



ToSEE - Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe  
7<sup>th</sup> International Scientific Conference  
"Engagement & Empowerment: A Path Toward  
Sustainable Tourism"  
May 25 - 27, 2023, Opatija, Croatia  
University of Rijeka, Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management



# ToSEE 2023

7th International Scientific Conference  
25 to 27 May, 2023

## Book of Abstracts

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Online ISBN 978-953-7842-59-8



SVEUČILIŠTE U RIJEKI UNIVERSITY OF RIJEKA  
FAKULTET ZA MENADŽMENT U TURIZMU I UGOSTITELJSTVU  
FACULTY OF TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT  
OPATIJA, HRVATSKA CROATIA



# Book of Abstracts

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A Path Toward Sustainable Tourism**



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Online ISBN 978-953-7842-59-8

**Publisher** © 2023 University of Rijeka  
Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management  
Opatija, Croatia

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Authors submitted their abstracts in final form. Editorial Committee disclaims responsibility for language and printing errors.

**Online ISBN 978-953-7842-59-8**

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## SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS AS CO-CREATORS OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION VALUE

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Lorena Bašan  
Barbara Jerković  
Katarina Šimičić  
Marija Ham  
Ana Pap Vorkapić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – This paper aims to propose a model for co-creating destination value through Social media influencer (SMI) credibility, its congruences with destination products and tourists, by the mediation of tourist-destination product congruence, and perceived overall value creation for the tourist destination experience through SMI (OVCTDESIM).

*Methodology* – Data was collected from a sample of 211 tourists and 32 tourist boards in Croatia, and it was processed and analyzed using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) ver. 26. Univariate statistical analysis (descriptive statistics) was used to describe the characteristics of the sample. Multivariate statistical analysis (exploratory factor analysis and confirmatory factor analysis) was used to confirm the reliability and validity of the scales, and structural equation modeling (SEM) was used to test the hypotheses. Thus, structural equation modeling was performed using Amos ver. 26, to analyze the structural relationships between the variables. An Independent-sample t-test was performed to identify the significance of differences between perceived and created or communicated overall value for the tourist destination experience through SMI during previsit, visit, and post-visit stay.

*Findings* – The model explained 51.3% of the variance in intention to visit and 56.1% of the variance in intention to recommend the destination. Perceived SMI credibility significantly influenced perceived SMI-destination product and SMI-tourist congruences. Research results indicate that perceived SMI-tourist congruence significantly affects the perceived OVCTDESIM. However, the hypothesis regarding the influence of perceived SMI-destination product congruence on OVCTDESIM was not confirmed. The research results reveal that perceived OVCTDESIM significantly influences attitudes toward a destination, consequently influencing the intention to visit and recommend the destination. Additionally, it was established that partial mediation exists between SMI-destination product and SMI-tourist congruences through tourist-destination product congruence. Significant differences are identified between perceived and created or communicated overall value for the tourist destination experience through SMI.

*Contribution* – The present research aims to close a specific research gap by proposing an original, empirically tested model that can be further developed and expanded in future research related to the use of influencer marketing in creating destination value and possibly in other contexts. Also, findings can serve as a reference for destination management planners to comprehend all the important dimensions to consider when employing influencer marketing to increase destination value.

**Keywords:** social media influencer (SMI), SMI credibility, SMI congruences, co-creation of destination value

# EXAMINING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF GOVERNMENTAL TOURISM RECOVERY STRATEGIES IN SLOVENIA AND CROATIA DURING THE COVID-19 CRISIS

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Miha Bratec  
Tina Segota

## Abstract

*Purpose* – The unique pandemic context provides an excellent framework to research and assess governmental tourism interventions. The research examines two communication strategies supported by heavy (Slovenia) or light (Croatia) government actions. The latter was implemented to combat travel risk perceptions and position a safe destination image via media and health-protective initiatives to encourage travel where Slovenia relied on domestic tourism, while Croatia on proximity tourism to recover from the crisis.

*Methodology* – Critical reflection method is applied, and industry benchmark data for both countries are interpreted. Thus, both countries' strategies were examined through marketing and destination performance and correlated to destination competitiveness, innovation, and sustainability.

*Results* –The Slovenian and Croatian tourist activity and destination performance in 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022 are observed to evaluate each recovery strategy. Preliminary data suggest that the Slovenian recovery plan, while more disruptive and innovative, caused market anomalies like record-breaking ADR in 2020 and RevPAR only marginally lower than in 2019. More notably, Slovenian ADR and RevPAR were higher in 2020, the "most critical" year, than in 2021 and 2022. The Croatian plan showed a large Occupancy, ADR, and RevPAR reduction in 2020 and a linear rebound toward the 2019 numbers for all three performance measures, aligning with the rest of Europe.

*Contribution* – The paper evaluates two tourism-related COVID-19 government interventions. It shows that less government interference can improve long-term outcomes. Thus, based on quantitative and qualitative characteristics, the Croatian approach, albeit more conservative, is more sustainable in overcoming crises and retaining worldwide competitiveness and appeal.

**Keywords:** crisis, recovery, policy, intervention, sustainability, competitiveness

## IS TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT IN SERBIA ALIGNED WITH THE PRINCIPLES OF SMART TOURIST DESTINATIONS?

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Marija Cimbajević  
Vanja Pavluković  
Tatjana Pivac  
Sanja Kovačić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The aim of this paper is to identify tourists' satisfaction with ICT performance in two tourist destinations in Serbia. In addition, one of the goals of the research is to determine the weaknesses and strengths of the tourist offer at the destinations, in order to choose an adequate tourism development strategy in the future to improve the competitiveness of the tourist offer in Serbia and possibly find patterns of development between different destinations.

*Methodology* – Measuring the importance and satisfaction with the performance of smart technologies was carried out in two destinations, Novi Sad and Vrnjačka Banja (Serbia). IPA analysis was used to assess the importance and performance of 38 attributes related to ICT in the selected destinations. Exploratory factor analysis was used to identify groups of smart technologies that tourists consider when evaluating smart tourist destinations.

*Findings* – When examining individual components, the ICT tourism offer in Novi Sad and Vrnjačka Banja are evaluated as fairly low. The results of the analysis showed that Novi Sad, is a more competitive destination than Vrnjačka Banja in terms of the deployment of smart technologies.

*Contribution* – The analysis of weaknesses and strengths can be particularly insightful in revealing what is prioritized more and what is viewed as less crucially, for the overall experience and satisfaction of tourists in order to improve the tourist experience. The results of this research provide practical knowledge for DMOs and tourism companies, to understand the benefits of smart tourism as an important direction in improving the competitiveness of a tourist destination.

**Keywords:** smart tourism destination, ICT, smart tourism, tourist experience, competitiveness

## CONSERVATION AUTHORITIES AND RURAL COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA: THE INTRICACIES BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY

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Michael Chambwe  
Andrea Saayman

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Conservation authorities have recently shifted their focus towards the welfare and livelihoods of communities surrounding their parks as their buy-in and support are seen as critical in attaining the objectives of conservancies. Despite such initiatives, these communities continue to grapple with poverty which ultimately threatens the success of conservation authority goals. This paper explores the overlap of the mandate of conservation authorities and the community development agenda in rural areas and provides recommendations to improve the status quo.

*Methodology* – The study occurs at the world heritage site designated uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park (UDP) in South Africa. A qualitative approach was utilised where five interviews were conducted to capture the views of UDP's community liaison officers and traditional leaders of the communities surrounding the UDP.

*Findings* – The results reveal disjointed coordination between the conservation authority and the surrounding communities regarding development. Funding constraints, extreme poverty levels, poor communication, and communities' overreliance on the UDP for material benefits are revealed.

*Contribution* – Empirically, the paper reveals the roles played by and shortcomings of conservation authorities in advancing the development agenda of their communities. The paper also adds to the literature debate on the importance of community-based tourism initiatives in uplifting rural communities and on the role and mandate of conservation authorities in the development of surrounding communities. On the practice front, the paper provides recommendations on the institution of community-based tourism approaches that align with sustainability practices and the capacitation of both communities and conservation authorities on development matters.

**Keywords:** Community development, rural tourism, community-based tourism, sustainable tourism development, uKhahlamba Drakensberg Park

## CHALLENGES OF SMALL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF CROATIA

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Ivan Čapeta  
Sara Fuchs  
Dino Manestar

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – The paper deals with the challenges faced by small and medium-sized enterprises and small tourism enterprises in the Republic of Croatia during the transformation of business towards sustainability. The answer to these challenges can be seen in the positive effects on the local community through participation in community welfare, preservation of natural and cultural heritage, environmental protection, etc., i.e., through contribution to the sustainable development of tourism.

*Methodology* – The paper presents the results of research obtained by surveying small entrepreneurs in tourism about the characteristics of small businesses and the challenges faced by small businesses in tourism in the Republic of Croatia. The basic hypothesis that small businesses in tourism contribute to the sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Croatia is proven.

*Findings* – Empirical research has shown the negative impact of business risks, i.e., the challenges faced by small tourism entrepreneurs in their operations, on the sustainable development of tourism (economic sustainability, ecological sustainability, cultural sustainability, sustainability of the local community).

*Contribution* – The conducted research can be the basis for further research on small entrepreneurship in tourism and sustainable development of tourism in the Republic of Croatia. It contributes to the enrichment of knowledge about the profile of small entrepreneurs in Croatian entrepreneurship and to the understanding of the challenges that small entrepreneurs face in business.

**Keywords:** small business characteristics, small business challenges, sustainability of tourism

## INTERDEPENDENCE OF SUSTAINABILITY FACTORS IN TOURISM IN THE CONTEXT OF SUSTAINABILITY REPORTING

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Dijana Čičin-Šain  
Sonja Brlečić Valčić  
Sandra Janković

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – The purpose of the paper is to determine the interdependence of factors that affect sustainability in the EU Mediterranean tourist countries with regards to priorities and requirements for tourism businesses in the context of sustainable reporting, improving the economic conditions and quality of life of the local residents and, respectively, sustainable tourism development.

*Methodology* – On a sample of 9 countries, 16 essential Eurostat parameters of sustainability and quality of life in tourist countries were connected using method of hierarchical clustering or dendrograms to create a model for analyzing their interdependence.

*Findings* – The main cluster that connects the share of Tourism in GDP and Share of renewable energy in gross final energy consumption is dependent on two other large clusters. In the first are Share of people with good or very good perceived health and Gender employment gap, People at risk of poverty or social exclusion and General government gross debt. The second cluster consists of Circular material use rate which depends on Gross domestic expenditure on R&D by sector and Recycling rate of municipal waste.

*Contribution* – The scientific contribution of the paper is manifested in an innovative approach to the observation of important factors that affect the sustainable development of tourist countries in order to achieve the quality goals of reporting by tourism businesses, and in order to ensure the essential assumptions of the quality of life of the local population in these countries.

**Keywords:** sustainability reporting, tourism, sustainability factors, sustainable development

# THE INFLUENCE OF INSTAGRAM IN DESTINATION CHOICE FOR GENERATION Z: MEDIATING ROLES OF SOCIAL ESCAPISM MOTIVATION AND PLEASURE

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Ana Čuić Tanković  
Tajana Vidović

## Abstract

*Purpose* – Instagram is a social media platform that focuses heavily on visual communication, where photos and videos are shared. The purpose of this paper is to show the possible influences of Instagram on the choice of a travel destination among Generation Z. The aim of this paper is to investigate the determinants of Instagram influence for destination selection for Generation Z according to the attitude, usage of social media, and information reliability, where social escapism motivation and pleasure have a mediatic effect.

*Methodology* – To understand better the influence of Instagram in destination selection, a theoretical systematization and analysis of previous literature is presented. Primary research was conducted based on an online questionnaire developed from previous research and adapted for the objectives of this paper. The collected data were empirically tested and validated through partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM).

*Findings* – The results suggest that the effect of Information reliability and Attitude are mediated by Pleasure and Social escapism motivation, while Usage of social media it is not. Attitude and Information reliability have a significant positive effect both on Pleasure and on Social escapism motivation, while Social media usage has not a significant positive effect on Pleasure and Social escapism motivation.

*Contribution* – This research contributes to both theory and practice. It identifies the factors that contribute to importance of Instagram in destination selection for Generation Z. The antecedents as attitude, usage of social media, and information reliability in regards to the Instagram influence prove a scientific contribution of the study while contributes to knowledge of Social escapism motivation and Pleasure playing a mediating role. The practical contribution of the paper is that it presents a better understanding of behavioral intentions of Generation Z that can help destination marketing organizations to develop effective digital marketing strategies.

**Keywords:** destination selection, Generation Z, Instagram, social escapism motivation, pleasure



## FUNDRAISING ACTIVITIES OF NPOs OPERATING IN CROATIAN TOURIST DESTINATIONS

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Lorena Dadić Fruk

### Abstract

*Purpose* – To fund their missions, non-profit organizations (NPOs) use a variety of fundraising activities such as applying for public funds (grants), contacting potential donors by phone, email, or through social networks; organizing various events; renting property, collecting membership fees, and selling their own products and services. The aim of this paper is to investigate whether there are any statistically significant differences between NPOs operating in Croatian coastal tourist destinations and NPOs operating in continental destinations with regard to selling products and services to raise funds.

*Methodology* – For the purpose of obtaining answers to the research questions, primary research was conducted using an online structured questionnaire. Research in Croatian coastal tourist destinations was conducted from May to June 2018, while in continental tourist destinations from November 2019 to March 2020. The sample numbered 756 NPOs, and a total of 389 correctly completed questionnaires were returned.

*Findings* – The results of the research show that almost all activities relating to selling products and providing services, with the exception of activities in organizing guided tours, are carried out more often by NPOs operating in Croatian coastal destinations. Activities relating to the organization of guided tours are more often carried out by NPOs operating in continental destinations.

*Contribution* – The theoretical contribution of the paper show that the coastal NPO as a non-profit destination stakeholder led effective policy in the most cases but not in all. The paper's practical contribution is that it provides the representatives of NPOs with a new approach about the activities of fundraising. Future research needs to be done to estimate the impact of NPOs on tourism sector, before fundraising strategies becomes widespread.

**Keywords:** non-profit organizations, tourism destinations, fundraising activities, commercial activities, self-funding

## EXPLORING OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF GREEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT TO ADVANCE SUSTAINABLE TOURISM IN NORTH MACEDONIA

---

Ljupcho Effimov  
Bojan Kitanovikj

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The drive for environmentally-sustainable tourism, seen as the consideration of present and future economic, social, and environmental effects while taking care of the needs of the tourist, the sector, the environment, and the host, has recently become a focus of many researchers and managers. To achieve environmental sustainability, the management of tourism organizations can benefit from introducing green human resource management (GHRM) practices as a new managerial approach to improve organizational performance. Grounded by three theories, the paper aims to address the gap in the GHRM research as part of the environmental sustainability efforts in the tourism by exploring the opportunities and obstacles for implementing such practices.

*Methodology* – We conducted qualitative research founded on data from semi-structured interviews with nine HR professionals and managers who are working in tourism in North Macedonia. This helped us understand their experience in the settings holistically, thus helping us better understand how GHRM can help organizations improve their sustainable practices. We choose reflexive thematic analysis (RTA) as an approach to qualitative analysis.

*Findings* – Through this exploratory study, we address 1) the potential opportunities and challenges of implementing GHRM practices to advance the environmental performance of tourism organizations, and 2) a theoretical framework for implementing GHRM for HR managers to contribute to the development of environmentally-sustainable tourism.

*Contribution* – The paper represents one of the first studies on GHRM in North Macedonia and its tourism sector. As such, we aim to provide insight into the current situation as well as recommendations for the business community.

**Keywords:** Green human resource management, Environmentally-sustainable tourism, Sustainable development, Reflexive thematic analysis

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN USING TOURIST MOBILE APPLICATIONS AND THE SATISFACTION OF YOUNG VISITORS OF A TOURIST DESTINATION

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Daniela Gračan  
Nikolina Šerić Honović  
Maja Lena Lopatny

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The development of today's tourism is almost impossible to imagine without understanding the inclusion of technology. Not long after the emergence of the Internet, tourism began to take advantage of its benefits. This paper presents the attitudes of tourists on the importance of implementation of mobile applications before and during a visit to a tourist destination.

Therefore, the aim of the paper is to explore the extent to which young visitors use mobile applications during and after their trips and whether the use of mobile digital tools and services affects their satisfaction with their stay in the destination. Young visitors/students were taken as sample because of previous researches where there were respondents from more generations but young people were the most numerous.

*Methodology* – In order to explore the importance and participation of individual mobile applications in improving satisfaction in a tourist destination, a descriptive analysis of existing technological tools that help tourism to reach recognisability among potential and current visitors was carried out. The primary research was carried out by using a structured online questionnaire. By carrying out correlation analysis, the results were obtained, which applications participate most significantly in improving satisfaction when visiting a tourist destination.

*Findings* – The research in this paper indicated the attitudes on the importance of mobile applications in the future development of tourism and on the importance of digital technology in all segments of travel. In addition, the attitudes of the respondents regarding their thinking about the future possibilities of using technology for the benefit of tourism development were also highlighted.

*Contribution* – The theoretical, empirical, practical, and social contribution of this research should be taken into account in the design of a new tool for the adaptable and selective introduction of new mobile applications in the function of improving satisfaction with a tourist destination.

**Keywords:** tourism destinations, trends, mobile applications, young visitors

# DIFFERENCES IN PERCEIVING SOCIALLY RESPONSIBLE BEHAVIOUR BETWEEN FIRST-TIME AND MULTIPLE TIME VISITORS TO A DESTINATION: THE CASE OF THE GORIČKO NATURE PARK, SLOVENIA

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Miran Grah  
Alan Fyall  
Borut Milfelner  
Sonja Sibila Lebe

## Abstract

*Purpose* – In this paper, we intended to a) identify factors of perceived destination image, and b) factors of perceived socially responsible behaviour among visitors to a destination, in which we differentiate between first-time- and multiple time visitors.

*Methodology* – The empirical research is based on an opinion poll conducted in 2022 on two independent samples, a total of 422 visitors in the Goričko Nature Park in Slovenia. The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests were used to verify the normality of the data distribution. The factor analysis and the t-test for two independent samples (Mann-Whitney U-test) were used to test the research hypotheses, as the data were not distributed normally. The reliability analysis was done, too.

*Findings* – Results show that differences exist in perceiving the destination image among visitors who visit the destination for the first-time and multiple time visitors: differences in perceived socially responsible behaviour were noticed in the tested groups of “economic” and “environmental” dimensions. No differences, surprisingly, were perceived in the field “social dimension”. Most items forming the economic, social, and environmental dimensions in revisiting tourists are expressed stronger as in the first-time visitors.

*Contribution* – Results highlight items, which tourism destination managers can use for reducing problems of different visitor perceptions. Results also allow tourism destination managers to anticipate future needs and expectations of tourists.

**Keywords:** perceived destination image, socially responsible behaviour, first-time and multiple time visits

## DETERMINING THE IMPACT OF TOURISM ON THE ENVIRONMENT BY EXTRACTING THE CARBON FOOTPRINT OF ROAD INFRASTRUCTURE IN NATURAL PROTECTED AREAS – CASE STUDY OF THE UČKA NATURE PARK

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Hrvoje Grofelnik  
Nataša Kovačić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The research is based on the thesis that if the impacts of tourism on the environment were reduced to a local carrying capacity of the environment, then the global impact of tourism on the environment would be fully sustainable. In this light, the purpose of this research is to measure the local impact of tourism related road traffic on the environment on the example of the Učka Nature Park.

*Methodology* – The carbon footprint of road traffic in the Učka tunnel was calculated using the carbon footprint methodology. The footprint was measured in the period from 2015 to 2020 on a monthly basis in order to gather database for analysing the seasonality of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, taking into account the local biocapacity of the environment.

*Findings* – The total carbon footprint of traffic in the Učka tunnel from 2015 to 2020 is the result of an average volume of 3,204,375 vehicles per year. This amount of road traffic emitted an average of 2934.3 tons of CO<sub>2</sub> per year. On a yearly basis 4.45% of the total biocapacity of the Učka Nature Park or 687.9 lha is needed to absorb carbon emissions from the Učka tunnel. The share of tourism in the total carbon footprint of road traffic in the Učka tunnel during the observed period at the annual level is 30.5%.

*Contribution* – The paper contributes to the discussion of the local impact of tourism related to road traffic. Specifically, the paper aims to raise awareness and encourage the scientific community to research more local case studies that will measure the concrete impact of tourism on the environment. The applied contribution of the work is expressed through the measured value of the total and specifically separated tourist carbon footprint and contributes to the expansion of the database that would enable objective, measurable and sustainable spatial management.

**Keywords:** tourism, environmental impact, sustainable development, road traffic, carbon footprint, natural protected area

## SUSTAINABLE DESTINATION DEVELOPMENT IN BAVARIA: INCREASING TOURISM ACCEPTANCE BY APPLYING PARTICIPATORY APPROACHES?

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Marcus Herntrei  
Veronika Jánová

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – The article examines whether and, if so, how systematic citizen participation in the planning and decision-making processes can improve the acceptance of tourism in three popular Bavarian destinations — the Franconian Lake District, Tölzer Land, and Munich.

*Methodology* – The article draws on a qualitative study, comprising 33 expert interviews with representatives of politics, administration, tourism organisations, tourism service providers, associations, and local communities. The expert interviews were analysed using the qualitative research method GABEK. Selected findings were subsequently visualised through causal network charts.

*Findings* – The findings revealed a fundamental dissatisfaction with the prevailing political planning and decision-making processes. More support from politics and a clear commitment to tourism value creation is required. Greater citizen involvement in the strategic development of tourism is desirable. The implementation of citizen participation is fraught with many difficulties, including lack of political goodwill, and is therefore either not or only insufficiently developed in the participating Bavarian destinations.

*Contribution* – Against the background of recent and contemporary social developments, strategic citizen participation in tourism planning processes was identified as an important approach for the continued successful and sustainable development of Bavarian tourism destinations and living spaces. The findings can be regarded as an urgent appeal to initiate systematic participatory processes in Bavaria, guaranteeing a framework for a continuous exchange between the local population, politics, and administration, enabling better incorporation of the needs of the local population into tourism planning objectives, and increasing the acceptance of tourism.

**Keywords:** Overtourism, Tourism Acceptance, Citizen Participation, Bavaria, GABEK

## TOURISM GROWTH AS A DRIVER OF MIGRATION PATTERNS: EVIDENCE FROM CROATIA

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Ria Ivandić  
Neven Ivandić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – This research investigates to what extent local economic growth driven by tourism was able to prevent emigration from local areas. The relative economic prosperity of the Western Member States is considered to have had a large pull effect on immigrants following the enlargement of the EU to Central and Eastern European states. A similar pattern has been established in Croatia, where a mass exodus of the population has been recorded in the years following the 2013 EU Accession.

*Methodology* – To do so, we use the newly released Population Census data from 2021, along with data from the earlier Census, to create a panel dataset of all municipalities and cities in Croatia and estimate the role of tourism. These data sources overcome the measurement errors in previously available annual migration data from the Ministry of Interior and allow for a more disaggregated analysis using detailed variables on the age and sex profile of citizens. We estimate a linear regression model using Ordinary Least Squares with the difference in population change as the dependent variable and measures of tourism development as the independent variable.

*Findings* – We find evidence that the size of tourism is negatively associated with the size of emigration from the local area. We then investigate the mechanisms behind the relationship between local tourism growth and emigration, testing whether tourism is more correlated with emigration of younger or older individuals, men or women.

*Contribution* – This paper is the first to shed light into the empirical nexus between tourism growth as the cause of the retention of population. Policy wise, it gives important insights into understanding how economic opportunities are key for individuals' decision to emigrate that could be relevant for policymakers interested in ways to retain local populations. Finally, methodologically, to the best of our knowledge, it is the first research to explore migration patterns using the 2021 Census.

**Keywords:** Croatia, Migration, Tourism

# BREAKING THE BARRIERS: AN ANALYSIS OF DIVERSITY, EQUITY, AND INCLUSION STRATEGIES IN THE GLOBAL AVIATION INDUSTRY

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Sena Kılıç  
Özge Peksatıcı Yanıkoğlu

## Abstract

*Purpose* – Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) refers to efforts to promote the involvement of a wide range of individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences, skills, and expertise. Despite the growing importance of DEI in the aviation industry, there has been a lack of research exploring the DEI strategies of airlines. This study aims to examine the DEI strategies of the top 10 airlines in the world based on their official statements and reports. The study investigates the prioritization of DEI concerns by airlines and the types of DEI strategies commonly employed.

*Methodology* – Data is gathered from the airlines' websites and reports, and each company's DEI scores are calculated. This study employs manual coding to analyze how airline's view and prioritize diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI), as well as how they implement DEI practices.

*Findings* – The study provides a better understanding of the current state of DEI practices in the aviation industry and identifies potential areas for improvement. Prioritizing DEI can positively affect the travel experience and attract customers who value DEI and sustainability. Embracing diversity can also lead to a more dynamic and productive workplace for airlines.

*Contribution* – The findings will be valuable not only for the aviation industry but also for other industries. Also, this study will serve as a foundation for further research on DEI practices in the aviation industry. It provides a DEI management performance evaluation of airlines and offers recommendations for areas of improvement, helping airlines to create a more inclusive environment and benefiting the tourism industry as a whole.

**Keywords:** Diversity, equity, and inclusion; DEI initiatives; Air transportation; Airlines



## DEVELOPMENT OF HEALTH TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY TO USE THE EXISTING CAPACITY OF MEDICAL ENTITIES

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Ewa Kosycarz  
Dagmara Ruszkiewicz  
Krystyna Walendowicz

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – The aim of the article is to analyze the development of medical tourism in Poland in the context of the development of alternative health services provided by medical entities. Is there a way to improve the financial situation of medical entities?

*Methodology* – The article provides an overview of the relevant literature on health and medical tourism and related literature in Poland and the region. The article also analyzes the case of a rehabilitation hospital in Poland. The internal documents of the medical entity were used in the analysis.

*Findings* – The society is increasingly aware of the need to take care of health, including prevention and rehabilitation. A way to respond to the needs of society may be medical tourism, combining leisure with professional medical services. It is also an opportunity for rehabilitation hospitals to make better use of their capacities. Due to limitations in access to public funds for health, medical tourism is an opportunity for an additional stream of financing medical entities, without limiting access for patients paid from public funds.

*Contribution* – This study contributes to increasing knowledge about the development of medical tourism in Poland. Through a case study, it shows how the development of medical tourism can improve the financial situation of a medical entity.

**Keywords:** rehabilitation, hospital, alternative revenue, medical tourism, health tourism

## POTENTIAL OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM PRODUCTS IN RURAL DESTINATIONS: PERCEPTIONS OF RAVNI KOTARI RESIDENTS (CROATIA)

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Bozena Krce Miocic

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The goal of this study is to examine the potential of the development course in Zadar hinterlands, i.e., the Ravni kotari area that represents a rural type of destination. For the purpose of this study, it was important to assess the awareness and familiarity of the residents in Ravni kotari with their cultural heritage, but also to evaluate their perceptions regarding the importance and potential of said cultural heritage in the development of tourism products. This paper provides an answer to the question of Ravni kotari residents' perception regarding the potential of their cultural heritage with the purpose of tourism product development in their area.

*Methodology* – In total 500 respondents (n=500) over 18 years of age, who own a real estate or live and work in the Ravni kotari area, participated in the survey. The survey was conducted through the semi-structured questionnaire with a presence of an interviewer in the period between June and October 2020.

*Findings* – The Ravni Kotari residents do not recognise its cultural heritage sufficiently and they cannot see a single heritage element as a possible umbrella brand of the destination. The highest number of respondents recognised the most significant tangible heritage cultural attractions under protection. Unfortunately, the UNESCO protected intangible heritage remained unmentioned by respondents.

*Contribution* – The rich cultural heritage in the Ravni kotari area is not sufficient *per se* without the commitment of its residents, given that without their involvement in the presentation and interpretation, cultural heritage decays and disappears. Therefore, the involvement of the residents in their cultural heritage possesses the exceptional importance in its preservation for future generations as well as for its presentation and valorisation through tourism. The lack of the residents' awareness about the valuable heritage attractions in their area results with their slower inclusion in the tourism offer and valorisation in tourism value chains.

**Keywords:** Cultural heritage, tourism products, tourism destination, tourism development, Ravni Kotari, Croatia

## HOW DOES TOURISM AFFECT THE RESIDENTS' LIFE? THE CASE FROM ZADAR (CROATIA)

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Bozena Krce Miocic  
Tomislav Klarin  
Gabrijela Vidic

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The growth of tourism in recent years has led to overtourism, which is present in many Mediterranean destinations. Coastal destinations are usually dealing with the consequences of seasonality and mass tourism during the summer season. Consequently, they have problems with their carrying capacity and various negative impacts of tourism. The well-being and quality of life of the local community depends on these impacts. According to this, the aim of this paper was to determine the attitudes of residents on the impact of tourism on their life in Zadar. The town of Zadar is a developed Mediterranean destination and the typical travel motive among tourists is the sea and the sun. It records continuous growth in tourist arrivals. Therefore, the purpose of the research was to examine how does tourism affect the residents' life.

*Methodology* – The research was conducted in 2022 on a sample of 821 inhabitants of the town of Zadar. The questionnaire included demographic characteristics and attitudes related to their satisfaction with the tourism development and the impact of tourism on the residents' life.

*Findings* – The research results showed that the residents are relatively satisfied with tourism activities in the town of Zadar. Despite the positive, primarily economic impacts of tourism, it is evident that there are also negative ones, including crowds, traffic, price increases, etc. Accordingly, residents support certain measures aimed at relieving the pressure of tourism in the town.

*Contribution* – The results of this research indicate the increasing problems of overtourism faced by coastal destinations. These results should serve as one of the indicators for measurement and monitoring of tourism development. It is necessary to include them in the destination management of the town Zadar.

**Keywords:** quality of life, impacts of tourism, residents, sustainable tourism, Croatia

## CAN GENERATION Z IMPLEMENT SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM?

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Marinela Krstinić Nižić  
Ivan Bučković

### Abstract

*Purpose* – In the context of tourism, which is strongly focused on service delivery and a direct relationship with guests, employees can play a key role in implementing sustainability. The purpose of this paper is to investigate the attitudes of students, i.e. Generation Z (1995-2002), as new employees entering the labor market and their role in the implementation of sustainable development in tourism.

*Methodology* – A qualitative survey was conducted on a sample of 100 students from all years of study at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality Management (N=100) University of Rijeka. The survey was based on existing research. The main research question is: As a new workforce, is Generation Z ready to implement the principles of sustainable development in tourism and do they understand the importance of sustainable development in their early career?

*Findings* – The results show the perception of Generation Z's attitudes as a new sustainable workforce, i.e., the green generation. Sustainability is important to them, but they put career success first. They place a high value on implementing sustainable development measures in their daily lives, but believe that they cannot make a greater contribution to sustainability at the beginning of their careers. They believe that the key role in implementing sustainability lies with management.

*Contribution* – Many studies have been conducted on Generation Z as a workforce and how best to identify their wants and needs, but few of them have addressed the link between sustainable development and Generation Z careers in tourism. Therefore, this paper attempts to fill this research gap. Based on the research conducted, the authors analyze the attitudes of Generation Z and conclude that it is necessary to continuously educate students as a new workforce to become a green generation. This conclusion also represents the practical contribution of the work. The contribution of the work will be recognized not only by future researchers working on similar issues, but also by employers who want to attract and retain new workers for tourism.

**Keywords:** Generation Z, sustainability, tourism, career perceptions, students, green workforce

## A COMPARISON OF OFFICIAL TOURISM WEBSITES IN TUSCANY REGION AND ISTRIA COUNTY USING TOPIC MODELLING

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Valentina Marchi  
Katarina Lovrečić  
Kristina Brščić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The aim of this study is to explore the textual and visual contents of official tourism websites of Tuscany Region (Italy) and Istria County (Croatia) to understand how destinations from different countries, but with similar characteristics, promote their tourism offer to an international audience.

*Methodology* – A total of 185 web pages from the official tourism websites of Tuscany Region (n. 98 webpages) and Istria County (n. 87 webpages) were analysed. To explore the characteristics of tourism offer promoted by the DMOs of both analysed destinations, the Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) model was applied to textual data. Furthermore, more than 1,000 images were analysed to investigate if there exists a correspondence between text and visual contents published on the webpages.

*Findings* – Eight topics that characterise the tourism offer promoted on Tuscan and Istrian official tourism websites have emerged. The findings reveal differences in the promotion of visual and textual tourism offer, highlighting that destinations focus their communication on different topics. Each destination places greater emphasis on different characteristics that make its territory unique by adopting different communication strategies. Furthermore, for both destinations a correspondence between textual and visual content communication is observed in many topics.

*Contribution* – The findings shed light on the current state of the art of the tourism offer promoted online supporting Tuscany Region and Istria County in understanding if the current promotion is in line with their communication goals. Furthermore, this study provides inputs to determine if there exists synergy between the promotion of the tourism offer and the development of tourism products in the destination.

**Keywords:** Tuscany Region, Istria County, LDA model, tourism websites, DMO, visual and textual tourism offer

## DEVELOPMENT OF INDUSTRIAL HERITAGE BASED ON MEMORABLE TOURISM EXPERIENCES: A CULTURAL TRENDSETTER PERSPECTIVE

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Tihomil Matković  
Josipa Mijoč  
Ivana Jobst

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Tourist destinations are considered to be the growth engines of the national economy, and the offer of destination content is adapted to meet tourist expectations. In an effort to create a balanced and sustainable tourist offer with reduced seasonality throughout the year, policy makers are encouraging the development of special forms of tourism, among which cultural tourism stands out. Industrial heritage is a niche offer of cultural heritage, i.e., the wider field of cultural tourism. This paper examines tourists' intention to visit industrial heritage destinations.

*Methodology* – The scope of the study refers to the group of tourists who are experts in industrial heritage and have similar characteristics to trendsetters. The research was conducted in tourist destinations in Croatia ( $n = 342$ ), where there are no industrial heritage sites which have been revitalised for tourism purposes, but which have significant potential for industrial heritage.

*Findings* – The results of CFA show that MTE is a valid and reliable measurement instrument. The result provides a reliable scale to measure the intention to visit industrial heritage sites in tourist destinations. Multiple regression analysis shows that certain dimensions of the MTE scale (hedonism, novelty, local culture, refreshment and knowledge) statistically significantly predict the intention to visit industrial heritage sites ( $R^2 = 0.301$ ,  $F(7, 329) = 20.255$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ).

*Contribution* – The intention to visit industrial heritage sites was studied in the area with high tourist activity. The results are useful for further research on industrial heritage as a special form of tourism. Research into authentic heritage raises new questions related to measuring the potential of sustainable tourism development based on industrial heritage.

**Keywords:** tourism trendsetters, cultural tourism, memorable tourism experience, authenticity, multivariate data analysis

## HOW CAN ACCESSIBILITY HELP BUILD SUSTAINABLE DESTINATIONS?

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Susana Mesquita  
Ana Pinto Borges  
Elvira Vieira  
António Lopes De Almeida

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The awareness that destinations must be inclusive and adapted to visitors' requirements is crucial to tourism. However, people with special needs face constraints that reduce their satisfaction and desire to return. Despite a high number of people with special needs worldwide, there is a lack of research on the accessibility of tourism destinations. This paper aims to fill this gap by identifying physical and attitudinal factors that either facilitate or constrain the mobility and orientation of people with special needs. It evaluates the physical and attitudinal accessibility awareness in Porto and Vila Nova de Gaia, two major cities in the north of Portugal, to provide insights into how destinations can improve the satisfaction of both visitors and residents.

*Methodology* – Based on a questionnaire survey, with direct interviews applied to the adult population (age 18 years or older), the data were held in the historical center of both cities on the 26th of October of 2022. To reach our objectives, we apply exploratory and confirmatory analyses and two econometric models.

*Findings* – The results of the study conducted suggest that the main constraints on accessibility are related to physical factors such as sidewalks and parking, as well as by attitudinal factors such as the lack of information regarding the accessibility products/services and the way society face people with special needs.

*Contribution* – Accessibility plays a crucial role in building sustainable destinations. By incorporating accessibility into the planning and development of tourist destinations, destinations can become more sustainable, welcoming, and economically beneficial.

**Keywords:** sustainable destinations, accessibility, people with special needs, physical and attitudinal constraints

## THE LEVEL OF INTEGRATION OF CROATIAN PRODUCERS IN TOURISM CLUSTER

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Davor Mikulić  
Damira Keček  
Katerina Fotova Čiković

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – The aim of this paper is to analyze the level of integration of Croatian producers in tourism cluster. Study assessed the level of interconnection between cluster actors and investigate the connection of sectors which are directly included in the provision of goods and services to tourists and other economic units in Croatia.

*Methodology* – In this research Structural Decomposition Analysis based on the Input-Output model is used. Structural Decomposition Analysis provides more in-depth insights into the level of integration of Croatian tourism cluster. The total economic effects assessed in two different periods are decomposed to the changes in the level and the structure of tourist's expenditures and the effects of the changes in technological coefficients.

*Findings* – Empirical results confirm hypothesis on the increasing importance of the tourism sector for the Croatian economy. Higher share of imported goods is found for certain inputs used by tourism sector in recent years which negatively affect the multiplication of positive economic effects to other domestic producers. Trends in the integration and factors behind those trends are identified.

*Contribution* – Besides scientific community the results of the study could be of interest for policy makers and Croatian tourism associations because study estimate the effects of better coordination and integration among tourist companies and other domestic producers.

**Keywords:** tourism cluster, Structural Decomposition Analysis, Input-Output table, integration



## GEOHERITAGE PROMOTION TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE TOURISM: "KUČAJ-BELJANICA MOUNTAINS" NATIONAL PARK IN THE HOMOLJE AREA (EASTERN SERBIA)

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Đurđa Miljković  
Dajana Bjelajac

### Abstract

*Purpose* – One of the main aims of this research is to highlight those elements that favour certain geosites within the Kučaj-Beljanica Mountains National Park as particularly valuable and attractive phenomena of the overall geodiversity of this part of Eastern Serbia. Since geoheritage protects only authentic geosites, they must be adequately protected and rationally used. Such nature values should be appropriately promoted towards sustainable tourism and geotourism, which is one of the reasons for this research.

*Methodology* – This paper presents a review of representative geosites within the Kučaj-Beljanica National Park in the Homolje area. Interpretation of geosites is based on scientific, aesthetic, touristic and other values that make them authentic and specific concerning others. These criteria of values are based on Vujačić et. al (2011) geosite assessment model (GAM). ArcGIS software was used as a basic method tool to present the research area.

*Findings* – Geotourism aims to develop and spread public awareness of geosites that has scientific and cultural values and will be discussed possible solutions for developing this part of tourism. It will be analyzed what are the main issues of not recognizing the natural worth and how should they be better preserved and adequately used in the future.

*Contribution* – The main task and contribution of this study are to indicate what can be done to adequately develop sustainable tourism on the natural phenomenon. In that way, this study will have an impact on public education and consciousness about the vulnerability and multiple significance of geoheritage as an essential component of the environment.

**Keywords:** Geosite, geoheritage, sustainable tourism, geotourism, protection

## EXPLORING MOTIVATIONS AND SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS OF ERASMUS+ STUDENTS IN RIJEKA, CROATIA

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Timea Palfi  
Lauren A. Siegel  
Tina Šegota

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The Croatian city of Rijeka has been a popular enclave for students participating in the Erasmus+ study exchange program, which has led to a shift in the relations between the local community (as hosts) and the student visitors (as guests). By applying the concept of the host-guest-relationship in this context, this study explores the student perceptions of Rijeka as a study-abroad destination, the degree of cultural exchange between locals and student visitors, and the overall footprint of Erasmus+ students on local communities in Rijeka.

*Methodology* – An online questionnaire was distributed to Rijeka’s residents (n=93) and Erasmus students (n=114). Two surveys were designed to explore their attitudes and the factors influencing the host-guest relationship from both perspectives.

*Findings* – The findings were analysed from both the perspectives of the students and the residents. The motivating factors influencing students participating in the Erasmus+ program included the landscape, rich natural attractions, affordability, proximity to other travel destinations, culture, and safety. From the local host perspective, the findings indicate that locals have a very positive perception of international students in Rijeka, with attributes assigned to them such as “well-behaved” and “friendly”. Hence, contrary to some studies that showed that students might elicit residents’ negative perceptions, Rijeka’s residents were happy to accept them as a part of the community.

*Contribution* – This study applies past research in host/guest relationships to a student exchange scenario. The practical implications for local stakeholders in Rijeka are to extend their offerings of cultural experiences to international students. In addition, identifying the quality of interaction between locals and visitors has implications for hospitality and tourism businesses.

**Keywords:** resident attitudes, tourism impacts, students, motivations, culture, Rijeka

## ANALYSIS OF THE IMPACT OF LOCAL RESIDENT'S SUPPORT AND ATTACHMENT TO THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM DESTINATIONS

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Milena Podovac  
Romina Alkier  
Vedran Milojica

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The aim of this paper is to examine the key factors, which influence residents' participation in sustainable development of rural tourism destinations in Serbia, and which are related to the resident's support and their attachment to the place of residence. Authors also examined the potential positive impact of local community attachment and resident's support on the benefits for residents, which are realized from tourism development as well as the sustainable aspect of the rural tourism destinations in Serbia.

*Methodology* – The research sample includes residents of rural Serbia, who filled out an online questionnaire which was defined based on the previously conducted research by Than et al. (2020). The key variables are community attachment, resident support, and perceived benefits (socio-economic and cultural), socio-economic, cultural, and environmental sustainability. The PLS-PM analysis was performed for data analysis in the R programming language 4.2.5.

*Findings* – The results show that the residents' perceived benefits positively affect the sustainability of rural tourist destinations in Serbia. Although this research started from the assumption that community attachment and resident's support are positively affecting the perceived benefits of rural households and sustainable development of Serbia as a tourist destination, the obtained research results did not confirm this.

*Contribution* – This study enables a more complete understanding of the relevance of the inclusion of residents in the rural destination's sustainable development, but also can be used as an important source of information for defining and implementing future policies and strategies of rural development.

**Keywords:** Resident's support, attachment, sustainable development, rural tourism destinations, Republic of Serbia

## RESIDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN A NON-TOURISTY DESTINATION: THE MODERATING ROLE OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE

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Stephen Pratt

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Residents' perceptions of tourism development largely determine the success of a tourist destination. Emotional Solidarity encompasses three factors: welcoming nature, sympathetic understanding, and emotional closeness. The objective of this research is to examine residents' attitudes about tourism development using the theory of Emotional Solidarity in the context of Rotuma, Fiji.

*Methodology* – To fulfil the research objectives, a quantitative analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was undertaken of 310 questionnaires collected in person. Data from the quantitative surveys were augmented through informal discussions. While both methods were employed at the same time, the discussions were used to supplement the survey results, adding richness to the numbers.

*Findings* – On first inspection, it would appear there is moderate support for tourism development in Rotuma. However, there are divided opinions among the community. Using PLS-SEM model, we find only Emotional Closeness and Feeling Welcomed (but not Sympathetic Understanding) explained contribution to the community and support for tourism development. Recent travel by residents strengthens the relationship between emotional closeness and feeling welcomed to their perceptions of contribution to the community and support for tourism development.

*Originality* – To date the influence of travel history and experience has not been considered when examining residents' emotional solidarity towards tourism. While previous studies have examined this relationship either in a developed country context or in developing countries with a burgeoning tourism sector there has not been any research using emotional solidarity in the Pacific or in destinations where tourism development has previously been shunned. This research demonstrates that emotional solidarity can be used in this context as well.

**Keywords:** Emotional solidarity; Residents' attitudes towards tourism; Host guest interaction; Rotuma; Tourism Development

## THE CORPORATE SECURITY IN SLOVENIAN NATURAL SPAS

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Sebastjan Repnik  
Elena Marulc

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – This research aims to develop the theoretical framework and practice of corporate security in tourism. The research provides an analysis resulting in findings and conclusions which can be implemented to reduce the risk and ensure suitable security within spas tourism. The objectives of the research are to research, analyse, compare, review and critically evaluate contemporary domestic and foreign literature and sources in the field of corporate security in spa tourism; to have a deep insight into the concept of corporate security in natural spas as the managers and stakeholders of the research have; the development of a new conceptual model of corporate security in spas.

*Methodology* – The empirical part of the research is designed as a case study that focuses on the research of corporate security in spas. The qualitative part is based on a purposive sample of the leading experts in the field of security in health resorts. The external stakeholders we performed group interviews with were: chief firefighters in the region where the health resort was located and chiefs of police. Both cases represent purposive samples of the most knowledgeable informants. The purposive sample of health resorts was selected based on business ties. The analysis of data was based on the content analysis method where the collected data were processed via Atlas.ti software and manual processing.

*Findings* – The natural spas studied try to ensure the subjective dimension of safety/security and maintain diversity by providing an objective dimension of safety/security, which is the result of the qualitative part of the research.

*Contribution* – This research will contribute to the body of knowledge with the base of corporate security aspects in spas.

**Keywords:** corporate security /spas /security culture/safety culture

## QUALITY GAPS IN TOURISM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES: ACCESS TO INFORMATION SERVICES

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Teresa Skalska

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The aim of the article is to assess the significance and level of inconvenience of selected attributes of tourist services provided for people with various types of social exclusion, the disability among them. It may be helpful for understanding the possibility of separating customer groups and seeing their needs at particular stages of the supply chain in tourism (information, accommodation, transport, organization and intermediation).

*Methodology* – The survey was conducted among disabled and seniors helped to identify quality gaps in the provision of tourism services, taking into account their complementarity and accessibility at every stage of the delivery. The empirical data were obtained as a result of a survey conducted with the use of the CAPI (Computer-Assisted Personal Interview) method among persons with disabilities (n=610). The survey aimed to acquire respondents' opinions on the significance (importance) and individual inconvenience to the respondent of a number of services related to a tourism trip. The method of Importance-Performance Analysis (I.P.A) and basic measures of descriptive statistics were used to analyze empirical data.

*Findings* – The survey results show how much the expectations of people with disabilities differ from the stereotyped perception of both the community itself and barriers to information services and participation in the tourism market. The important gap related to the widespread use of modern information technologies in tourism services was particularly highlighted. The results of the study will help to indicate to what extent the tourist experience of a disabled person and seniors affect the assessment of the significance and inconvenience of selected attributes of tourist services. It can point out stereotyped perception of restrictions and expectations.

*Contribution* – The results of the author's original research are mostly of practical and social character. They can be used by entrepreneurs to analyze the quality and reliability of services provided by their partners and the behavior and needs of the disabled people and seniors in tourism. They will also be useful for local and regional authorities responsible for ensuring the competitiveness and inclusiveness of tourism regions.

**Keywords:** tourism of people with disabilities, seniors, Importance-Performance Analysis, quality gaps

## THE READINESS FOR IMPLEMENTING ICTs IN HOTEL INDUSTRY ORGANIZATIONS: EVIDENCE FROM THE REGIONAL LEVEL

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Marino Stanković  
Ana Portolan

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Information and communication technologies (ICTs) usage is one of the key elements in the competitive struggle and achieving a competitive advantage in the hotel industry. The main goal of this paper is to empirically analyze the existence of readiness to implement ICTs in a sight of the potential challenges which hotels face due to the lack of such technology in their business.

*Methodology* – This article, through researching the attitudes of managers at the top, middle and operational management levels, analyzes the readiness of the organizations in hotel industry to implement ICTs as well as the main opportunities and advantages of their application. The data were analyzed by acting the methods of descriptive and inferential statistics in order to test the significance of the examination attitudes obtained from respondent.

*Findings* – The obtained results indicate the importance of the readiness for companies in the hotel industry to apply ICT and the inclination for digital transformation of business. There is exigency to provide an insight into the state of readiness for the implementation of digital technologies in the hotel industry, as well as a proposal for the values that these actions result.

*Contribution* – The main contributions of this paper are fulfilling the literature gap towards the mentioned research issue for the implementation of ICT in the hotel industry at the regional level and providing insight from the viewpoints of managers rather than from technology experts.

**Keywords:** Information and communication technology, readiness, hotel industry, digital implementation

## FOREST, HEALTH AND TOURISM: DEVELOPING SUSTAINABLE HEALTH TOURISM OFFERS IN LOCAL FORESTS

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Georg Christian Steckenbauer  
Sebastian Markov  
Corinna Pippirs

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Forests are a “polyvalent space” of very broad significance and use. Especially given the ongoing shift towards being a “health space” and their increasing interpretation by society as a location for leisure activities, recreation and experiencing nature, forest-based health tourism activities and offers are springing. It is therefore crucial to take not only the demand side into account, but also those offering these forests: the forest owners.

*Methodology* – Within the framework of a cross-border "INTERREG-V-A Austria-Bavaria 2014-2020" research project on the socially important topic of "Forest, Health and Tourism", an online survey of forest owners (n = 150) in the projects pilot regions of Lower Bavaria and Upper Austria was conducted and evaluated.

*Findings* – Forest has an enormous emotional value for their owners. Indeed, they see the importance of their forests for the population and society, but primarily as a deliverer of “ecosystem services” and not as activity space. There is a basic willingness to make their forests available for health tourism use, but this requires compensation or added value.

*Contribution* – While a forest-related, health tourism product development deals in particular with the demand side, addressing specific target groups with concrete offers, the supply side is often neglected. The survey makes clear that forest owners, despite the common right of free access to forests, must always be seriously and actively involved in product development and implementation of forest-based health tourism offers as key stakeholders in a participatory and transparent manner.

**Keywords:** forest, health, tourism offers, natural resources, product development, stakeholder participation



## MUSIC EVENTS AS AN INNOVATION ELEMENT OF THE TOURISM OFFERING

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Christian Stipanović  
Elena Rudan  
Vedran Zubović

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Music tourism refers to attendance at music events such as concerts, festivals, and other music-related activities. This form of tourism can have a significant effect on the development of destinations hosting music events, and can also contribute to the promotion of a destination's cultural heritage and identity. Croatian destinations organize various music events and strive to become distinctive music-event destinations. In the process of diversification relative to the global, universal offering, the valorisation of traditional music plays an important role in creating a unique experience. The aim of the article is to analyse the attitudes of Generation Y tourists towards traditional-music events and the supplementary offering with a view to innovating music festivals and concerts, which can become the main motivation for visiting a destination.

*Methodology* – The research of the music preferences of Generation Y in tourism is based on a questionnaire survey of 123 respondents in Croatia, who evaluated the offering of music festivals and traditional-music events in the overall offering of music events in the destination. Factor analysis was conducted to determine the factors that influence the behavioural intentions and selection of traditional-music festivals of Generation Y.

*Findings* – The main results of the research are the identification of the most important characteristics for choosing a type of music event and their impact on a destination's music offering and overall tourism offering. The results show that attendance at traditional-music events depends mainly on the respondents' personal preferences and the quality of the event offerings, while a destination's supplementary facilities and services are not critical to the choice of a music event in tourism. The development of events to innovate a destination's offering must focus on the quality of music events geared to the target segment and should be based on stakeholder synergy and the knowledge of musicologists.

*Contribution* – This research is significant because no previous research results have been found on Generation Y in relation to the evaluation of traditional-music events and their role in the overall music offering of a destination. The results contribute to a better understanding of the needs and preferences of specific generations who attend music events, and of the supporting destination strategies in destination audio management.

**Keywords:** Music Tourism, Musical Events, Traditional Music, Tourism Destination, Croatia

## EUDAIMONIC TOURISM: ENSURING THE SUSTAINABILITY OF TOURISM THROUGH DESIGN OF MEANINGFUL TOURISM EXPERIENCES

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Marta Šveb Dragija  
Sunčana Franić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Eudaimonic tourism is a relatively new concept that has in a short time shown it can be a great asset for ensuring the sustainability of tourism by providing meaningful experiences for visitors. Those experiences are often accompanied by emotions. Because there is a lack of synthesized knowledge on how to design eudaimonic tourist experiences and how emotions may be used, this study systematically explores and synthesizes the literature on eudaimonic tourism.

*Methodology* – Our review uses the PRISMA protocol to answer two research questions: 1. What are the main factors in eudaimonic tourism experience design, and 2. What is the role of specific emotions in such experiences? Our search includes original research papers, published in journals and book chapters written in English, obtained from a search of libraries worldwide.

*Findings* – The findings indicate eudaimonic tourism is gaining momentum because of its ability to enrich visitors' lives in the long run while simultaneously ensuring the sustainability of the destination. Tourist destinations should provide pleasurable, meaningful experiences that stimulate both positive and negative emotions and offer ample opportunities for social interactions, altruism, and pro-environmental behavior.

*Contribution* – This study is the first to synthesize the knowledge on eudaimonic tourism and its relation to sustainability, by providing detailed guidelines on how to design eudaimonic tourism experiences.

**Keywords:** eudaimonic tourism; wellbeing; sustainable tourism; experience design; emotions

## THE ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION IN MANAGING CHANGE: THE CASE FROM THE HOTEL INDUSTRY

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Anita Talaja  
Doris Podrug  
Lucija Brešković

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The main research goal of this paper is to examine how organizational culture affects change management process through employee satisfaction. Organizational culture and employee satisfaction appear as important factors in a successful business because they lead to the satisfaction of the service user, which helps building quality relationships with customers.

*Methodology* – In order to test the research hypotheses and analyze the connection between variables, a questionnaire was conducted among 49 employees of the Bluesun hotel in Dalmatia. The collected data was analyzed using the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), while descriptive statistics were analyzed using SPSS.

*Findings* – The results of PLS-SEM analysis confirmed that dynamic organizational culture has positive direct and indirect impact on change management, i.e., employee satisfaction partially mediates organizational culture-change management relationship.

*Contribution* – Organizational culture, change management and employee satisfaction are crucial to an organization's competitiveness and survival in the market. One unique contribution is the proposed model that integrates mentioned variables with a particular focus on the mediating role of employee satisfaction in facilitating the positive effects of a dynamic and creative organizational culture in hotel industry. This work also aims to draw attention to the importance of organizational culture, its impact on each individual part of the organization and the necessity of constant adaptation to changes.

**Keywords:** organizational culture; employee satisfaction; change management; tourism

## DIGITAL NOMADS IN THE MEDITERRANEAN TOURISM HUB

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Renata Tomljenović  
Zrinka Marušić  
Matina Gjurašić

### **Abstract**

**Purpose** – Over the last two decades, people have significantly changed how they work and spend their leisure time. Taking advantage of remote work and lockdowns, many have taken up a digital nomad lifestyle. There are minimal studies on digital nomads in tourism destinations in developed countries, therefore the main objective of this study was to explore digital nomads as a traveller, their needs, and lifestyles in the relatively large city of Split in Croatia.

**Methodology** – The eight online in-depth interviews were conducted in Split in the spring of 2022 on a population of digital nomads residing there during 2021 and/or 2022.

**Findings** – This study identifies significant benefits of being a digital nomad in Split. However, the results also reveal a complex picture of the experiences and challenges of digital nomads affected by the seasonality of tourism, which manifests itself in a sharp increase in the cost of living (especially accommodation costs), disruption of their lives by crowds and noise, or services geared towards mass tourism. Furthermore, although local service providers appreciated the digital nomads in the off-season, they tried to maximise their income by switching to short-term accommodation rentals once tourist demand picked up, forcing them to move out and eventually return after the season.

**Contribution** – This research identifies the digital nomad profile in popular tourist destinations in Europe. It provides recommendations that could help policymakers in any tourism-developed destination to implement policies for attracting more digital nomads to their cities which could positively impact their local economies.

**Keywords:** digital nomad, tourism destination, seasonality, local community

## (COASTAL) URBAN TOURISM AND QUALITY OF LIFE: RESIDENTS' PERCEPTION

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Maša Trinajstić  
Jelena Đurkin Badurina

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Urban tourism has not been adequately studied and many destinations that have conditions to develop urban tourism are still focused on other, more “traditional” types of attractions, especially coastal destinations with predominately sea and sun tourism. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of local residents in terms of their quality of life and their opinions on the potential shift from predominately coastal tourism to an urban tourism offering.

*Methodology* – The research was conducted within the territory of the city of Opatija using a structured survey questionnaire. Univariate and bivariate statistical methods were used for statistical analysis. Research questions were tested using SPSS.

*Findings* – Findings indicate that the residents of Opatija are not particularly satisfied with elements related to city quality of life. They are the most satisfied with air quality and green spaces, and the least, with public transport and health care. Those residents who are rather dissatisfied with the tourism development of Opatija have a significantly lower level of satisfaction with certain elements of quality of life. Further, residents show interest and support for the development of urban tourism and strongly support the shift from a seasonal distribution towards a more balanced year-round distribution of tourist flows.

*Contribution* – This paper contributes to the body of knowledge on urban tourism and residents' support for urban tourism development. Results can be useful to local decision makers and tourism authorities in creating policies focused on future tourism development, but also in informing and involving local residents, regardless of their connection to tourism, in tourism planning and in understanding its benefits.

**Keywords:** urban tourism, quality of life, local population, Croatia

## HALFWAY THERE: DID WE LEARN ANYTHING? - YOUTH PERCEPTION OF SUSTAINABILITY AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

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Marija Vukadin  
Jasmina Mladenović

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Since 2015, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have represented a unique framework that aims to achieve balance between economic, environmental and social development. In the overall population, young people are playing an important role in a responsible and sustainable future. The year 2023 represents a year halfway through achieving the 17 SDGs, but awareness of this topic among the young population is still low. The main purpose of this research paper is to find out what young people know about sustainability and the SDGs. The main focus of this paper is on young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia, aged between 15 and 30 years.

*Methodology* – An online questionnaire was distributed in these two countries and for analysing the data, descriptive statistics and SPSS were used.

*Findings* – According to findings, young people from Bosnia and Herzegovina and Croatia are showing an intermediate level of knowledge. Differences between attitudes and sustainable practices among young people from these two countries are also being detected. Preferable sources of information regarding SDGs are also different, but it is concerning that 1 in 4 respondents from both sample groups are not aware of this topic.

*Contribution* – Until now, there have been frequent studies related to SD and SDGs and young people, but on the territory of these two countries, such studies are not known. This research represents a foundation for future research into the knowledge, attitudes, and practices of young people from this part of Europe.

**Keywords:** slow tourism, slow destinations, consumer behaviour, goals of travel, outcomes of travel, Autonomous Province of Vojvodina

## THE ROLE OF TELECOMMUNICATIONS IN SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS

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Marija Vukoja  
Iriana Rajković  
Dino Baričević

### **Abstract**

*Purpose* – This paper provides an overview of theoretical and practical knowledge regarding the role of telecommunications in managing sustainable tourism destinations. The aim is to determine the role of telecommunications in managing sustainable tourism development through assessing the level of telecommunications development in tourist destinations and their utilization in sustainable tourism management. The purpose of the study is to enrich the understanding of the connection between the development of telecommunications, sustainable and destination tourism development.

*Methodology* – The paper is based on primary and secondary research, including the analysis of statistical data on telecommunications development, sustainability, and tourist development in destinations, as well as empirical research on the perception of entrepreneurs in the tourism sector in Croatian tourist destinations regarding the role of telecommunications and information and communication technologies in sustainable tourism development and the level of telecommunications development in the destination. The research results were processed using descriptive statistics and presented in tables and graphs.

*Findings* – The results show a high level of availability of telecommunications services in Croatian tourist destinations and positive effects of telecommunications on destination sustainability, but also the shortcomings. A causal relationship between telecommunications development and sustainability, as well as telecommunications and tourist development, was also identified in Croatian tourist destinations.

*Contribution* – The research results can contribute to enriching the literature on the impact of telecommunications on the development of tourism destinations and be useful in future research efforts to deepen existing knowledge and understanding of destination management mechanisms through the application of telecommunications technologies.

**Keywords:** telecommunications, information and communication technologies, smart destination, sustainable development

## TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY IN AFRICA: CAN WE RELY ON TIP, ETHNIC TENSION AND SOCIAL SUPPORT?

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Ernest Alang Wung  
Roger Tsafack Nanfosso  
Armand Mboutchouang Kountchou

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The objective of this paper is to analyze the cultural values in Africa on tourism sustainability. This is due to the existence of minimal works in the African context on tourism.

*Methodology* – Adopting the instrumental variable two-stage least square (IV-2SLS) strategy on a panel of 41 African countries within the period 2006-2017, we accustom for potential endogeneity problems with the indicators to explore the theoretical contribution of the study.

*Findings* – Findings show that, African generosity, culture, and social support contribute to the sustainability of the tourism sector in Africa. Implying that, as Africans are more and more supportive, offering tips (time, financial and/or moral help) to strangers/organizations, and the diversity of the African continent in terms of language, nationality, and race strongly contribute to the sustainability of tourism in Africa through a massive annually inflow of tourist.

*Contribution* – Apart from contributing to the sustainable tourism literature, this paper is novel in its scope and methodology alongside its theoretical background. This paper as well indicates the importance of hospitality in the tourism sector of African countries.

**Keywords:** Generosity (tips), Ethnic Tension, Social Support, Tourism sustainability, IV-2SLS, Africa



## BE CAREFUL WITH THE ATTITUDE OF EMPLOYEES IN THE SERVICE INDUSTRY: ARE THEY AFFECTED BY TIPS AND TIPPING

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Ernest Alang Wung  
Roger Tsafack Nanfosso

### Abstract

*Purpose* – Little is known about tipping practices on the tip receiver side (employees of the service industry). This paper fills in this gap by investigating the attitudes of employees admits customers' tipping habits.

*Methodology* – A face-to-face (F2F) self-administered questionnaire was used and a sample of 233 was retained and used for analysis. With a response rate 77.66% far above the required threshold of 60%. The Partial Least Square Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) approach was used for analysis due to its aptness in revealing the contribution of a construct to a latent variable.

*Findings* – Results show that; tips positively and statistically influence the job attitudes of servers, and the satisfaction of employees with management mechanisms of tips positively affects servers' attitudes. Hence, both domestic and international tourists are better off whether they offer servers tips or not in the study context. Though tips positively influence the work attitudes of servers, it is important for consumers to understand that, they are not discriminated upon not tipping. Meanwhile, managers should not interfere in tip management, as servers prefer keeping all tips to themselves rather than sharing.

*Contribution* – This paper contributes to the existing literature by not just investigating the effect of tipping phenomenon on servers' attitudes but equally by analysing this social norm across several service occupations and accustoming the tipping practice into an uncovered area in an attempt to give a clue of the effect of tips on server's attitudes to practitioners and academicians.

**Keywords:** Tip, Employees attitudes, Service Industry, Dschang-Cameroon

## PROACTIVE VS RESTRAINED BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT RESPONSE TO THE CRISIS: UNDERSTANDING THE FUTURE MANAGEMENT PERCEPTION

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Zrinka Zadel  
Aleksandra S. Dragin  
Maja B. Mijatov  
Kristina Košić  
Ivana Ivančić

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The purpose of this research was to explore the effect of pandemic development on Generation Z representatives in the sector of Tourism and Hospitality and their perception regarding required actions for ensuring the business success in times of the crisis. The most important fact is reflected in a sample structure, which obtained representatives of Generation Z, who will soon directly influence the business by taking over majority of leading positions. It was interesting to research reactions to the crisis from the perspective of generation who tackled the crisis for the first time in their life.

*Methodology* – The research was conducted in the period June-October 2021, on the basis of the survey in Rijeka. The sampling obtained 122 students of tourism management. Collected data were analyzed on the basis of descriptive statistics and exploratory factor analysis in SPSS.

*Findings* – Results shed light on the influence of the COVID-19 pandemic on the acceptability of responsive and non-responsive management strategies. The research resulted in five factors: *Communication strategy*, *Crisis management strategy*, *Marketing and financial strategy*, *Readiness for immediate adaptation to changes* and *Non-responsive strategy*.

*Contribution* – The main contribution is to provide a guideline for developing tourism during the time of the crises, in order to enable a recovery of the economy in wider terms, and tourism in narrow one. The research findings are contributing to a better insight into such behavior, and provide important information for disaster managers, educators, government, and policymakers for adjusting their strategies and management responses to the crisis.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, crisis management, Generation Z, managers in training, responsive strategies, tourism

## RETHINKING TOURISM UNDER THE PANDEMIC LENS: THE FOCUS ON SUSTAINABILITY ISSUES

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Luqi Yang  
Xiaoni Li  
Ana Beatriz Hernández-Lara

### Abstract

*Purpose* – The main purpose of this research is to investigate the current state of the art of tourism and sustainability-related discussions and find out what could be possible ways and research potentials in the context of the global pandemic and future similar health emergencies.

*Methodology* – We conducted a content-analysis based literature review, analyzing key findings of previous studies in the field, aiming to propose future research lines.

*Findings* – The negative impacts brought about by the pandemic have induced worldwide prevention measures in controlling the diffusion of COVID-19. Recovery strategies and business reconstructions have aroused main attention in tourism-related subsectors, especially for the most suffering industries like hospitality and transportation, in the pursuit of a sustainable system and resolution of realistic problems as over-tourism, job insecurity, tourist trustfulness and revisitation, and stakeholder wellbeing. Tourism practitioners are also faced with intractable socio-cultural issues, like unemployment problems, indecent jobs, racial and cultural discrimination and loss of customer trust. The utilization of new technologies is expected to provide vital guidance for the improvement of decision-making and strategic planning in the acceleration of tourism resilience by fulfilling tourist experiences and promoting local destination management when the pandemic comes to a stabilization.

*Contribution* – This article contributes to enriching the existing literature in tourism sustainability studies, highlighting the current academic interests in tourism resilience and tourism sustainable transformation, especially in the face of the global severe health crises like the COVID-19. It also provides implications for future researchers, tourism practitioners and local destinations in finding possible way-out, research and investment potentials in the resolution of social problems, improvement of satisfied tourism experience and responsible destination marketing, governance and long-term local development.

**Keywords:** COVID-19, tourism sustainability, sustainable transformation, tourism resilience, destination management, crisis management

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