

UNIADRION
UNIVERSITY OF BOLOGNA

**TRAINING COURSE FOR EXPERTS IN DEVELOPMENT, PROGRAMMING AND
MANAGEMENT OF CULTURAL TOURISM IN THE ADRIATIC-IONIAN REGIONS**

PROJECT AND DEVELOPMENT STRATEGIES

PROJECT ORGANISERS:

Prof. Matilde Callari Galli (*University of Bologna*) Dr. Giovanna Guerzoni (*University of Bologna*)

Bologna, September 2002

Introduction

Identification and selection of development strategies

1. Development of themes connected with the Region

The Adriatic-Ionian area: a multicultural treasure with sustainable tourism.

Cultural tourism is the concept lying at the base of this project. The Adriatic Initiative, backed by the Italian government, has always stressed the importance of the historical and artistic heritage of this geographical area, which has suffered and risked much in recent years, as the conflicts in the area have raged around and about. The artistic and cultural heritage is, indeed, of extraordinary importance to European history, and should be seen as a resource to be used to promote the concepts of democratic coexistence, peace and intercultural dialogue. The Project organisers feel that promoting cultural tourism consists first and foremost in giving full value to the positive elements which have emerged, and at the same time developing innovative training courses to develop the concept of sustainable cultural tourism.

2 Tourism in contemporary society

Tourism is expanding apace. The many forms of tourism enjoyed today by an increasing number of people is a demonstration of the growing importance of tourism both economically and financially, with a consequent growth in the amount of intercultural relations bound in with the fact of many people visiting previously unknown areas. In the context of the radical economic transformation affecting the whole planet, international tourism grows by 3% each year. In 1995 funds invested in tourism amounted to 321 billion US dollars, an increase of 5% with respect to 1994.

The Adriatic-Ionian area has experienced a very swift increase in tourist flow since the second world war. For the area, tourism is an exclusively modern development, and can therefore be treated as "emblematic" of both the advantages and the challenges of modern tourism, including the challenge of the risks and difficulties experienced by an area touched for the first time by large-scale tourism.

The experience of tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian area, and the anthropological research carried out on the tourist phenomenon have shown that while it is true that tourism can be an important financial source for a country and an opportunity for many people to improve their quality of life, its development must not be based on improvisation and chance, which are likely to involve the risk of potential exploitation as well as negative impacts on the local communities, the natural environment and the cultural resources.

The search for the development of a balanced tourist industry which can grow without damaging the environment means critically evaluating modes of operation employed by those on the ground, if we are to avoid the negative effects - already there for all to see and read about - that indiscriminate tourism can bring.

Tourism activities promote skills linked to local production and knowledge but also highlight the global dimension of contemporary problems, favouring, through a direct knowledge of places, traditions and cultures, the acceptance and enhancement of the many diversities which characterise our age.

Tourism is therefore an education in sharing by different kinds of people as well as in understanding those aspects of history and art which connect not only people living close to each other, but also those coming from a long way away. Tourism is an education in what embraces all of us as a species, as well as being a lesson in human diversity.

Tourism is also a complex phenomenon: it is both supported by and stimulates a whole network of varied resources and skills which tend increasingly to combine local infrastructures with global demand and interests: transport and organisational resources, economy and trade (catering, hotels, products, local craft products, knick-knacks, tourist packages holidays), communication (information, publishing, internet) and culture (festivals, cultural goods, theatre, music, etc.), as well as education and leisure time activities.

3. The anthropology of tourism

Any project for development of a tourist industry has to be sensitive to the needs of both visitors and hosts. While the basis of a project vis-à-vis the local culture is by necessity anthropological, with due consideration of regional ethnography, careful local cultural analysis is also imperative, so that the social, economic and cultural impact that tourism will have on a given community can be correctly assessed. Much attention has also to be paid to the question of tourism as a phenomenon within the context of increasing globalisation of the world economy.

The above approach was developed by the Bologna University Cultural Anthropology team (led by Professor Matilde Callari Galli) during the course of several tourism projects in south-east Asia (Cambodia) and in the Balkans region (Bulgaria), in collaboration with G. Guerzoni, S. Bianchini and F. Privitera. It is our belief that the same model of operation that emerged from the above experiences can be applied to the Adriatic-Ionian area.

The Adriatic-Ionian region is extraordinarily rich in archaeological and historical worth, as well as in local arts and crafts, festivals and traditional costumes, dance and music. The beauty and variety of its nature and landscape do much to suggest its suitability as a kind of laboratory (for us, anyway) for ideas, innovative tourism, and for new operations aimed at supporting and sustaining inter-cultural exchange and peaceful cohabitation.

Contemporary society is characterised – as UNESCO recently stressed in its recognition of the region as one of the great sites of world treasures - by the growing need to safeguard not only the most important monuments of the past, but also the more modest products of daily life: in other words the traditional aspects of the towns and villages, the places of worship, artisan products, the village dwellings, since these are essential parts of the collective identity and memory of the place. Throughout the world, protection of the environment, the policy of encouraging local trades and arts, promoting traditional festivals and protecting oral tradition have become factors of economic and cultural development.

The development of cultural tourism is an opportunity for the tourism-interested regions to place a proper value on their own past, history and heritage, safeguarding a culture while not being afraid to come to terms with the realities of the modern world, which often appear to threaten local culture and custom. Tourism should have a strongly cultural identity, creating greater incentives and gathering together local cultural resources, all for the ultimate benefit of the local communities. But at the same time, the development and management of tourism must be sensitive to the flow of an ever-increasingly interdependent and globalised world-wide culture. If this challenge is not properly addressed, the risk is that we will resort to a merely tourist rather than to a cultural logic, thus encouraging extreme parochialism and superficial cosmopolitanism, and at worst risking often-devastating exploitation of the local society and natural environment.

4. Cultural tourism and communication

Cultural tourism is, in itself, a form of communication. Unlike simple tourism, which revolves around visits to monuments and archaeological sites, often featuring easy pleasures which are consumed avidly and often forbidden at home, cultural tourism may be intended as participation and an opening towards other-ness, through an encounter with cultures fully appreciated in their diversity. Cultural tourism requires a re-evaluation of the animate and inanimate elements of the cultural heritage, encouraging individuals and communities to involve themselves in the new tourism by taking a kind of tourist view of themselves, studying their roots, their history and their own evolution, to re-discover the true nature of their own culture. And the arrival in their community of so many strangers motivates them to measure their own life-style and customs against those of their visitors.

Tourism may therefore be considered and may indeed become a truly important form of communication between nations, peoples and continents. Cultural tourism stimulates awareness, through direct experience, of how different realities and traditions interweave. This is especially true of regions featuring the cohabitation and intermingling of different cultural heritages – and it can be one of the tools which can be used to fashion a culture of peace and regard for human rights. The foregoing can be even truer when dealing with a region that is characterised by the co-presence and admixture of different cultural heritages, and which is subject to tension and conflicts of all kinds.

Tourism today is also the subject of great media attention. The mass media obviously promotes tourism, but at the same time the representation of both near and far culture is transmitted through the filter of the concept of the journey. While such representation is positive inasmuch as it stimulates a feeling of fascination for exotic places, it often presents a kind of stereotype of a place and its people, which has a lasting effect on the world's vision of that place and that people, and underlines the different-ness of the spectator from that place and those people.

When setting up a cultural tourism programme the role of the media has to be taken into consideration, and the full meaning of the message transmitted carefully weighed so that cultural analysis is employed, with the result that a proper and balanced intercultural education is offered and the proper people are involved to make sure this is done. With the arrival of visitors, supplementary material appears, informing the tourists on how best to see the area, where to go and so on, all of which has a striking effect on the nature of the tourist flow within the region.

I. Modes of Operation

As it has the aim of promoting cultural tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian region, the project is reserved for the area of post-graduate studies, or for professional training.

The project is based on different and interconnected modes of operation:

A *Course in Cultural Tourism* will be set up, consisting of courses for experts in planning, management and development of cultural tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian area. A Course will be organised on residential seminars intensive (*Summer School on Cultural Tourism.*) and on-line teaching "packets".

1. Operative stages: contents and intermediate and final objectives

The project is articulated in two operative steps (see enclosure: Timing of the Project Events):

- I. The first stage relates to the activation of the project, its organisation (appointing of a secretariat, where it is to be held, equipment needed and so on), on-line networking of the institutions involved, identification of the teachers for the two parts of the project, publication of and information on the two initiatives, and so on.
- II. The second concerns the setting up of the "Training Course for Experts in Planning, Management and Development of Cultural Tourism for the Adriatic-Ionian region"

2. Course for experts in planning, management and development of cultural tourism in the Adriatic-Ionian region.

The objective of the project is to set up and run a *Training Course in cultural tourism.*

a. Who the course is for

Participants (10 students) will mainly be from the following categories: recent graduates in various subjects; operators working in cultural, educational and leisure institutions; officers working for local authority bodies, especially related council departments and cultural institutions; government workers involved in the field of educational, cultural and tourism planning (at both local and national levels).

The aim is to give participants the theoretical and methodological tools for evaluating:

- the effects that development of tourism will have on the cultural identity and the society of the Adriatic-Ionian region;
- the potential of cultural tourism in promoting inter-cultural and peaceful attitudes;
- the importance of tourism for economic and commercial development in the region.

b. Objectives of the Course

The course is for specialised cultural tourist operators in the Adriatic-Ionian region and will have a theoretical-operative approach, which is particularly aimed at the multi-cultural aspect of the region. Teaching will also be aimed at helping participants towards various professional specialisations: though the most typical participant will be the specialised operator in cultural tourism, the course is also suitable for cultural officers working in museums or other centres of culture, as well as for inter-cultural mediators or educators (in and out of schools).

In recent years, tourism has been the object of much study and research spreading over a number of disciplines; the Course in Cultural Tourism project for the Adriatic-Ionian region aims at involving various aspects and specialists, from anthropologists to economists from business managers to local historians, from ethnologists and archaeologists to sociologists of tourism.

3. Organisation and management of the Course

Concerning the organisation of the course (teaching emphasis, coordination, monitoring and evaluation), two levels are envisaged:

1. organisational programme coordination (setting up the work, general programme coordination, ordering work etc.);
2. Academic team responsible for design and development of the project, as well as for monitoring activities (deciding on aims, monitoring progress and validating the various stages of the project);
3. Team of teachers who plan and coordinate the general teaching syllabus;
4. A project manager with operative responsibility for the single project stages.

4. Course content and expected results

1. General course contents

The general contents as listed below relate - with necessary adjustments connected with the intensive nature of the work in the case of the Summer School- to both the Summer School and the Training Course.

The cultural perspective of the project will be double-edged: it will deal with the peculiarities that make the Adriatic-Ionian region culturally and historically unique, but it will also stress the ever-growing interdependencies of the region with the overall global cultural situation.

The general themes connected with tourist planning and management cannot avoid mentioning those specific aspects of the Adriatic-Ionian region which come from its archaeological and historical heritage, its artistic and craft production, its music and its traditional celebrations, its objective beauty and the variety of nature and countryside it contains.

The course is based on collaboration between various disciplinary areas: from tourist anthropology, regional ethnology, archaeology and urban planning, from sociology and the Romance, Hellenic, Slavic and Illyrian languages of the region, to economics, the operative abilities of the broadcasting and statistical models, business management and marketing.

2. Course articulation

Both Summer School and Training Course in Cultural Tourism for experts in the Adriatic-Ionian region include the following subjects:

- Anthropology
- Sociology
- Economics and Geography
- Linguistic
- History and Archaeology
- Communication
- Information Technology

3. Teaching and Training activities

The Training Course will be articulated in a series of differentiated activities which will combine intensive theoretical and methodological training, experience in the field and distance teaching:

- Intensive theoretical and methodological seminars conducted by Italian, European and Adriatic-Ionian experts under the supervision of the Italian team;
- Research in the field, monitored by the experts;
- Identification of the contribution that "privileged witnesses" can provide on the themes of the course.

In particular the activities of the Summer School will be organised on an intensive basis - with for example a resident teacher for each part of the course - with an alternation of introductory theoretical-methodological input (mornings) and meetings based on reflection on how to apply the theory on the operative level based on real experiences (afternoon). The Summer School will have a two-week duration, with a total running time of 80 hours, of which 60 hours for lessons, exercises etc. and the remaining 20 hours for field experience.

The Training Course will in many ways be the same as the above-described Summer School, but with more time available the following activities will be offered:

- training and self-training of course participants based on mixed and customised teaching "packets", transmitted via a mailing list;
- an theoretic-applicational individual project, which will involve structured activities in specific areas which may have revealed themselves during the Training Course and which are of particular relevance to that particular participant. This will be the end-of-course dissertation. The individual project can also be taken as the opportunity to commence a "mapping-out of potential" of the territories in the Adriatic-Ionian region, and may be specific to the cultural treasures of the region, or the natural resources, or the material culture inasmuch as it is seen as necessary background for the operators in the sector.

Visits can also be made to various sites in the Adriatic-Ionian region, both during the project implementation stage, so as to find partners for the Training Course, and during the setting-up stage of the Training Course, for training purposes and for field training for the course participants.

The Training Course will have a two-year duration, with a total commitment of 1000 hours of lessons, exercises etc. and 200 hours of field research.

Appendix 1

PROJECT ORGANISERS

Name/Surname	Employer	Tel./fax	e-mail
Matilde Callari Gal	Dep. Sciences of Education, University Of Bologna	t. 00390512098456 f. 0039051228847	callarig@sun.economia.unibo
Giovanna Guerzoni	Dep. Sciences of Education, University Of Bologna)	t. 00390512098479 f. 0039051228847	guerzoni@scform.unibo.it

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