

Cofinanciado



TOURAVEL '18 / V. International Tourism, Travel and Leisure Conference

May 25-26, 2018 Istanbul

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Innovation and Future: The Touristic Challenge of Lisbon Metropolitan Area

Abstract

The exponential growth of tourism in Lisbon coexists alongside inequalities in the tourist development of the Lisbon Metropolitan Area (LMA). In fact, the remaining 17 counties, with the exception of Sintra and Cascais, have benefited residually from this expressive growth, which has been well above average growth rates in comparison to other cities and shows tendency to widen. However, high tourist concentration levels in the city of Lisbon create a unique opportunity in terms of diversification of tourism supply, construction and creation of new content that can be visited in LMA, significant increase of tourism added value, and a focus on thematic integration and innovation at the level of new tourist offerings that both Lisbon and LMA do not have, yet.

The purpose of this communication is to present a reflection on the global development of the ongoing project "Innovation and Future: contributions on the design of tourist offer in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area" (Lisbon-01-0145-Feder-023368), of which I am responsible researcher. In the light of research data, the problem of tourist experiences and challenges faced in these territories, which are strongly scarce of tourist experiences that are plural (Joaquim, 2015) as well as territorially decentralized and integrated, will be argued.

The design and creation of new content which can be visited in LMA, bearing in mind thematic integration and innovation at the level of new tourist offerings, are central objectives of this project. Cultural and creative industries and cultural heritage (Richard, 2014) are here assumed as the decisive themes, although the research is also exploring new offerings such as film tourism, dark tourism or solidarity based tourism. It is, above all, an opportunity of agency for institutional actors and local residents in the context of an ethical and sustainable developed tourism (Font, 2017).

Four major objectives may be identified. The first one articulates existing offerings in several areas in order to enhance the development of tourism in LMA considering territorial integration. This is the case, for example, of the actuating axis entitled Exploring the Cultural Heritage. A second objective focuses on the development of weak tourist offers in some territories and the creation of synergies with other territories. We include here the example of Health Tourism and Wellness, and paradoxically the Gastronomy and Wines cluster that shows levels of incipient territorial articulation. A third objective aims at creating new tourist offerings, especially within the context of those creative industries and tourist experiences that have been growing robustly on an international scale such as creative, literary, film, (Es e Reijnderes, 2016;) volunteer, solidarity (Ciara, 2017) and dark tourism (Brown, 2015). A final objective is concerned to building integrated tourist diversification proposals between themes of tourism experience and the multiple territories of LMA.

At the end, this research project will make available to the community, local authorities, companies, population and tourists, a business model in the studied areas, as well as the development of applications that will allow one's navigating across the territory.

Lisbon has 500,000 inhabitants. Receives more than 5 million tourists and this exponential growth has particularly accentuated since 2012. Being able to extend the brand Lisbon to the whole Metropolitan Area consisting of eighteen counties is the big challenge in the near future, and this will be achieved by including the existing offers on a thematic and territorial level and by innovating on the plurality of tourist experiences offer.

Keywords: Tourist Experiences, Authenticity, Itineraries, Innovation, Lisbon.