

Transforming Tourism

Regional perspectives on a global phenomenon

Executive summary and background

"Transforming Tourism: Regional perspectives on a global phenomenon" is a collective work published by Coppieters Foundation in 2019. It summarises the main conclusions and panels from an international workshop to analyse sustainable and regional development in societies heavily dependent on tourism. In the workshop we looked at diverse and multilingual societies with devolved powers.

We observe that, very often, there is a struggle to balance conflicting imperatives of preservation of the communities' identity and economic growth. Local communities face strong challenges to develop more sustainable growth strategies. This shows the need to address the impact of tourism, especially on indigenous, autochthonous and minority groups.

HERE ARE THE MAIN TOPICS OF ANALYSIS:

Degrowth in Tourism: The Need to Rightsize or Downscale Tourism Activity



Sustainable Tourism and regional development requires degrowth in demand. To achieve it we need to introduce changes in consumer behaviour; put the focus on the value of local economies and communities; set limits to growth in tourism; and increase awareness on the negative impact of mass tourism.

Collaborative Tourism Platforms



Collaborative Economy ecosystems can potentially offer new alternatives to traditional production and consumption models, as well as more equitable forms of democratic platform governance and cooperativism. Sharing economy, within a wider collaborative economy, has the potential to transform Tourism.

Event Based Tourism and Social Responsibility: Tensions between Global and Local



Global events often jeopardize the sustainable development of local societies (Global vs Local). This is especially the case in diverse societies where minority groups and unrecognized nations have difficulties to be acknowledged. Global events are in nature temporally and geographically space bounded, hence events can be considered reflections or responses to societal norms and standards.

Accessible Tourism: Wheels of all Sizes



Leisure and contact with nature have proven to increase quality of life. Sustainable development, also in tourism-based economies, needs to guarantee access for all: children, the elderly, persons with special needs and people in situations of vulnerability.

Seeing Tourism Transformations in Europe through Algorithmic, Techno-Political, and City- Regional Lenses



Technological change will ultimately provide the means to achieve data devolution, technological sovereignty, and citizens empowerment in European cities and regions. Such a change would align a citizen-to-citizen tourism interactions between visitors and residents and would take communities back to the basics, where ultimately citizens decide - without any undesirable, external, disruptive algorithmic influence - their own choice, and thus, their own future.

A Review of the Causes and Consequences of Tourism Saturation



Tourism is, as a matter of fact, an effective way to achieve economic growth and development if it is not over exploited. Mass tourism has a negative impact that outweighs the economic benefits for receiving societies. To acknowledge the risk of tourism saturation and thus, to reflect afterwards on restrictions is the first step to preserve the positive impact of tourism in the economy and to reduce the social, economic and environmental impairment it generates.

The COVID-19 crisis could be an opportunity to transform the impact of tourism on societies, nature, climate, and the economy.

It brings us the chance to build more resilient communities and businesses through innovation, digitalization, sustainability, and partnerships.

Key conclusions

- Degrowth-inspired tourism agendas might help to overturn the current trends: Mass Tourism and over exploited local economies.
- A redefinition of Tourism is needed. Tourism needs to be considered within its appropriate context of global mobility, human wellbeing and a sustainable future.
- Education and awareness-raising are needed to move towards a shift to tourism values disconnected from excessive commodification and exploitation.
- Tourism must trigger positive interaction and connection with local cultures and societies. There is also a need to warn about corporations from over exploiting resources hence, hampering sustainable development for local economies.
- Decision makers would benefit from engaging suppliers and the general tourism value chain actors at an early stage to identify innovative solutions and business models for an increased offer of more sustainable products and services.
- Measuring and reporting on the benefits and impacts of sustainable consumption and production should not be neglected when defining public policies.
- The concepts of reduction, reuse and recycling in tourism are still to be more strongly embedded in local tourism management and carrying capacity theories.



Want to know more?
Download the study here!



www.ideasforeurope.eu/activity/publication/transforming-tourism/

Authors

Iñaki Irazabalbeitia Fernandez • info@ezkerraberri.eus
Ezkerraberri fundazioa - By Way of Introduction

Aurkene Alzua Sorzabal • aurkenealzua@deusto.es
Marina Abad Galzacorta • marina.abad@deusto.es
University of Deusto - An Introduction to Degrowth in Tourism Through Konstantinos Andriotis's Work / Towards a Measurement Framework for More Responsible Tourism Development

Julie Wilson • jwilson2@uoc.edu
Open University of Catalonia - Collaborative Tourism Platforms and the Production of Urban Space: Tales from Barcelona

Rebecca Finkel • RFinkel@qmu.ac.uk
Queen Margaret University - Event Tourism and Social Responsibility: Tensions between Global and Local

Majella Sweeney • MSweeney@qmu.ac.uk
Queen Margaret University
Accessible Tourism: Wheels of all Sizes

Igor Calzada • igor.calzada@compas.ox.ac.uk
University of Oxford & University of Strathclyde
Seeing Tourism Transformations in Europe through Algorithmic, Techno-Political, and City-Regional Lenses

Pedro Bravo • bravopedro@gmail.com
Writer and journalist
We travel with excess baggage: A Review of the Causes and Consequences of Tourism Saturation