

TOURISM AND THE CITY: OPPORTUNITY FOR REGENERATION

Rossana Galdini
University of Calabria

Urban tourism is in full expansion due to world-wide urbanisation and internationalisation of our societies. New economic impulse created by investments in urban regeneration, and improving the quality of life, produces different consequences. This paper tries to examine the benefits and costs which tourism has on host environments, economies and societies and analyses the strategic conditions which can assist cities to revitalise their territory, through a coherent tourism policy. An Italian case study, Genoa is used to illustrate some of these impact issues. Genoa, after a deep crisis, has regained a new identity and its role in the Italian economic and social system. The paper provides a critical approach of how places of cultural significance are transformed into places of consumption by investigating the relationship between culture as a resource for identity and culture as an economic resource.

Keywords: urban tourism, regeneration, culture, environment, sustainability

INTRODUCTION

Approximately 80 % of Europe's population lives in cities and towns, making Europe the world's most built-up continent and the urban question one of the major issues for future years.

European cities reveal the problems that face European society as a whole: traffic, pollution, lawlessness and unemployment. They are not just the main places in which wealth is created and the focus of cultural and social development, however, but places where people live and work, shop and enjoy leisure pursuits.

Renewed interest in urban tourism since the beginning of the 1980s has brought about a sharp upturn in this kind of tourism. Various interlinked factors have played a part in this process: the need to breathe life back into and rehabilitate the historic centres of towns and cities,



wider-ranging and more diversified cultural pursuits, consumers' interest in the heritage and urban development and their search for things to do and for spending opportunities.

The fact that people are taking more, but shorter, holidays, the advent of the single market and the general increase in mobility have also helped to build up urban tourism in Europe.

The broader range of activities and leisure pursuits that visitors are seeking is extending what is on offer. This diversification is also due to a growing awareness of tourism among political decision-makers who are increasingly keen to promote it as a key factor in economic development bringing wealth and employment. Tourism is, in fact, an important part of the city's economy and contributes to the leisure and well-being of the whole community. It is an expanding activity that helps to improve and promote the image of the city as a place to live and visit. Tourism also provides employment and income and increases the range of social facilities. It covers a range of visitors, for example, those on holiday, on day trips and on business trips to the city. Tourism combines a competitive supply able to meet visitors' expectations with a positive contribution to the development of towns and cities and the well-being of their residents.

For these reasons, urban regeneration process, in the most European cities aims to act on both these fronts: economic development, on the one hand, and urban development, on the other. It does this by offering visitors a unique and original experience and by trying as far as possible to satisfy residents' rightful aspirations for harmonious economic and social development which shows concern for the environment.

Taking into consideration the case study of Genoa, this paper highlights factors that have helped to make such strategies successful, looks at methods and procedures and shows what resources have been implemented and what results have been obtained.

THE IMPACTS OF TOURISM ON HOST ENVIRONMENT

The tourism industry is one of the largest industries in the world and has seen significant growth throughout the 1990s and into the millennium. International tourist arrivals in 2004 alone totalled 700 million. Europe accounts for 58% of international tourism but, the fastest developing region continues to be East Asia and the Pacific. At the beginning of the new millennium, Travel and Tourism employment accounted for over 207 million jobs, or 8.2% of total employment. For decades tourism industry

growth has been a major contributor to increased economic activity throughout many countries.

The tourism industry adapts to changes and trends in the world economy and consumers' tastes and fashions. During the past 20 years, tourism - both in negative and in positive terms - has developed into an important factor within the context of sustainability. For this reason, the United Nations Commission on Sustainable Development (UNCSD) has placed tourism at the centre of its 1999 conference. The World Tourism Organisation estimates that the number of arrivals in Europe will double to 720 million tourists per year by 2020. This development involves serious risks for the European environment and the welfare of people, but also for the tourist industry itself. Tourism accounts for about 50% of passenger traffic in Europe, which has serious impacts both on the tourist destinations as such, and the areas along tourist travel routes. The local infrastructure and natural resources are often confronted with an dramatic increase population during the tourist season. In the most popular tourist destinations along sea coasts and in the Alps, the impacts on nature and the population already clearly exceed the critical limits. Three-quarters of the sand dunes on the Mediterranean coastline between Spain and Sicily have already disappeared, mainly as the result of urbanisation linked to tourism development. Similar developments are observed in the Alps. This trend is further reinforced by the constant increase of traffic-intensive event tourism, the evolution of tourism mega-centres and a general change in vacationing patterns to the disadvantage of sustainable development: more vacations per year, shorter stays and longer travelling distances. The combined effects of major investments in infrastructure and the associated influx of visitors mean that tourism can have significant impacts, both positive and negative, on an economy, on its culture, and on the environment (Brown, 1998).

In practice, the dominant motive for the development of tourism is economic (improvements in employment, incomes and exports), but the very process of developing tourism will impose costs elsewhere. If governmental and non-governmental organisations are to make sensible and rational decisions with respect to the current and future development of tourism, they must have reliable information on its costs and benefits (Fletcher, 1989).

The purpose of this paper is to examine the main economic costs and benefits associated with tourism and to highlight the difficulties associated with their measurement. Most people think of tourism in terms of economic impacts, jobs, and taxes. However, the range of impacts from

tourism is broad and often influences areas beyond those commonly associated with tourism.

Leaders as well as residents who understand the potential impacts of tourism can integrate this industry into their community in the most positive way.

The impacts of tourism can be sorted into seven general categories:

1. Economic; 2. Environmental; 3. Social and cultural; 4. Crowding and congestion; 5. Services; 6. Taxes; 7. Community attitude.

Each category includes positive and negative impacts. Not all impacts are applicable to every community because conditions or resources differ. Community and tourism leaders must balance an array of impacts that may either improve or negatively affect communities and their residents. Local leaders should not expect tourism to solve all community problems. Tourism is just one element of a community. It is wise to acknowledge and identify possible negative impacts so actions can be taken to minimize or prevent them. Tourism researchers have identified a large number of impacts. Grouping the impacts into categories shows the types of impacts that could result from developing tourism in a community.

A community will not experience every impact. Some are dependent on particular natural resource features or development and spatial patterns (special "tourist zones"). Others relate to the social condition of the community particularly the ability to culturally or socially connect with tourists. Tourism development may result in many and complex impacts and this consideration suggests that local elected officials, the tourism industry, and community residents need to work cooperatively and carefully to plan for its growth and development.

The Economic Impact

First we consider the economic impacts of tourism. Before discussing the various economic benefits of tourism in detail, it is perhaps appropriate to clarify the current position of tourism in the world economy. Arguably, tourism is the second largest industry in the world; estimates from the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) suggest that it generates around 200 million jobs world-wide and accounts for 10% of global GDP (WTTC, 2003).

Tourism increases employment opportunities. Particularly in rural areas, the diversification created by tourism helps communities that are possibly dependent on only one industry. As tourism grows, additional opportunities are created for investment, development, and infrastructure

spending. Tourism often induces improvements. Improves public utilities and transport infrastructure; creates new business opportunities in public utilities. Such improvements benefit tourists and residents at the same time. New jobs generate more income tax revenues. Greater demand for goods, services, land, and housing may increase prices that in turn will increase the cost of living.

The Environmental Impact

Another important aspect are the environmental impacts. Areas with high-value natural resources and great scenic beauty attract tourists and new residents who seek emotional and spiritual connections with nature. Because these people value nature, selected natural environments are preserved, protected, and kept from further ecological decline. Tourist income often makes it possible to preserve and restore historic buildings and monuments. The negative aspects of the tourism refers to the possibility to degrade an environment, generating waste and pollution.

The needs of future generations, along with environmental, social, and cultural carrying capacities are setting the quality and limits of growth. All activities related to tourism must be sustainable, and respect the environment, the local and global economies, the social aspects of individual communities, and cultural identity. This means that tourism must be ecologically sustainable in the long-term, economically feasible, and acceptable from both an ethical and social point of view. Sustainable tourism must be integrated into the natural, cultural, and human environment. Tourism activities should have an acceptable impact on natural resources, biodiversity, and the capacity of the natural environment to absorb all impacts and waste.

Tourism must assess its own impacts on the cultural heritage and on the traditional activities of the communities it affects.

Acknowledgement and respect of local communities, and support for their identity, culture, and interests must play a key role in the development of tourism policies, opportunities, and strategic projects.

It is therefore very important to carefully plan and efficiently manage tourism-related activities, and to exchange best practices in order to be able to conduct feasibility studies before embarking on community related strategies. The rediscovery of the value of the protection of local landscapes, cultures, traditions, and historical identities goes hand-in-hand with the European-wide need for opportunities, infrastructure, and places in which environmental quality is seen as a way to enjoy better vacations and protect the environment by acting responsibly.

There is a strong need to intensify efforts to sensitise public opinion through adequate communication and comparison tools, as well as through the circulation of information on best practices among the various subjects involved.

Tourism-related activities require careful analysis on the part of public administrations, which must be involved in both the supply side – such as sustainable tourism production models – and in terms of regulating resource use and the relationships between all stakeholders. Regional-level institutions are particularly important, since they are the public institutions best adapted to achieving the necessary operational convergence between the national/global level and local communities, and between the various public and private stakeholders involved in defining and creating the supply of sustainable tourism activities. The new tourism industry, through the creation of self-regulatory instruments, new specific legislation, and activities that respect the social, cultural, and environmental aspects of tourism, seeks to create a new code of behaviour that respects sustainable tourism.

The implementation of projects to develop sustainable tourism requires feedback and self-monitoring, in order to guarantee a more sustainable quality of life.

A network can have such a function, and it can facilitate the exchange of ideas, know-how, and results.

Sustainable tourism can help to balance the economies of richer and poorer regions, to maintain public infrastructure and consequently to improve the quality of life. Moreover, tourism can be a vehicle for tolerance and better understanding among people and regions at local, national and global level.

Social and Cultural Impacts

The social and cultural effects of tourism are to be taken into careful consideration, as impacts can either become assets or detriments to communities. Influxes of tourists bring diverse values to the community and influence behaviors and family life. Individuals and the collective community might adopt tourist behaviors. Interactions between residents and tourists can impact creative expression by providing new opportunities (positive) or by stifling individuality with new restrictions (negative). Increased tourism can push a community to adopt a different moral conduct.

Tourism offers residents opportunities to meet interesting people, make friendships, learn about the world, and expose themselves to new

perspectives. At the same time, tourism often promotes higher levels of psychological satisfaction from opportunities created by tourism development and through interactions with travelers. An important feature of recent European tourism development has been the explosion in cultural or heritage tourism.

Many post industrial cities are currently undergoing profound changes in their economic and social structures as well as in their physical structure. As traditional industries decline, many urban areas have found difficulty in attracting sufficient investment to offset economic shortfalls. Attempts to regenerate such areas are increasingly looking toward tourism as a potential method by which to stimulate local economies. Coalmines become museums, factories become visitor centres and, most relevant to the case of Ireland, countryside becomes leisure landscape (Cloke, 1993).

Culture is an essential factor for the success of a town. Culture has the potential to bring a regenerative effect on the town's economy and nature. Cultural tourism is no longer restricted to the mainly visual consumption of 'high culture' artefacts such as galleries, theatres and architecture, but has expanded to include simply "soaking up the atmosphere" of a place, sampling the local food and participating in local events. In Europe tourism has been particularly developed in the form of heritage attractions such as historic houses, interpretative centres, parks and monument. In addition to historical or heritage attractions, the people of the touristic places are seen as a key component of the cultural tourism product.

In the following section, an attempt is made to conceptualise these responses in terms of the relationship between tourism and place identity. We have to consider other possible effects like:

- OVERCROWDING

Tourism often develops around specific locations and concentrates there, providing growth yet avoiding sprawl. Historic buildings and grounds, which might otherwise slowly deteriorate, have great appeal for tourism development and can often be renovated to suit the industry. As people congregate, congestion and crowding produces stress, annoyance, anger, and other negative attitudes.

- SERVICES

Tourism creates opportunities to develop new amenities and recreation facilities that would not otherwise be viable in a community.

- TAXES

Increased retail activity from restaurants and tourist shopping will add state and local sales tax revenue.

- COMMUNITY ATTITUDE

It is possible that in a community tension between residents and tourists can occur. People will often feel stressed over the new, increasingly hectic community and personal pace of life worse. Where culture is part of the tourist attractions, over-amplification of cultural traits and creation of "new" cultural traits to satisfy tourist tastes may generate in the residents a sense of exclusion and alienation over planning and development concerns.

The influx of outside businesses creates a sensation that the community is being manipulated and exploited by outsiders for the sole benefit of those developers or business people. Knowing the nature of tourism impacts won't automatically lead to solutions. It is equally important to identify the sources of these impacts and how they influence interactions between tourists and residents, the host community, and the environment.

Directing tourism growth toward local needs, interests, and limits can greatly enhance tourism's value to the community and help create a sustainable industry. Creating a successful and sustainable tourism industry requires a right vision, planning and work.

Tourism and Place Identities

I will examine now aspects of the relationship between tourism and place identity in Europe.

It is argued that the impact of tourism must be understood in terms of the new social relations which emerge as individuals and institutions interact to commodify place identity. These new relations in turn are mediated through residents existing social relations.

An important feature of European tourism development has been the explosion in cultural or heritage tourism. As Richards notes (1996), this is part of a broader European trend towards the conversion of former production spaces into spaces of consumption.

Cultural tourism is no longer restricted to the mainly visual consumption of 'high culture' artefacts such as galleries, theatres and architecture, but has expanded to include simply "soaking up the atmosphere" of a place (Richards, 1996), sampling the local food and participating in local events. Therefore, tourism over the last decade or so has been characterised by rapid growth, with particular emphasis on the use of cultural or heritage tourism to promote 'bottom-up' development in rural areas. The emergence of this kind of all-encompassing tourism has implications for the people who live in tourist destinations, people who themselves become part of the tourist product. In the attempt to

conceptualise the relationship between tourism and place identity we can observe that it is broadly agreed that tourism has an impact on place identities. What is not agreed is the extent and nature of that impact. The expression 'place identities' refers to a wide range of social relations which contribute to the construction of a 'sense of place', a sense which enables people to feel that they 'belong' to a place, or that a place 'belongs' to them. Plural 'identities' is used to suggest that different versions of identity may circulate within a place, versions which are shaped by the individual or collective experiences of different people.

Tourism constructs or reconstructs place identities.

The first theme is that place identities are (re)constructed in order to meet tourist desires for particular characteristics such as authenticity and tradition (Urry, 1990).

Tourism destroys unique place identities.

The idea that heritage centres contribute to the commercialisation and trivialisation of culture is common. These critiques of the heritage industry can be seen as part of a broader vision of tourism as a symptom of the homogenising of global capitalism, whereby places are seen to lose their distinctive identities in an increasingly bland world of MacDonalds and Coca-Cola consumption.

In other words, tourism can be seen as an example of the unique ways in which global-local relations are negotiated within the context of particular places, thus allowing for the maintenance of diversity and difference. Whilst identities may be in a constant process of change, there are also elements of continuity which enable one to talk about a sense of place, to make qualitative, subjective assessments of what places are like. In each place, the relationship between change and continuity is different, with change being more rapid and noticeable in some locations than in others. Although the tourism industry may seek to promote uncomplicated, easily communicable and readily consumed images of place identity, these constructions exist alongside other deeply-rooted expressions of place identity and need not necessarily dominate or override all of them.

TOURISM AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR REGENERATION

How can tourism represent an opportunity for cities regeneration? Tourism is one of the most significant social forces in the world today. It also has enormous international economic and geopolitical importance. Tourism constructs, rearranges, and inhabits geographic, social and

cultural spaces globally. It cannot be denied that tourism is a terrific force for change. It accounts for prosperity in many countries. The hundreds of visitors who come do not only bring money but they also transform the lives of the locals for better or worse. They consume, devour and digest places so finally there is nothing left it seems. And indeed the commodification of landscape is the phenomenon that has brought the most significant changes to everybody lifestyles.

Europe needs a sustainable tourism to maintain the most crucial assets of the tourism industry: intact nature, a rich and diverse culture, the satisfaction of visitors and the positive attitude of the resident population. Tourism is the natural ally of sustainable development, because any and all measures in this area implying more attractive offers for the tourists, higher quality of life for the residents, a positive long-term development for the tourism industry and, last but not least, for the environment of the regions whose preservation constitutes the necessary prerequisite to such a positive development.

In Europe, tourism policy is wrongly classified as a purely local concern. Sustainable tourism operates in harmony with local environment, community and cultures, so that these become the permanent beneficiaries. All these reasons make tourism an engine for urban regeneration. There is a strong need for a European strategy and a European Action Programme for a more sustainable tourism in order to protect the environment and safeguard the quality of life in tourism destinations and regions affected by tourism transport. At the European, national and local level priority has to be given to the policy measures that can reduce environmental and health damage and improve new transport system, particularly regarding intermodality, accessibility, frequency and comfort. The tourism sector could contribute substantially to the three goals of regional policy in Europe, recently confirmed by the European Spatial Development Perspective (ESDP):

- Economic and social cohesion - as tourism provides income in often remote rural regions.
- Conservation and management of natural resources and the cultural heritage - which are the main assets of every tourism destination.
- More balanced competitiveness within the European territory - as the tourism industry functions very often as a pioneer for the development of other local businesses.

But at the same time tourism can exert a lot of pressure on local communities. In response to this reality of negative impact of tourism in the destination tourists have become aware of this and want something different. "Responsible Tourism" is a recent buzzword that is permeating

the tourism sector. Travelers are demanding authentic experiences, direct contact with the local communities, environmentally friendly tours and accommodation. Some researcher finding a definition for this process use the term of “responsible tourism is a concept closely related to the idea of ecotourism. It is from this latter concept that we can draw conclusions for a possible definition of “responsible tourism”. The International Ecotourism Society (TIES) defines ecotourism as: *“Responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the well-being of local people.”* A sustainable and responsible tourism could reduce the negative impacts and increase the benefits on the contexts of the diverse regions giving the opportunities of a dynamic regeneration process.

THE CASE OF GENOA: A CITY BETWEEN CHANGE AND CONTINUITY

The case study, Genoa is a clear example of a city in that tourism is considered as an opportunity for regeneration. Genoa, after a deep crisis, has regained a new identity and its role in the Italian economic and social system. Today the city is re-opening towards the outside world, rediscovering its roots and its true greatness with a feeling of pride. In order to revitalise its territory and economy, Genoa has adopted a coherent tourism policy. The case study puts in evidence the possibility to find a compromise between tradition and innovation, between the idea of culture as a resource for identity and social meaning and culture as an important economic resource for post-industrial cities. The city has only recently raised its head again and tried to recover its rightful role. As Giuseppe Pericu, Mayor of Genoa said, “Genoa is a city of great ferment and vitality, which is rethinking its pre-eminent role in Italy and in the world, after profound changes that are still underway.”

In 1970 Italy was the country with the highest tourist flows in the world; now it has lost its pre-eminence, and currently holds the fourth place. Opportunities such as these, however, will contribute to convey a positive and successful image of our country, and to attract quality tourism.

In Genoa a programme for restructuring the old harbour areas, the waterfront and the historic centre has been set up.

Genoa approaches functional specialisation as a more general element in its strategy for increasing economic competitiveness.

The development of transport systems, services, infrastructures, promises considerable renovation of the urban functions with a significant

growth in the economy linked to cultural activities and tourism. Regeneration programmes for de-industrialised areas have promoted the location and relocation of business investments as well as actions to improve a productive diversification. At present Genoa after a deep crisis, has regained a new identity and its role in the Italian economic and social system.

The Strategy

Since the early 1980s the image of Genoa as a place of industrial and tertiary activity has been under heavy pressure. Given the recession in the harbour and in the traditional economic activities the different actors conscious of the need to break the negative spiral took the decision to stimulate the shift to tertiary activities. Tourism was in this context considered as a possible spearhead.

Today Genoa appears as an example of urban and socio-economic regeneration. A city with a glorious past as a maritime republic, home of great explores, centre of the state- controlled industry for a long time. After a long economic crisis has managed to renew itself, adapt to the present and plan for the future. Today the city has a different image, still based on the traditional pillars of its economy such as the commerce, the port and the industry, but with an expanding advanced technology sector and a burgeoning tourist trade.

The main challenge is to fight decay in all its forms - physical, social, and economic - reversing a tendency and promoting actions that might have some positive ramifications. The programme is then to preserve the old town the way it is: all it is needed is to reduce physical, social, and economic decay and at the same time increase social mix together with maximising its assets. The programme is of an integrated nature, comprising actions and projects that at the same time affect physical, social and economic conditions. The aims are to increase the quality of life for the residents and develop touristic activities. There is also a programme that supports existing economic activities and is helping to develop new ones, together with a programme to rationalize and develop cultural facilities.

The result is that the attraction of the city for tourists has been greatly improved in recent years. The main actions are meant to conclude the waterfront redevelopment process that should start a new relationship with the old town, entirely modifying the city and its functional system. Another series of actions is related to accessibility, the crucial topic for

the revitalization of the historic city centre. The strategy is driven by the interaction between the various parts of the integrated plan, but above all by the propulsive effect that every action can have on the whole context. In such a situation, the main problem is that it is necessary to act on two fronts.

One is that of the various micro-actions to try, above all, to exploit all the possibilities of improvement. The other is to develop some major projects that can breathe new life into the system. Obviously, all the actions cannot be thought of as public interventions. Rather, the public actor must develop strategic actions, determining the conditions to accelerate the process of detailed revitalization that only residents and private owners can fulfill properly.

The layout of the city has also changed radically over the last decade. The city centre has been reconnected with the sea. The old city has come alive again. Its beautiful historical and architecturally important buildings have recently been nominated as a Unesco World Heritage Site and its extraordinary wealth of artistic treasures has been restored for the city's year of culture (2004), as European Capital of Culture. The city has also changed in social terms.

It is becoming an evermore multicultural and multiethnic city, open to Europe and the rest of the world. Due to its geographic position Genoa represent, infact, a bridge between Nort-Europe and the Mediterranean. Genoa as revitalised city is full of potential and opportunity.

Urban Interventions

The process of urban regeneration which has taken place in Genoa has seen the renewal of a number of areas through projects which seek to revitalise places both economically and socially by helping small businesses and craft industries. This progressive socioeconomic transformation has been facilitate by funding from local, national and European institution designed to stimulate business development and emplyment growth.

The most important intervention that has taken place in Genoa is the renovation of Porto Antico that has reconnected city and sea.

The programme of reconnecting the city with its waterfront area will be completed i 2010 with the conclusion of Ponte Parodi project. Meanwhile, as a result of all these interventions, the historic heart of the city has begun to beat again.

While some parts of the old city remain in poor states of repair, the new public lighting sistem and the repaving of the streets have helped the

citizens of Genoa to rediscover the medieval area of their city. This revival is primarily due to the city itself which has retaken possession of an overlooked area and partly it is the result of the allocation of European funds. In particular the Urban Program has represented a fundamental instrument for Genoa's regeneration. The area of the Centro Storico, is facing severe social and economic problems, resulting from the high level of immigration, unemployment, crime, decaying buildings and public spaces, decaying infrastructural systems and environmental damage. On the other hand, the area is located close to the main urban services and it contains a significant stock of historical buildings dating from the Middle Ages to the renaissance period. The tourism sector is therefore considered to have significant growth potential.

Support for the weaker sections of society will involve projects designed to facilitate social interaction and improve service provision. In particular, preference will be given to projects which seek to combat the marginalisation of the elderly, immigrant communities and the youth. The logic behind this strategy is to carry out integrated projects which unite the clear need for structural works in conjunction with initiatives designed to promote economic and social regeneration. Of particular importance therefore is the development of the cultural and tourist potential of the area along with the improvement of living conditions. For these and many other reasons Genoa is becoming an increasingly attractive place of study for both Italian and international students.

The Role of Culture and Events as an Engine for Tourism and City Regeneration

Hosting big events can represent an opportunity for the city to make changes and improvements in a shorter period of time that would usually be possible. This is the case over the last twenty years in Genoa. Major events like the Columbus celebrations in 1992, the G8 in 2001 and recently the city's year as European Capital of Culture have helped open up a city traditionally reluctant towards process of change and has changed Genoa's cultural position within a dynamic Europe. The city has undergone a cultural renewal which can be seen in the renovation of some areas and in the refurbished museums and in the several important cultural events taking place in the city.

The designation of Genoa as European Capital of Culture confirms the city's cultural rebirth. The tourist revival in Genoa is also the result of new identity of the city, based on the transformations of the last decade. After the 80s the demand has changed with more and more people coming

to the city because of its attractions. Genoa has also become an increasingly popular destination both for Italians and visitors from abroad

CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is a key element in urban regeneration; and developing tourism can achieve economic growth and conservation of the environment.

While tourism is now one of the largest industries in the world and has incredible potential for economic growth, it potentially carries with it significant negative social and environmental impacts. The art of the tourism development and management process is to balance the opportunities and costs for the community, the environment and the tourists. Tourism studies encompasses the significance of tourism to hosts and guests, the structure and operational context of the industry that serves the needs of those who participate in it, the expression of tourism development over space and time in a variety of contexts, the positive and negative effects of such development upon the environments and communities of destination regions, and the means by which tourism can be managed so as to make more sustainable use of the physical and human resources implicated in its production and consumption.

All these inter-related aspects must be taken into consideration for effective planning and policy making for tourism and for the management of tourism's environmental, socio-cultural and economic impacts.

Nowadays, the worldwide economic crisis, the desertion of old industrial areas suggested a new policy that gradually turned into pragmatic programs, based on the idea that improving the quality of urban areas actually means achieving two goals: citizen's approval, encouragement of new economic enterprises.

Urban regeneration takes therefore complex characteristics: in Genoa's case it involves both the restoration of the historical centre and the whole port area. What changes with these interventions is the image of the existing city. Today Genoa appears as a city that has completely transformed its image, without losing any of its vibrancy as a city however and has become economically competitive internationally through its industries and the port. Genoa is a dynamic city, not just because of its quality of life, but due to its wealth of official cultural activities to rival other European cities.

The process that has taken place in European cities in the last twenty years has features that define a deep innovation in the approach to urban

transformation. This is not made through demolition like in the past; it doesn't derive from additions, in most cases is a true transformation from "within", with quality as its goal (Gabrielli, 2004).

As tourism development progresses, efforts are being made to help the community identify and achieve tourism objectives by emphasizing principles that support community participation, environmental sustainability and cultural integrity. The underlying philosophy is a sustainable urban tourism management, based on the need to move from the rhetoric of sustainable development to locally-grounded tourism and management practices. Specifically, sustainability for the cities involved in a revitalisation process urban tourism destination management explores the challenges of achieving economic benefits from sustainable community tourism while mitigating negative social, cultural, and environmental influences.

The main goal for the cities involved in a revitalisation process is not to simply create more opportunities for the hotel and hospitality industry. Rather it is to recognize tourism as a major force in community development, a force that must be carefully planned and managed taking into account the principle of sustainability.

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REFEREED ANONYMOUSLY

Rossana Galdini (r.galdini@unical.it) is a PhD Candidate at the University of Calabria, Department of Sociology and Political Science, Ponte Bucci Cubo 0 – 87036, Arcavacata di Rende (Cosenza), Italy.