

# TRAVEL TO *tomorrow ...*

VISITFLANDERS  
VISION | STRATEGY | ACTIONS

---

**Vincent Nijs**  
*Chief Strategist*

VISITFLANDERS



**Flanders**  
State of the Art



# AGENDA

---

VISION: Travel to tomorrow

GOAL: Flourishing Destinations

STRATEGY: with 6 themes


KNOWLEDGE DRIVEN

TRAVEL TO  
*tomorrow ...*



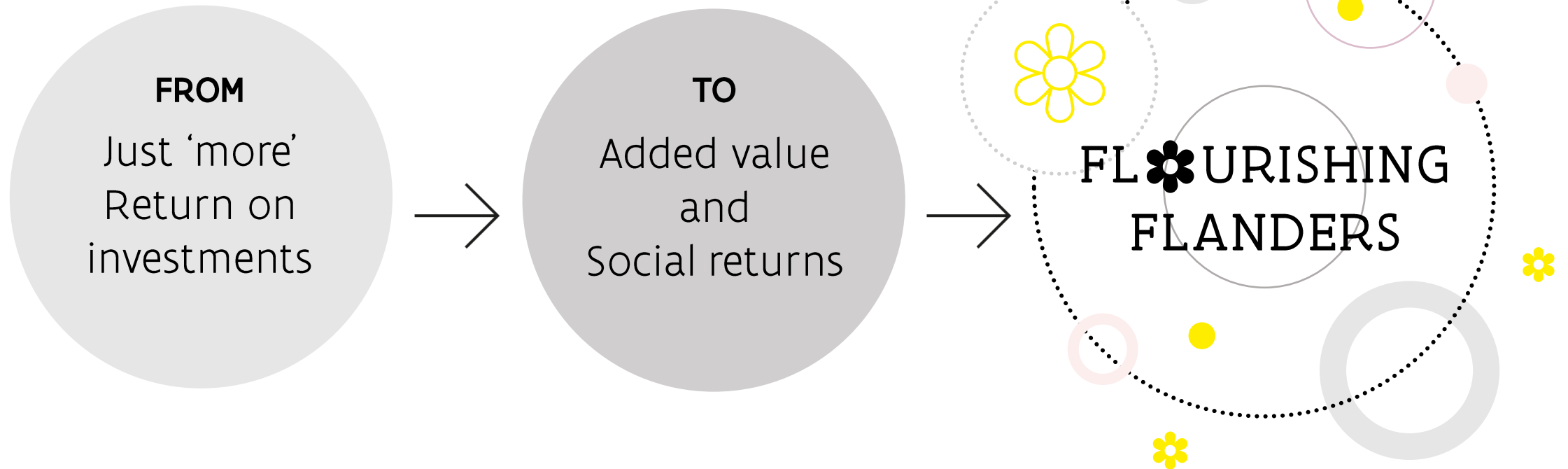
Flora et  
Labora



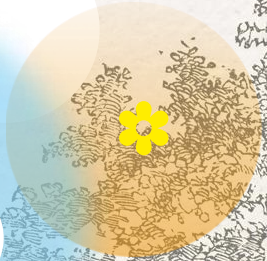


*Which WORD(S)  
spring to your mind  
when you hear about  
Travel To Tomorrow*

# THE POSITIVE POWER OF TOURISM





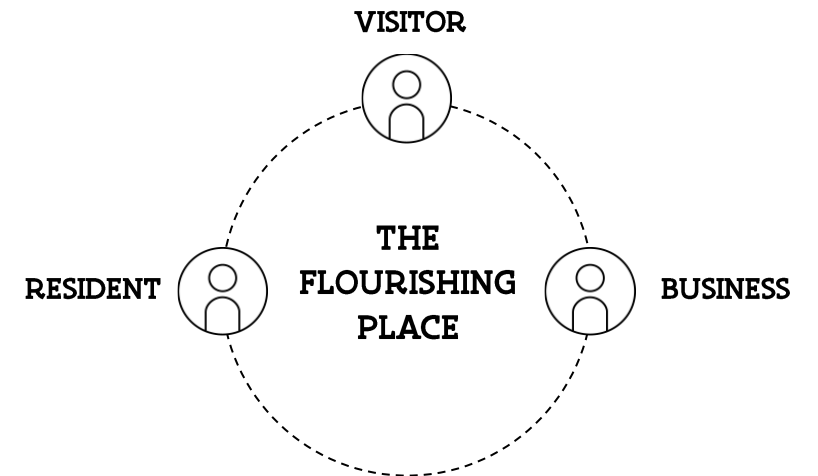


# OUR VISION: TRAVEL TO TOMORROW

---

Tourism is a means, rather than an end.  
It can help to bring balance.

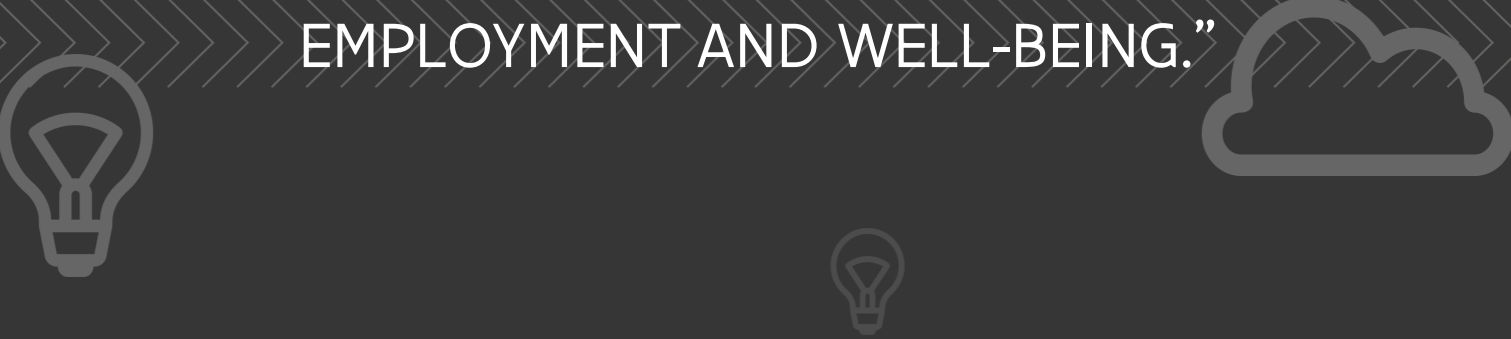
We want to strengthen the role of tourism as a **positive** force, ensuring Flanders can **flourish** as an **innovative, inspiring** and **qualitative** travel destination, for the benefit of its **inhabitants, entrepreneurs** and **visitors**.



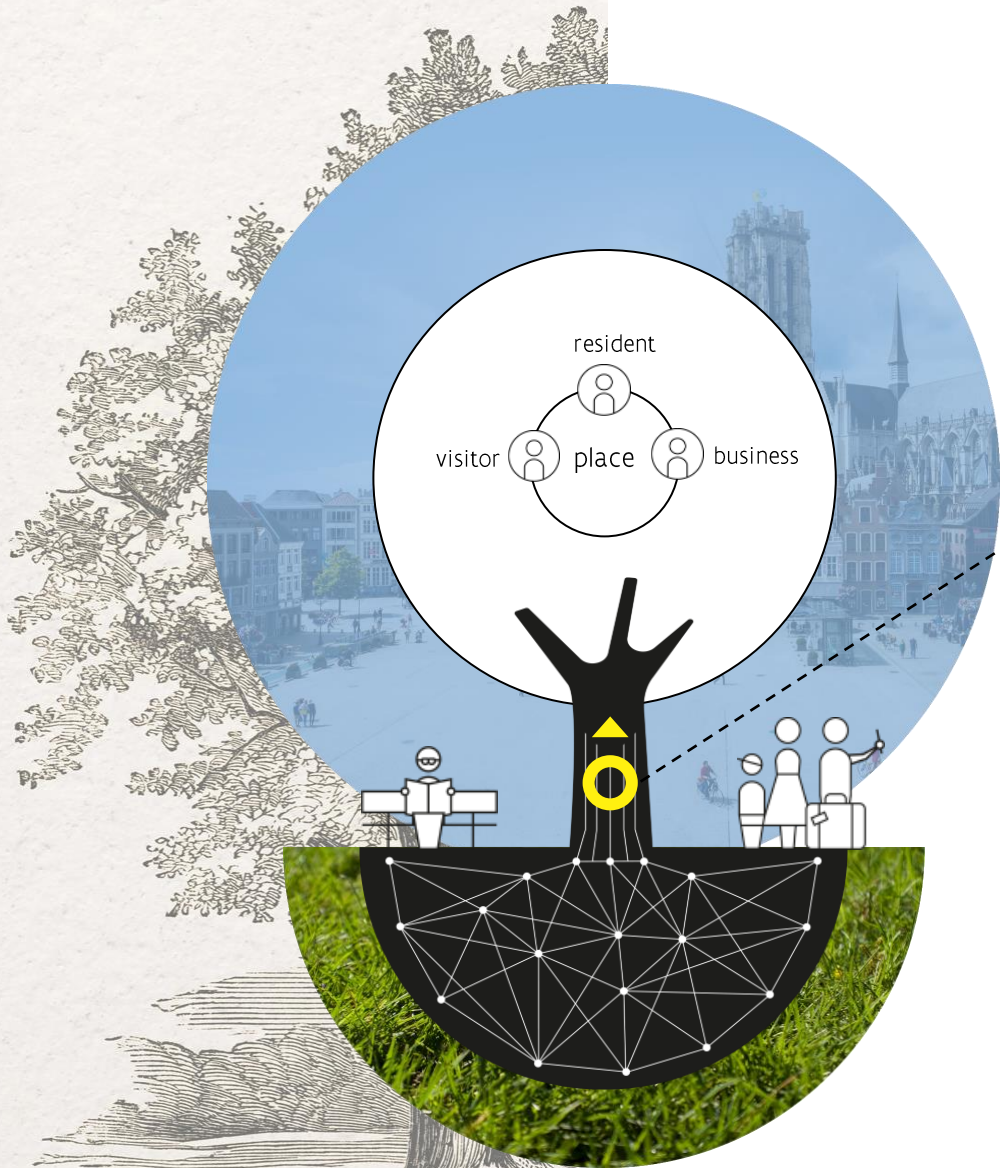


# PREVIOUS VISION 2016–2019

“BY 2020, WE WANT TO DEVELOP TOURISM IN AND TO FLANDERS-BRUSSELS IN A SUSTAINABLE WAY INTO AN ECONOMIC GROWTH ENGINE, TOGETHER WITH THE TOURISM SECTOR. THIS IS HOW WE WANT TO ACHIEVE MORE RETURNS, EMPLOYMENT AND WELL-BEING.”

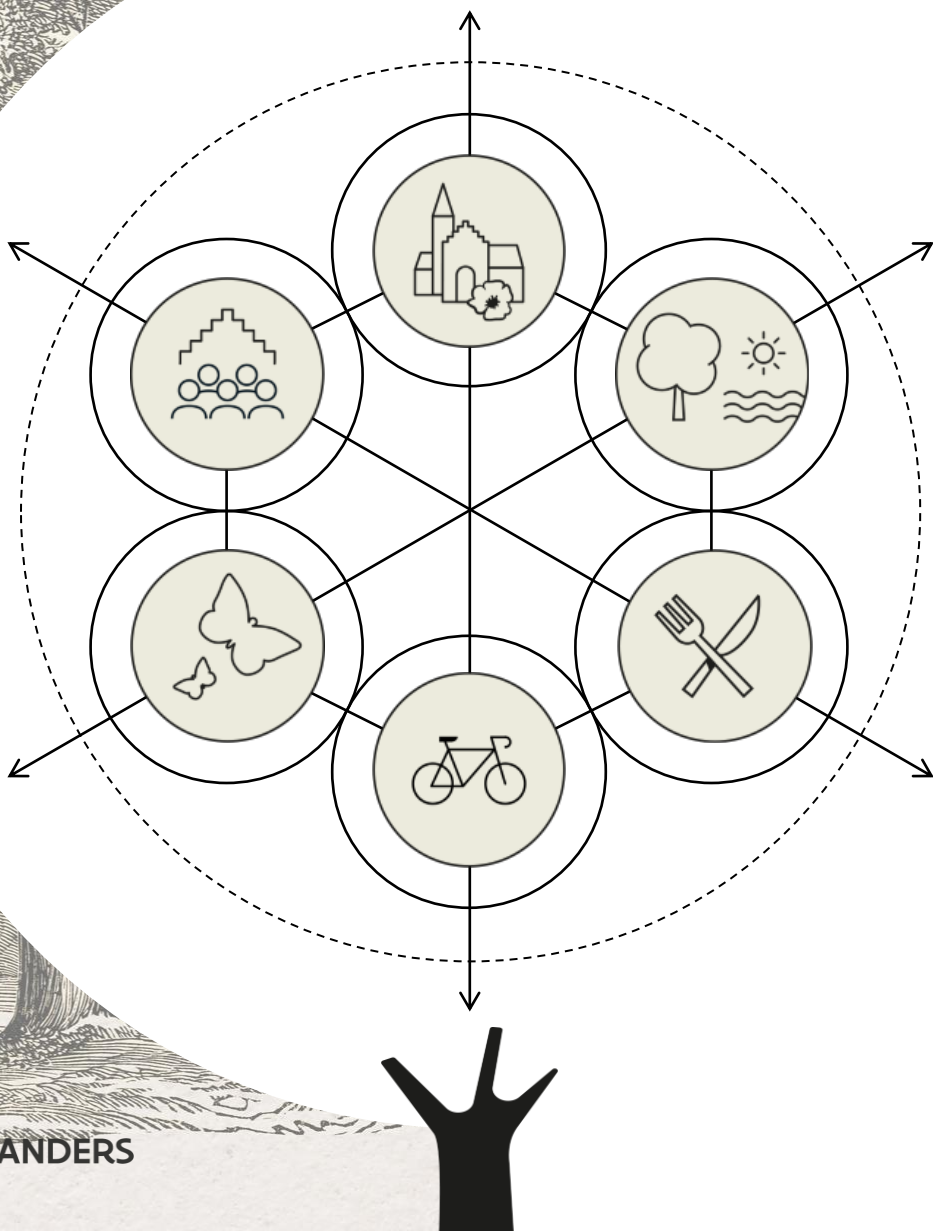






## our strategy on the basis of five key principles

- 1 Creating **added value** for all stakeholders in a balanced manner.
- 2 Generating **connections** between people, places and activities within a unique story.
- 3 Stimulating **participation**.
- 4 Prioritising **quality**, with room for **innovation** and **creativity**.
- 5 Working on the basis of **strategy** and **knowledge**.



## Which six themes?

That connect  
into the DNA of  
Flanders

- **Heritage** experience
- Flanders **Nature**
- **Culinary** Flanders
- Flanders as a **cycling** country
- Why Holidays Matter (Everybody deserves a holiday)
- **Conferences** and **events**





1

FLEMISH  
MASTERS



2

CASTLES  
AND GARDENS



3

RELIGIOUS  
HERITAGE



4

THE GREAT  
WAR



# Heritage experience



1

NATIONAL PARKS AND  
LANDSCAPE PARKS



2

COUNTRYSIDE AND  
NATURAL TOURISM

3

RECREATIONAL  
WALKS

# Flanders Naturally!





1

BELGIAN BEER CULTURE

# Culinary Flanders



1

CYCLING IN FLANDERS



2

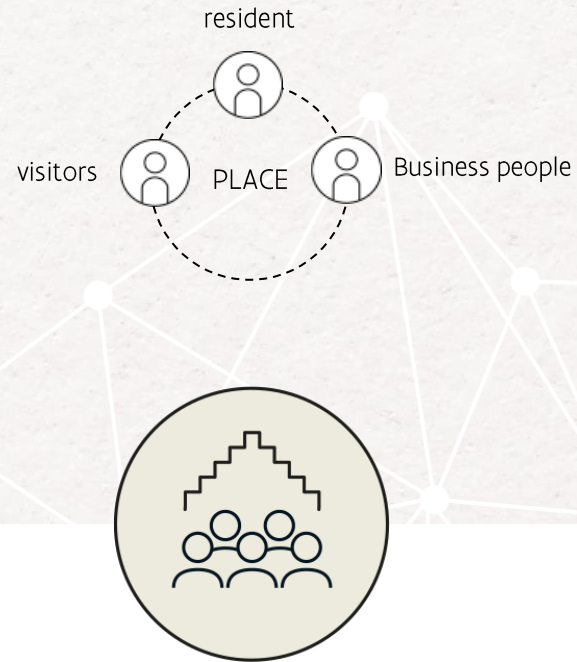
RECREATIONAL CYCLING

# Flanders as a cycling country



Connecting visitors with the place, its residents and business people/scientists,...

FROM 'MORE'  
TO 'BETTER'



COMBINATION BETWEEN  
REAL LIFE AND DIGITAL



## Conferences and events

1

INTELLECTUEEL  
ERFGOED

VISITFLANDERS

2

FLANDERS HERITAGE  
VENUES

INCL EVENT**FLANDERS**



# Why Holidays Matter



*What  
will we do  
in order to travel  
to tomorrow*

---



# INSTRUMENTS TO APPLY TRAVEL TO TOMORROW

---

- Participative
- Quality tools (e.g. labels, advise, ...)
- Financial (subsidies / grants)
- Promotional (int'l network)
- Legal (compulsory vetting of all accommodations in Flanders)







## **PILOT PROJECTS**



# PILOTAGE SITE & BUOY SHED ANTWERP

BECOMES FLEMISH CULINARY CENTER





# MAAGDENDALE ABBEY OUDENAARDE

BECOMES CYCLING HUB





# CASTLE SITES

1

RUBENS CASTLE



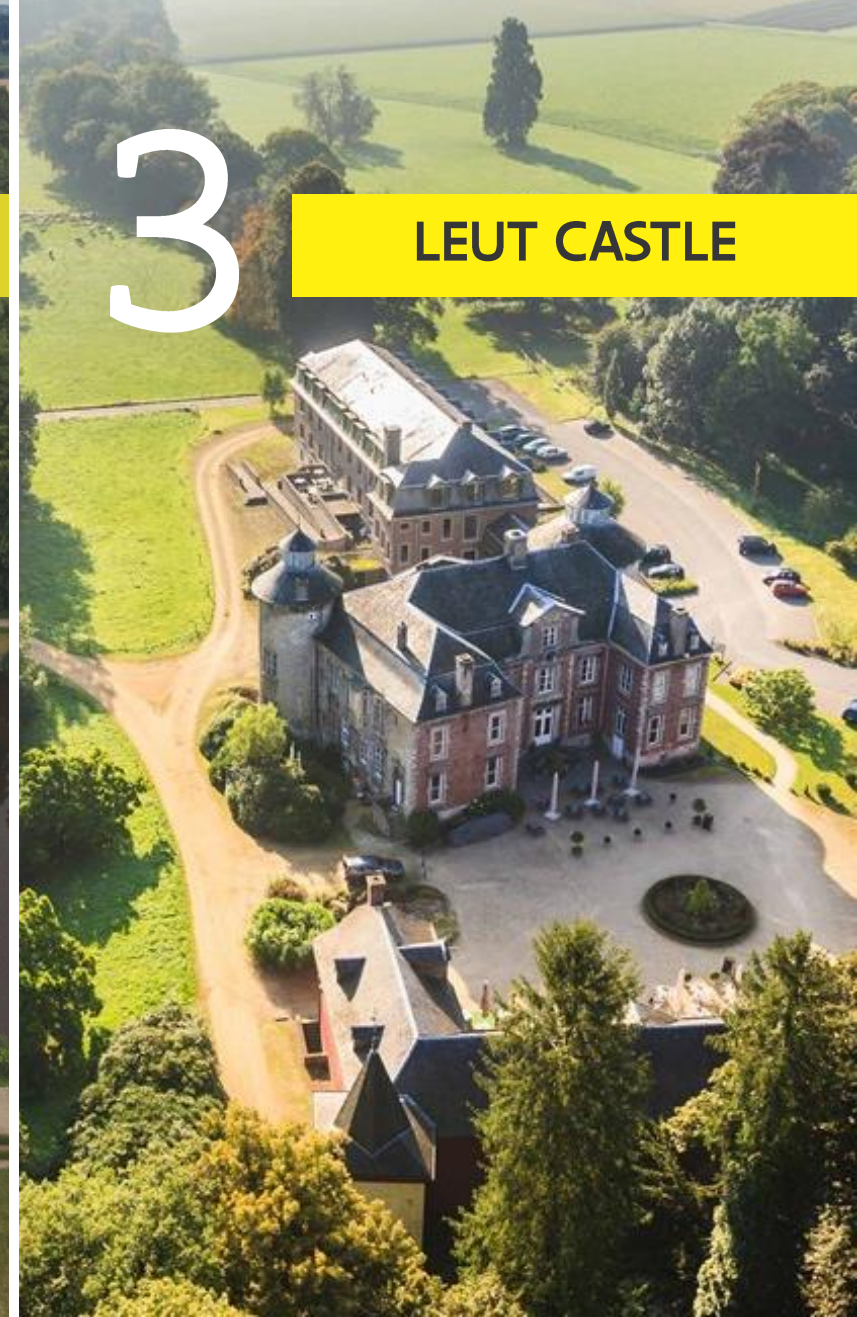
2

POEKE CASTLE



3

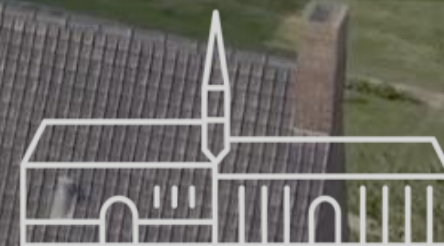
LEUT CASTLE





# ST. GODELIEVE ABBEY

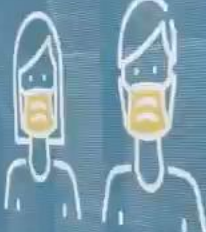
2 hectares of history in the center of Bruges







VEILIG  
WITVENEN



Houd 1,5m  
afstand

mondmasker  
verplicht

volg de pijlen

komert in de tuin van heden  
**Welkom**  
vrijdag  
zaterdag  
zondag  
van 13 tot 19 uur





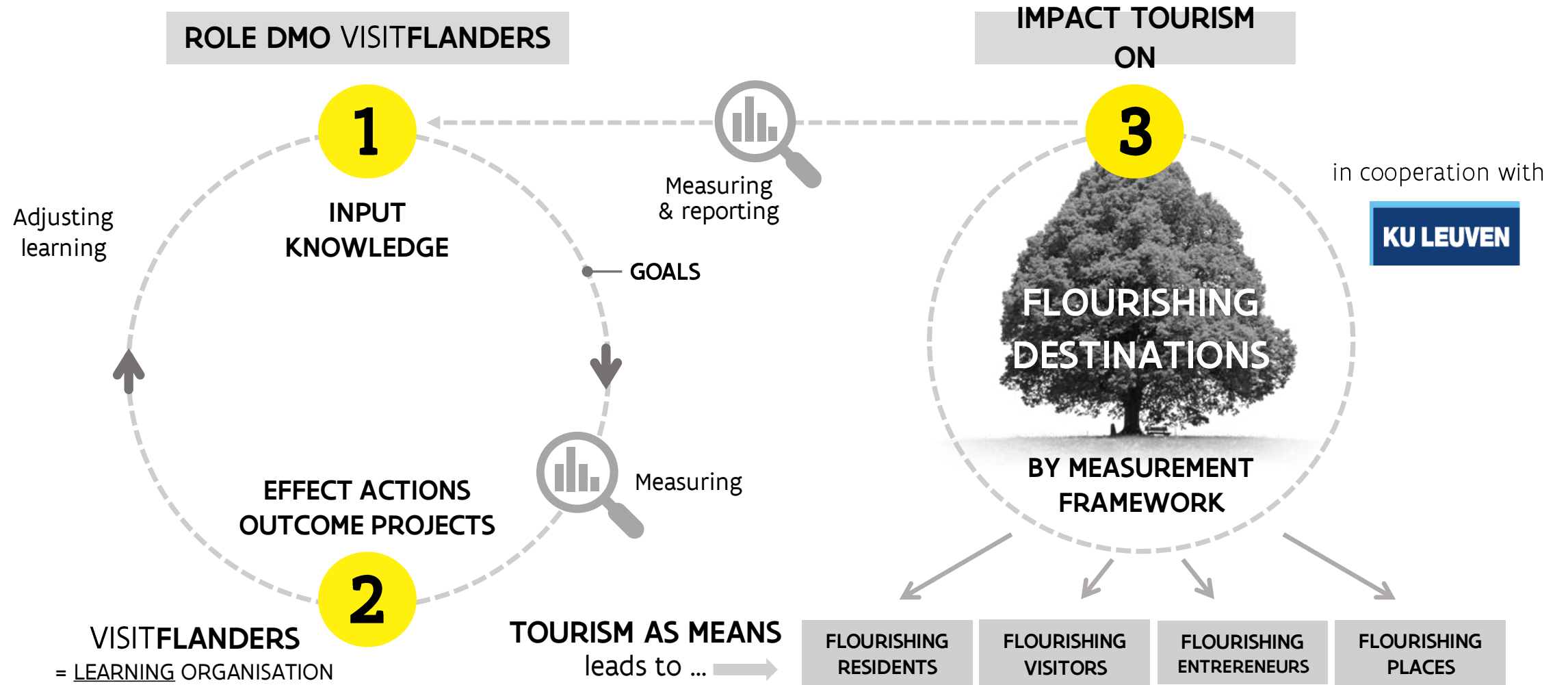
# PILOT PROJECTS – WHY?

## REINFORCE POLICY CHOICES & TO LEARN

- **Develop** within our themes + cross overs
- Experiment & inspire + get inspired
- **Apply ‘Travel to Tomorrow’ principles**
  - › Participative approach
  - › Connect people, places, activities
  - › Balance
  - › Quality
  - › Strategy and knowledge driven
- **Large potential group**, also international, now underused
- Opportunities for **spreading** in time and space
- **Impulse** for sites in problematic context or for themes in inspiring sites
- Make **policy conclusions**



# 3 TYPES OF 'KNOWLEDGE' AT VISITFLANDERS





1

## INPUT KNOWLEDGE

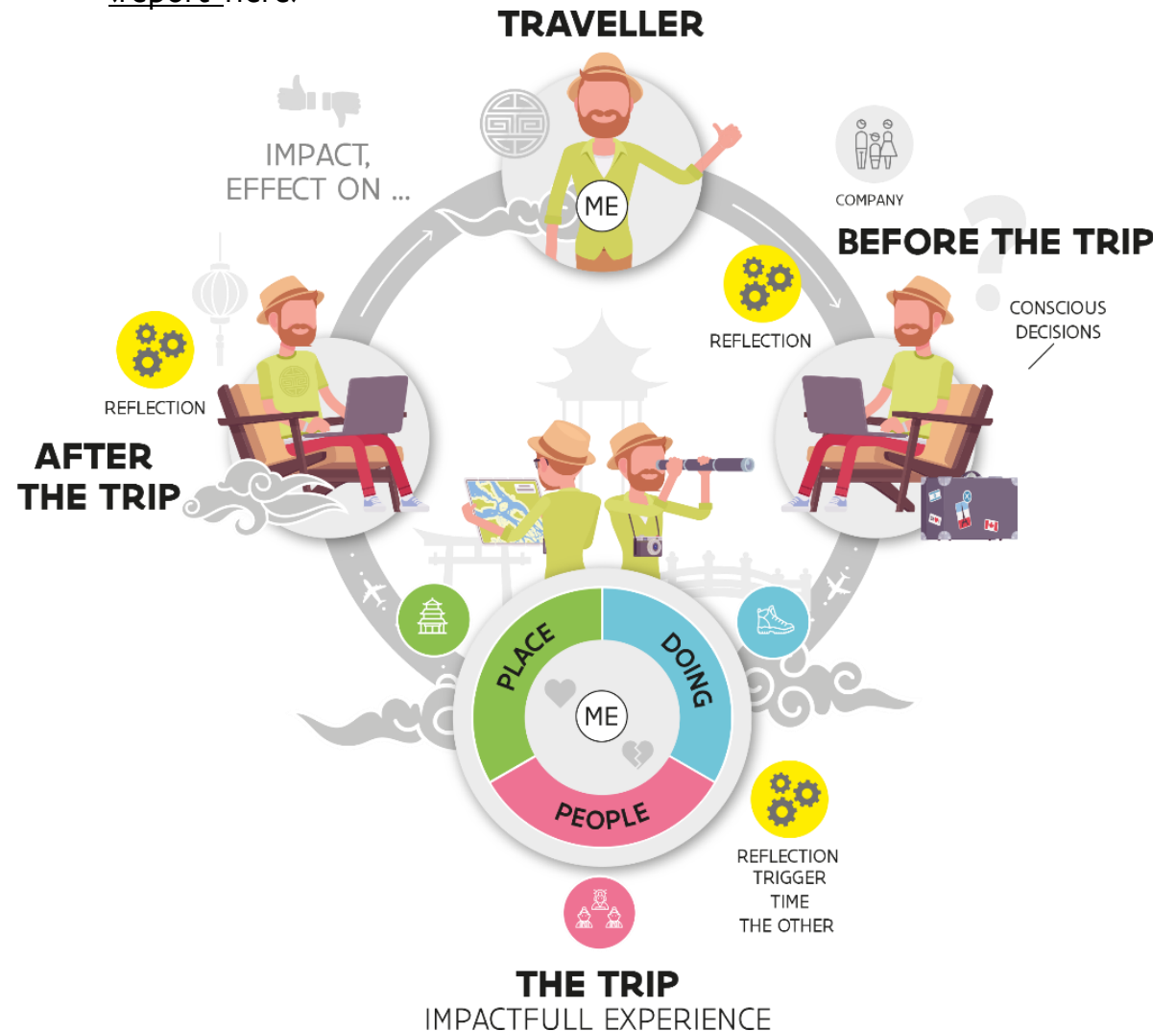
WHEN CREATING  
TRAVEL TO TOMORROW  
→ DISCOVER THE  
TRANSFORMATIONAL POWER OF  
TRAVELLING

Why a travel experience  
is impactful and how can  
we facilitate it?

## LARGE SCALE LISTENING EXERCISE

1.644 stories about impactful travel moments

([report here](#))



## FLOURISHING RESIDENTS

Residents in the destination flourish if tourism contributes to:

- Facilities (cultural/public)
- Strengthening of local culture
- Connection with visitors
- Safety
- Employment
- Living environment

## Review of state of the destination

## FLOURISHING VISITORS

Visitors experience a flourishing destination by:

- Connection with place
- Choice in supply
- Hospitality
- Service provision and information
- Quality of the destination

## FLOURISHING ENTREPRENEURS

Entrepreneurs are healthy and sustainable when accounting for:

- Energy use
- Emissions
- Employment and sector growth
- Corporate social responsibility
- Financial results

## FLOURISHING PLACE

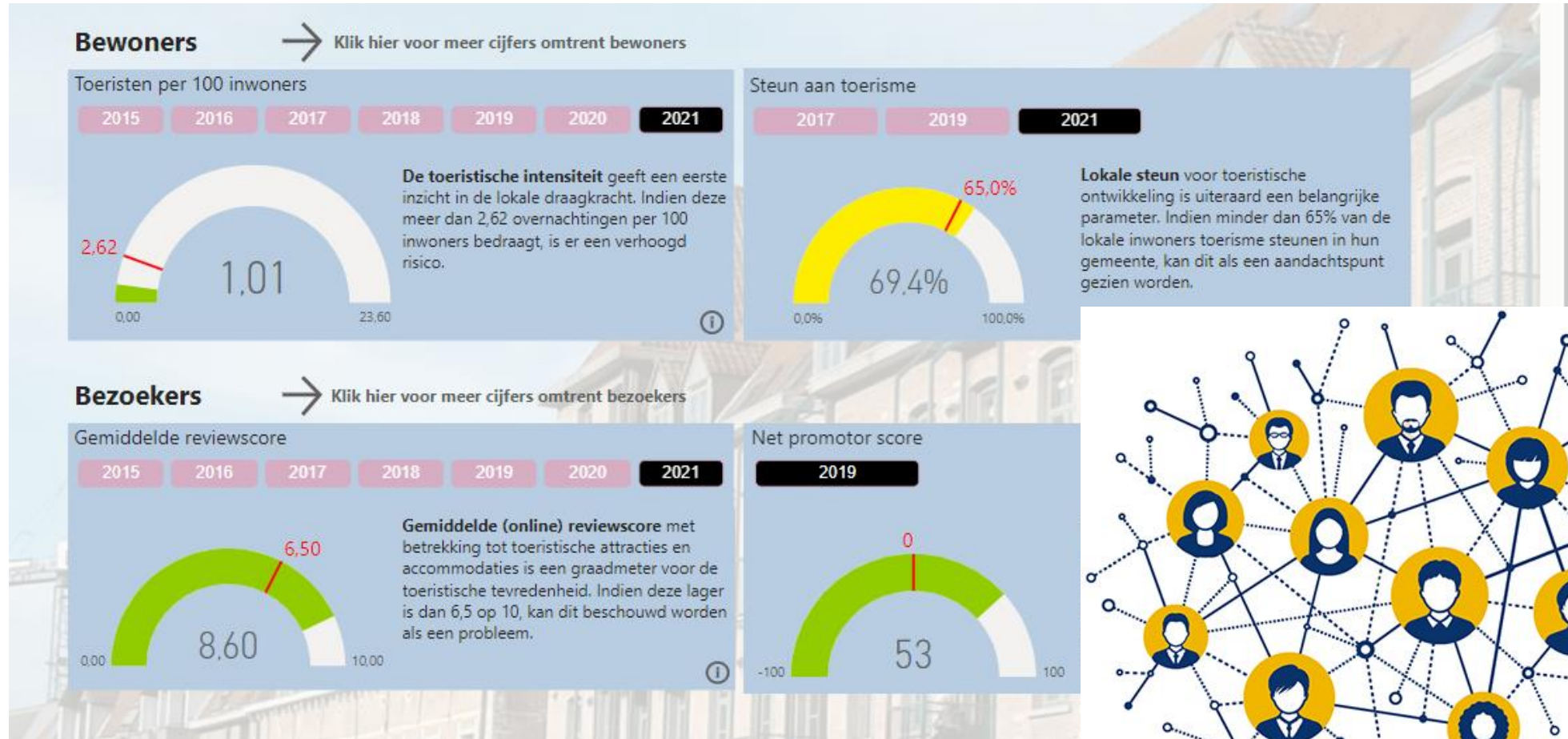
The sustainability of the destination is protected by accounting for:

- Spread of tourism (in time and space)
- Emissions
- Macro-economic effects
- Contribution of tourism to the protection of culture and nature



FLOURISHING  
DESTINATIONS

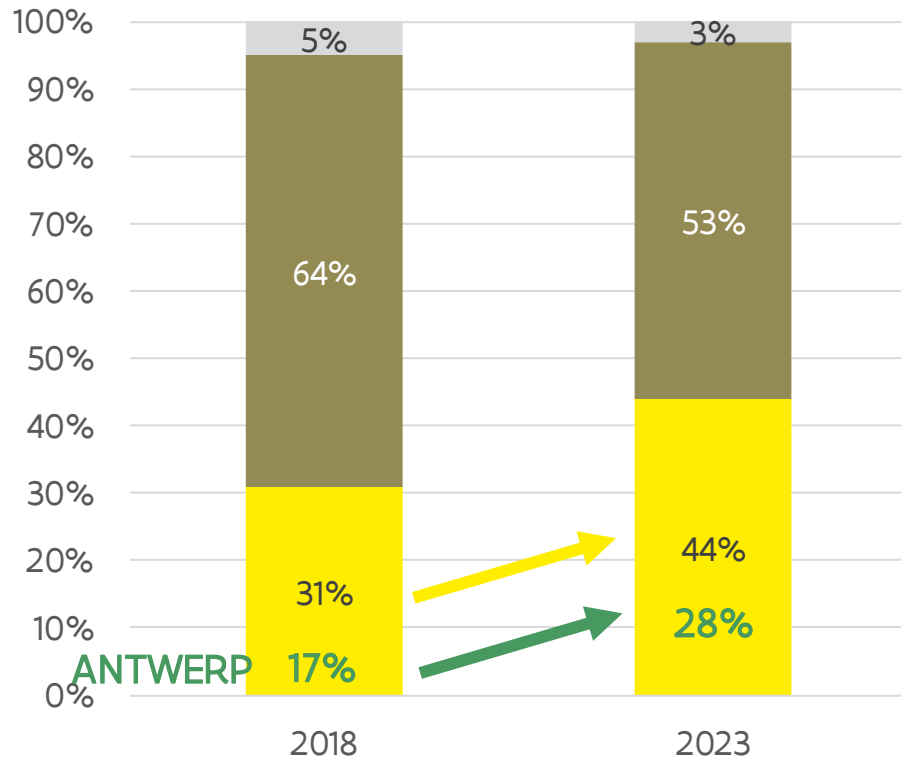


THE DESTINATION BAROMETER

1 2 & 3

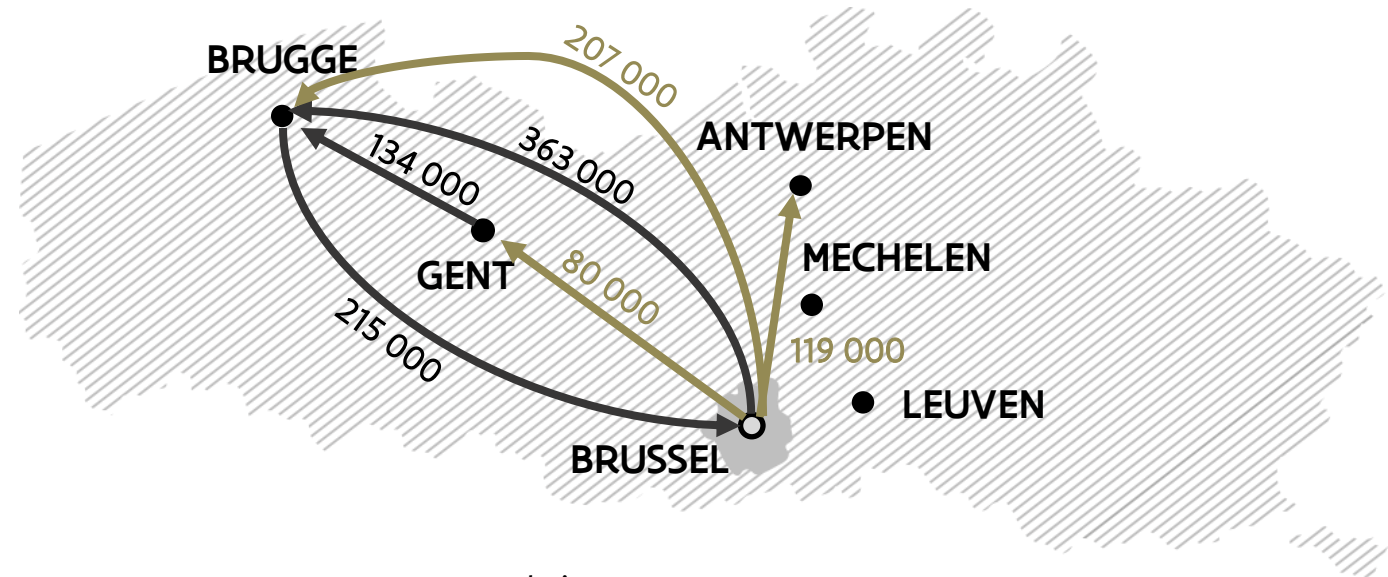
# ART CITIES VISITOR STUDY – COMBINING DESTINATIONS

= ANTWERP, BRUGES, BRUSSELS, GHENT, LEUVEN, MECHELEN



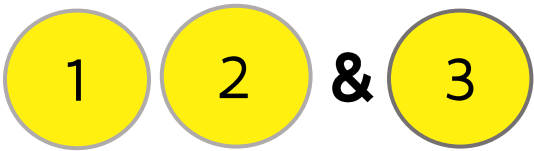
- I don't know
- No other destinations
- Combining other destinations

## Top combinations in Flanders (volumes)



- Met overnachting
- Zonder overnachting

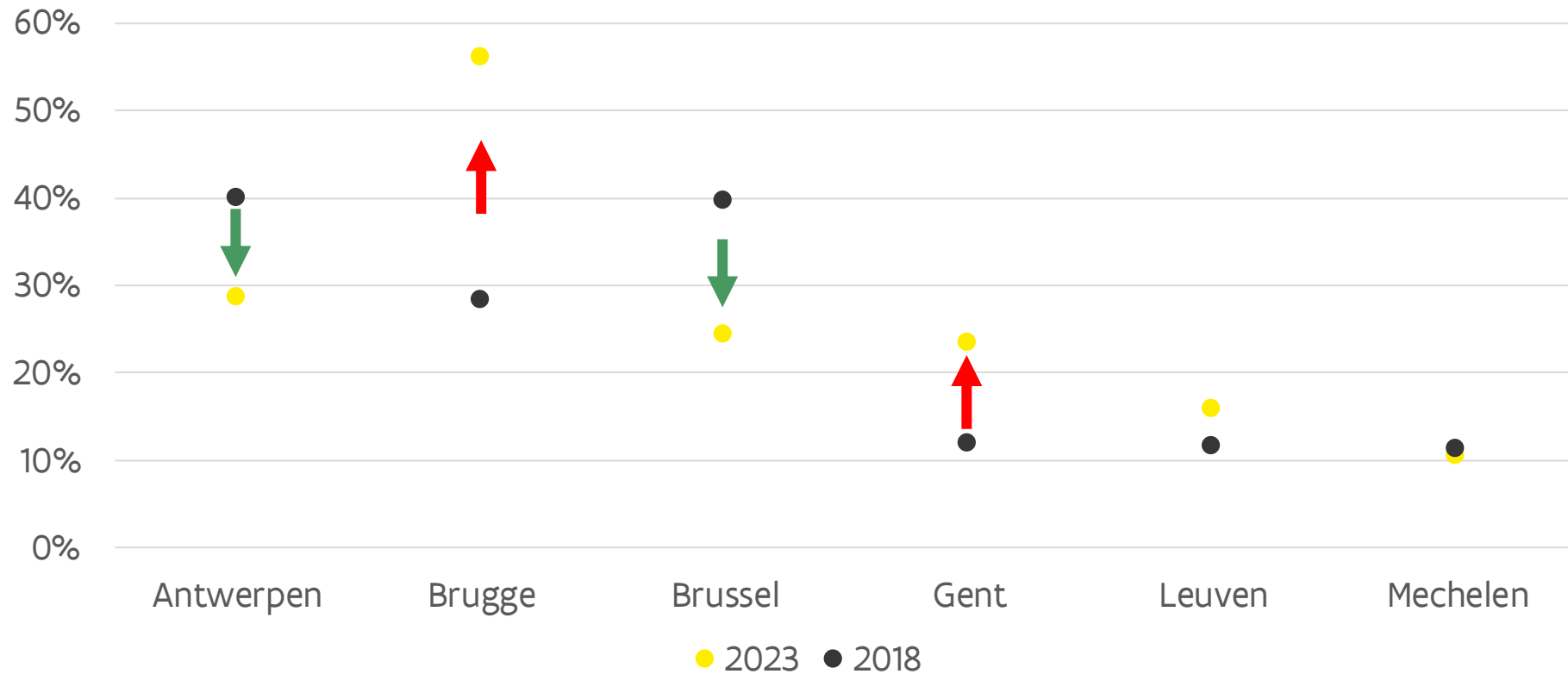


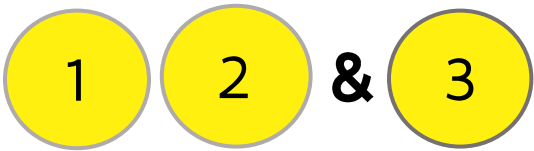


# ART CITIES VISITOR STUDY – CROWDING

*'In certain places I think it was too crowded'*

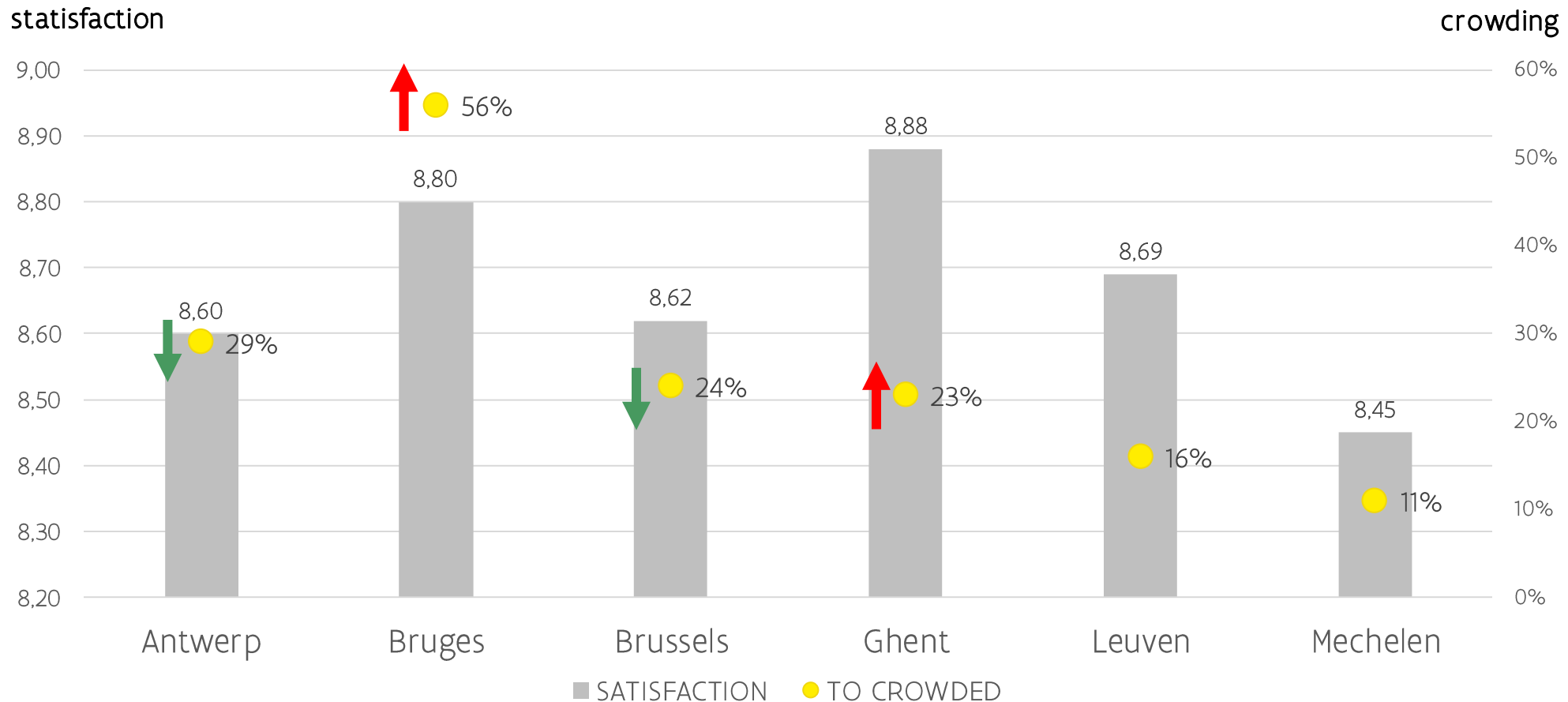
% (centrally) agree





# ART CITIES VISITOR STUDY – CROWDING VS SATISFACTION

Crowding: % (centrainly) agree) – Satisfaction: score /10





1

2

&

3

CASE:

# BRUGES

## HOW MANY VISITORS?

(in a 2x2 km<sup>2</sup> area with only 19,500 inhabitants)

## 2019: ALMOST 10 MILLION VISITORS



2,5 million overnight stays

regional visits: **1,25 million**



**30 December** most visitors (60,000)

day excursions: **6 million**



1,25 million passengers on boats



**50%** stays less than 3h



## CASE:

# BRUGES

RESIDENTS STAY POSITIVE? WHICH SHARE SUPPORTS TOURISM?

(2019)

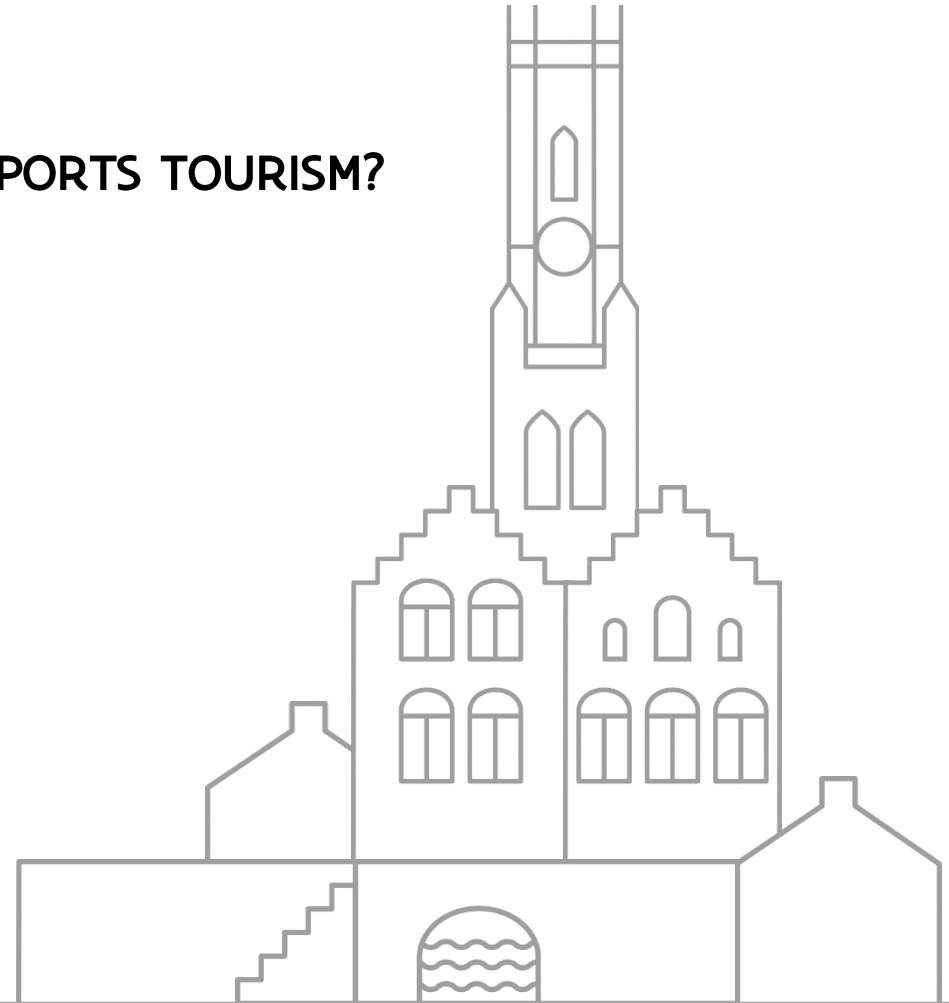
**76%** of the residents support tourism



**67%** say the benefits outweigh the negative impact



**13%**  
do not



Source: Visit Flanders & Art Cities 2019

see: <http://toerism-vlaanderen.s3-website-eu-west-1.amazonaws.com/>

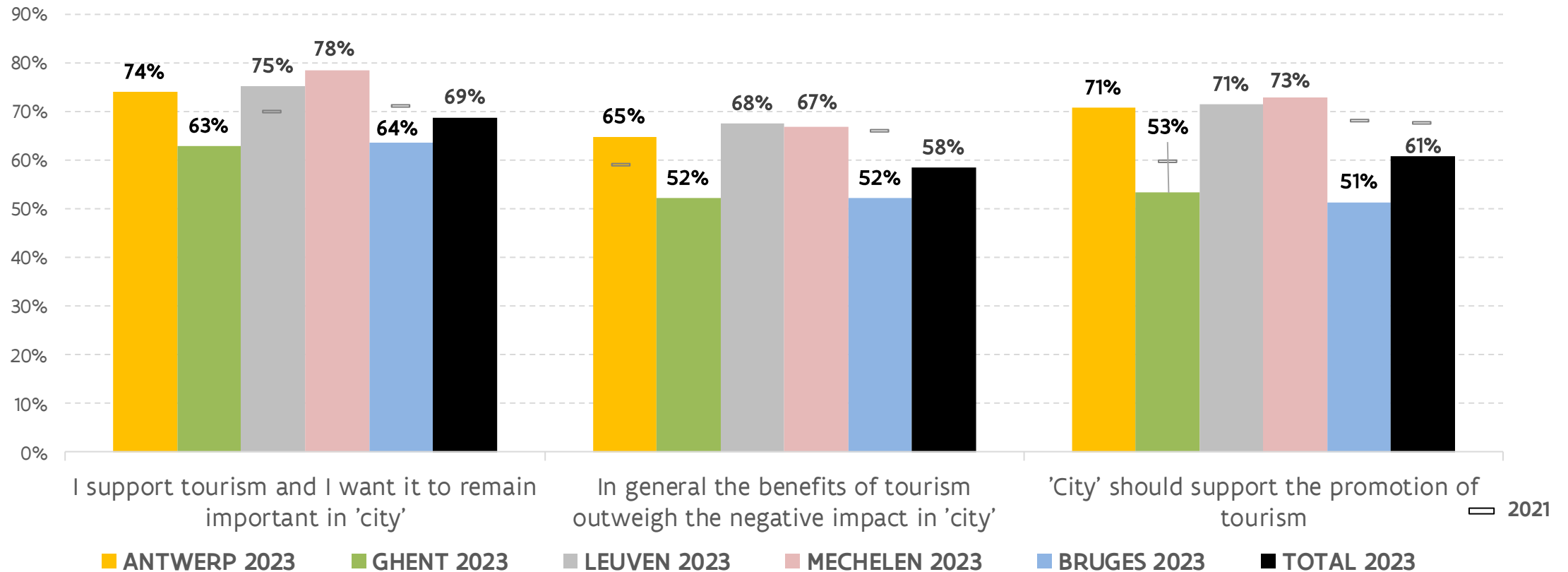
VISITFLANDERS



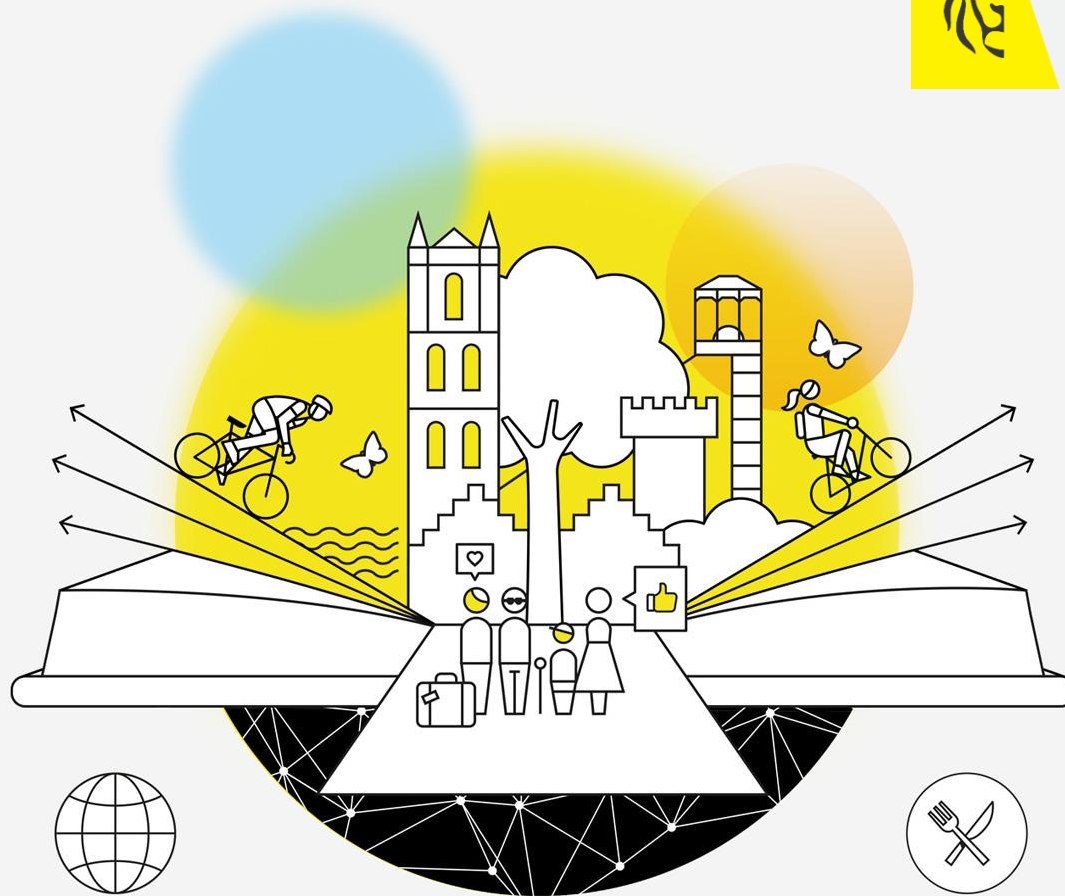
# RESIDENT STUDY – 2021-2023

## Resident support in the ART CITIES

% 'agree' with the statement...



RESIDENTS ART CITIES



Thank you

[vincent.nijs@visitflanders.com](mailto:vincent.nijs@visitflanders.com) – Chief strategist



# NEW WAYS OF MARKETING AND PROMOTION

---

- 'Lovers en fanatics'
- Passionate communities
- Niche groups
- Connecting locals and visitors with shared interests and passions

