

Chapter 14

Reaching the New Tourist Through Creativity: Sustainable Development Challenges in Croatian Coastal Towns

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ABSTRACT

In today's modern world, creative expression is opening up new dimensions of business and new opportunities for economic development. One field of economic activities in which this is evident is tourism. Creativity in tourist destinations can be viewed in different ways, for example, through creative action (undertaken by destination management, residents, entrepreneurs, and tourists) and through creative spaces and creative events. Creativity plays a vital role in all elements involved in the creation of a destination's offering, regardless of which form of tourism is the focus of development efforts. Given the growing role of self-actualisation of individuals in society and the displaying of social status, creativity has in the past 20 years begun to positively impact on economy activities taking place in tourist destinations. Creativity is especially important in developing cultural tourism in all its sub-types, where it is seen as a means of animating and adding value to cultural heritage locations.

INTRODUCTION

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Creativity in tourism has still not been conceptually defined because creativity in tourism focuses on a broad range of tourism and hospitality service sectors and related industries. In light of this, a question arises as to the role of developed creative industries as platforms for achieving creativity in tourist destinations, in particular in urban spaces that until recently have primarily based their offerings on static resources.

1. CREATIVITY IN CITY TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

Creativity in tourism can best be described as an opportunity for tourists to develop their creative potential by actively participating in learning processes that are characteristic of the destination in which they are staying (Richards & Raymond, 2000). Bacon (2005) sees creativity as originality and usefulness, while Virfinija (2016) argues that creativity in tourism is a part of cultural tourism; it can greatly contribute to developing new experiences thus driving social, cultural and economic growth, and its focus is on intangible resources such as learning, developing experiences and traditions. The growing role of creativity in tourism is further bolstered by the generation of the value-added of tourism products, which is reflected in the creative economy through the aspects of creative space, creative events and creative tourism (Richards & Wilson, 2006). Creative space gathers creative producers and artisans to make a creative environment for tourism consumption (Marques & Richards, 2014). Creative environments encourage the development of creative industries. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) views creativity in the context of the creative industries as industries that make, produce and commercialise intangible goods and services of a cultural nature. Creativity can also be viewed from the perspective of sustainability that ensures the authenticity of experiences of local cultures (Raymond, 2007) or from the perspective of participative learning in the field of art or cultural heritage (Garcês, Pociño & Jesus, 2018). Enabling creativity helps to ensure sustainability and, vice versa, sustainability helps to ensure future creativity. The future of tourism development is not only about the number of attractions and how they should be market managed. It is also about the creativity of projects and programmes and the ability to bring together and coordinate sustainable development-based projects (Valeri, 2015).

In recent years, the term "creativity" has often emerged in the strategic thinking of tourism development aimed at designing new tourism offerings (Rudan, 2012). The broad spectrum of diverse directions of creativity in tourism represents a challenge to entrepreneurial initiatives in innovating and managing the tourism product and the sustainable development of a destination. The creativity of entrepreneurial initiatives in any destination is determined by spatial dynamics, which is defined by the specific processes taking place within a geographical region, processes that involve creating an offering and managing the destination product and market (Berg & Hassink, 2014). Turok (2009) notes that in seeking new ways

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