



TOURISM IN THE MEDITERRANEAN SEA

An Italian Perspective

EDITED BY
FILIPPO GRASSO
BRUNO S. SERGI

Tourism in the Mediterranean Sea

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Introduction

Tourism is primarily a vital industry for local communities' social and environmental development. Tourism stimulates the economy by generating income, employment and investments. Human resources are the true differential and competitive value of tourism as we believe that human and social capital formation determines the quality of tourist activity. The time has come for the advancement of wide-ranging reflections that may concern shared research visions and paths through careful reading and thought by the essays of the various contributors who have written on issues related to tourism and its variations.

The present volume offers a panorama of transdisciplinary study to favour a new generation of university students wishing to know regional strategies. This volume intends to train young university students to contribute to an elevated level of qualification and contribute to innovation in economic growth and the competitiveness of the international markets' territorial tourism system. The volume enhances supranational policy in the complex tourist phenomenon of the Mediterranean area.

The volume also aims at those professionals who work in the tourism sector with integrated skills and supply a careful interpretative reading of processes and phenomena. The readers can make detailed and relational analyses adequate of the elements that characterize the different contexts, on a local and global scale, and provide aspects of territorial screening useful to the local tourism policies adopted by public and private decision-makers.

This book's goal is to contribute to supporting an in-depth political tourism analysis in the Mediterranean area that goes beyond the prompt actions of the individual territories. It is a harmonious framework of conventional thought in all the public areas involved, thus helping public and private decision-makers implement specific indications of strategies, actions and good practices of tourism governance.

Not to be neglected is the interdisciplinary nature of the humanistic, territorial, economic and social subjects to prepare professional figures to plan local tourism development plans and disciplines that interpret the leading role of 'new tourists'. Lifestyles tend to abolish the hierarchies between high and low culture, the search for accurate knowledge of the place, openness to diversity, seasonal adjustment (short break), the need for doing tourism to feel fulfilled, and no longer to

celebrate belonging to the industrial society. Through the study of SWOT analysis techniques and the 'customer tourist', the volume would continue refresher courses for professional re-qualification that are part of an integrated supply chain. The best investment is in human resources, new figures of technical directors, tourist guides and interpreters, museum communicators and territorial organizers, local development coordinators, destination managers, among others.

The interplay of universities and professional education might favour the demand and supply, generating critical positive impacts on employment opportunities and revitalizing the economic system for small businesses. An expressed concept is the importance of a tourist culture to be strengthened with an internal marketing action. It can be considered ways more important than external marketing. If people are unskilled, they go far neither in terms of design nor in promotional and commercial terms. For any hypothesis of territorial marketing, they assume a significant role: human resources; knowing how to define competencies in their multiple and various expressions represents a fundamental value of the territory, the uniqueness and authenticity that are proper to it.

For this reason, this book constructs innovative and quality training projects, of human capital. It appears competitiveness to support the internationalization and fast digitization of services and hospitality. A government system of the territories that develops a region's strategy involves clear and targeted aims, indicators and right practice actions for quality tourism in the Mediterranean area. The participating promo-marketing of the territories involved in the development of tourist destinations in Mediterranean countries includes themed tourism products (e.g. soft, slow and sustainable mobility, gastronomy, cultural events, nature, wellness). It also encourages territories and stakeholders to work on strengthening and diversifying tourism products throughout the year, improve and enhance the training of skills and experience for quality services. It increases the awareness that environmental and economic sustainability is a value to protect in light of 'over-tourism' and 'hit-and-run' tourism.

Thus, tourism becomes a factor of local development: the local community tries to be no longer dependent on demand and develops the concept of integrated and quality tourism.

The economic growth illustrated in various parts of chapters puts the current economic and cultural development towards consumption models oriented to the satisfaction also of intangible needs. Most of the exchanges are on a market transaction, but the value created exceeds the part economic, including the social and psychological content that characterizes everyone's experience.

The responsibility to promote the tourism and cultural sector in intersectoral destinations, mobilizing goods and people, and increasing the competitiveness of this industry. The ability to create a system, and the strength of knowing how to attract quality investments in the tourism sector generate sound effects on the economic and social development policies if strongly supported by the local tourism governance involved in the decision-making processes.

We wish the readers and students that the present book helps to deepen the problems related to the development of tourism governance policies in the destinations. At the same time, it is an indispensable drive for the effective planning of asset valuations. This culture combines the people's identity and the production chains of the same destinations involved.

Grasso, Sergi
August 2020

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Chapter 1

Tourism for All: Economic Opportunities and Territorial Constraints for Sustainable Development

Carmen Bizzarri

Abstract

‘Tourism for all’ is a way to consider tourism activities and services inclusive, involving all people, guests and residents, in the same activities and creating the dialogue, peace and human development.

This tourism is able to achieve the Millennium Development Goals in two ways: first, it implements human rights, respecting the possibilities of everyone and second, it activates the process of development from the local to global impacts for sustainable development, thus eradicating the poor in the local level.

These are ambitious goals; on the one hand they are certainly difficult to achieve, but on the other hand they are necessary to implement in order to make tourism a more and more sustainable economic activity, given its international spread. Certain sustainable development is ambiguous ground but in the tourism activities it is very pressing for the negative impacts of the classical tourism model.

These assumptions are useful to analyze the costs and benefits of inclusive tourism, thanks to the pyramid of accessibility. This study will in fact make it possible to determine, on the basis of the resources present in the territory, the opportunities and limits of this type of tourism.

In European destinations, above all, in Italy, the openness to inclusive tourism can constitute a new cycle of tourism product such as to activate that interest and curiosity that drives tourists to visit the destination. This chapter describes at first the criteria for the planning of tourism for all, and finally, in the second part, it will deal with the international policies for the realization of tourism for all.

The traditional model of tourist destination is characterized by tourist attractions and related infrastructure, often avoiding the local people.

The resort or tourist villages are born to entertain tourists, but they did not involve local people. Nowadays the tourism and the resorts are changing, and so a lot of destinations are involving a new idea of tourism with the accomplishment of the local people that can support the persons with special needs to live an independent travel as inhabitants.

It is therefore necessary to look for new models in tourism that can create a dialogue, peace and fruitful encounter between guests and the local community. This involvement, in fact, can be activated directly or indirectly – with or without the presence of the local community in all activities of tours – but always in accordance with the need of each other. Tourism for all is a new idea but is the future of tourism for different reasons: the first is that the needs of people, especially those with differences or disabilities, are increased in all parts of the world and they required the solution immediately and tailor-made; the second consists in the hypothesis that if guests can have more economic and especially technological potential, they can support and transfer their know-how to all those who suffer from that particular disorder, providing this benefit; and the third gives sustainability using the appropriate resources to enhance tourist activities.

In this new vision, the World Tourism Organization has attributed to tourism for all a broader vision than accessible tourism alone, combining sustainable and social tourism in a single form of tourism, including every person regardless of gender or other forms of diversity.

In the innovative strategy of inclusive tourism, it should be pointed out that destinations will have to develop plans and appropriate policies for sustainability and accessibility. This form of tourism, which certainly has social aims, could also be conflicting if, for example, accessibility makes use of very invasive technologies or not too much in line with the efficiency and protection of the environment. Tourism for all, therefore, becomes an ambitious project to be implemented at the local level to create a model, so valid to the global level.

Keywords: Tourism for all; sustainable and inclusive tourism; local tourist economy; tourist and local community; new model of tourist development; tourist supply chain; tourist destination for all

1. Tourism for All: Benefits from Local Destination to Global Environment

In high-income countries, as has been shown, people with special needs are on the increase and are more likely to be in high-income regions of Europe. This number is significant in terms of the social changes underway and suggests a demand for high-quality and flexible services to meet different needs.

Among the most requested requirements, accessibility plays the main role as its declination activates quality and safety in all the most requested services:

- (1) Accessible roads for all contribute to the independence of people and their free mobility;
- (2) Accessible food is traceable, local, certified and of quality;
- (3) Accessible health means that hospitals and nursing homes are directly bookable by people, structurally prepared to receive people with various diseases and therefore with staff in charge of the care.

Accessibility in tourism, therefore, can and must improve the quality of life of people with disabilities, especially in the countries of incoming tourism, as these efforts benefit society as a whole.

At present, many efforts have been made to achieve universal accessibility in tourism. Regulations for applying accessibility have been drawn up both internationally and at regional and local level. However, their implementation is lagging behind, and for this reason the authorities are developing strategies aimed at greater supervision to ensure the accessibility of environments.

Very often the application of international conventions and regulations is delayed due to the difficulty of reconciling profitability with accessibility, especially when it comes to building or renovating new and innovative structures.

Accessible tourism, in fact, has a strong impact on all tourist services: booking, reception, catering, entertainment, return travel, etc. It is therefore necessary to carefully assess the costs and benefits inherent in this type of tourism before.

If a single structure were to bear the costs of disposal and adaptation to different needs, it is clear that these costs would fall on demand, without the latter obtaining a real benefit, in social terms. If the costs were to fall on demand, i.e. on individual tourists, the services would not be sustainable because the high price imposed by the accommodation or tourist services could discourage customer loyalty, so as not to return to the destination. The high price imposed on tourists, however, would encourage the tourist to lock himself up in the structure to receive the goods and services included in the travel package.

Another solution could be tried, receiving financial support from public institutions for the development of accessible tourism.

This solution, however, would not be efficient and optimal from a social point of view, since public institutions, in order to encourage this form of tourism and consequently to activate investments in accessible services and infrastructures, could increase taxes and prices of goods to the population, while tourists would remain unaffected by this inflation; such situations would imply a social conflict between residents and tourists, not facilitating the permanence of the latter.

The conflict would arise from the excessive cost of living of the local population and could widen the gap between rich and poor within the same local community. It is clear that such tourism would not be economically sustainable.

On the contrary, the distribution of costs, the valorization of the local area, human and cultural capital (qualifying element in the tourist activity) succeeds in producing an effective balance between costs and benefits to the local community and to the tourists.

In large cities or cities of art, especially those where there is the phenomenon of overcrowding – so-called over tourism – it is worth investing in a similar tourism, which requires attention to the person and his needs. While in fragile areas, in particular, in natural or archaeological areas, the needs of disabled tourists are wrongly considered secondary to the problems related to the environmental, social and economic impact of tourism.

In fact, the benefits of accessible tourism are many and are also described by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO):

- Increase of international tourism in the destination, not only for the disabled;
- Increase in the market opportunities of a tourist destination;
- Improvement of competitiveness and promotion of market differentiation;
- Strengthening of the quality of the travel experience and reception;
- Consolidating the long-term viability of the tourism system and the sustainability of destinations and businesses, including in financial terms (in terms of work and income);
- Promotion of an inclusive approach to development, reflecting social responsibility;
- Contribution to the responsibility and unity of the community living in the destination.

These benefits should also be weighed against investment costs and alternative projects so as to replace capital with other combinations of production factors.

For example, the high costs involved in renovating an old building in an accessible way: only by taking advantage of the economies of agglomeration could the costs be reduced, or by transforming the entire destination into an accessible destination, so that companies will be more flexible in costs, being able to have an entire destination with diversified goods and services.

Making destinations accessible and sustainable is not just a fashion, it responds to the actual demand of millions of tourists to achieve sustainable development.

The accessibility of destination, in fact, has as its objective the simplification and practicability of every movement of the tourist, inside and outside the home, as well as the complete independence and freedom of movement of the individual. Building this type of offer, it means to have a high level of service quality, in which security becomes an essential element and a priority for development itself.

It is a matter of connecting all the companies involved in the tourist service so that each service is connected to the other and the continuous improvements that can be produced, also thanks to the experience, have a cascade effect on the entire chain and in turn throughout the destination.

In fact, the benefits of accessible tourism are many and are also described by the UNWTO:

- Increase of international tourism in the destination, not only for the disabled;
- Increase of market opportunities of a tourist destination;

- Improvement of competitiveness and promotion of market differentiation;
- Strengthening of the quality of the travel experience and reception;
- Increasing opportunities to retain and recommend the destination;
- Consolidating the long-term viability of the tourism system and the sustainability of destinations and businesses, including in financial terms (in terms of work and income);
- Promotion of an inclusive approach to development, reflecting social responsibility;
- Contribution to the responsibility and unity of the community living in the destination.

These benefits should also be weighed against investment costs and alternative projects so as to replace capital with other combinations of inputs.

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Making destinations accessible and sustainable must not just be a fashion, it must respond to the demand of millions of tourists.

These objectives are achievable for the already substantial and future demand for tourism by the disabled and for the necessary conversion to the sustainability of development.

2. Investment for Tourism for All: A Choice for Innovative Destination

Investing in accessible tourism, or tourism for all, is not an easy choice and involves all operators in the tourism sector and beyond. The decision to adapt the destination to the needs of the disabled and those with specific needs must be considered and catalogued well, as this offer is additional to the existing tourism product.

In view of the current high technological potential, innovations can be a valid support, but knowing the best benefits and limitations; the application of the principle of prevention, as applied by the European Union, can be a valid model on which to follow, even in extreme cases.

In 2014, however, the UNWTO found that technologies can offer in tourism (and in particular in tourism for all) to improve not only accessibility but the usability of goods and resources. Investing in technologies means, in fact, involving many economic sectors across the board, improving the attractiveness of the destination. A useful tool suitable to detect the benefits and costs of the adoption of technologies and any useful tool to make the destination for all is the pyramid of accessibility.

Using the 'accessibility pyramid' and related calculation models, it is possible to estimate the potential benefits that could result from the presence of additional accessible facilities. The accessibility pyramid highlights the relationship

between the volume of investment, the degree of accessibility and the number of suppliers and beneficiaries, i.e. tourists and users. The pyramid represents the entire market for accessible tourist facilities in a region. In this model, the more the facilities are at the top of the pyramid, the more they are adapted to the individual needs of users. The main obstacle to remain at the top of the pyramid is the high cost of additional and direct investment to improve the already high accessibility.

The base of the pyramid is made up of companies that offer services and goods suitable for a smaller number of people than those at the top, or to put it another way, the demand has difficulties in knowing how to use the services and consume goods, as they do not meet their needs, or rather, not easily differentiable.

The pyramid is made up of various progressive levels, the boundaries of which are blurred. In a free and functioning market at the base of the pyramid, there will be companies that invest little in accessible facilities because they focus on other target groups or they can reach a relatively high number of tourists (with business limitations and through small investments: improving information and orientation to services by implementing simple and practical solutions). In the central part of the pyramid, there will be companies that invest more than the former, in accessible facilities, because they want their services to be suitable for a higher income and high spending.

This category of companies will invest in infrastructure improvement in order to make their efforts as evident as possible to their customers. Finally, at the top of the pyramid there will be the few structures that make great efforts to offer targeted services and activities, suitable for guests with limitations.

Within the entire pyramid, simple economic theory applies: tourism service providers invest in accessible facilities only if they affect the choice of preference of people who spend high shares of their income on services, such as to generate a turnover, significantly higher than the investment costs.

Following this logic, it will not be in the interest of every single tourist service provider to develop accessible facilities, but only if the investments are profitable. Of course, this means that only those needs are met that, from an economic point of view, respond to a very large demand for quantity or quality. This mechanism is reflected in the tapered shape of the pyramid towards the apex. In a functioning market for accessible tourism, an excellent economy is established which is not characterized by generalized and extensive accessibility. Each supplier makes the investments it deems appropriate, positioning itself in a certain segment of the pyramid. From a macroeconomic point of view, it is not possible to determine the exact degree necessary to meet universal accessibility.

The expected return on an investment decision depends on many factors: the type of tourism, the accessibility of the type of tourism itself, the historical onsite availability of accessible facilities, local competition, the availability of trained and professional staff and, finally, effective capital to invest. The ratio between input and output, i.e. the economic return, is different for each supplier. However, several examples from the regions under consideration confirm that investments in accessible tourism facilities are profitable by accepting a constant demand. For example, a hotel chain in Erfurt (Germany) managed to attract a large group of disabled

people, who are now regular guests, by increasing its service orientation and implementing a series of small practical aids. The renovation of a pension, in accessibility, for example, and the setting up of a pick-up service by a hotel have proved to be competitive advantages, used and appreciated very much, despite their initial cost. Solutions designed to accommodate groups of disabled travellers are advantageous and demonstrate how accessible facilities are profitable regardless of location, in the pyramid, of the investor. The rather general pyramid model can be transferred to all elements of the tourism services chain and to different service segments: from accommodation to gastronomy, from recreational and cultural activities to travel to and from the destination (public transport networks, as local/regional).

International research has shown that the pyramid can also highlight social improvements such as greater tolerance between tourists and residents. Among these intangible factors, empathy is the most widespread element: it generates a warm welcome overcoming physical and psychological difficulties and activating a fruitful dialogue between tourists and residents. Finally, the accessibility pyramid can be useful to determine how the potential demand can translate into customers, against useful investments in inclusive tourism. The well-being experienced during the holiday, in fact, often determines the expenditure of the tourist who, in the final analysis, supports the local and regional economy.

3. The Territorial Determinants for Planning the Tourism for All

In order to satisfy accessibility, companies that develop new technologies, oriented towards well-being and robotics, are also involved often because of their function and degree of innovation, not localized according to Weberian criteria, i.e. close to raw materials or places of consumption, but in places where they can use the economies of agglomeration typical of research and development (Celant, 2017) and therefore with a wider scope than the local one.

For this reason, the activation of accessible tourism, in addition to fostering the local economy, could expand its economic benefits at regional level: it could in fact encourage the use of public investment in accessible infrastructure.

Determining the exact impact of the effects produced by public investment in a destination, however, is very complex for the different outcomes of design, implementation and use in the short and long term. The accessibility pyramid, on the other hand, makes it clear that the greatest success of tourism for all does not lie in expensive tailor-made packages but in meeting the demands of independence and freedom, as well as all the needs of the person, spreading empathy in the destination.

The additional benefits that tourism for all can bring to a community should not be underestimated; among these, it is important to remember the spread of quality standards and safety certifications, which complete the achievement of a sustainable destination. From the destinations, the benefits can also expand to the regional level, even when the tourism activities are additional to the existing

sectors and founding of regional development. The regional effects may not be homogeneous and depend both on the relative diversification of the tourist offer and on the relative use of the tourist infrastructure. In this process of regional dissemination, those accompanying the project of disabled travellers constitute a potential and latent demand and can more directly verify the presence of resources and attractions in the regional system or return individually to that region.

Reaching new targets and promoting tourism facilities in the region are strategic marketing activities that must be built with great attention: investments in these areas are expensive and must be weighed up if useful for regional development. The cost–benefit analysis should also be carried out when tourism service operators or associations take on coordination roles at regional level, thus being able to influence the economic strategy of a region.

Investments in accessible facilities are largely based on the decisions of the entire supply chain. Certainly, it must be made clear that some investments are much more expensive than others, both for the technological solutions used and for the restricted use of a few users with special needs, while in order to be economically sustainable, priority should be given to investments that bring prosperity to a large part of the regional community.

These needs must be carefully assessed when planning through a development model that is able to direct the flow of people, money, goods and information, creating satisfaction in the demand and supply of tourism. In view of the diversified investments, different scenarios can be envisaged:

- (1) The ‘inactivity scenario’, in which a region does not take further action, does not try to penetrate this market segment and consequently loses market share;
- (2) The ‘adaptation scenario’, in which a region makes small steps towards the creation of an accessible infrastructure, making small investments in relevant structures and thus satisfying part of the market and potential demand;
- (3) The ‘priority scenario’, in which an entire region concentrates in a coordinated manner on the target group, recognizes it as a market segment, makes investments on the basis of strategic and coordinated planning and develops the plants in such a way as to make it possible to predict a sharp increase in demand.

In this perspective, the region, in order to develop tourism flows, should not consider demand preferences, as indicated by the model in [Lundgren \(1982\)](#), which considers the hierarchical level of the number of flows, but verifying the potential demand for accessibility. As [Lozato Giortat \(2008\)](#) himself points out, the realization of a distribution of flows occurs when the tourist region is multi-polar and multi-purpose, when it has a number of attractions that can be distributed in the territory with various forms of accessible location. In order to achieve this form of development, a geographical area is necessary in which processes of systematic interaction between the different components of the tourist offer are manifested and mobility tends to be exhausted.