)			
Develop event calendar for virtual business and leisure events			
Develop relationships between travel trade and organisations that have a major online broadcast presence to package real-world experiences			
 <b>Place Making and Community Support</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Develop digital placemaking strategy, including research to understand visitor flows and influence visitor behaviour in order to avoid further public health risks			
Work with city government to improve cleaning and maintenance of popular public spaces			
Set up long-term programme of community engagement for each sector of the tourism industry in order to channel visitor spending for the benefit of local communities			
Explore opportunities for businesses in the visitor economy to join a circular economy model of working			



 <b>Marketing and Communications</b>	Not started	Underway	Complete
Integrate communications approach to communicating with locals vs. domestic and international visitors (serving people, not locals vs. tourists)			
Set up long-term programme to boost pride in local area among residents, using lessons learned from response and recovery period			
Evaluate the results of the SEO and content strategy, and in turn amend its guidelines accordingly			
Establish online channels and schedule of virtual meetings with travel trade, enable them to use team project management tools where appropriate			
Communicate new strategic approach (new KPIs, new priorities) to local partners			

# A message from ECM

## **WE ARE ALL FACING UNPRECEDENTED CHALLENGES.**

Beyond the immediate health emergency, urban communities are looking towards a deep and protracted economic downfall and the tourism sector is standing among the frontline industries of that downfall. Moreover, the consequences of a long period of alienation and social distancing will affect our future preferences and behaviour in ways we have yet to understand. As Covid-19 spreads, everything we thought we knew has been turned upside down. And, while many factors are unknown and uncertain, one thing is for sure: We need to face it together to overcome.

## **WE ARE TOGETHER APART.**

In these times of hardship, the value of strong community and close connections is clearer than ever. Indeed, it is difficult that we cannot meet as we usually do. Until we can, we are already finding new ways to meet, to share our experiences and seek inspiration and support in each other. Sharing is at the core of ECM, and it is our firm belief that sharing inspiration, insights and experiences will be key to pulling through this crisis – together.

## **WE ARE RESILIENT.**

The strategy of ECM is Tomorrow Today and it is our pledge to members to be forward-looking and help prepare today for what will come tomorrow. And while it is difficult, we need to believe, stay positive and work towards a new tomorrow. A tomorrow that will be different from what we came from, and which will require us to rebuild, reshape and reimagine tourism and the responsibilities and role of DMMOs anew.

## **WE ARE ECM.**

And we want to continue to empower our conversation with all of our members on what A New Tomorrow looks like, combining innovative powers and creative minds, charging it with new perspectives from the outside and exploring what might come. Following input and needs of our members, we launched a new series of communication over the coming weeks and months. The purpose is to share ideas and challenges, find inspiration in DMOs new practice and different approaches, and envision together with all of you a new future of destinations rebuilt, and conventions reimaged to meet new traveler preferences and behavior, a new tomorrow of DMOs repurposed.

We will share also with our members weekly updates in different bite-sized and long-read formats of inspirational new practices and insights. We are bringing together a panel of “long thinkers” to help us reimagine “A New Tomorrow” with articles and digital conversations. And, we want to engage and empower all of our members to take active part in this conversation.

**To share and to inspire each other in facing what will be #ANewTomorrow!**

**More information on [www.europeancitiesmarketing.com](http://www.europeancitiesmarketing.com)**

# A NEW TOMORROW

ECM COVID-19  
ANTIBODIES FOR YOUR  
DESTINATION

Webinars

News  
bulletins

Long-thinker  
panel

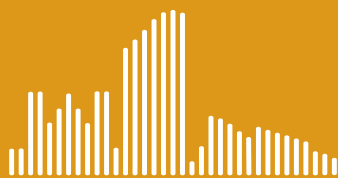


**EUROPEAN CITIES MARKETING**

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# About ECM

European Cities Marketing is a non-profit organisation improving the competitiveness and performance of leading cities of Europe by providing a platform for convention, leisure and city marketing professionals to exchange knowledge, best practice and widen their network to build new business. European Cities Marketing promotes and links the interests of members from more than 120 major cities in 39 countries.



**EUROPEAN CITIES MARKETING**

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