



# Book of Abstracts

For the 33<sup>rd</sup> Nordic Symposium on  
Tourism and Hospitality Research on  
Bornholm 17-19 September 2025

## **Centre for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT)**

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CRT provides research, data, and analysis of societal development at regional level. We work to understand the transformation that is taking place in areas such as education, business, and the labour market - and how the transition affects development in rural and urban areas. CRT is located on Bornholm and in Copenhagen and has existed since 1994.

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# About NORTHORS

The aim of the Nordic Society for Tourism and Hospitality Research (NORTHORS) is to provide a platform for academic debate and development in the field of tourism and hospitality in the Nordic countries and surrounding areas, seen in a wider European and global context. The society has more than 500 members, mainly researchers based in the Nordic countries but increasingly also from further afield. All of them have contributed to the work of NORTHORS by attending one of our events.

NORTHORS focuses on the development of tourism and hospitality research and research training. Beyond the promotion of collaboration between the Nordic partners, NORTHORS also has an international orientation. It aims at making the Nordic research visible in the international arena and encourages international participation on the symposiums and other events organized by NORTHORS.

NORTHORS has a moderated mailing list that is also open to non-members. Most messages concern events and call for papers, but also information on publications and job opportunities occur on a regular basis. It aims at making the Nordic research visible in the international arena and encourages international participation at the conferences, organized by NORTHORS.

## **About the Symposium**

Each year (normally in the autumn) NORTHORS organizes the conference Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research. The Scandinavian nations host the conferences in turns, and more than 150-200 delegates from around the Nordic countries and other nations typically find their way to the symposium. Information on conferences from previous years is available by following the below link to the NORTHORS website.

## **The journal**

NORTHORS is associated with the Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism and encourages network members to subscribe to the journal. In relation to the annual Nordic Symposium a journal subscription for the next year is included in the conference fee.

The Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism is an English-language journal addressing the field of tourism and hospitality in an international perspective. It deals with conceptual as well as empirical research. The journal aims at stimulating discussions among the academic community, managers and decision makers in the public and private sector. Beyond research articles and book reviews the journal consists of debating and commenting contributions on relevant issues in the tourism and hospitality research field.

The Scandinavian Journal of Hospitality is published by Routledge four times annually.

Link: [NORTHORS - Nordic Society for Tourism and Hospitality Research \(aau.dk\)](http://www.northors.dk)

# Welcome to Bornholm

It has already been a year now since we were all gathered in Stavanger for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research– and what a time and an event it was! Now we are about to launch the 33<sup>rd</sup> Nordic Symposium, shifting from one coast to another, here on the island of Bornholm.

As always, it has been a long planning process to get everything ready in time here at the Center for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT), your host organization this year. But when the opportunity presented itself a couple of years ago, we discussed the host responsibility amongst ourselves and quickly agreed with Tourism Researchers in Denmark (TiD) that we would like to bring the Symposium to Bornholm in 2025. However, this is not the first time that the conference is held on the island. It was, in fact, also here back in the early 2000s, though in a smaller version of what it has grown into today. Some of you may even remember that time and having guested our island back then. This year we are around 175 tourism and hospitality researchers and professionals gathered over three days that will include both top-of-the-line academic content and social activities out on the island.

It is an interesting thing to observe this year that, although it has only been a year since Stavanger, we can see that the interest in tourism and hospitality research continues to be large and grow in relevance. We have thus received a little more than 175 abstracts, of which more than 140 will be presented on Bornholm. Many of the abstracts have inter- or cross-disciplinary content, which demonstrates that our field of study has many dimensions and important cultural, social, economic and environmental impacts that we must understand better. We have also managed to invite and accommodate friends from all Nordic countries and beyond, which we are very thankful for. This shows that our topic has no boundaries and that we are navigating and operating in a truly global world – also even though many of the places and people we study are often found on a very local scale.

We hope that we have managed to make an exciting conference program for you. We encourage you to listen, explore and experience as much as possible during your days here on Bornholm. Please use this Book of Abstract as a reading guide to the conference. It contains all the important information that you need and also works as a collection of knowledge that you can refer back to, and follow up on, in the coming years.

A very warm welcome to you all!

**Andreas Skriver Hansen**

On behalf of Center for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT) and  
Tourism Researchers in Denmark (TiD)

# A warm welcome from CRT

It is a great pleasure for the Center for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT) to welcome you to the 33rd Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research!

Since its beginning, the Symposium has aimed to create a vibrant forum and network where we can meet across disciplines and national borders to share knowledge, experiences, and perspectives. This is a tradition that not only strengthens the research community in the Nordic region but also makes an important contribution to the international debate on tourism.

Hosting this year's Symposium is both an honour and a responsibility, and we look forward to welcoming you all. We see it as a unique opportunity to highlight Bornholm as an example of how small communities can play a major role in the development of tourism – and how research can help shape a sustainable future for the sector. CRT is headquartered on Bornholm and, as a research institution, is deeply rooted on the island.

Tourism has always been part of the centre DNA. However, we do more than tourism. CRT is a research and development centre providing knowledge that focuses on and specializes in place development and regional transformation. In this work, we provide research, data and analyses of societal development at the local and regional level, and we often use Bornholm and remote areas as cases.

We are excited to present a rich program with inspiring keynote speakers and more than a hundred academic contributions showcasing the breadth and depth of contemporary tourism research. And perhaps most importantly: we look forward to the conversations, connections, and ideas that will emerge along the way.

Welcome to Bornholm – and welcome to a Symposium where the Nordic community of tourism research once again demonstrates its strength and vitality.

**Gitte Hvidkær Marschner**

Acting Director, Center for Regional and Tourism Research (CRT)

# The Organizing Group

## **Organizer of the Symposium 2025**

Andreas Skriver Hansen, Senior Researcher, CRT

## **Organization has also been supported by the researchers at CRT**

Dr. Jesper Manniche, Senior Researcher

Dr. Rikke Brandt Broegaard, Senior Researcher

Dr. Ditte Brøgger, Researcher

Lotte Kofod Møller, Research Assistant

In collaboration with

## **Copenhagen Event Company**

Mariella Mounzer, Project Manager

Bo Ilskjær, Project Manager ass.



# Welcome from TiD

On behalf of Tourism Researchers in Denmark (TiD), it is my great pleasure to also welcome you to the 33<sup>rd</sup> Nordic Symposium on Bornholm. TiD has been looking forward to welcoming you all, Nordic colleagues and friends from further afield, and we are grateful to Andreas and CRT for stepping forward early to take on the role as local host. Their commitment and efforts have made it possible to bring the Symposium to Bornholm, a unique and inspiring setting for our community.

Tourism is central to Denmark and the Nordics. We see important developments and urgent topics shaping our field these years: the ongoing challenge of ensuring sustainability in destinations under pressure, the opportunities and risks brought by digitalization and AI, and the way international crises increasingly affect how places are imagined, valued, and visited. In this context, notions such as place solidarity highlight how communities, organizations, and visitors express support for destinations in difficult times.

Tourism Researchers in Denmark is the national network for tourism researchers in Denmark, connecting academics across many disciplines and institutions. Our aim is to strengthen tourism research by facilitating collaboration, visibility, and engagement with both Nordic and international colleagues and partners.

We wish you an inspiring conference filled with fruitful exchanges and new ideas. And while academic discussions are central, we hope that you will also find time to enjoy Bornholm – its unique landscapes, culture, and hospitality (and yes, even the smoked herring – which, like reviewer #2, can be a bit of an acquired taste).

Warm regards,

**Alexander Josiassen**

Chairman, Tourism Researchers in Denmark (TiD)

# The Scientific Committee 2025

The scientific committee consists of members of the academic network  
Tourism Researchers in Denmark (TiD)

**Professor Alexander Josiassen**

Copenhagen Business School (Chairman)

**Professor Henrik Halkier**

Aalborg University

**Associate professor Matias Thuen Jørgensen**

Roskilde University

**Senior researcher Berit Charlotte Kaae**

Copenhagen University

**Associate professor Donna Sundbo**

University College Zealand

**Associate professor Kristof Tomej**

University of Southern Denmark

**Associate professor Christian Ribeiro Maagaard Dragin-Jensen**

Business Academy Southwest

**Senior researcher Andreas Skriver Hansen**

Centre for Regional and Tourism Research



# Collaborators and Sponsors 2025



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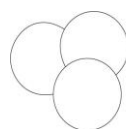


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# Conference Theme 2025

The overall theme for the 33rd Nordic Symposium on Tourism and Hospitality Research is 'The transformative power and potential of tourism', with an aim to share, discuss and advance topic-related science-based and practitioner knowledge and examples.

The theme is set on the background of past symposium themes with their focus on sustainable tourism development in increasing precarious and digitalized times. Recognizing these efforts, the 2025 symposium adds another lens: tourism's transformative potential in, contribution to and influence on transformative processes, on multiple scales and in collaboration with different sectors. Transformative processes are defined here as complex changes to society with a focus on creating growth in the industry under a community sustainable development vision.

The theme is an important one now and in the coming years, where tourism can become an industry that sets an example of, and plays a key role in, transformation processes in the Nordic context and beyond. This is especially true for local communities, where tourism is often used to take actions and deliver sustainable results by regenerating, revitalizing, and re-strategizing the communities. To succeed with this, rethinking actions and practices in the industry is warranted.

The symposium invites Nordic and international colleagues to share academic insights, experiences and examples, and together explore the connection between tourism and transformation processes. The theme is primarily meant to inspire conference participants, and we strongly encourage presenters to include couplings in presentations and discussions throughout the conference.

# Keynote I - Greg Richards

## **Transforming Culture in the Curated Countryside**

Transformation through tourism has often been linked to changes in the urban environment, such as the placemaking effects of major events such as the Olympic Games in Barcelona or London. Less attention is paid to transformational effects of tourism in rural areas. The Covid Pandemic produced a flurry of speculation about a shift towards rural destinations, but the post-Covid tourism landscape is even more dominated by cities and debates about 'overtourism'. This keynote examines the relatively under-researched nature of transformation in the rural world and highlights the development of the 'curated countryside' as a new form of colonisation of the rural by the urban.

Professor Greg Richards has conducted research on a wide range of topics including creative development, cultural tourism, creative tourism, crafts tourism, youth tourism, sustainable tourism, tourism education and labour mobility in the tourism industry. He has also worked extensively on the analysis of cultural and creative development in cities around the world. His recent major publications include the volumes *Eventful Cities*, *The Social Impact of Events*, *The Handbook of Cultural Tourism*, *Reinventing the Local in Tourism*, *The SAGE Handbook of New Urban Studies*, *Small Cities with Big Dreams*, *A Research Agenda for Creative Tourism and Rethinking Cultural Tourism*.



## Keynote II - Anders Wiberg

[TBA]



# Panel discussion

## **Enough with the rhetoric:**

### **How can we effectively manage tourism's growth in the coming years?**

For decades, scholars but also practitioners have grappled with the age-old question of how to maximize the benefits from tourism's development while minimizing the sector's adverse impacts. Countless articles and reports have been produced ranging from narrow discussions relating to sustainable tourism to more system-based approaches that examine tourism's role in a broader context of overall sustainable development. Nevertheless, and despite all this attention and rhetoric, not to mention all the lessons learned, it appears little – if any – progress has been made when it comes to implementing more benign forms of tourism. The pictures and stories of locals armed with water pistols targeting tourists these days will tell you that too.

In response to this apparent impasse, in recent years we have seen a wave of concepts drawn from other disciplines that seek to breathe fresh air into the dialogue on sustainable approaches in tourism. These concepts, which include sustainability transition, resilience, transformation, degrowth and regenerative tourism, have generated a flurry of research on how to ensure that host communities effectively can manage tourism's impacts.

Though such initiatives are certainly welcome and interesting from a purely academic standpoint, it is evident that stories of success in terms of conceptual implementations 'on the ground' are rare and complex. In this, we must also recognize that global problems such as climate change and the decline of social cohesion coincide with tourism's growth and thus require attention. Moreover, it appears impossible to come up with one-size-fits-all solutions considering that geographical and historical contingencies can have a major effect on how such new approaches play out in various destinations and geographies.

In this panel session, we want to address the elephant in the room, or do a reality check, if you will, on these new conceptual waves. Specifically, we invite panelists to discuss some of the following themes:

- Have we reached a saturation point or even a dead-end when it comes to conceptualising the management of tourism?
- Should certain places more actively contemplate life after tourism?
- What lies beyond tourism as both an academic concept and an applied endeavour? What and where are the limits?
- What is the likelihood of a broader uptake of critical perspectives such as resilience and degrowth?

- What are the applied limits to emerging concepts such as transformative and regenerative tourism?
- Should any sensitive areas become 'out of bounds' for tourism?
- How can tourism researchers more actively be engaged in workable, practical solutions that ground our thinking and enhance tourism's positive effects on host communities? Is it even possible to achieve?

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Sessions and abstracts

# The Transformative Power and Potential of Tourism

**Title**

Birds of a feather flock together? Occupational clustering and the role of second homes in destination dynamics

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**Abstract**

Second homes in the Nordic countries are increasingly used beyond traditional vacation periods, reflecting broader shifts in mobility, work patterns, and the blending of leisure and professional life. This paper explores how second-home owners in specific occupational groups – particularly those enabled by remote work – use their second homes as sites of distance work. Using micro-geographical data on over 250,000 second homes and their owners in Sweden, we investigate whether certain professions cluster in particular regions, reshaping the seasonal rhythm and socioeconomic fabric of second-home destinations.

The analysis reveals that occupational clustering may contribute to the emergence of temporary, place-bound “seasonal buzz,” where the co-location of skilled professionals fosters knowledge exchange and latent economic activity. These dynamics challenge conventional notions of tourism destinations as seasonal, leisure-oriented, and primarily geared towards consumption. Instead, second-home areas may be used as hybrid spaces – part-time workscapes that also host professional life.

We discuss implications for destination management, emphasizing the need for governance models that account for multi-local living, blurred tourist/resident categories, and new demands on infrastructure, services, and spatial planning. The paper calls for adaptive strategies that integrate tourism, housing, and labour mobility policies to better manage and harness the transformative potential of evolving second-home use in Nordic regions.

**Keywords**

Second homes; Multi-local living; Hybrid spaces; Rural development

**Title**

Building Social Capital? The role of Civil Society Organizations in Connecting Residents and Tourists – A Case Study in Rural Sweden

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**Abstract**

Literature suggests that tourism positively impacts social capital, e.g. by facilitating resident engagement and enhancing communication efforts. However, scholars have also highlighted negative effects, especially when interactions between tourists and residents are negative, which can lead to conflicts and concerns. Despite these perspectives, limited research has explored the relationship between different aspects of tourism and social capital in destination communities and especially the role of civil society. The mechanisms that transform practices into relationships between residents and tourists are even described as a mystery (Fan 2023; Moscardo et al. 2017).

Civil society organizations (CSOs) are recognized as arenas where social capital and trust are developed by connecting people. However, it is unclear what function CSOs serve in promoting social capital by connecting residents and tourists. Furthermore, there is a lack of knowledge about the conditions enabling CSOs to build bridges between residents and tourists (Fan 2023; Edwards 2015 et al.). The purpose of this paper is to investigate what functions CSOs serve in promoting social capital by facilitating relationships between residents and tourists in rural destination communities.

To explore this, we use data collected via a survey sent to representatives of CSOs in two rural municipalities in Sweden: Malung-Sälen and Älvdalen. These municipalities have few inhabitants over a large area, and research indicates that membership in CSOs is often more extensive in such areas (Lundåsen 2022). Furthermore, Malung-Sälen and Älvdalen are known for extensive tourism and many second homeowners. This makes them most likely cases for studying the relationship between tourists, residents, CSOs and social capital in rural destination communities, and therefore suitable for falsification (Flyvbjerg 2006). In other words: If social capital is not affected by this relationship in these areas, where tourism plays a big part, it is likely to have a small influence on social capital in rural destination communities in a Swedish context. Preliminary results indicate that CSOs have an important role to play in place development in this context.

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**Keywords**

Tourism; Civil Society Organizations

**Title**

Living Labs in Tourism Research: Pathways to Sustainable Transformation through Innovation and Community Engagement

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**Abstract**

Living Labs have the ability to play a pivotal role in the transformation of the tourism industry. These transdisciplinary research and development facilities connect applied science with local communities to collaboratively work on future-oriented solutions. As catalysts for change, Living Labs initiate and drive transformative processes through continuous dialogue and engagement.

Many important research questions and problems that impact various stakeholders beyond the scientific sphere remain unnoticed by researchers. This gap is largely due to the considerable access barriers that prevent external parties from connecting with scientists. Living Labs can serve as a method in themselves for participatory action, providing a collaborative platform where diverse stakeholders can actively engage in shaping research directions and addressing pressing issues.

Living Labs promote innovation by providing a platform for developing and testing new ideas and technologies in real-world settings (Bichler & Pikkemaat, 2024). This approach ensures that the needs and desires of residents are considered, fostering acceptance and support for tourism projects. The interdisciplinary collaboration facilitated by Living Labs brings together various sectors, including academia, industry, and government, leading to holistic solutions that address multiple aspects of sustainable development.

Living Labs emphasize the systematic measurement of experiences through empirical social research, facilitating evidence-based decision-making and the identification of transferable best practices (Dekker et al., 2020). They also function as educational platforms, promoting awareness of sustainable tourism and practices (Jernsand, 2021), and offer dynamic learning environments in higher education by incorporating practical problem-solving into academic curricula (Koens et al., 2024).

By incorporating modern technologies, Living Labs generate excellent scientific insights that contribute to the sustainable development of local communities (Lapointe et al., 2021). They support the creation of innovative products, services, and strategies in leisure, recreation, well-being, and tourism, significantly enhancing the local work, economic, cultural, vacation, and living environment.

One notably new example is the TIZIO Lab, which focuses on the transformative power of tourism. It acts as a lighthouse project in rural areas near the Alps, which is currently unique in this form in Germany.

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## Keywords

Living Labs; Innovation; Sustainable Development; Community Engagement; Stakeholder participation

**Title**

Exploring the dynamic relationship between destination branding and social sustainability: case Salla - in the middle of nowhere

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**Abstract**

The tourism industry is one of the fastest-growing sectors in the world, and its impacts extend widely across our society and environment. Despite the fact that many of the tourism destinations and organizations are focused on developing sustainable tourism, the most significant efforts are still primarily directed towards ecological sustainability. Other aspects of sustainability, such as social sustainability, often receive less attention, which has led to partly uncontrolled growth of tourism, the occurrence of unethical practices, and increasing resistance towards the tourism industry among local communities.

While the concepts of destination branding and sustainable tourism, as well as corporate social responsibility have been actively studied, social sustainability in its relationship to destination branding still remains less explored in academic research. As tourism expands, the impact especially on local communities becomes increasingly significant. This research therefore aims to address the research gap in understanding how a destination's brand can be leveraged to promote social sustainability by fostering stronger community relations, ensuring the local community's welfare and resilience, and at the same time maintaining long-term image and competitiveness for the brand.

The research is conducted in the context of Salla, located in Eastern Lapland, which is known for its efforts in promoting sustainable tourism. Salla is a small and remote tourism destination, where the role of the local community and culture are strong. The chosen research method is action research, with the researcher playing an active role at the center of both the research and the development work involved. The research data will be gathered from the brand's key stakeholders, including the local community, representatives of the municipality, local tourism association, tour operators, tourism companies, employees, and tourists. Using a diverse combination of qualitative methods, such as interviews, focus groups, workshops and benchmarking trips ensures a comprehensive understanding of the topic from multiple perspectives.

The findings of the research are expected to provide scientifically and practically significant and valuable insights that can be widely applied in the tourism industry within destinations and companies aiming to enhance their brand while promoting social sustainability in the area.

**Keywords**

Social sustainability; Destination branding; Brand co-creation; Community welfare; Community resilience

# Tourism Workforce and Employment

Title

Putting local food on the menu – a chef perspective

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**Abstract**

This study aims to provide a more detailed evaluation of local food product supply by capturing the extent to which, if any, challenges and barriers exist that prohibit restaurant providers in Ireland from engaging with a sustainable food tourism ambition in their menu design. Despite growing interest in food and tourism and its role in enhancing destination identity, limited research has explored the operational constraints that impact restaurant chefs' ability and desire to offer authentic, local dishes. Through semi-structured interviews with industry chefs in Limerick, Ireland, this qualitative study adopted a purposive sampling technique to identify interview participants for this preliminary study. Senior restaurant chefs were deemed an appropriate group as they are key decision makers in food sourcing, purchasing and menu development. Results reveal that product attributes like quality and taste are key determinants in food sourcing decisions, while a reliable, cost-effective and consistent supply remains a critical need for Limerick based restaurants.

Findings indicate a lack of distinct regional cuisine identity in Limerick, compounded by widespread menu standardisation and persistent skilled staffing challenges—exacerbated by the Covid-19 pandemic and ongoing operational issues like low wages, unsociable working hours, inadequate compensation and romanticization of the restaurant industry. Additionally, the importance of food miles, traceability and transparency were indicated. Notwithstanding such challenges chefs also emphasized their commitment to local food and the broader social benefits of supporting local suppliers, such as community empowerment and economic resilience while underlining the importance of telling the story of food producers and growing consumer awareness of food sustainability. While the research is limited in scope and generalisability due to its qualitative design and small sample size, it provides valuable insights into the complex dynamics between local food supply and menu design. The study underscores the need for systemic improvements if the restaurant sector is to fully embrace authentic local foods in their menu design and suggests directions for future research to strengthen local food networks and regional tourism development.

**Keywords**

Local; Food; Chefs; Restaurants; Menus

**Title**

Sustainable Tourism Destination Management Training Needs Analysis

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**Abstract**

As part of a wider 3-year Erasmus+ study involving 12 partners across 5 EU countries, this paper captures the training needs for sustainable tourism destination management from the perspectives of new and existing tourism destination practitioners and students. A dedicated online questionnaire was administered via a purposive sample of tourism destination managers, employees and students across 5 partner EU countries.

Drawing on the dataset which comprised 258 responses, a training needs analysis (TNA) was developed which subsequently informed the development of a high-quality, unique, and inclusive training program dedicated to the innovative professional practice of sustainable tourism destination management. The questionnaire analysis signals that while awareness of sustainable tourism among respondents was high, there is an urgent need to equip tourism practitioners with relevant skills. More specifically, the training needs analysis ascertained that a combination of traditional 'soft' skills including effective communication, networking and relationship building practical industry 'specific skills' such as sustainable destination management tools, corporate social responsibility, social and environmental measurement techniques and the development of marketing, information communication technologies, governance and project management acumen are required. Additionally, to relieve the demands of long unsocial hours, seasonality and personal interactions which typically characterize tourism employment, a blended approach to delivery which offers the flexibility of online and personal contact of face-to-face was desirable.

Collectively, results indicate that the provision of sustainable destination management program tailored to the needs of stakeholders was deemed a fundamental step forward in navigating the complexities of sustainable tourism. These results align to previous TNA studies and point to the ongoing need for sustainable tourism training for tourism practitioners. Such training should seek to simultaneously equip learners with both industry specific practical 'know how' and soft skills while adopting a flexible, blended, 'hands on' delivery. These findings informed the design and delivery of the WeNaTour sustainable tourism destination management program which priorities company welfare, nature and tourism.

**Keywords**

Sustainable Tourism, Destination Management

**Title**

The Situated Performance of Emotional Labour: Insights from Swedish Food and Drink Service

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**Abstract**

Emotional labour, defined as the regulation of feelings and expressions to meet organizational display rules, is a core component of hospitality labour. Existing research has highlighted the expectation for front-line workers to perform prescribed emotions during service hours. However, there is less focus on the nuanced, situated performance of emotional labour as it unfolds within specific contexts. Furthermore, the geographical dimensions of hospitality spaces and their relationship to embodied performance like emotional labour remain relatively under-researched from a geographical perspective

This paper examines the dynamic and contextual nature of emotional labour performance among front-line food and drink service workers in Sweden, focusing on how this performance is influenced by spatial, relational, and temporal factors within the work environment.

Drawing on qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 12 front-line hospitality employees, this study explores their lived experiences and understandings of emotional labour in their daily work, including their navigation of physical space, relationships, and time.

Consistent with prior research, findings indicate that workers are expected to perform positive emotional displays. However, the study reveals this performance is significantly contingent. Emotional labour performance varies spatially, with workers reporting relaxing their emotional display in back-of-house areas, distinct from customer-facing zones. Performance is also relationally dependent, shaped by the worker's relationship with superiors. Finally, it is temporally contingent, becoming harder to sustain as employees experience fatigue late at night.

These findings argue for a more nuanced understanding of emotional labour as a fluid and contingent practice, deeply embedded in the specific spatial, relational, and temporal characteristics of the service environment. By illustrating how emotional performance shifts, the study moves beyond a fixed view to see it as an actively negotiated practice. This offers a contribution to the conceptualization of hospitality spaces from a geographical standpoint, demonstrating how these environments are actively shaped through emotional displays and underscoring the need for further geographical research into lived service spaces.

**Keywords**

Emotional Labour; Hospitality Spaces; Geography; Interviews; Sweden

**Title**

Retention and Career Continuation of Skilled Seasonal Workers: A Qualitative Study on Ski Instructors

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**Abstract**

Ski instructors are a unique group of skilled seasonal workers whose profession is inherently tied to seasonality. Unlike workers who may choose seasonal employment as a temporary phase, ski instructors' entire careers depend on the ability and willingness to return to seasonal work year after year. If they stop working seasonally, their profession effectively comes to an end. Despite this, little research has examined the retention of skilled seasonal workers from the perspective of the workers themselves, particularly in relation to their long-term career commitment, personal resources, and external challenges.

This PhD study explores the retention and career continuation of ski instructors through three key questions: (1) What organizational and contextual factors influence retention decisions among ski instructors? (2) How do ski instructors demonstrate resilience and maintain their career commitment during major disruptions, such as crises like COVID-19? (3) What role do initial motivations and ongoing passions play in the long-term career commitment of ski instructors? By focusing on the perspectives of ski instructors, the study examines how personal motivation, resilience, and adaptability shape their ability to sustain a career in seasonal work. It also considers external challenges, such as global crises, which have had significant effects on seasonal employment.

The research is conducted as a qualitative study using semi-structured interviews, allowing for a detailed exploration of the experiences of ski instructors across different career stages. By exploring the experiences and stories of both those who have remained in the profession and those who have left, the study provides insights into the individual and contextual factors that support or hinder career continuation. The findings contribute to a deeper understanding of what drives career continuation in seasonal tourism professions and highlight the role of intrinsic motivation, resilience, and external conditions in shaping long-term career trajectories.

**Keywords**

Ski instructor retention; Seasonal career continuation; Resilience in seasonal work; Motivation in seasonal career

# Risk, Recovery and Resilience

**Title**

Remote effects of terrorism on tourists' notions of risk and safety

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**Abstract**

Tourism has grown substantially for a long period of time and tourists' interests have shifted to becoming more individual and adventurous. What was once portrayed as tourism is today part of people's everyday life. Tourism is more susceptible than before. As global activity is growing, so is the number and geographical range of terrorist attacks. This is true for specific periods, as in the early 1970's, and after 2001. In parallel to risk expansion comes an increasing awareness and attention to risk. This means that one would usually conceive people as thinking more of the risks that exist. But the understanding of risk in tourism research is uneven. This is surprising, as the concept of risk is inherent to the concept of travel. There is an abundance of research contribution on this – however usually without a direct focus on the meaning of the term risk. While risk can be measured in objective terms, this contribution is about the assumptions and meanings of risk.

We have conducted semi-structured interviews with people who consider themselves as common travelers. We asked about people's views on risk, safety, and terrorism. We have looked beyond travel patterns, intending to understand shared basic assumptions behind individuals' travel behavior. The qualitative approach is motivated by our intention to understand people's reasoning about their attitudes.

The general pattern in previous research is that terrorist attacks entail short recovery periods. This assumption is strengthened in this study. However, we argue that physical hazards are comprehended as more risk than terrorism itself. We also claim that terrorist attacks to some degree also bring an increasing awareness and attention to risk, but not at the expense of the awareness of ordinary and more probable hazards, such as traffic accidents.

Empirically, terrorism has not been related to risk by the participants of this study. Instead, it has been linked to matters of inconvenience and respect. One ought to avoid terrorist attacks not primarily because they bring suffering, but because travelling is becoming inconvenient. Security checks have become more time-consuming, and other inconveniences have made travel less fun. Another reason for avoiding travel is the feeling of respect. If people are suffering, tourists should not be travelling to such places, disturbing the grief. For these reasons, it is better to wait until the situation has calmed down.

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**Keywords**

Risk; Terrorism; Tourism

## **Title**

A warmer climate, loss of permafrost, glaciers and snow fields: the adaptive capacity of Norwegian mountain tourism

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## **Abstract**

Mountain tourism is a growing industry, generating an increase in human activity in an environment with perennial snow and ice in the form of permafrost, snow fields and glaciers. This is an environment that is particularly prone to impacts of a warming climate, such as landscape changes and geohazards.

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) describes climate risk as a function of hazards, exposure and vulnerability. In Norwegian high mountains, impacts of a changing climate is increasingly being experienced. Simultaneously, the tourism industry is also changing, with more tourist traffic and new types of tourists in the mountains with different experience levels, preferences and behaviour patterns. Thus, the climate change induced hazards are increasing as the same time as exposures caused by increased tourism volumes, and vulnerability, caused by changing tourist segments, are increasing.

While increased risks in nature-based tourism due to climate change have been reported internationally (Mourey et al., 2019; Raveland & Deline, 2011), similar consequences have not been observed in Norway. This study has investigated how tourism stakeholders in three regions of the Jotunheimen mountain region in Norway perceive changes and risks due to climate change. We interviewed key stakeholders and people who have worked as guides in the Jotunheimen mountain region over an extended time periods (several decades), to get their perceptions of the changes taking place.

We employ the IPCC's framework for understanding climate change risks (2022) and the concept of adaptive capacity as an actor or system ability to cope with adverse effects of climate change (Pörtner et al., 2022) as analytical frameworks.

Preliminary findings include that climate change is experienced in all three mountain regions, with tourism stakeholders continuously making adaptive measures. Still, climate change cannot be said to increase risks at the same levels as in the European Alps. Less predictable weather, more intense rain and glacier retreat leaving big areas with slippery smooth rock are seen as the biggest threat to safety. The increase in exposure due to more people in the mountains with various levels of competencies is also a concern, particularly in the shoulder seasons when the weather is most unpredictable.

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**Keywords**

Climate change; Mountain tourism; Risk; Adaptation

**Title**

Extreme Weather and Tourism: Developing Indicators to Evaluate Economic Impacts and Vulnerabilities in Denmark

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**Abstract**

With this study, we sought to understand the exposure of Danish municipalities' tourism economies to future extreme weather events, identify which municipalities are most at risk due to their combined tourism dependence and susceptibility, and determine whether areas within the same geographical tourism typology experience similar challenges. To address this, we developed two innovative indicators: the Tourism Extreme Weather Exposure Index (TEWEI) and the Total Tourism Weather Exposure Index (TTWEI). By integrating projected climate data from the Danish Meteorological Institute with comprehensive Tourism Satellite Accounts, we created these indices to evaluate the susceptibility of Denmark's local tourism sector to extreme weather conditions.

The TEWEI assesses the relative vulnerability of specific areas, revealing that while all municipalities in Denmark exhibit some degree of economic and social vulnerability to extreme weather events, islands and coastal municipalities with high coastline-to-area ratios are particularly susceptible to extreme weather events that jeopardize tourism-related livelihoods. Conversely, the TTWEI measures the overall economic impact in terms of absolute employment figures, demonstrating that while urban agglomerations around major cities (e.g., Copenhagen, Aarhus) might experience higher absolute losses in tourism earnings, local livelihoods in rural and island areas are disproportionately at risk.

Our research also uncovers significant disparities within traditional tourism typologies, indicating that even regions with similar characteristics experience markedly different types of extreme weather. Thus, even among similar regions, differences in exposure necessitate location-sensitive adaptation measures. Projected increases in extreme weather occurrences and the potential for rising tourism demand in northern coastal zones underscore the urgency of these efforts. We argue that effective mitigation requires national decision-makers to allocate resources and establish flexible frameworks that empower local stakeholders to develop tailored adaptation strategies suited to their specific vulnerabilities.

The indices offer a structured, scalable framework for conceptualizing and assessing

tourism dependency and climate risk that can be developed, transferred, and tailored to other destinations.

**Keywords**

Extreme Weather Exposure; Tourism Vulnerability; Climate Risk Assessment; Adaptation Strategies; Economic Impact

**Title**

Food, nature-based tourism, and resilience in rural Sweden: Regenerating after a global crisis with a resource-based view

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**Abstract**

This study explores how outdoor recreation (OR) and nature-based tourism (NBT) enterprises in rural Sweden responded to the challenges brought on by crisis—specifically the COVID-19 pandemic. The primary aim is to identify how these adaptations can inform and strengthen both current practices and future pathways toward sustainable and resilient development for OR/NBT businesses and the rural communities in which they are embedded. This approach to resilience builds on the concept of "bouncing forward," emphasizing how individual operators and communities can adapt to disruptions in ways that promote long-term transformation and resilience. The study is grounded in the resource-based view of the firm (RBV), which focuses on the unique internal resources of OR and NBT enterprises that enable them to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, thereby supporting rural development.

An explanatory mixed-methods design was used for this investigation. Initially, a national questionnaire was distributed to NBT providers offering a combination of outdoor recreation, local food, and hospitality services. A total of 61 responses met the inclusion criteria. Based on these findings, 18 follow-up semi-structured interviews were conducted to gain deeper insight into pandemic-related adaptations and their implications. The analysis, guided by the RBV framework and research aims, reveals how businesses navigated uncertainty and shifted strategies in response. Key outcomes include the capacity of rural tourism and hospitality industries to recalibrate and regenerate after crisis. The findings highlight the growing significance of local food—not only as a service offering but also as an educational tool when integrated with OR and NBT experiences.

The results also underscore how the tourism and hospitality sectors foster collaboration and cohesion among businesses and communities, strengthening local social fabric. These outcomes supported short-term survival while laying the groundwork for more community-embedded, resilient hospitality models moving forward. Lessons from this study provide practical and theoretical insights into how NBT and OR can contribute to socio-ecological resilience. In times of uncertainty, hospitality enterprises hold the potential to support both immediate recovery and long-term sustainable transformation in rural areas.

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## Keywords

COVID-19; Nature-based tourism; Outdoor recreation; Resilience; Resource-based view of the firm

# Governance and Policy 1 + 2

**Title**

Access under pressure: Public rights, private interests, and the future of outdoor recreation in the U.S. and Sweden

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**Abstract**

Public access to land is a shared value in both the United States and Nordic countries. The U.S. system is characterized by a complex network of federal, state, and local lands, each governed by specific mandates (Manning et al., 2022). In contrast, Nordic countries - particularly Sweden - have the right of public access across public and private lands. It is the cornerstone of “friluftsliv”, a cultural concept that ties outdoor recreation to philosophical and lifestyle values (Beery, 2012). There is some exchange of ideas between these systems. North American models (e.g. zoning) and visitor management are increasingly being adopted in Swedish land policy. Conversely, U.S. models like Maine’s “open land tradition” show similarities to the Swedish approach (Acheson & Acheson, 2010).

However, there is a trend toward increasing the privatization of land, either by converting former public recreational areas into private property (the U.S) or by limiting public access to traditionally open private lands (Sweden). In the U.S., the current executive administration is significantly downsizing the land management workforce and threatening to privatize lands (Schechter, 2025). Additionally, places with an open land tradition are seeing increased pushbacks from landowners regarding public access on their private lands (Acheson & Acheson 2010). In Sweden, the right of public access can sometimes conflict with private property rights. Proposed changes to shoreline protection (meant to secure public access) aim to support rural development by easing construction near shores. For landowners and farmers, public access may pose challenges. Some commercial businesses, like tourism or berry-picking companies, repeatedly use the same areas without informing landowners, which create tensions.

As attitudes toward private land evolve and pressures on recreational areas intensify, understanding the ongoing challenges to access is essential. Further research on international approaches to public access can offer valuable insights as a complement to designated areas (NPs and nature reserves) in supporting outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism (Sandell & Fredman, 2010). In our reflective study of two different governance models, we discuss the balance of individual property rights with collective access amid neoliberal land reforms but also increased use of recreational land. This also highlights implications for equity and social inclusion.

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**Keywords**

Access; Privatization; Conflicts

**Title**

Tourism Innovation in Rural areas

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**Abstract**

This paper presents a PhD project on innovation in tourism in rural areas. Food tourism could address regional challenges faced by rural areas by creating jobs, attracting funds, and ensuring investment in new projects. The thesis thus aims to explore how local food-based tourism can contribute to the local economy and drive innovation in rural regions (Andersson, Mossberg, and Therkelsen 2017). However, despite its critical role in tourism development, innovation and effective governance support for food tourism innovation remain underexplored in tourism literature. Some characteristics of the tourism sector complicate innovation. The tourism sector is characterised as having below-average levels of innovation (Hjalager 2010; Kofler et al. 2018) and is mostly made up of SMEs, which often lack strategic planning, time and resources to implement ideas into innovations (Pikkemaat, Peters, and Chan 2018). Especially in rural and remote areas, the tourism industry is highly seasonal which makes retention of employees difficult from season to season, impacting businesses' capacity to innovate (Najda-Janoszka and Kopera 2014). Interdependencies between actors further add to the complexity we find in this sector. The thesis sets out to examine tourism innovation through the case of food tourism in Southern Jutland, taking a qualitative approach. Drawing inspiration from the theoretical concepts of systems failures and innovation systems, the thesis explores the challenges found in tourism innovation and how different governance initiatives can support the development of food tourism. The research thus contributes to advancing understanding of tourism innovation in rural areas and aims to support policymakers in rural regions to improve tourism innovation.

**Keywords**

Tourism Innovation; Rural Tourism; Food Tourism; Innovation Systems; Tourism Governance

**Title**

Neoliberal environmentalism and climate crisis skepticism? The conduct of conduct through tourism politics

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**Abstract**

This paper is based on a qualitative study that explores the intersection of climate change skepticism and neoliberal environmentalism – a belief that market mechanisms will solve the climate crisis – enacted by the Norwegian authorities. Specifically, we focus on how Norwegian tourism policies and domestic tourists' attitudes reflect each other. The data consist of policy documents from the 1960s until today and interviews with 58 tourists (26 interviews, from 2020–2023).

Norway has long positioned itself as a global environmental pioneer while simultaneously pursuing policies that sustain oil production. Tourism policies have evolved from a focus on social democratic values and environmental conservation in the 1960s and 1970s, turning towards a neoliberal growth orientation in the 1980s, introducing a sustainability rhetoric in the 1990s, and developing into a neoliberal green growth rhetoric with economic priorities in the 2020s.

The tourists' perceptions reflect governmental politics when it comes to the social democratic defense of nature and ideas of sustainability, but many also echo the neoliberal environmentalist politics, aiming for commercial tourism, supporting growth and scale in tourism. Thus, most tourists express a strong desire to maintain their ability to travel freely, even in the face of environmental concerns. Statements like “I want to decide for myself” and “We are used to freedom” reflect a resistance to regulations that might limit personal choices. Several informants support market-based solutions and technological innovations, such as electric vehicles and cleaner aviation technologies. However, some informants emphasize the need for collective action and structural change, recognizing that individual actions are insufficient to address systemic issues like climate change – they question the sustainability of neoliberal tourism politics supporting economic growth. Thus, there is a split among the tourists; one group somewhat mirrors the neoliberal authorities, while another addresses the paradox between Norway's tourism politics and the need for climate change solutions. In conclusion, neoliberal environmentalism is strongly exhibited both in policies and among individual tourists, but it is also triggering some people's growing concern about the need for collective action and structural changes to cope with climate change issues.

**Keywords**

Climate Change; Tourism Policies; Sustainability Rhetoric; Freedom of Travel; Environmental concerns

**Title**

Seeking public value in the licensing of Edinburgh's short-term lets

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**Abstract**

Increasing inequalities in cities, greater urbanisation and tourismification trends threaten to erode resident lifestyles and give rise to discontent. Public value thinking from Public Administration offers promise in exploring conceptions of value within the tourism sphere(s), and among different publics to generate fairer policy outcomes and offer new insights not encompassed by the 'public goods', the 'public interest' or other market constructs that have been problematic within the tourism domain (Dredge, 2010; Anastasiadou, 2016).

The contestation of public value in tourism is set against the introduction of short term let licensing in the city of Edinburgh, Scotland, in October 2022. Edinburgh is a historic city with a growing population dynamic and sustained rise in popularity with domestic and international visitors, which sought to assuage local concerns around health and safety standards and housing shortages.

Adopting an interpretivist and constructivist perspective, we undertook 27 semi-structured stakeholder interviews with elected councillors, MPs and MSPs (members of Scottish Parliament), business associations, residents' associations, local civil society, festival organisers, local community councils on the introduction of the scheme. Secondary data analysis of CEC committee reports, responses to consultation documents and position statements also provided additional context on the evolution of the policy issue.

Findings demonstrate the existence of a complex public sphere consisting of a multitude of primary and secondary stakeholders who after the introduction of the licensing remain divided about the usefulness, purpose and ultimately, outcomes and consequences of this regulation. The study findings further confirm public value theory assertion that to achieve win-win situations stakeholders will need to be prepared to accept temporary win-lose situations for themselves (Bennington, 2009; McMillan, 2021).

Within the tourism sphere, tourism stakeholders are locked in a lose-win state where individual wins dominate. Managing and informing the manifestations of contest in the tourism domain to gradually move towards win-win outcomes for the sector and its publics are necessary for tourism to avoid becoming a wicked problem.

**Keywords**

Tourism; Public value; Short term let; Edinburgh; Licensing

**Title**

Tourism growth in Northern Finland´s national parks; implications on overtourism from the perspective of governance

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**Abstract**

Tourism growth has become an urgent issue in tourism studies and development in the past decade.

Tourism growth has become known mostly in global metropolises like London, Paris and Barcelona, for instance. Nowadays, tourism growth and thus over-crowdedness has been recognized to have spread to peripheral areas and nature-based tourism destinations as well as national parks and World Heritage sites. The subject has not been studied in Finnish context a lot – thus such research is needed to be conducted in the protected areas of Finland. However, such studies have been published globally in several cases.

The purpose of this study is to find out how the effects of tourism growth – and as a consequence presumably – how over-crowdedness and similar elements affect the visitors experience in Northern Finland´s national parks and the main governance body of the national parks, Metsähallitus. Similarly, effects, supposedly negative are attempted to find out from the local´s perspective who reside in the nearby areas; 5km radius at most. The background of the research is based on the previous research on tourism growth in national parks globally. As there is a clear gap in this field of research in Finland, it is justified to conduct such study to gain information about tourists´ perceptions to improve their experience, and vice versa. Also, the goal is to understand how management-wise it is challenging to govern these areas – what kind of obstacles they face and how to tackle them. From the local´s perspective, it is attempted to understand how the locals perceive these tourism flows; what they think about it and what should be done in their opinion.

The theoretical background of the research is based on the theory of social constructionism with specific focus on the theory of discourse and degrowth. The study is based on qualitative approach utilizing semi-structured in depth-interviews as data collection methods. As an analysis method of the study, discourse analysis, and thematic analysis will be utilized. These research methods are chosen as the goal is to gather data from the directors of Metsähallitus but also from the visitors and locals. The theoretical background and analysis methods are chosen as the purpose is to gain information on how the phenomenon is considered in the spoken language, but also to be able to thematize certain aspects related to the matter. Thus, it is possible to make categorizations on the individuals who perceive and consider the phenomenon differently depending which party they are representing. The research fills a gap in Finnish tourism research on tourism growth in national parks, which allows to have understanding on how national parks and their governance could be improved but also on how people could improve their behavior and on choosing their nature destination and season of the visit.

**Keywords**

National park: Tourism growth; Overtourism

**Title**

Cross-border tourism development in Europe: the role of the EU macro-regional strategies

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**Abstract**

Cross-border collaboration in tourism is being promoted throughout by the EU Interreg programme, and through four EU macro-regional strategies covering the Baltic, Alpine, Danubian, and Adriatic-Ionian regions. While bilateral cross-border tourism cooperation has been studied (e.g. Sialverstava et al., 2019; Shepherd & Ioannides, 2020; Ceric, 2023), the role of the wider macro-regional strategies in tourism has only been given scant attention in the relatively limited literature on the role of macro-regional strategies in Europe (Gänzle & Kern, 2016; Teston & Bramanti, 2018). The existing literature on cross-border tourism cooperation has documented recurring issues – such as cultural differences, limited organisational capacities, and the time-limited nature of Interreg projects – but within both literatures calls are made for complementing individual case-studies by adopting a wider geographical perspective in order to illuminate broader patterns of policy development and implementation (e.g. Gänzle & Kern, 2016; Sialverstava et al., 2019).

This paper reports early findings from a study of the EU macro-regional strategies, all of which include tourism as a priority area. It is based on analysis of three types of data: 1) documentary sources primarily retrieved from the websites of the four EU macro-regions and DG Regio, 2) semi-structured interviews with c 40 policy specialists and project managers involved in strategy development and implementation with the fields of tourism and/or culture, and 3) the DG Regio database of Interreg projects. The findings show how differences between the four macro-regions play out in relation cross-border tourism development.

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**Keywords**

Destination development; Tourism policy; Cross-border collaboration; Macro-regional strategies

**Title**

‘The vision: Passenger railway to Sälen’ – the governance of a new railway project in north Dalarna, Sweden

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**Abstract**

Now the trains are rolling again’, this was the title of an article in Falu Kurirer journal in August 2019 announcing the re-opening for freight transport of the abandoned railway up to Malung. A few months earlier, in April 2019, another article was titled ‘The vision: Passenger railway to Sälen’ signposted the beginning of a public discourse for the re-opening and eventually the expansion of the railway in north Dalarna and possibly to Norway for passengers.

In December 2019 a brand-new airport was inaugurated in the mountains of Dalarna, the first after 20 years in Sweden, which was debated as a better alternative over a railway. Pro-growth discourses were found in support of it for the generation of jobs, internationalisation of tourism, growth, and regional development and was delivered as a public-private partnership (Elbe & Farsari, 2023). At the same time, the vision to rebuild and expand the old railway was communicated from the same actors who were involved in the construction of the airport. In 2024 a company was launched with partners from local municipalities, DMOs, and private business, to examine and decide on the feasibility of the project in the forthcoming 18 months.

We perform a critical discourse analysis in local and national newspapers concerning the Scandinavian Mountains Railway project. Our aim is to better understand the actors represented (and those excluded) from the governance process, the role of private actors and public institutions at different levels, and to unveil agendas and power structures.

We employ a (meta)governance lens to understand power discourses in the development of the plan and understand tourism’s role in it and the prevalence of certain discourses and certain interests over others (Jessop 2011). Governance highlights representativeness, plurality of goals and flexible networks (also in the form of public-private partnerships) with an emphasis on efficiency. Metagovernance takes this further to add a critical understanding on the self-organisation of those flexible structures, of power negotiations, and the role of the state (Amore & Hall, 2016; Sørensen, 2006).

This is a work in progress and preliminary analysis has shown the entanglement of local authorities with the local DMO and the tourism industry who together are driving the developments while the state traffic/infrastructure agencies are not part of the same discourses and develop their own. Discourses also change in the course of time with

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## Keywords

Governance; Metagovernance; Tourism; Critical discourse analysis

**Title**

Community-Led Adaptive Co-Management for Sustainable Tourism Governance in Post-Communist Protected Areas: Insights from Lahemaa National Park, Estonia

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**Abstract**

Protected areas are increasingly popular tourist destinations, offering opportunities for nature-based experiences, particularly in an era of accelerating urbanisation. However, tourism governance in protected areas often prioritises environmental protection over collaborative stakeholder engagement, leading to underdeveloped tourism management structures.

Adaptive co-management (ACM) has emerged as a governance approach for complex social-ecological systems, integrating participatory decision-making, social learning, sustainable resource use, and the development of adaptive capacities for resilience. While ACM has been widely studied in global conservation contexts, there remains a paucity of research from Eastern Europe — a region shaped by post-socialist transition dynamics that may offer valuable empirical and theoretical contributions to ACM scholarship.

This study investigates ACM processes in tourism management within Lahemaa National Park, Estonia — a post-communist protected area with a turbulent socio-political history. The research focused on mechanisms of stakeholder collaboration and leadership within the ACM framework. Empirical data were collected through 15 semi-structured interviews with representatives from key stakeholder groups, including public authorities, community organisations, and tourism enterprises.

The case study findings highlight that multi-dimensional collaboration among diverse stakeholder groups is most effectively facilitated by a community-based non-governmental organisation (NGO). While public sector actors possess institutional power, they often lack sufficient resources or motivation for active involvement. Conversely, community NGOs play a critical intermediary role, fostering dialogue, strengthening the voice of local tourism entrepreneurs, and coordinating collaborative processes. The private sector demonstrates increasing willingness to participate once tangible benefits of cooperation become apparent.

The study concludes that community NGOs are well-positioned to lead ACM processes in tourism governance within protected areas, particularly in post-communist contexts.

Nevertheless, ensuring the long-term sustainability of such collaborative arrangements — both in terms of financial resources and leadership continuity — remains a critical challenge.

**Keywords**

Community-led tourism; Stakeholder involvement; Adaptive co-management; Protected areas

# Destination Management 1 + 2

**Title**

Post-COVID and the visiting sector at the border

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**Abstract**

The aim with this paper is to discuss the current situation in a border region, namely HaparandaTornio, from a post-COVID perspective. A sense of place, with tourism and the visiting sector in focus.

For HaparandaTornio, the supranational decisions regarding COVID-19 were fateful. Suddenly and without warning, the open and transparent border became a barrier that could not be crossed. (Lundén, T. 2022). For a border region to function effectively, free movement and mobility across the border are essential. From a Nordic perspective, the Swedish-Finnish border was the most affected. (Wallin Aagesen, Järv et al. 2023)

Life in a populated and active border region is largely about social constructions and regional identity. The border line is more than just a line on a map, as it is the people and the surrounding community that, potentially, shape a shared identity. (Paasi, A. 1996) The concept of “post” is particularly interesting when it comes to describing a phenomenon or a specific event that occurs at a certain point in time and what happens thereafter, or post space-time time from a geographic perspective. (Houssay-Holzschuch, M. 2021) In the case of HaparandaTornio, post-IKEA is certainly such an event, and the establishment of IKEA and its consequences truly provided a boost to the shared identity among the general populace.

While post-COVID has meant that the regional identity has taken a hit and there is a certain uncertainty about the future, the visiting sector appears to remain strong. The tourism industry has a joint cross-border destination initiative, which means that they present and market the entire twin-town and its surroundings together as one place. The tourism sector is described as a success story from a cross-border perspective with a share brand and with the border itself as an important success factor for tourism, while the border in other respects (e.g. shopping) tends to fall somewhere between co-existence and co-operation. (Prokkola, Andersson et al. 2024).

The border issue is, of course, a major challenge for the visit industry, as there is significant interest from abroad regarding the border itself as a phenomenon, combined with attractions such as the Northern Lights, exotic winter climate and the Kukkola rapids. For visitors associated with shopping, the goal is to extend the duration of their stay. Currently, they stay for an average of 4-5 hours.

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**Keywords**

Post-COVID; Border region; Place development; Co-operation; The visiting sector

**Title**

Panel discussion: Pilgrimage Tourism in the Nordics - characteristics and trends

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**Abstract**

Pilgrimage tourism is booming. Almost two million people travelled to Mecca for hajj in 2024 and a staggering 35 million are expected to descend on Rome for the Jubilee Year of 2025. One interesting development in Europe over the last thirty years has been the exponential growth of tourism on Christian pilgrimage routes. Santiago de Compostela in Spain has seen the most dramatic growth, with over half a million pilgrims walking the various caminos to the holy city.

In the Nordics, pilgrimage is also making a comeback, with a proliferation of routes developing, mostly centered on traditional pilgrimage destinations such as Trondheim in Norway or Vadstena in Sweden. This said, “pilgrimage” routes are also being created that have little to no connection to pre-Reformation pilgrimage, and are primarily designed as showcases of local heritage and catalysts for regional development. An example of that is the popular Camøno in Denmark. Therefore, the Nordics, while partaking in the European trend for pilgrimage tourism development, demonstrate particular characteristics that make it different to Mediterranean pilgrimage. Crucial among these are Nordic traditions of outdoor life or friluftsliv, the right of public access to nature, and a deeply secular society.

To investigate the under-researched phenomenon of Nordic pilgrimage, in 2024 an

interdisciplinary group of researchers from Sweden and Denmark came together to create a research network on pilgrimage in the Nordics. They have so far conducted on-site data collection on two pilgrimage routes in the Nordics. One is the Camøno on the island of Møn in Denmark, and the other is the St Birgitta Ways in Östergötland, Sweden. In this panel discussion, participating researchers will share and discuss the key results of their work so far, and open the floor to the audience for questions and interaction with the audience. Guiding their discussions are several important questions:

- What are the defining characteristics of pilgrimage tourism in the Nordics?
- What trends are we seeing in pilgrimage tourism development in the Nordics?
- Who are the driving forces behind pilgrimage tourism development in the Nordics?
- Is Nordic pilgrimage more about the destination or the journey?
- Is Nordic pilgrimage more about communion with the divine or with oneself?
- Is pilgrimage tourism in the Nordics proposed as a transformational experience for pilgrims? In other words, is Nordic pilgrimage characterised by eudaimonic or hedonic values?

### **Keywords**

Pilgrimage tourism; Nordic pilgrimage; Religious tourism; Outdoor recreation

**Title**

Inter-Destination Coopetition: The Impact of Tourism Destination Status on Coopetition Propensity

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**Abstract**

Coopetition (i.e., simultaneous cooperation and competition) in the tourism industry has gained increasing attention in research, and typically the focus is on antecedents to, dynamics in, or outcomes from coopetitive relationships between firms operating at the same destination (i.e. intra-destination coopetition). However, coopetition between destinations is far less explored although coopetition between neighboring tourism destinations has gained some interest in recent years due to new opportunities and constraints, such as changing tourist behavior and sustainability-related expectations. Inter-destination coopetition is an important phenomenon as destinations compete for the value-creation tourism generates, either with other destinations in their own region, or with destinations in other regions or countries. One way to strengthen a destinations' competitiveness is to strengthen the attractiveness of one's own region through engaging in cooperation at the inter-destination level through establishing a joint destination management organization (i.e. the destination management organization represents more than one destination). In essence, establishing a joint destination management organization represent a strong manifestation of coopetition.

This paper focuses on such (joint) destination management organizations as they typically are set up as separate organizational entities to represent and work on behalf of (local) business actors. Building on the established insight that status is a key consideration in partnership formation, the current study takes a status-based perspective to extend the literature on joint destination management. Specifically, this article argues that tourism destination status affects coopetition propensity in terms of forming a joint destination management organization and develops hypotheses for each of the three types of status recently identified in status research (prestige, dominant, and iconic status). The hypotheses are tested with a sample of 474 officially classified tourism destinations in France. As predicted by the theoretical model, a destination's high prestige status has a negative effect on its coopetition propensity. The predicted negative effects of dominant and iconic status are, on the other hand, only partially supported.

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## Keywords

DMOs; Coopetition; Cooperation;, France; Joint destination management

**Title**

Communicating a ‘Sustainable Destination’ in the Arctic

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**Abstract**

As sustainability has become an increasingly central concern in tourism policy and development, Arctic destinations located in fragile and vulnerable environments are increasingly articulating their sustainability efforts to various audiences. Sustainability has played an essential role in the tourism strategy and communication of Tromsø, Northern Norway, since 2019, when it was awarded the status of a ‘sustainable destination.’

This study examines how the notion of a ‘sustainable destination’ is communicated in Tromsø. Often described as the “Gateway to the Arctic,” Tromsø is characterized by a combination of surrounding nature, cultural heritage, and seasonal phenomena such as the Northern Lights. Despite its relatively small population, Tromsø offers a high density of tourism experiences, attracting thousands of visitors annually. Thus, since 2019, sustainability has featured prominently in the city’s tourism strategy. However, the operationalization and communication of this ambition raise questions about which aspects of sustainability are prioritized and whose perspectives are represented. The study draws on qualitative methods, including analysis of digital and printed tourism materials, as well as observational data collected on-site.

Preliminary findings indicate that environmental responsibility is a dominant theme, with an emphasis on behavioral guidelines and the use of certifications by tourism providers. The study contributes to ongoing discussions about sustainability in Arctic tourism by highlighting the communicative dimensions of sustainability and their implications for the distribution of responsibility among stakeholders.

**Keywords**

Sustainable tourism; Marketing communication; Arctic; Tromsø

**Title**

Destination brand loving

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**Abstract**

The aim of this study is to conceptualize brand loving in the context of destination brands. Thus, the aim is to emphasize the dynamic relationship view of brand loving instead of seeing only the emotion of love, or a set of antecedents before and consequences after brand love. The study is conducted in the context of tourists.

Theoretical framework is built from brand relationships, brand love and tourism literature by utilizing processual approach, social identity theory and bodily aspects. Data and real-life notions will lead to the creation of theoretical framework. Current literature approaches brand love mainly as a positive static entity, focusing on its antecedents and consequences, neglecting the processual relationship view as well as bodily and negative aspects.

The research approach of this doctoral research obeys abductive reasoning and utilizes qualitative data gathering and analysing methods. The data are gathered in the context of an outdoor destination brand located in Finnish Lapland with three methods: semi-structured interviews and naturally occurring data from guestbook entries and the destination brand's Facebook site. Data is longitudinal as some of the guestbook entries span over 35 years. On-site observations and autoethnographic notes and notions are employed while analysing and interpreting the data.

Current findings show how complex and dynamic destination brand loving indeed is. The study enlightens the bodily dimension of this brand relationship by bringing bodies into brand love literature side by side with three other dimensions, namely emotional, cognitive and behavioral. Including also negative aspects, such as having an injury in the loved destination or feelings of jealousy when others visit the site or visit it "a wrong way", this loving is shown to include a broad variety of processes that either strengthen, maintain or weaken the relationship. Further, it seems that loving customers tend to act responsibly towards the destination and its inhabitants - as what you love is part of you.

Practical implications of the study can hopefully help destination managers to understand how to build long-lasting, loving and responsible relationships with their customers.

**Keywords**

Brand loving; Destination brand loving; Embodiment; Relationship

**Title**

Carbon Footprint of Tourism in the Nordics

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**Abstract**

To support Agenda 2030 and the Nordic efforts of becoming the world's most sustainable region, harmonized environmental tourism measures are needed. Therefore in 2022, the Nordic Council of Ministers commissioned and funded the two-fold pan-Nordic project, *Measuring Regional Tourism and Tourism's Environmental Impact in the Nordics*. The work package, *Measuring Tourism's Environmental Impact in the Nordics*, has so far prioritized focus on measuring the carbon footprint of tourism in the Nordics.

The aim is to create a common Nordic calculation approach aligned with international standards, enabling the Nordic countries to measure tourism's impact on climate and resources. By developing comparable, actionable data, the project supports evidence-based policies and fosters collaboration across the region.

The work began with exploratory feasibility studies and Nordic capacity building and quickly gained international attention outside the Nordics. Experimental pilot calculations have been made, and in 2024 Denmark launched their first official statistics of the carbon footprint to support this work (the Danish carbon footprint of tourism is funded outside this project).

The project aligns with the UN-endorsed statistical framework of measuring sustainable tourism (SF-MST) and positions the Nordics as early adopters and global examples of how this internationally agreed reference framework can be operationalized with respect to the carbon footprint of tourism.

However, the SF-MST covers more than the carbon footprint: *Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon. It relies on and has impact on the economy, the natural and built environment, the local population at places visited and on visitors themselves. Owing to this range of impacts and the wide spectrum of stakeholders involved, there is a need for a holistic approach to tourism measurement.*

The aim of this presentation is to present the statistical framework and share the latest official and experimental results, serving as a backdrop for further Nordic research and development.

A pivotal harmonizing reference is Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA), and the presentation will cover the international methodology behind tourism activity from the TSA, and examples of how it is practiced in the Nordics. Since international transportation is a considerable part of the emissions related to tourism, another pivotal harmonizing exercise is the joint estimation of the emissions related to international transport. The

presentation will also cover this compilation methodology, which is based on a statistical concept of total emissions from an individual tourist with respect to the tourist's country of origin and modes of transportation to their Nordic destination.

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### Keywords

Climate agenda; Sustainable tourism; Tourism statistics; International statistics

**Title**

Locals as part-time marketers. Engaging local residents in service innovations and sustainable destination development in peripheral areas

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**Abstract**

The importance of a highly motivated, trained, and skillful workforce for positive tourist experiences in staged service settings is well documented in the literature. These professionals, referred to as "full-time" service marketing personnel, are supported by "part-time" marketers—individuals who are not directly involved in marketing tasks but still play a central role in co-creating positive experiences in service settings and destinations. In this study, these actors in supporting roles are identified as local residents.

The central role of locals in co-creating positive tourism experiences by merely being present at the destination and bringing the socio-cultural context to life is indisputable. However, this group of actors can also be more actively engaged in various tourism development activities, thereby becoming an active resource.

Previous research on local residents' participation in tourism development has focused on explaining factors impacting attitudes towards tourism development, the role of locals in sustainable tourism development, and barriers to participation. Structures for engaging and empowering local residents in service innovations and sustainable destination development are still scantily explored, leaving the toolbox for vitalizing potential and unused resources quite empty.

The aim of this study is to develop a model for engaging and empowering local residents in service innovation and sustainable destination development. This will be achieved by exploring the foundation for engagement in tourism development by local residents and identifying the potential resources this actor group is willing to contribute.

The research questions we aim to answer are:

- 1) How do locals perceive sustainable destination development and their role in this process?
- 2) Do they want to engage in sustainable destination development, and if so, how?
- 3) How would they like sustainable destination development to be organized?

The main empirical studies are scheduled for Autumn 2025. Locals living in the World Nature Heritage Site Kvarken Archipelago, Finland, will be asked to participate in a quantitative survey and focus group interviews. Input on how to organize for engaging locals will also be sought from corresponding World Heritage sites in the Nordic countries.

**Keywords**

Sustainable tourism development; Local residents; Part-time marketers; Engagement; World Heritage site

**Title**

How can customer-based destination branding work in favour of green transition?

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**Abstract**

Today, the tourism industry exhibits a widespread understanding of the importance of sustainable development. Destinations increasingly prioritise and integrate green transition efforts into their operational and strategic management and marketing activities. Ultimately, it is the choices and actions of the visitors that drive the green transition, and therefore it is essential to work on encouraging sustainable behaviour to build an attractive destination brand by including sustainability in the destination brand promise. Achieving this requires destinations to obtain a deeper understanding of tourists' experience, destination brand perceptions, and broader pro-sustainable values and attitudes, as well as to learn how to integrate this knowledge into management and marketing practices. The final stage of a research project, conducted in collaboration with Högå Kusten destination in Sweden, utilized findings from empirical survey studies of the destination brand, to facilitate dialogue between researchers and destination managers. This dialogue took place in the format of three consecutive workshops accompanied by two-sided output exchanges between these sessions.

The research team contributed to the workshops with findings related to a web-based experiment examining sustainability as a dimension of experience value and a sub-dimension of destination brand value (i.e., the extension of the CBDBE model), as well as insights into identification and profiling of tourist segments based on their environmental concerns and ascribed responsibility. Destination managers utilized these insights to inventory the existing and planned communication and product development initiatives emphasizing sustainability aspects of the tourism destination offer. Together, the project team designed a conceptual sketch for a web-based app to tailor-make the sustainability-focused destination communication and increase its relevance and acceptance among potential visitors. This final stage of the project addresses destination branding efforts aimed at encouraging sustainable behavior among visitors, thereby enhancing the brand's value and contributing to green transition of businesses within the tourism industry. The study also provides insights into how the visitors' experience value can be applied in development work for green transition within the tourism industry.

**Keywords**

Customer-based destination branding; Green transition; Pro-sustainable values and attitudes; Segmentation

Technology (incl. AI)

**Title**

Enhancing Special Interest Tourism Experiences & Storytelling through Artificial Intelligence: Opportunities and Implications

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**Abstract**

Artificial Intelligence is reshaping the tourism industry by enabling personalized, immersive, and narrative-driven experiences. In Special Interest Tourism (SIT), where travelers are motivated by niche passions and deeper meanings, AI technology creations – offer transformative potential for tailoring experiences and co-creating storytelling and thus enhancing the SIT Experience.

This paper investigates how future tourism professionals conceptualize the role of Artificial Intelligence in Special Interest Tourism, based on a qualitative analysis of students' exams from a university-level course. Using a content analysis approach, we will examine written home-exams to identify patterns in students' use of AI in their development of special interest experiences and storytelling. Furthermore, we will compare these AI-influenced responses with earlier exams produced prior to the integration of AI tools.

Recent studies suggest that AI has a growing impact on the development of narrative-rich and culturally sensitive tourism experiences. Ferracani et al. (2024) demonstrated the power of personalized generative storytelling in cultural heritage tourism through mobile applications that generate user-centered narratives accompanied by visual illustrations using GPT-4 and custom image pipelines. He et al. (2025) investigated collaborative storytelling using generative AI in cultural heritage contexts, highlighting how participants used AI tools to craft meaningful narratives that supported memory recall and personal connection with historical content. Angelaccio et al. (2024) examined AI-based learning environments for cultural tourism, emphasizing how AI-enhanced tools support personalized learning and creative exploration among students. Their findings reinforce the pedagogical potential of AI to scaffold student creativity and situate them as co-creators in thematic tourism experiences.

These contributions collectively underline the transformative potential of AI for both tourism product development and tourism education, particularly within the niche of special interest tourism, where meaning-making, personalization, storytelling and emotional engagement are central.

Findings are not available yet. Insights will provide practical implications for both educators, tourism industry and curriculum designers aiming to foster digital competencies and critical thinking in tourism education and whether to use AI or not.

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**Keywords**

Special Interest Tourism; Artificial Intelligence; Storytelling

## Title

Affordances of Technologies for Diabetic Travelers: Examining the Potential of AI

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## Abstract

The global diabetes prevalence is estimated to rise to 578 million by 2030 and 700 million by 2045 (Saeedi et al., 2019). Tourists with diabetes usually face numerous challenges due to the diet, activity, sleep, climate changing during their travelling (Ghosh et al., 2018). These disruptions expose them to elevated health risks while travelling. Scholars have proposed that diabetic patients need strengthened guidance and training before travelling, as well as constant consultation during their journey to manage the glucose level (Ghosh et al., 2018; Rajkumar, 2022). To address these needs, artificial intelligence (AI) technology may provide the best solution. This study seeks to explore how technology, particularly AI, can assist diabetic travellers in mitigating travel-related risks and enhancing wellbeing and enjoyment during the trips.

This research employs a mixed-method approach, including qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys. Approximately 20 interviewees are involved, with 6 semi-structured interviews already conducted. The survey data is planning to be collected through an AI application which is designed specifically for the diabetics.

This research tries to investigate the potential of AI technology to support tourists with diabetes in tourism industry. It aims to contribute significantly to the theoretical understanding of the travel experience for individuals with special needs and to advance the academic discussions on the affordances of AI technology. By doing so, the study also promotes the sustainable development of the tourism sector. Tourism industry stakeholders can take the identified AI technology affordances into account when designing applications for tourist with special needs. It is of great economic value (A Leminen et al., 2018) and social significance to provide this special group people with more safety, convenience and better services while travelling.

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**Keywords**

Diabetic travellers; AI; Tourism risk management; Tourist health risk

**Title**

Fascinating and Awe-Inspiring Landscape Attributes in Virtual Nature-Based Wellbeing Tourism

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**Abstract**

Research on restorative and therapeutic landscapes has primarily emerged from environmental psychology and allied fields (e.g., Berto, 2005; Brooks et al., 2017; Hartig et al., 2003, 2014; Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Kaplan, 1995; Ulrich, 1983). Despite longstanding efforts to classify landscapes for recreation and tourism, the specific attributes and multi-sensory dimensions that shape leisure experiences remain underexplored. Furthermore, existing research has largely focused on greenspaces and bluespaces leaving multi-component landscapes - those lacking a single dominant feature – and non-visual sensory stimuli such as sound and scent overlooked. Studies have also concentrated on the stress-reducing effects of natural versus built environments, offering limited insight into how therapeutic landscapes function within recreation and tourism contexts. As interest in outdoor and virtual nature-based tourism grows in the post-pandemic era, understanding how landscape features evoke emotional, restorative, and transformative responses is increasingly vital.

Attention Restoration Theory (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989) identifies fascination - effortless, involuntary attention - as a key mechanism of cognitive restoration, often triggered by natural stimuli like water movement or scenic vistas (Berto, 2005). Relatedly, awe—elicited by vast landscapes or wildlife—can deepen human-nature connections when accompanied by reflection (Pearce et al., 2017; Wang et al., 2020). Yet, the specific landscape attributes that trigger fascination and evoke awe in tourism contexts remain insufficiently understood.

This study, part of a larger project, applies Attention Restoration Theory to examine how awe and fascination are triggered by visual, auditory, and olfactory stimuli across diverse landscapes. Using a 2D exposure experiment, it examines how familiarity mediates emotional and imaginative responses among local versus tourist populations. Findings highlight the role of sensory congruence and familiarity in shaping affective responses and perceived restorativeness, with implications for the design of multi-sensory tourism experiences and broader theoretical contributions to both tourism and environmental psychology.

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**Keywords**

Therapeutic Virtual Landscapes; Fascination; Attention Restoration Theory; Experience Design; Virtual Tourism

**Title**

Immersive technologies in literary and film tourism: Opportunities and challenges

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**Abstract**

Locations related to films and literary works, whether those are filming locations, literary settings, or the homes of authors, have long attracted visitors who are interested in and passionate about particular works of fiction. Immersive technologies such as virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and mixed reality (MX) offer great opportunities for SMEs, DMOs, and other tourism actors interested in creating experiences and products relating to literary and film tourism. These technologies can inspire innovation and creativity on how to approach this type of tourism services and can offer new ways to engage audiences with the stories being told.

The paper presented is part of the Erasmus+ project ‘Unlocking the potential of immersive literary and film tourism in Europe (UPLIFT)’ and is based on desk research and 16 interviews with stakeholders and experts undertaken for the project’s research report. The report, along with a compendium of 12 best practice cases, was created to be a knowledge foundation for the teaching material that will be created within the project. Therefore, the research goals were to map the opportunities immersive technologies can provide, possible challenges and risks in adapting them, and what skills are needed in the industry to implement them.

The findings show that there are plenty of exciting opportunities for tourism businesses to engage their visitors with immersive storytelling, digital extension, and virtual experiences. However, there are also clear challenges that need to be addressed such as a high threshold into these new technologies, as well as high starting costs. Skill development within the industry will therefore be crucial for further development of immersive experiences in literary and film tourism.

Disclaimer: This paper is part of the Erasmus+ project ‘Unlocking the potential of immersive literary and film tourism in Europe (UPLIFT)’ and is co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or the European Education and Culture Executive Agency (EACEA). Neither the European Union nor EACEA can be held responsible for them.

**Keywords**

Immersive technologies; Film tourism; Literary tourism; Virtual reality; Augmented reality

# Theory and Critical Approaches

1 + 2

**Title**

Impact of tourism research upon the discipline of anthropology

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**Abstract**

50 years of tourism research has brought immense expansion into our knowledge of tourism. To a large degree, theoretical and methodological foundation for this expansion has come from outside tourism research, but research within this domain has resulted in a vast field of developments and refinements. However, while the application of knowledge from outside tourism is readily acknowledged, we do not have much knowledge about whether the work within the domain of tourism has influenced scholarly research outside it. Has tourism research impacted broader scholarly research, or are we an isolated domain of little academic importance? Such questions are important to throw light on since they tie into ongoing debates on scientific impacts and scholarly qualities of tourism research, but the answers likely differ between disciplines. Being an anthropologist that has focused on tourism in my entire academic life, I decided to investigate this within the discipline of anthropology. And do it robustly.

The assumption is that the influence of tourism research on anthropology can be traced by examining citations, both quantitatively and qualitatively, in papers published in anthropological journals. For that purpose, complete series of volumes from 2000-2024 from 12 high-ranking anthropology journals was downloaded and scrutinized. The number of papers total more than 11,000. The analysis is no mere quantitative citation count! It includes several queries, for instance: Which kind of tourism writings are cited in papers with a tourism focus; which kind are cited in papers with a regional/ethnic focus; which kind are cited in papers that are theory focused; and so on. 8 working questions are utilized.

Preliminary findings are sobering: tourism is not frequently covered, and tourism research is not frequently cited, not even in tourism papers. A few vintage publications (e.g., Smith [ed.] 1976) constitute a large proportion of the citations, but many of these are *ad passim*, and tourism is all but absent from theory-focused papers that are not about tourism. Tourism research citations in papers with a regional or ethnic focus are limited, and so on.

Findings are discussed, and the question is raised whether the limited presence of tourism research in anthropology journals has to do with the quality of tourism research, or whether the phenomenon of tourism (still) is stigmatized within anthropology.

**Keywords**

Research impact assessment; Tourism research quality; Tourism research maturity; Citation analysis

**Title**

Cross-cultural food experiences in tourism: Towards a comprehensive approach

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**Abstract**

Communications about food and tourism, including popular and academic writings, are riddled with biases: pejorative remarks, off-hand condescension, self-righteous positionings, claims of authenticity, and much more. While opinionated communications are pervasive when the topic is food and gastronomy in general, they are particularly accentuated in the context of international tourism where food production and consumption cross national and/or cultural boundaries. Therefore, the field of tourism is an excellent site to research how we talk and write about cross-cultural food. But to improve the scholarly qualities of such research and to reduce the risk of perpetuating the biases that we aim to study, we need organising frameworks that take the tourism mobilities of food, consumers and producers into account.

The purpose of this paper is to develop such a framework, with a focus on how food is altered in tourism as well as the normative reactions thereto. Alterations take many shapes, for instance tourists consuming supposedly local food, adaptations of local food to the assumed preferences of visiting tourists (e.g. less spicy), or local chefs preparing 'foreign' food from outside their habitual or cultural preferences. To investigate these normativities it is necessary to instigate a two-step exploration. Building on the concept of translation, step one explores ways in which food is translated (changed, adjusted, interpreted) in a tourism context, and a typology of food translations such as curation, adaptation, substitution and simplification is suggested. Building on that, step two explores how the different food translations are normatively described and discussed in communications on food and tourism. By employing the concepts of terroir and non-place, and viewing these concepts in the light of the social force of distinction, communications on food translations in tourism are organised in a tentative taxonomy of normativities in food and tourism.

This taxonomy is relevant for analysing cross-cultural food and provides a framework to elucidate the normativities in popular and scholarly communication about food and tourism. The paper is mostly theoretical and conceptual, albeit building on a series of empirical examples and observations.

**Keywords**

Culinary tourism; Food tourism; Cross-cultural food

**Title**

Circular Economy Innovation In Tourism

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**Abstract**

Focus: The benefits of Circular Economy (CE) in tourism are clear (Sørensen & Bærenholdt, 2020) but we lack a tourism-based framework for systemic CE innovation in tourism and practical guidance for tourism actors on how to unlock the potential of CE. This paper has two connected purposes: A) develop a practically applicable framework that sustains systemic tourism CE innovation; B) suggest a theoretical approach regarding such innovation.

Context: CE aims to build restorative industrial systems that Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, and Recover resources (the “4-R Framework”) (e.g. Kirchherr et al., 2017). This paper combines the 4-R Framework with four pillars (the “4-I”) of modern tourism production: 1) tourism companies IMPLEMENT production solutions along vertical production chains joining primary, secondary, tertiary and experience sectors; 2) tourists INTERACT as co-producers of their experiences; 3) tourism experiences result from INTEGRATION of multiple companies' services/products; and 4) residents are INVOLVED in tourism as producers/consumers in the Sharing Economy.

Combining CE’s 4-R framework with the “4-I” results in the CERI Framework. The framework consists of 4x4 fields of potential innovation actions and can help actors identify individual plus systemic innovation initiatives for CE in tourism.

Based on CERI the paper argues that understanding CE innovation in tourism benefits from a multi-faceted theoretical approach that integrates perspectives on innovation management and innovative capabilities of tourism organizations, innovation networks among tourism actors, innovative practices of tourists, residents, and industry stakeholders, and the institutional ecosystem characteristics of tourism.

Methods: A case study of a Danish destination initiative illustrates the relevance of CERI and the theoretical framework. The empirical data is based on workshops and other interactions with key actors.

Results/conclusion: To develop truly systemic and impactful CE solutions in tourist destinations interconnected initiatives in all fields of the CERI framework must be identified. Furthermore, the suggested CERI-related theoretical approach indicates the importance of integrating micro, meso, and macro perspectives; technological and behavioral innovations; and understandings of the practices of tourists, producers, and residents for comprehending how to unlock the transformative power of tourism CE innovations.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.103027>

**Keywords**

Innovation; Circular Economy; CERI framework

**Title**

Conceptualising destination degrowth for sustainable tourism development in three German biosphere reserves

**Author(s)**

**Abstract**

Tourism is a typical example of conflicts in society-environment-interactions, as it causes increasing pressure on natural resources and ecosystems due to growth expectations. Being especially dependent on healthy society-environment interactions, tourism in protected areas (PAs) has gained increased attention within sustainable tourism discourses. This includes tourism in Biosphere Reserves as model regions for sustainable development. However, despite a considerable body of research on sustainable tourism in protected areas, its focus often lies on strategies of green growth. Notions of degrowth have been weakly conceptualised for sustainable tourism in biosphere reserves (BRs). The empirical aim of this article is to show how different key actors in three different German Biosphere Reserves (Wadden Sea of Lower Saxony, Spreewald and Schorfheide-Chorin) socially construct different models of sustainable tourism and notions of growth or degrowth against the backdrop of conflicts related to tourism growth and society-environment-interactions. By analysing the results of 24 semi-structured interviews with tourism and Biosphere Reserve stakeholders, narratives about growth or degrowth in German Biosphere Reserves are examined. Drawing on these empirical findings, the contribution of this article is a conceptualisation of degrowth-inspired sustainable tourism in Biosphere Reserves. We conclude that such a type of tourism can positively contribute to preserve and restore healthy society-environment-interactions and to provide conditions for a high quality of life and good working conditions in the region.

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**Keywords**

Degrowth; Sustainable tourism development; Model regions; Society-environment-interactions; UNESCO biosphere reserves

**Title**

Sharing, shared places

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**Abstract**

The aim of this paper is to develop a theory about sharing/shared places. 'Sharing places' emerged as a concept from an analysis of the role of second-home tourism in some Faroese and North Norwegian coastal communities (Bærenholdt et al. 2024). It was a spin off from the Nordic NorValue project (<https://pub.norden.org/temanord2024-501/index.html>). But the concept deserves more theoretical discussion to improve our understanding of how tourism and tourists can be socialised into a more community-centred framework and be part of convivial ways of bringing locals and tourists together in more responsible forms (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020; Huijbens 2022). With a point of departure in the long tradition for discussing place as open and porous articulations and collections in human geography (Massey and more), this paper suggests following Dovey (2009) approaching place as material, productive and becoming assemblages. But there is also a need for understanding the role of social mobilisation and engagement, around 'place communities' (Healey, 2023). Material places and their designs and landscapes, thus, play a productive role in bringing people together. Thus, it is the intention of this paper to push tourism research into contributing to and taking part in broader societal agendas, relevant in different tourist places from like Copenhagen to like Bornholm. Although based in the previous project, this is an 'idea paper' under development, discussing the relevance of different conceptual understandings (such as places as assemblages, conviviality, responsibility, hospitality, engagement and the common) for understanding how people can share places, which are also tourist places.

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**Keywords**

Conviviality; Place; Place-community; Sharing places

**Title**

Sustainability on the Move: Mobility Transitions and Institutional Change in the Eurovision Song Contest

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**Abstract**

Mega-events such as the Eurovision Song Contest (ESC) present both opportunities and challenges for sustainability transitions due to their temporary, mobile, and highly visible character (Sheller & Urry, 2006). Their short planning cycles demand the implementation of sustainability practices without long-term institutional anchoring. This paper analyzes ESC 2013 and 2024, both held in Malmö, to examine how sustainability efforts evolve when the same event returns to the same city.

We use practice theory (Shove et al., 2012) and institutional theory (Scott, 2014) to distinguish between practices of transition—strategies and governance mechanisms that introduce sustainability—and transitions in practice, where routines become stabilized, adapted, or discontinued across event cycles. The study draws on interviews, video analysis, and documents.

ESC 2013 showed fragmented, compliance-oriented efforts focused on ISO certification. In ESC 2024, sustainability was more integrated: 90% of materials were reused, electric mobility policies were implemented, and coordination improved. However, the challenge of institutionalizing sustainability beyond the event remains. Malmö developed checklists to support knowledge transfer, but early signs from ESC 2025 suggest limited use.

We contribute to sustainability transition theory (Geels, 2011) by showing how mobile mega-events can support experimentation while constraining institutional change. The study also highlights how conflicting priorities—such as tightened security—can undermine social goals despite environmental progress (Chalip, 2006). This analysis provides insights for event organizers and policymakers aiming to strengthen governance and mobility practices in tourism and mega-events.

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**Keywords**

Sustainability transitions; Mega-events; Mobility; Practice theory; Institutional change

Sustainable, Responsible,  
Regenerative Tourism 1 + 2 + 3

**Title**

Coping with sustainable travel: Young adults and the role of parents, peers and partners

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**Abstract**

Tourists experience conflicts and dilemmas in relation to sustainable travelling, and studies have focused on dichotomies such as knowledge/value-action gaps to explain discrepancies between intentions and actions taken to travel more sustainably. This paper contributes to this field of research by demonstrating how multiple coping practices are utilised to handle (un)sustainable travelling and highlights the under-researched significance of social communities in shaping the ways in which young adults think, talk and practice (un)sustainable travelling. Where existing research has mostly tackled sustainability-related issues by unpacking individual dilemmas and coping practices, our analysis reveals how coping practices are processes largely formed through parents, peers and partners.

Based on in-depth interviews with 18 young adult travellers (Danish and international students enrolled at a Danish university), the paper shows that parents, peers and partners influence their (un)sustainable travel practices in different ways: Parents frame a practice among young adults characterised by coping through opposition and fixing the problem by proxy; peers frame a coping practice characterised by acceptance of difference and compromise; and partners a coping practice characterised by convergence of values and habits. On this background, we suggest a new sustainable travel coping framework to help advance our understanding of sustainable travelling practices among young adults.

**Keywords**

Sustainable travel; Young adults; Dilemmas; Coping practices; Social communities

**Title**

Rethinking about plastics in co-creative souvenir making experiences

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**Abstract**

**Problem Description:** The over consumption and disposal of plastic products in tourism destinations may generate further environmental pollution through littering. Tourists are less likely to behave pro-environmentally when on vacation unless they are exposed to enjoyment-focused activities that specifically aim to modify their behaviour.

**Context:** The interdisciplinary research team wished to explore whether making souvenirs out of reclaimed plastic may encourage visitors to reevaluate their own plastic consumption and souvenir purchases.

**Methods/Data:** During a two-day event that focused on plastics as pollution and material resource, using lectures, a making workshop, and multiple integrative methods and lo-fi crafting techniques, 58 European students accompanied by their teachers co-created souvenirs from waste plastic.

**Results:** The participants were keen to consider alternatives to raw plastic, repurpose disposed single-use plastic to personalise their souvenirs, and following the activity, demonstrated an increased willingness to adopt environmentally friendly behaviours towards plastic consumption at the destination and at home. Additionally, making their own souvenir using found materials led to the enhancement of people-object-place-experience connections increasing the value and satisfaction experienced through participating in this activity.

**Conclusions:** Future research may focus on how engaging in co-creative experiences such as souvenir making at the destination may further encourage sustainable behaviours, production and consumption practices, and contribute to repurposing and reimagining tourism-generated waste.

**Keywords**

Souvenir; Pro-environmental behaviour; Tourist; Co-creation; Craft; Plastic

**Title**

Resilience and Tourism: Challenges in Developing Tourism in Rural Areas

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**Abstract**

Icelandic tourism is one of the pillars of the country's economy, but uneven distribution of tourists results in varying economic benefits between regions. Tourism is most concentrated in the southwest and south of Iceland, within convenient driving distance from the capital area and Keflavík International Airport. In recent years, tourism authorities have placed emphasis on achieving a more balanced distribution of tourists and tourism activities while also reducing seasonal fluctuations.

This presentation focuses on one of Iceland's least-visited regions, Melrakkaslétta, a remote area that includes the northernmost points of the country and is also the region farthest from the capital area and Keflavík International Airport, the main entry gate of the island.

Melrakkaslétta is part of a relatively new tourist route, the Arctic Coast Way, which follows Iceland's northern coastline. The route connects service centres by leading travellers through rural areas between them, aiming to attract tourists out of the beaten track and create opportunities for year-round tourism development in these regions. However, infrastructure is a crucial bottleneck for reaching these aims. Parts of the route include gravel roads that receive minimal maintenance, and in winter, the path shifts inland due to a lack of road services in rural areas. In the presentation, we will discuss these issues when introducing findings from recent studies on tourism development in Melrakkaslétta, set in the context of community resilience and the challenges faced by rural Arctic communities when aiming to enhance local tourism.

**Keywords**

Resilience; Tourist route; The Arctic Coast Way; Iceland

## **Title**

The Paradox of Tourism as a Promoter of Counterculture and an Agent of Commodification and Normalisation: The Case of Freetown Christiania

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## **Abstract**

Freetown Christiania is one of the most famous squat communes in the world. This countercultural space has been founded on principles of self-governance, self-reliance, collective management and activism. For decades, Christiania has been in conflict with the Danish state, that sought “normalisation” and reintegration of the area into Copenhagen. An especially contentious issue has been the soft drugs trade on ‘Pusher Street’. Drug sales have been a major economic activity in the community. During various times the drug trade and related criminal activities have taken over other aspects of Christiania, requiring strong response from law enforcement, the community or both. In 2024, ‘Pusher Street’ was permanently closed for drug trade.

While some Christiania residents work outside of the community, many are reliant on income from visitors to Christiania. Christiania is promoted as a creative and sustainable neighbourhood where visitors can explore unique architecture and art, shop for souvenirs and taste delicious food. We observe and argue that since the end of drug trade, tourism has become an even more central socio-economic activity that has various impacts on the community.

This paper discusses the role of tourism in Freetown Christiania. On the one hand tourism significantly contributes to the community’s economic viability, it provides economic value for its creativity and protects it from a stronger push for reintegration from the state authorities. On the other hand, tourism, as a commercial activity, commodifies Christiania’s culture and forces the community to adapt to the demands of the market, which it was founded partly in opposition to, thus potentially defeating the founding principles of the community and contributing to its further “normalisation”. We argue that this commodification contributes to an ongoing transformation the of Freetown from a countercultural space to a quirky and trendy area fit for (tourism) consumption. While issues of authenticity and commodification in tourism have been explored in various contexts, the case of Freetown Christiania contributes to a better understanding of contradictory impacts of tourism on communities.

## **Keywords**

Christiania; authenticity; commodification; community impacts; neighbourhood tourism; counterculture

**Title**

Branded routes on bumpy roads: exploring infrastructure and tourism collaboration in rural Iceland

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**Abstract**

This paper explores the role of road infrastructure and governance in the development of rural drive tourism in Iceland. The focus is on the involvement of the Icelandic road authorities (IRCA) in the development of three branded tourist routes that rely on existing roads: the Arctic Coast Way, the Westfjords Way, and the Volcanic Way. All three routes were developed to promote tourism dispersal, support communities in rural areas and aim to encourage slower travel that promotes stronger connections with landscapes and communities, in line with sustainability goals.

Semi-structured interviews were conducted with 14 key stakeholders, including representatives from IRCA, regional tourism offices and municipalities along the routes. Interviews focused on the planning and implementation of the routes, as well as perceptions of collaboration between tourism and infrastructure actors. Findings suggest that although IRCA is widely regarded as an essential stakeholder in route development, its role has largely remained reactive and focused on maintenance and safety rather than involvement in strategic planning. Tourism stakeholders emphasised the need for engagement with IRCA to ensure that infrastructure, signage, and winter services align with tourism goals and the needs of travellers. Differences in institutional priorities, limited funding and a lack of formalised coordination mechanisms were identified as key challenges.

The study reveals how road infrastructure, institutional roles and governance affect tourism development in rural Iceland. It also calls for closer attention to coordination between tourism and infrastructure stakeholders.

**Keywords**

Rural drive tourism; Infrastructure governance; Branded tourist routes; Stakeholder collaboration

**Title**

Navigating Self-Identity in Sustainable Tourism: A Typology of Core, Expanded, Inflated, and Community Selves

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**Abstract**

With the acknowledgement of environmental catastrophe, there is a growing emphasis on sustainable practices (Wallace-Wells, 2022). Yet, the reality of persistent trend of unsustainable consumption cannot be overlooked. The self, a fundamental aspect of consumer behaviour, is shaped by and shapes consumption patterns (Campbell, 1983; Firat, 1991; Hogg and Michell, 1996). We argue that responsible tourism is not merely an external practice, but a deeply personal and community-oriented commitment, moulded by the diverse aspects of the self (Firat, 2005). Thus, we ask ‘how can the self of the consumer be conceptualized in sustainable tourism?’. To address this, we developed a typology of the self, comprising the core self, expanded self, inflated self, and community self, and examine their roles in sustainable service consumption. The core self, representing an individual's fundamental values and beliefs, is closely linked to existential authenticity and sustainable tourism choices. The expanded self includes significant others and non-material objects, fostering social bonding and aligning with sustainable tourism principles. The inflated self, driven by self-enhancement tendencies, presents contradictions but can be engaged through tailored communication strategies. Lastly, the community self emphasizes participation in shared consumption activities, reinforcing a sense of belonging and collective pursuit of sustainable tourism.

By situating our research within the extant literature on self and sustainable tourism, we contribute to the understanding of the complex interplay between individual and collective selves in sustainable tourism, acknowledging its dynamic and multi-dimensional nature. While previous research has predominantly focused on the consumption of commodities, this study contributes to the services literature by exploring the consumption of services, particularly within the context of sustainable tourism. Our research offers a comprehensive perspective on the engagement of the self in sustainable service consumption, underscoring the importance of reconciling the complexities of the self in pursuit of a more sustainable future.

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**Keywords**

Sustainable tourism; Sustainable consumption; Self; Services

**Title**

Social sustainability as a tourism destination brand. The case of Copenhagen

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**Abstract**

This paper explores how the social dimension of sustainability is framed and leveraged to promote urban tourism destinations, focusing on Copenhagen as a case study. Using a qualitative multi-method approach, the study examined the mechanisms through which Copenhagen's urban social sustainability is strategically positioned as a destination brand. It highlights how the social value embedded in the city's social fabric is framed and marketed to attract visitors and enhance the city's global appeal. Additionally, it discusses how social sustainability principles are integrated into sustainable and regenerative tourism models to catalyse environmental stewardship and social cohesion between tourists and residents. By investigating the interplay between social sustainability narratives and urban tourism strategies, this research contributes to the discourse on the social dimension of tourism, emphasising the need to balance destination promotion with social sustainability and resident well-being.

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**Keywords**

Social Sustainability; Destination branding; urban tourism; discourse analysis; Copenhagen

## **Title**

Towards regenerative tourism? Insights and experiences from Danish Destination Management Organizations

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## **Abstract**

This abstract and presentation is based off an accepted article in a special issue on “Regenerative Tourism in Arctic and Nordic Geographies” in the Journal of Arctic Tourism. The article reports results from a study investigating the role of Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) in advancing regenerative tourism in Denmark. Despite its potential, regenerative tourism remains underdeveloped and difficult to understand, presenting challenges in adoption and implementation (see also Dredge 2022; Belato and Pollock, 2023). Through an exploratory qualitative analysis of interviews with nine Danish DMOs, we identify three key themes: open and receptiveness to regenerative tourism principles, significant barriers to operationalization, and the dichotomy between willing and reluctant tourism stakeholders. All key themes will be explained and examples provided along with quotes from the interviewed DMO representatives.

Findings reveal a general openness to regenerative tourism among DMOs, tempered by conceptual ambiguity, measurement challenges, and resistance from stakeholders. The study underscores DMOs' potential as critical change agents in fostering regenerative tourism by bridging academic insights with practical applications. To answer the call for increased regenerative literacy in the field, we advocate the need for an increased collaboration between academia and DMOs to foster actionable blueprints, adaptable key performance indicators and documented (un)successful regenerative tourism initiatives tailored to local contexts so both DMOs and academia can make tangible shifts towards regenerative tourism beyond the conceptual. The research also contributes to the discourse on transitioning DMOs from infinite growth-driven entities to stewards of sustainable and regenerative tourism. Future work calls for expanded comparative studies and deeper academia-practitioner collaboration to refine regenerative tourism's theoretical and practical foundations.

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**Keywords**

Regenerative tourism; Destination Management Organizations; Challenges; Academia-practitioner collaboration, Denmark

**Title**

The greener the better? Tourists' willingness to accept sacrifices for reduced emissions from transportation

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**Abstract**

Travel and tourism are responsible for huge carbon emissions (Gössling et al., 2023), of which the majority comes from transportation (Sustainable Travel International, 2024). Investing in climate-neutral technologies will contribute to reduced emissions. However, since such investments are both costly and risky, their profitability depends on the market's willingness to accept sacrifices such as paying a higher ticket price and/or accepting longer travel time. In this research, we investigate factors influencing tourists' willingness to make sacrifices for reduced emissions from transportation.

Previous research demonstrates that it is difficult to motivate people to choose more sustainable alternatives, if it entails personal sacrifices (Chiambaretto et al., 2024; White et al., 2019). A number of factors that can motivate people to act sustainably have been identified (Greene et al., 2023; Passaforo & Veccione, 2022). However, the relative impact and interplay between different technological solutions as well as situational and individual factors are likely to be complex and remains to be explored.

This research takes short-distance ferries as an example and investigates how sustainability actions put forth by companies as well as situational and individual difference factors influence tourists' willingness to sacrifice for reduced emissions from transportation. Using data from focus groups as well as survey data from Germany and Norway collected in two waves (2023/24 and 2024/25), and two choice-based conjoint experiments we investigate the impact of different levels of emission reduction (50% - 100%) and drive solutions (electricity vs biofuel) on tourists' willingness to pay higher ticket prices (wtp) and accept longer travel time. Results indicate a modest wtp effect, however a willingness to buy effect suggests investments in emission reducing technologies may lead to higher market shares. Individual and situational factors moderating these effects are identified.

Theoretically, this research contributes with insight into factors that influence tourists' willingness to sacrifice for the environment. Results will help authorities and managers when they make decisions about regulations and investments for reduced emissions and how they should communicate with different market segments to motivate tourists to join them in positively contributing to the environment.

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## Keywords

Reduction of carbon emissions; Transportation; Sustainable travel; Willingness to pay

## Title

Workshops as a tool for engaging rural communities in regenerative tourism

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## Abstract

Regenerative approaches have been presented as a crucial evolution towards holistic sustainability transformations in tourism. Particularly in rural communities, where tourism has often served as a means to diversify local economies (Hall et al., 2009), regenerative tourism holds potential to support tourism economies within ecological and social boundaries (Lazic & Della Lucia, 2024). Under the pressures of green transition, environmental crisis, and out-migration, regenerative development can support vitality and liveability of places. As regenerative tourism utilises bottom-up and community-based approaches, it is designed to ensure the participation and inclusion of all voices.

To secure the regenerative tourism futures, changes are needed not only in tourism practices and systems but also in tourism research (Bellato et al., 2024). More collaboration between scholars and practitioners is crucial for exploring possible pathways. By applying, for example, co-creative methods or action research, the dualistic distinction between research subject and object can be dissolved. Through two-way knowledge-sharing, tourism research can act as an intervention targeting “core properties, structures and paradigms of a system” (Lupini et al., 2024, p. 3).

The study examines the delivery and the outcomes of a community workshop held in a case municipality in Northern Finland. The workshop brought together residents, entrepreneurs, and organisation representatives to envision how places in the municipality can be developed through regenerative tourism. This kind of bottom-up development ensures that tourism contributes to rural vitality and fosters reciprocal collaboration among socio-ecological communities. To assess the practical impact of this individual intervention, follow-up data will be collected. The insights from the workshop and follow-up data will help us understand the prospects and challenges of initiating regenerative tourism processes in rural communities.

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**Keywords**

Regenerative tourism; Workshop; Sustainability transformations; Tourism planning; Rural development

**Title**

White Trash: Tourist Voices on Waste in Coastal Destinations

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**Abstract**

Despite tourism-generated solid waste is a growing problem in coastal destinations, customer reviews and social media communication largely ignore the issue. This paper analyzes tourist voices on garbage in user-generated content and identifies the drivers and processes or responsabilization. From the review platforms of Booking.com and Tripadvisor, we scraped 1,701 comments indicative of waste management practices and issues in (and around) 71 hospitality operators on the equatorial archipelago of Zanzibar. Scraped reviews between 2018-2024 were contrasted with a GIS analysis of visitor concentrations on the island in the same period, and allowed the spatial mapping of waste perceptions. We found that tourists' environmental attitudes and placing of responsibility is invariably connected to strong sentiments (contempt, anger and disgust) and embodied encounters with waste. Furthermore, the location of garbage and litter also heightened eco-ethical awareness and reflections. Drawing on literature pertaining to discard studies and consumer subject formation, we contribute to research on embodied and sensory gateways of moralization.

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**Keywords**

Online reviews; Waste perceptions; Moralization; Discard studies; Sustainable tourism; Tanzania

### **Title**

The market for second-hand sports equipment. An explorative study of participants in two sport events

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### **Abstract**

The second-hand market provides an opportunity to reduce utilized resources and thus emissions. Since estimates of carbon emissions are based largely on the production rather than on the consumption of goods, the environmental impacts of sports activities can be considerably reduced by stimulating the use of second-hand equipment. As an example, the carbon footprint of a new competition bicycle is around 94 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e whereas the carbon footprint of a second-hand similar bicycle is zero. This study is part of the MISTRA project with the aim to reduce carbon emissions and resource use from sports and leisure activities. The aim of this explorative study is to describe the consumption and induced emissions of equipment, both new and second-hand, by participants in sports events.

The methodology is based on surveys at two large participant events in Sweden (Göteborgsvarvet and Vätternrundan) one of them is a half-marathon and the second is a road cycling event. In all 1546 useable replies were received (923 & 623) to an internet survey. The survey questions asked about equipment bought (price and amount) during the last year in preparation for one of the events. The carbon footprint from each type of equipment was calculated using life cycle assessment (LCA) and the results of these calculations were integrated in the database. Furthermore, questions were asked related to sports motivation (serious leisure) and environmental attitudes (New Environmental Paradigm). Socioeconomic variables (age, income, gender, education) were also included in the questionnaire.

It turned out that 106 (17%) participants at the road cycling event had bought a new bicycle during the last year and 105 participants (17%) had bought a second-hand bicycle. An in-depth analysis is made of these two subsamples.

The results show that road cyclists spend on average 18 880 kr per year on equipment which is much more than the marathon runners 2 050 kr per year. The average road cyclist spends 15 800 kr per year on new equipment and 3 080 kr per year on second-hand equipment whereas the average marathon runner spends 2 025 kr per year on new equipment and only 25 kr per year on second-hand equipment. Consequently, the average carbon footprint related to equipment is much higher for the average road cyclist.

### **Keywords**

Participatory sport events; Carbon footprint; Second-hand market

# The Visitor Experience 1 + 2

**Title**

Hotel room perceptions: shaping the traveler experience

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**Abstract**

Hotel accommodation is a multifaceted component of travel that significantly impacts the traveler experience. While the physical aspects of a hotel room - such as design, amenities, and functionality - are important, intangible factors like ambiance, comfort and hotel services are crucial to forming a guest's overall perception. Ineson et al. (2019) argue that travel begins and ends in the hotel room, which serves as a temporary home, while Roberts et al. (2018) highlight that the familiarity and comfort of the room are key to ensuring quality rest and satisfaction.

Despite extensive research on hotel elements and operations (e.g., design, amenities, revenue management, guest service quality, sustainability practices, and customer loyalty programs), there is a gap in understanding the deeper meaning of the hotel room itself. This meaning evolves depending on the context of the stay, whether business or leisure (Kim & Park, 2017) and includes both tangible and intangible factors such as atmosphere and cleanliness, which are central to guest satisfaction (Marić et al., 2016).

Building on the work of Lvov & Komppula (2024), who examined hotel experiences from the perspective of hotel managers, this research looks at how hotel rooms perceptions shape travelers' expectations and experiences. Notably, Lvov (2023) focuses on the role of the hotel room within a travel experience, emphasizing the importance of personalizing the room environment through guest interaction (Ineson et al., 2019). Whether traveling for business or leisure, factors such as sleep quality, noise levels, room ambiance, and intangible elements all play a significant role in shaping the guest's experience (Marić et al., 2016). Together, these factors turn what could be a simple overnight stay into a meaningful and personal experience.

This research uses an online panel survey to collect data from Finland and key markets influencing its hospitality industry - Sweden and Germany. Participants aged 18-75 will have taken at least one leisure and one business trip with a hotel stay in the past three years.

This research examines how guests' hotel room expectations and perceptions shape the overall travel experience, providing a deeper understanding of what the hotel room means to travelers across different cultural and demographic backgrounds. The findings can help guide hotel management practices aimed at improving the guest experience, providing valuable insights for the hospitality industry.

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**Keywords**

Hotel room perceptions; Traveler experience; Hospitality management

**Title**

The Tourist experience concept revisited - Service design, immersion, and satisfaction

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**Abstract**

Tourism, as a phenomenon, is inherently associated with experiences, a concept is widely acknowledged as the new marketing frontier. The emergence of the Experience Economy and the evolving service marketing led to a refocus on tourism marketing in general and the tourist experience concept in particular. The special issue of SJHT (no. 1, vol. 7, 2007) has made a significant contribution to the experience concept approached from different perspectives. The content, structure, and use of the concept were explored. However, missing links exist especially from a marketing perspective in which the tourist experience concept is enclosed in isolation from other central marketing concepts. The purpose of this paper is to broaden the perspective and to link the experience concept to well-established marketing concepts such as service design, immersion, and customer satisfaction. Four hypotheses are presented, and the paper opens up a window to illustrate a theoretical model – the co-prosumption of experience, and it suggests Tourist Dominant (T-D) logic.

**Keywords**

Tourist experience; Service design; Immersion; Satisfaction; Tourist Dominant (T-D) Logic

**Title**

What Drives Nature Tourists? A Motivation-based Typology

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**Abstract**

Grounded in Push and Pull theory, this study explores the motivational typologies of nature-based tourism (NBT), aiming to increase understanding of motivation-based segmentation. Motivations are commonly analyzed to explain tourists' behavior and decision-making process. While there is an extensive body of literature on NBT motivations, shifting trends, such as changing consumption patterns, evolving leisure time preferences (Sørensen & Grindsted, 2021), and increased interest in recreation in natural environments (Fredman & Margaryan, 2021), call for further exploration of the tourists' needs and typologies in the NBT market.

A quantitative research strategy was employed, surveying 4981 tourists in Baltic Sea Region and in its key European source markets. Study identified (1) knowledge of nature and harmony with it, (2) relaxation, and (3) social and cultural engagement as core underlying motivational factors demonstrating the effectiveness of exploratory factor analysis NBT segmentation. Cluster analysis revealed Nature enthusiasts, Leisure seekers, and Cultural travelers types, further showcasing the diversity of NBT market. The results indicated that each type differed in motivation, service preferences, and sociodemographic characteristics.

Understanding the heterogeneity of NBT motivations and clusters has significant implications for businesses, DMOs and policymakers regarding destination marketing and management. This knowledge may increase the effectiveness of promotional strategies, support the adaptation of service offering to shifting consumer needs and values, and enhance tourist satisfaction.

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<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2021.103307>

**Keywords**

Nature-based tourism; NBT; Nature tourist motivation; Motivation-based segmentation

**Title**

Outdoor recreation experiences in a changing marine environment – insights from recreational anglers, scuba divers and birdwatchers in the Oslofjord, Norway

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**Abstract**

The main element of nature experiences such as nature-based tourism and outdoor recreation is nature, which is mainly outside of both visitors' and providers' control (Mehmetoglu, 2007). Meanwhile, several urban natural areas are under pressure, both from the infrastructure surrounding them, and from outdoor recreation itself (e.g., Mejjad et al., 2022). A prime example of this issue is the Oslofjord, which is located in the most densely populated area of Norway. The natural environment of the fjord has deteriorated drastically the last 20 years, and several local populations of fish and other marine life forms in the fjord are struggling. As a result, the Norwegian government has introduced a local fishing ban for cod, and stricter regulations on both commercial and recreational fishing, as well as other forms of use are currently considered.

Our study examines how the changing state of the natural environment in the Oslofjord influences the outdoor recreation experiences of three groups of dedicated outdoor recreationalists; recreational anglers, recreational birdwatchers and recreational scuba divers in the area. To examine this issue, we conducted seven focus groups with 3-6 experienced recreationalists within these three groups, including a total of 31 informants with 20 to 70 years of experience with their outdoor activity in the Oslofjord. Preliminary findings indicate that the experiences of most informants have changed drastically since they first started with their outdoor activity in the area. Less wildlife, murkier water and more crowding were discussed at many of the focus groups. Several informants expressed negative emotions such as anger, sadness, powerlessness and grief, possibly linked to Eco-Grief and related concepts (Ágoston et al., 2022). Moreover, most informants appeared to have changed the way they did their activity, or to travel to other locations more often to participate in it. These behaviors are linked to substitution (Sutton & Oh, 2015). These topics and other elements linked to the changing outdoor recreation experiences of recreational angling, scuba diving and birdwatching will be discussed and elaborated.

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**Keywords**

Outdoor recreation; Nature experiences; Eco-grief; Substitution; Changing experiences

**Title**

The Role of Scent in Experiences

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**Abstract**

Creating and delivering unique, high-quality, memorable experiences is vital in tourism, as extraordinary experiences attract and satisfy tourists (Tung & Ritchie, 2011). Sensory impressions are crucial to reacting to, remembering, and retelling an experience (Agapito, Valle, & Mendes, 2014; Elvekrok & Gulbrandsøy, 2022). The most sensitive human sense is smell. This study investigates the effects of scent on the evaluation of an experience.

An example of a novel experiential innovation that targets both residents and visitors is escape rooms. Although popular in gaming for a long time, live versions have only been offered to customers in the last decade (Pakhlov & Rozhkova, 2020). The basic idea of an escape room is that groups of participants enter a closed, themed room to solve puzzles and clues to escape within a limited timeframe, usually an hour. Escape rooms provide an ideal experimental setting where all environmental signals are effectively planned, and exposure is limited in time and space.

Data were collected through field experiments in an escape room in Oslo, Norway. The manipulation involved the presence or absence of a scent that fits the escape room theme. We hypothesize that including a scent that agrees with the theme will positively impact the evaluation of the dimensions of the experience and the general satisfaction of the participants. The effect on experience evaluation and overall satisfaction was inspired by previously validated measures in other contexts (Brakus, Schmitt, & Zarantonello, 2009).

Preliminary findings indicate that addition of a scent enhances the intensity of the experience and, consequently, the level of satisfaction. However, the observed increase in satisfaction is less pronounced than expected. One plausible explanation is that the overall satisfaction level was already quite high in the control group (the non-scent group), limiting the potential for a significant positive difference.

This study contributes to the literature on staged experiences, particularly those that involve sensory elements. Our research provides insight into how sensory stimuli can enhance satisfaction. This understanding is crucial for fields such as marketing, hospitality, and event management, where creating memorable and engaging experiences is paramount.

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**Keywords**

Tourism experiences; Sensory marketing; Escape rooms; Scent; Satisfaction

**Title**

More Than a Meal: How Service Became Culinary Art in Scandinavia

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**Abstract**

Over the past two decades, the Scandinavian restaurant industry has undergone a significant transformation that extends beyond the kitchen to redefine the art of service within the culinary experience. Rooted in the rise of New Nordic Cuisine and influenced by increasing demands for sustainability, transparency, and digital integration, restaurant service in Denmark, Sweden, and Norway has shifted from a traditionally minimal and efficient model toward one that is narrative-driven, ethically conscious, and closely intertwined with culinary philosophy. This research explores how the evolution of service practices reflects broader changes in culinary values and guest expectations, positioning service as a central, expressive component of contemporary Scandinavian gastronomy.

Using a qualitative methodology, the study draws on semi-structured interviews with chefs, service staff, and hospitality educators, alongside case studies of notable Scandinavian dining establishments and content analysis of industry publications. This multi-source approach enables a nuanced examination of how service roles are being redefined in both fine dining and casual settings, and how service professionals are adapting to expanded expectations that include culinary fluency, cultural sensitivity, and emotional engagement.

The research contributes to the field of culinary arts by articulating how service is becoming a performative and co-creative act that supports the storytelling, sustainability, and aesthetic values of modern Scandinavian cuisine.

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**Keywords**

Culinary arts; Scandinavian gastronomy; Restaurant service; Service culture; Guest experience

**Title**

Factory experience with novel interactions: Meaning creations when factory employees get on the ‘scene’

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**Abstract**

Service and experience literature have mostly studied interactions between visitors and service personnel, and interactions with other visitors (Carù & Cova, 2005). However, other diverse types of interactions can be important in the experience design and for visitors meaning creation (Eide & Lindberg, 2022).

The context is a new visitor center for wild fish at a fish factory in North Norway, where fish factory employees become part of a story and experience attraction. This paper aims to develop knowledge about the consequences for meaning creation when bringing backstage employees on the ‘stage’. The research questions are: How can interactions with factory employees enhance visitors’ meaning creation? How can interactions with visitors influence factory employees’ meaning creation at work?

Meaning creation is approached as multi-relational where different interaction types are one of four main dimensions (Lindberg, et al., 2014). Interactions include nonverbal communication like kinesics (Islam and Kirillova 2021).

The study applies a qualitative case-design. Semi-structured interviews with factory employees and management, guides, and visitors are carried out as well as a visitor survey, workshops, observations, and conversations. Data is analyzed through thematical content analysis.

Preliminary findings show there are two main types of interactions. One where employees are shown on screens in three different ways: by picture and text presenting who they are, one video showing when they work, as well as live streaming. The second type occurs at a distance where visitors and employees see each other but cannot communicate verbally. The visitors are standing on a glass balcony looking down in the factory, observing employees doing their work, interacting with fish, tools and each other. By non-verbal behavior (e.g. smiling and waving) employees and visitors acknowledge each other and show their emotions. Sometimes a tour guide facilitates the tour by storytelling and explaining. For visitors, seeing the employees working in the factory was the peak experience during their visit. Factory employees were at first skeptical about the experience design. Later, most of them felt proud to show who they are, their work and the fishing culture. Further analysis will explore details about the experience design used and the main meaning patterns created about the novel ‘meeting’, seen from different stakeholder perspectives.

**Keywords**

Experience design; Interactions; Meaning creation; Visitor experience; Employee perspective

**Title**

Of Routes and Northern Roads. Tourism Development in Rural Iceland

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**Abstract**

This paper presents and discusses findings from two research studies conducted in the summer of 2024 in two rural areas in Iceland, Vatnsnes and Melrakkaslétta peninsulas. Both form a part of a newly branded tourism route, the Arctic Coast Way, which follows the northern coastline of Iceland. The route leads tourists through some of the country's most rural and least visited areas, partly following some of the country's least maintained gravel roads.

The research applied surveys, survey interviews and unstructured conversations as well as fieldwork and on-site group discussions. The research objective is to enhance knowledge on rural tourism development, tourism routes and drive tourism on local level. The research amongst residents was positioned in studies on residential support and involvement in local tourism, focusing on the residents' inclusion in the creation of the Arctic Coast Way and their attitudes towards its utilisation on local level. The tourist-focused research was premised in literature on the role of transport systems in tourism mobilities, set to capture if and how the Arctic Coast Way and infrastructural conditions affect tourism travels off-the-beaten-track.

Findings show that both areas share commonalities in scarce local involvement, yet positive stances towards the Arctic Coast Way's potentials for local tourism development while the route seems to not have gained widespread recognition amongst tourists travelling the rural Icelandic North. The two research studies, however, showcase concerns regarding infrastructures and rural road conditions, although with somewhat differing emphasis between both residents and tourists as well as between the residents in the two areas.

**Keywords**

Rural tourism; Community involvement; Rural roads; Drive tourism; Tourism routes

# Entrepreneurship and Innovation

**Title**

Towards an Archipelago Tourism Entrepreneurial Ecosystem

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**Abstract**

The archipelago is a potent tourism amenity (e.g Marjavaara & Müller, 2007). The pre-pandemic tourism consumption in Sweden increased significantly but was and still is unevenly spread. “Tourism consumption in Sweden is booming, but it seems to be at a standstill in the Stockholm archipelago, and most businesses of all kinds in it are small.” (Onn, 2018, 73). This triggers an urge from the public sector to fix the problem of poor development in the archipelago. Anecdotal evidence suggests that many of the residents in the archipelago are dependent on visitation – either second home tourists, tourists, or day-trip visitors. Hence, to lay the foundations to understand what kind of interventions that might improve the situation in the archipelago, it is reasonable to investigate how archipelago tourism works, and as most businesses in the archipelago are small, it is worthwhile to research entrepreneurship in the archipelago, as continuing the laden road hardly will render improvement.

Very few studies investigate archipelagos for specific aspects of the entrepreneurial ecosystems. Freitas and Kitson (2018) compare the archipelago and urban entrepreneurial ecosystems of Madeira versus Lisbon and Canary Islands versus Catalonia respectively. Rytkönen et al. (2023) focus on island artisan food entrepreneurs and the relation between entrepreneurship and self-employment among islanders on Åland, Finland, and its consequences for the entrepreneurial ecosystem. The Stockholm archipelago is large, with some 30 000 islands with a very sparse and unevenly distributed population and has potential to illuminate contextual challenges that may be overlooked in the study of urban or more densely populated areas. Entrepreneurial ecosystem research has focused on categorising, and there have been calls for a conceptualisation effort E.g. by Stam (2015). Hopefully, investigating the archipelago tourism entrepreneurial ecosystem renders conceptualisation of general aspects of entrepreneurial ecosystems theory, as the many projects launched to improve the situation indicated that it is not so well-functioning an ecosystem.

Methods used are unstructured and semi-structured interviews, (ca 60 in total), register data, document studies, and cartographical analysis based on google maps. Material was analysed using content analysis for the qualitative material and correlation and regression analysis. Results are now being analysed.

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**Keywords**

Archipelago; Entrepreneurial ecosystems

**Title**

Creative Attractions: Art, craft and entrepreneurship in rural Southeast Sweden

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**Abstract**

Art and craft have powers to redefine places. Hallmarked creative practices mark out or hold potential for emblematic perceptions of place that can be complementary or disruptive to local legacies. A qualitative study in rural Southeast Sweden shows the importance of vivid and aspiring influence on particular 'placetelling' through arts and craft communities. With signature art and craft, their produce and practices become embedded in places that differentiate those places from others, creatively configuring them as places to visit for particular reasons, redirecting visitor flows to less visited areas. The 'placetelling' that emanates from art and craft is not one of authenticity but rather one of originality. Originality is bound to specific creative dimensions of the artists' genius, intent and style. This goes beyond the art itself and connects to cultural tourists who read the landscape by those traits. Art and craft make up important motives and impetus for travel to places otherwise not visited.

**Keywords**

Rural tourism; Art tourism; Cultural tourism

**Title**

Recognizing the Role of Cultural Ecosystem Services in Nature-Based Tourism: A Resource Perspective

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**Abstract**

The quality of the local environment is crucial for nature-based tourism and influences tourism firms' performance. In nature-based tourism, cultural ecosystem services, such as beautiful landscapes, recreational activities, and various spiritual experiences, influence tourists' satisfaction and overall experience. Despite the significant environmental impacts of tourism, companies are not actively engaged in local nature conservation efforts. However, efforts to enhance the local natural environment could benefit both the performance of tourism firms and nature.

Currently, there is limited knowledge regarding how tourism businesses can help preserve the local natural environment, particularly in the case of cultural ecosystem services. This study positions cultural ecosystem services as critical resources for Nature-based tourism and explores them through the lenses of resource-based view and natural resource dependence. The use of natural resource dependence theory helps to understand the impacts of dependence and uncertainty in the nature-based tourism industry, while the resource-based view enables the analysis of the internal strategies of tourism companies.

This study examines the importance of cultural ecosystem services for nature-based tourism firms operating in two different UNESCO Biosphere Reserves in Finland. Additionally, it analyzes the firms' internal responses to their dependence on natural resources. The data consists of 27 interviews with purposely selected tourism firms that can be considered pioneering firms in sustainable tourism.

Although the analysis process is still ongoing, some insights can be shared. Despite the familiarity of the firms with sustainable tourism, not many have taken significant actions to enhance the quality of the natural environment. Nevertheless, the quality of nature is regarded as one of the most important aspects for business, even as the most critical resource. However, many companies feel powerless due to their limited ability to influence beyond their properties. Although some companies have taken steps to influence their operational environment, larger external issues remain beyond their control, such as water pollution and cyanobacterial blooms. Additionally, a lack of knowledge and resources impacts what companies believe is feasible and reasonable to undertake. Further analysis will focus on tourism firms' behavior and strategies. More precise results and conclusions are presented at the conference.

**Keywords**

Cultural ecosystem services; Nature-based tourism; Resource-based view; Natural resource-dependence; Sustainable tourism

**Title**

The types of knowledge and sources required by nature-based tourism firms for success

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**Abstract**

To gain a deeper understanding of knowledge management processes in micro and small enterprises within the nature-based tourism (NBT) sector, it is particularly important to identify the types of knowledge they utilize and their ability to process both tacit and explicit knowledge. A firm's competitive advantage and its sustainability depend on knowledge and the capability to create and utilize it (Nonaka et al., 2000). This research focuses on nature-based tourism businesses, a sector that remains underrepresented in the literature concerning knowledge management in micro- small and medium sized enterprises which dominate the nature-based tourism industry (Lundberg & Fredman, 2012). Resilience in this sector is critical, as its failure rate higher compared to most other industries (Williams & Rodríguez Sánchez, 2024).

The exploration of the types of knowledge used and needed by NBT firms is a key aspect of my doctoral research on knowledge management in these enterprises. This research is part of the VIMAS, MSCA doctoral network project.

Data collection is taking place in Finland in between March and May 2025 in collaboration with Metsähallitus the Finnish public natural resource administrator that is responsible for partnership agreements with NBT businesses operating in protected areas. Through qualitative, in-depth interviews with Metsähallitus' and 30-40 tourism company representatives from various protected areas, I aim to uncover and categorize the tacit and explicit knowledge and the types of sources these firms use and need for their successful operation. This qualitative approach also allows me to understand the capabilities these companies have or require processing the knowledge available to them, and to identify connections across different types of services, regions and company sizes and the quality of their relationships with Metsähallitus.

The analytical phase will take place in summer 2025 and will provide the necessary data for a study on the same topic, which will seek to answer the following research questions:

- What types of tacit and explicit knowledge are most frequently needed in nature-based tourism (NBT) firms?
- What types of tacit and explicit knowledge are most frequently utilized in NBT firms?
- What are the main sources of knowledge in NBT firms?

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**Keywords**

Nature tourism; Knowledge; Knowledge management; Firm; Entrepreneur

# (Re)Valuing Arctic Tourism 1 + 2

**Title**

Nuancing the Choices of Tourism Entrepreneurs in Their Involvement with Cruises in Arctic Norwegian Destinations

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**Abstract**

While many Arctic coastal communities are finding themselves under the pressure of unprecedented growth in cruise tourism arrivals, this presentation sets the scene to explore the negotiations behind the perceived “business as usual” notion in tourism industry, especially becoming evident in the post-Covid-19 pandemic period. We are adding to the critical evaluation of the tourism entrepreneurs’ own life choices and motives in relation to decisions to engage with cruise ship tourism by using examples from remote Arctic Norwegian coastal communities. By using in-depth qualitative methods, including interviews and ethnographic fieldwork, we were able to examine the specific placed-based economic and socio-cultural motives influencing our informants’ engagement with cruise tourism. Our participant observations in the field during 2021-2023 were complemented by formal semi-structured interviews with representatives from both tourism community and relevant stakeholders, resulting in a comprehensive material of total 41 interviews. The use of ethnographic methods with their contextual sensitivity allowed us to spend time at these destinations and helped to enrich our understanding of entrepreneurial practices focused on embracing, balancing, or avoiding cruise tourism.

Based on the analysis of the results derived from the two destinations of Honningsvåg and Alta, this presentation will shed light on the multifaced considerations involved in decision-making leading to local practices and adaptations to the challenges brought by cruise ship tourism development in this part of the Arctic. We will conclude that the ability to engage with cruise ship tourism is highly dependent on the level of stakeholders’ own agency – their capacity for self-governance, anticipated economic benefits, previous professional experiences and life-work balance abilities. In addition, our work highlights the necessity of situated analysis using in-depth ethnographic studies, helping to identify real-life choices of tourism hospitality entrepreneurs ranging from those who actively seeking other opportunities in life to those who pursue the economic benefits brought by their involvement in mass tourism in the Arctic.

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**Keywords**

Cruise tourism; Arctic tourism destinations; Community-based development; Arctic Norway

**Title**

Moving cruise profit margins while setting the course for community based cruise tourism policies – Arctic responses to re(value) coastal overtourism

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**Abstract**

Economic values translated to profits from cruise tourism to Arctic ports of calls have skyrocketed over the last two decades for various reasons, beyond more traffic. While many would have thought the golden days of cruise were over with Covid, there has been a steep bounce back to Arctic portal destinations. Simultaneously and even before the pandemic hit local voices from various communities in the North were getting louder and more outspoken about the ills of overtourism and related social and environmental negative impacts generated by increased cruise traffic. While harbour authorities and cruiseliners seemed insatiable in increasing profit margins, it could seem as the pandemic had triggered a change of mentality towards these calls among community members of cruise towns. Whether and to what degree and how the pandemic became a game changer in how these calls and types of tourism is valued locally is an interesting discussion. Also another point of discussion particularly focused on in this presentation is the different ways different Arctic destinations have chosen to respond. The focus of attention will be on various ways of regulating or reacting to mitigate increased social intolerance and environmental pressure from cruise traffic across different Arctic port communities in Alaska, NE Canada, Greenland, Iceland and W-Norway. How are the values of communities mediated through the suggested and/or approved policy responses?

**Keywords**

Arctic; Cruise Tourism; Ports; Cruiseliners; Profits; Communities; Policy responses

**Title**

Communities' valuation of Arctic tourism in Northern sparsely populated areas

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**Abstract**

Tourism has become a political go-to strategy for socioeconomic development in Northern sparsely populated areas. It is valued by transnational, national, and regional governmental bodies as a means to generate export-oriented growth, and revitalise infrastructure, cultural life, and natural heritage in remote places. A key tool for stimulating tourism development pathways in these areas is public funding. However, this often follows top-down valuations and development aspirations of higher-level governance stakeholders rather than local communities (Bohn et al., 2023).

This paper examines how rural communities in northernmost Finland and Sweden value Arctic tourism locally based on the analysis of LEADER projects executed between 2014 and 2022. The European Union introduced LEADER in the early 1990s as a programme empowering bottom-up development initiatives in rural regions led by local public and private actors and partnerships. LEADER constitutes a specific form of governance that transcends traditional regional or municipal jurisdictions by addressing policy problems within task-specific tailored spaces through voluntary participation (Servillo, 2019).

Across the EU, a substantial number of public and private tourism-focused projects have been funded by LEADER since its inception (Tirado Ballesteros & Hernández Hernández, 2018). For rural sparsely populated areas, LEADER offers opportunities to integrate tourism development in supra-municipal public-private networks (Tirado Ballesteros & Hernández Hernández, 2019).

Yet, little is known about the place-specific geographies and qualitative aspects of valuing tourism as a development pathway in Finnish Lapland and Västerbotten and Norrbotten in northern Sweden.

We analyse funding provided to firms and public organisations under the LEADER framework, to identify where, to what extent, and to what ends locally-led initiatives have executed tourism projects in general and Arctic tourism initiatives in particular. The aim is to gauge how (Arctic) tourism is valued as a bottom-up pathway to community development in remote hinterlands, and what economic, sociocultural or other community values are reflected in the projects. The comparison between Sweden and Finland sheds light on the broader institutional and historically evolved structural settings for LEADER-based tourism development, and reveals differences in the types of Arctic tourism projects supported.

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## Keywords

Arctic tourism; Northern sparsely populated areas; LEADER; Community development

**Title**

Destination X – infrastructural assemblage in Greenlandic tourism

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**Abstract**

In this presentation, we explore on-going tourism development in Greenland through the concept of infrastructural assemblage (Valkonen, et.al., 2022). Infrastructural assemblage highlights infrastructure as a relational heterogenous composite of materials, discourse, practices and images. This enables seeing infrastructures not just as physical backdrops or passive enablers but as vehicles that condition and order humans and more-than-humans alike, in the present and into the future.

This is exemplified by drawing our attention to Greenland, where within just a few years, tourism is set to become fundamentally altered due to the opening of international transatlantic airports in Nuuk (2024), Ilulissat and Qaqortoq. At the same time, rapid growth will add more pressure to a tourism system already strained by limited capacity. Greenlandic authorities have taken firm steps to regulate tourism with the approval of the very first Tourism Act implemented by January 2025, including new taxes on accommodation and cruise tourism, a certification requirement for tourism operators and stricter rule on foreign ownership and investments. However, there is still a great uncertainty in predicting the development of Greenlandic tourism and many tourism stakeholders are speculating about its future. Will legislation be enough to ensure a balanced growth, or will it completely halt an emerging industry?

Approaching the building of new airports in Greenland and the related thoughts and policy initiatives as infrastructural assemblage allows for exploring how diverse value propositions, dreams, hopes and concerns about tourism are in play while preparing for the new future for tourism in Greenland.

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**Keywords**

Greenland tourism; Infrastructural assemblage; Tourism futures; Arctic tourism development

**Title**

Navigating Values: Community-Centered (Re)Valuation in Arctic Expedition Cruise Tourism

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**Abstract**

This presentation explores how the value of Arctic expedition cruise tourism is being reconsidered; by local communities, policymakers, and the industry itself. Focusing on the role of the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO), we look at how value is defined and expressed in places like Svalbard, Greenland, Iceland, and Arctic Canada.

As Arctic tourism rebounds after COVID-19, there's growing interest in moving away from simply counting visitor numbers, and toward more thoughtful ways of understanding what tourism brings, and to whom. In many communities, cruise tourism creates opportunities: local jobs, visibility, and support for small businesses. But it also raises concerns: pressure on infrastructure, environmental risks, and questions about cultural integrity. AECO's 2030 Strategy responds to this by emphasizing sustainable growth, meaningful community engagement, and clearer responsibilities for the industry.

Drawing on AECO's internal strategies, community guidelines, and ongoing dialogue with local partners, this presentation highlights how the expedition cruise sector is actively pursuing a value-based approach. This includes efforts to employ local guides, support regional producers, and implement cultural and environmental practices that are tailored to each destination.

This approach is also reflected in how AECO responds to expectations from communities and authorities. Tourism is increasingly framed not just as an economic driver, but as something that must align with local priorities and values. This resonates with recent research on Arctic tourism operators who are seeking greater autonomy and a deeper sense of purpose in their work (Pashkevich & Hoarau-Heemstra, 2025).

What makes this case particularly relevant is that (re)valuation isn't just about financial returns, it's about whose voices shape what tourism should look like in the Arctic. AECO's approach shows how the conversation is evolving: from managing flows of visitors to fostering long-term relationships and mutual trust with Arctic communities.

This presentation contributes to ongoing discussions about the role of tourism in northern regions. It offers practical insights from within the expedition cruise industry on how value

is being redefined through policy, practice, and partnership, and why that matters for the future of Arctic travel.

**Keywords**

Arctic Expedition Cruise; Local value

**Title**

Revisiting and (re)valuing tourism employment in the Swedish mountain range: 20 Years on

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**Abstract**

For 60 years, the Swedish sub-Arctic region has faced rural decline, with ageing populations and fewer jobs in primary and public sectors. Tourism has become vital for economic development, attracting seasonal, younger workers. Building on Lundmark (2005), who analyzed 15 mountain municipalities using labor force data, this study maps labor mobility in the same area 1999-2019, assessing tourism's impact on employment, demographics, and sectoral distribution. In addition to examining changing labor market patterns and exploring economic values, local imbalances, and employment distribution, the study addresses growth, decline, and degrowth options as conceptual tools for (re)valuing tourism and, by adding a regenerative frame, the research contributes to discussions on the value of tourism in rural Arctic areas and beyond.

Preliminary results show that there is a difference in development between highly developed ski resorts and dispersed small-scale businesses. The ongoing 'green' transition has eradicated unemployment in the region, which further challenges tourism companies to find staff. This is leading to a temporary 'spatial fix' of international recruitment. So, even though tourism is growing i.e. increasing in numbers and economic value, recruitment and retainment difficulties are a core challenge for successful entrepreneurship, and permanent employment and integration of immigrants is needed for increasing local economic and social values and for tourism to become regenerative.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/15022250510014273>

**Keywords**

Degrowth; Employment; Growth; Labor market; Regenerative economies

**Title**

Regenerative tourism in Vindelälven-Juhttátahkka Biosphere reserve

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**Abstract**

This presentation aims to contribute to an academic discussion and sharing of experiences on the concept of regenerative economies and what that might mean in practical terms for rural communities in the Arctic. We present a new EU Horizon 2020 project aimed at empowering Coastal, Local, and Indigenous Communities (CLICs) as a basis for the discussion. The project seeks to mobilise their knowledge, including traditional ecological knowledge, to co-create regenerative economies and livelihoods in a just, inclusive, and gender-sensitive manner. It brings together CLICs, researchers, and local stakeholders (industry, businesses, civil society, policymakers) in a knowledge co-creation process. Together, they will co-design and implement principles, methodologies, guidelines, frameworks, and indicators for regenerative economies and livelihoods, as well as platforms for community engagement and participation. The project includes four Pilots (GL, NO, SE & FI), focusing on close-to-nature tourism, small-scale climate-resilient agriculture and climate-resilient fisheries. In this presentation, we focus on the Swedish pilot in the coastal area of the Vindelälven-Juhttátahkka Biosphere (VJB) reserve. Along the Vindelä river, with the municipality of Umeå at the coast, several communities reliant on tourism as part of their livelihoods are present.

**Keywords**

Coastal close-to-nature tourism; Climate change; Embeddedness; Regenerative practices

**Title**

Arctic cruise tourism and social license to operate: exploring social acceptance and trust in cruise tourism

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**Abstract**

The Arctic, with its diverse landscapes and cultures, has witnessed a surge in tourism over the past few decades. Cruise tourism, in particular, has played a pivotal role in this transformation. The region's remoteness and unique nature, filtering into what has been described as the 'Arctification' (Lundén et al., 2023), attract an ever-increasing number of cruise operators seeking to provide unique experiences for more and more tourists. Consequently, a growing debate is surrounding Arctic ports and destinations as the cruise business expands. This debate primarily revolves around the surge in visitor numbers congregating in remote and thinly populated communities (Stonehouse & Snyder, 2010). Issues are also emerging regarding the conduct of cruise tourists as they witness unfamiliar local customs, like traditional hunting or animal culling (Haworth, 2023), or overwhelm local residents through inquisitive observations of their daily lives. This study evaluates the feasibility of using the concept of Social License to Operate (SLO) in Arctic cruise tourism by identifying how attitudes and perceptions pertain to acceptance and trust.

Insights are gathered from both passengers and local stakeholders in Iceland and Faroe Islands. Results reveal cruise companies' dominance in itinerary planning, with minimal communication among destinations. Economic concerns overshadow collaborative planning, leading to varying levels of acceptance among the diverse stakeholders of cruise tourism. While those benefiting economically support the industry, others express reservations. This dichotomy in opinion regarding acceptance and trust highlights the SLO's challenges within tourism in general. For SLO to have relevance and legitimacy within cruise tourism, flow and circulation of perspectives is critical.

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**Keywords**

Social licence to operate (SLO); Social acceptance; Cruise tourism; Sustainability

Controversial Belongings:  
Contested Natures of Everyone's  
Right

**Title**

Illusory relationships: Unveiling cracks in the modern allemannsretten

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**Abstract**

The recent controversies surrounding allemannsretten (the everyone's right), in Norway have ignited debates on multiple fronts. Today, allemannsretten is celebrated as a traditional aspect deeply intertwined in Norway's identity as a nation fond of the outdoors. When the right was legally established in the Outdoor Recreation Act (Friluftsløven) of 1957, it was purportedly based on an old common law. Since then, its portrayal as a traditional and national right has lent it a veil of historical legitimacy, despite the relatively modern concept of outdoor recreation that the Act addresses. Historically, the old common law that gave the public access right, however, referred to landscape practices that were deemed "useful and necessary" (Reusch 2012, 36). These premodern landscape practices involved place-based communities and dependency relationships with floras and faunas, within which knowledges and belongings developed and cosmologies were shaped.

With the objective of critically investigating the current workings of allemannsretten in Norway, we address the historical transition of this right. The right has evolved to not only include but also emphasize outdoor recreation. This shift highlights historical changes in the application and perception of allemannsretten that reflect broader social changes.

Starting with an emphasis on more-than-human relational landscape practices, our study is informed by three ongoing ethnographic fieldworks in northern Norway. Guided by the historical traces indicated by the ethnographic materials, we explore these practices from a historical comparative perspective. This approach enables us to identify cracks in allemannsretten that arise from an environmental history of changing landscape use during the Capitalocene, as discussed by scholars such as Donna Haraway (2015) and Jason W. Moore (2016). Thus, we question the foundation of the modern allemannsrett by identifying changes in more-than-human relational practices that are inherent in modernization processes.

**Keywords**

Historical landscape practices; Capitalocene; More-than-human relationships

**Title**

A place of hospitality

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**Abstract**

For the last decade tourism has grown rapidly in Iceland and in 2023, 2.2 million travellers visited the country. It is about 4,5 times the country's population of 483.000 people. The majority of travellers visited the most highlighted destinations in the south of the country as the Golden Circle and Jökulsárlón glacier lagoon. Four percent of the visitors, around 88.000 people, however made a longer journey and travelled all the way to the westernmost point of the country, to a remote place named V-Barð. The place is characterised by its steep mountains, fjords and scattered communities in villages and countryside's with one thousand inhabitants.

Locals in V-Barð believe the main motivation for travellers visiting is because of the place rurality, where there is peace and quiet and they can be alone in nature. Locals also say that tourists like the freedom of being able to stop wherever they want to and do whatever they wish to do, which in their opinion should not be the case. Exactly what it is that gives travellers a feeling of unconditional access is not apparent, but locals frequently talk about the outdoor access rights of the public and how this causes diverse encounters of locals and travellers for good and for bad. Locals are prompt in their hospitality toward their guests and expect their guests to behave in responsible manners with respect and reciprocity.

In the chapter, I bring forth examples showing how the tension between hospitality and the outdoor access rights can be experienced in the relationship of guests, hosts, and places in V-Barð, Iceland, and I ask: How is the notion of hospitality apparent in different encounters of hosts, guests, and places in V-Barð, Iceland, through the outdoor access rights of the general public?

**Keywords**

Hospitality; Outdoor access rights of the general public; Remote places Tourism; Place

**Title**

Negotiating more-than-human hospitality on a wilderness immersion

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**Abstract**

A week-long immersion at a traditional nature living skills course is about to begin. The guests, mainly from around Stockholm and other urban centers of Sweden, are coming for the final part of their education at a folk high-school that has been running for the past year. The instructors have chosen this destination, where forest meets the sea, for its breathtaking beauty and abundance. They have permission from the landowner, a local farmer, to camp, at the condition that they are not allowed to make fire because of the unusually early and persistent drought. The first guests are arriving in kayaks at the Tjønnavika beach covered by stones, seaweed, and mussels at low tide. When everyone has checked in, they take the shoes off and take a moment to land in the new place. The tide is now rising. The touch of cold water on the feet and salty wind on the face feels harsh and welcoming at the same time. As if the sea is presenting its own terms of conditions for the stay. The kayaks are packed with essentials – tarp sleeping bag, one change of clothes, rope, axe, knife, and other things needed to make most of the coming week. They have little food and no water bottles with them. The most important things are provided by the local hosts – the sea and mountain streams, lichens and mosses, trees and other more-than-human beings who inhabit this place.

This essay approaches the contested nature of the everyone's right in settings where people seek to re-learn and repair relations with more-than-human landscapes. By playing with predominant tourism concepts like hosts and guests, exotic and mundane, authentic and staged, it explores the ways in which ethics and conditions of hospitality become negotiated during a wilderness immersion.

**References**

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**Keywords**

More-than-human; Hospitality; Wilderness immersion; Ancestral skills; Everyone's right

**Title**

Common(s) sense in the commons – entrepreneurs in outdoor recreation in Northern Norway

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**Abstract**

Outdoor recreation and nature-based tourism are changing the Norwegian landscape. In northern Norway, there has been a substantial increase in visitor management-related infrastructure like staircases, roads, trails, ski trails, cabins (for public use), parking lots, public toilets, information, and general markings of hiking routes. This is not necessarily a new phenomenon as national NGOs have promoted hiking and outdoor recreation for more than 150 years, and the biggest cabin owner is The Norwegian Trekking Association (DNT). What is new, however, is who is initializing this infrastructure, how it is justified, the number of actions taken, and finally who is executing these changes. Central to this change are several actors that have different mandates as agents of changing the outfields – the entrepreneurs of the commons. This intersects with a larger concern of human effects on nature in general, asking questions about what is needed infrastructure in the outfields, for whom, and ultimately asking what is common sense in the commons.

This paper draws on empirical data collected through ethnographic fieldwork in Northern Norway. A central institution that has been in the scope of participant observation and interviews is an outdoor recreational NGO called Friluftsråd. This is the entrepreneur that I follow in this paper.

The theoretical point of departure is leaning on two different pools of literature. The Norwegian anthropologist Fredrik Barth (1963) has been essential in the early debate on social entrepreneurship, with contributions on how we can understand social change in northern Norway. He suggested looking for what the entrepreneur makes. Here I take somewhat the opposite position by looking at what makes the entrepreneur. By connecting debates on entrepreneurship and the commons I hope to draw the curtains on questions that illuminate processes of what Blaser and De La Cadena (2017) call uncommonings. There are good reasons to listen to Blaser's and De la Cadenas's encouragement to raise questions regarding the commons as new knowledge about [...] "uncommoning" might be crucial for giving shape to solid commons." (Blaser & De la Cadena 2017: 185).

**Keywords**

Commons; Un-commons; Visitor management; Everyone's right; Outdoor recreation

**Title**

Belonging: Speculations on positionality in a more-than-human world

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**Abstract**

This presentation will focus on the concept of belonging and everyone's right in with examples from fieldwork in the Melrakkaslétta peninsula in northeast Iceland.

Melrakkaslétta is in the eyes of many a marginal place for various reasons. It is located as far from the capital, Reykjavík, as possible and is home to only about 350 residents, the majority of whom are located in two villages.

While the description might suggest that Melrakkaslétta is a dormant place, this presentation will present its heterogeneous and dynamic qualities. It is abundant in nature, known for its diverse and vivid birdlife, rich fishing grounds, arctic flora, and rich historical narratives that tell about plentiful human-nature relations that still flourish. Melrakkaslétta is, like all places, mobile and vibrant due to the constant comings and goings of humans, non-humans, ideas, and materials. In fact, it is a place of dynamic more-than-human relations. In this constant flow, it becomes evident that questions about belonging—who belongs and how one belongs—have always been at stake, both directly and indirectly, especially when considering human-nature relationalities. In this presentation, I will consider three examples that made me reflect on different ways of being with nature, which came to my attention during an organised four-day walking tour in the area. These events raise questions about relics and ruins, birds and multispecies communities, and challenge the concept of everyone's right from a more-than-human perspective in various temporal settings.

**Keywords**

Melrakkaslétta; Belonging; More-than-human relationalities; Marginal places; Everyone's right

# Inclusive Tourism

**Title**

Senior tourist group tour as a catalyst of active ageing and social engagement

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**Abstract**

As the population ages, increasing attention has been given to seniors' well-being and functional capacity. Social interaction, social activities, and social capital are key factors in seniors' overall well-being and active aging, referring to engagement with life in later years (Kim et al., 2021; Xiang & Qiao, 2022). Among seniors, retirement and negative life changes, such as health issues and the loss of loved ones, heighten the risk of social exclusion (Diekmann et al., 2020; Huber et al., 2018).

For seniors, tourism provides a platform to strengthen existing social relationships, build new ones, and engage in social interaction, which reduces social isolation (Huber et al., 2018; Kim et al., 2021). Engaging in tourism can also help seniors adjust to new life situations, such as losing a spouse. Group travel and association activities have been identified as effective strategies for overcoming such barriers (Diekmann et al., 2020; Huber et al., 2018).

This study examines the impact of a one-night group tour to a spa resort, organized by a regional heart disease association, on seniors' social capital, social engagement, and active aging. The study takes place in Finland, where health-related associations frequently offer social and leisure activities for their members, particularly seniors. A qualitative case study approach is employed, utilizing three-stage longitudinal semi-structured interviews (onsite, 2–3 weeks post-trip, 3 months post-trip), with thematic content analysis. The seven interviewees represent different roles in the customer group: long-term active association members, regular participants, and newcomers.

Overall, the results underscore the significance of group-based travel in fostering social relationships and reducing isolation. Findings indicate that social interaction during the trip promotes psychological recreation. This renewed energy and motivation serve as a catalyst for increased engagement in leisure and social activities, thus playing a crucial role in enhancing social inclusion and active aging. The study highlights the role of experienced association members as informal facilitators who encourage the inclusion of isolated peers, extending their support beyond the trip. Moreover, the results show that group travel fosters friendships and support networks that are crucial in challenging life circumstances. It also positively affects seniors' spousal relationships, particularly in caregiving contexts.

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**Keywords**

Senior tourism; Inclusive tourism; Active ageing; Social engagement; Social inclusion

**Title**

Barriers to Inclusion: Environmental and Interpersonal Challenges for Hearing-Impaired Travellers

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**Abstract**

The focus of this multidisciplinary project is exploration of the reality of the hearing-impaired individuals (HII) in Finnish and European inclusive tourism in the context of the science of well-being. The aim of my research is gaining a holistic understanding of the potential links between tourism experiences, social inclusion, which might be affected by the interpersonal barriers to accessibility, and the well-being of the HII.

My approach to disability and impairment is defined in the scope of the Capability Theory (Terzi, 2020), which accentuates the inter-relatedness of both, medical and social, models of disability; as well as the Basic Psychological Needs Theory (Ryan & Deci, 2017). This study is designed to add to the scientific knowledge by researching which factors play a major role in constructing a meaningful tourism experience for a hearing-impaired person; which constraints have the greatest impact on the tourists' wellbeing, under what condition and in which circumstances; how the interpersonal barriers affect the experience of social inclusion and how the tourists with hearing disabilities feel at various phases of their customer journey and due to which factors.

The research is currently in the phase of data collection through unstructured interviews, with the aim to answer the research question: What are the experiences of the hearing-impaired participants in tourism? The data is analyzed under the rules of Smith's interpretative phenomenological analysis (Smith, Flowers, and Larking, 2022). At this stage, the sample consists of stakeholders residing in Finland who live with an acquired hearing impairment.

The preliminary findings underline two major and interconnected issues the HII experience:

1. The choice of inadequate communication channels insufficiently adapted to the environments they are used in (e.g. announcing travel disruptions in trains only through speakers)
2. The attitudes of the public, which is frequently unaware of the challenges of people with invisible disabilities due to a lack of public discussion

The combination of these two factors places the HII into a self-perceived vulnerable position, where their understanding of the situation, or even their safety, relies on the kindness of strangers. These findings indicate that HII face significant barriers, which construct an environment where HII experience reduced social inclusion and increased vulnerability during their tourism and travel activities.

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**Keywords**

Inclusive tourism; Hearing-impaired stakeholders; Social inclusion; Environmental barriers; Interpersonal barriers

## **Title**

Questioning the foundations of inclusivity and boundaries of participation in nature-based tourism: Insights from sea-kayaking

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## **Abstract**

Nature-based recreation and tourism activities attract an increasing amount of people in Western societies which has led to an unprecedented growth of the nature-based tourism industry in destinations worldwide. Both the increasing acknowledgement of nature's preventive and rehabilitative value for human health and well-being as well as a western, anthropocentric fascination with wild nature has contributed to a popularity that is not likely to seize any time soon.

While becoming commonplace to many peoples' lives, nature activities and spaces are not equally accessible for several marginalized groups, among them people living with various impairments and disabilities, and some research attends to this increasingly problematic reality.

The present work builds on the assumption that many academic efforts build their epistemological commitments on a rather narrow ontological foundation of disability, which diminishes their well-meant pragmatic, social-justice or political incentives. Some works even reiterate instead of resolving dominant paradigms. It is the aim of this research to question the boundaries for participation in nature and thus (re)inform the foundations of inclusivity in nature-based tourism.

Semi-structured interviews with sea-kayaking participants were conducted at the southern coast of Norway and the data was analysed in two rounds: A reflexive thematic analysis that embarked from a framework of constraints and facilitators and a social understanding of disability (a dominant combination in accessible tourism research) was followed by a more critical, poststructuralist discussion that integrated the findings, relevant theory and literature.

The analysis revealed how language, normative thought and conceptual rigidity reiterate a narrow, dichotomous understanding and shape inherent convictions of disability and an abled-bodied normal. The analysis made visible how this may eventually impact (non-)participation in sea-kayaking. The experience accounts analysed contained relational and embodied aspects that extended beyond a dichotomous understanding of (dis)ability. More nuanced approaches are seen necessary to investigate and foster equal opportunities to participate in nature-based tourism activities. Specifically, the embodied relations between humans and nature hold potential in disrupting a resilient division of abled and disabled and inform theoretical and applied disability studies and inclusive practice.

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**Keywords**

Nature-based tourism; Inclusivity; Accessibility; Understanding; Post-structuralist perspective

**Title**

Proudly presenting the rainbow flag: Insights into rainbow inclusive tourism from business perspectives

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**Abstract**

This research seeks to identify why tourism businesses invest in voluntary responsibility communication, in this specific case promoting friendliness and inclusion towards sexual and gender minorities, also known as LGBTQ+ or rainbow individuals/community. The term "rainbow" is used here to refer to the sexual and gender minority, highlighting its increasing popularity in Finland for its intersectional and identity-inclusive nature. Despite Finland's high equality for sexual and gender minorities and its recognition as a favorable destination, Finnish tourism businesses are still in early stages of developing rainbow inclusive service environments and communication.

Previous research has shown the importance of LGBTQ+ friendliness (Ro & Khan, 2023) and that sexual and gender minority individuals prioritize this in businesses, for example, by choosing hotels that demonstrate LGBTQ+ friendly practices (Ro, 2025). Investment in LGBTQ+ related communication is crucial as it signals a safe environment for individuals to disclose their identities (Ro & Olson, 2020), leading to positive and potentially identity affirming experiences. While businesses may promote LGBTQ+ friendliness for economic benefits (Madinga et al., 2023), it's also vital for fostering acceptance and social inclusion (Sousa-Silva et al., 2024). The attitude of 'everyone is welcome' that businesses often settle for is insufficient for minorities facing discrimination; for instance, for rainbow individuals the visible signs of rainbow friendliness can be necessary for them to feel safe. In conclusion, while the importance of rainbow friendly and/or inclusive communication is well established from the consumer perspective, we still lack understanding why businesses decide to promote their rainbow friendliness and/or inclusion. For instance, Sousa-Silva et al. (2024) has called for deeper investigation into LGBTQ+-friendly practices to better understand their varied impacts across different business and industry contexts.

The research will involve interviews (spring/summer 2025) with businesses belonging to a rainbow friendly community in Finland. From a managerial perspective, the study seeks to understand the transition from a general "everyone is welcome" approach to actively marketing and promoting rainbow friendliness and inclusion. Furthermore, it will provide initial insights into how businesses perceive and implement the continuum from rainbow friendliness to rainbow inclusion.

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**Keywords**

Sexual and gender minorities; LGBTQ+ friendly; LGBTQ+ inclusive; Rainbow marketing; Inclusive tourism

# MICE Tourism: From Corona to Future Transformative Challenges

**Title**

Competitive strategies for meeting organisers in the meetings industry - A case study of existing and future fairs in Stockholm

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**Abstract**

The MICE-industry (Meetings, Incentive, Conferences and Exhibitions) suffered a lot during the Corona pandemic (Shabbing, 2022). However, according to UFI – The global association of the exhibition industry (2024) most exhibition markets around the world have fully recovered in 2023 from the Corona pandemic.

The current industry will both use their current strong strategies and develop new strategies (Conway & Johai, 2023), but there are also new meeting alternatives for the Swedish industry in general such as company internal digital meetings and bilateral company physical meetings.

The purpose of this research project is to explore and analyse event and meeting organisers' main strategies for planning and managing current and future fairs. 15 fairs in Stockholm were chosen as investigation cases. First an in-depth interviews of fair project leader were conducted and second an observation and homepage analysis. Structured interviews were chosen for verification of the case studies result.

The first chosen challenge is often discussed in the meetings industry after the Corona pandemic about the meeting format such as physical, digital or hybrid. Meeting product character is important when planning meetings. The often most mentioned for fairs are public and trade. The question of meeting character and format is also influencing the industry competitive situation, and the competitive strategies are starting from the meetings industry competitive situation.

Tentative conclusions show that the established meeting industry uses resilience strategies but the newly established meetings industry uses more industrial transformation strategies. Members in the MICE-sector are depending on the collaboration strategies in resilience-building (Lekgau & Tichaawa, 2024). Furthermore, both the established and newly established often use incremental developing strategies. The society in general will influence the meetings industry more in the future. Especially will the sustainability question with more concrete sustainability actions be focused for successful future fairs.

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**Keywords**

Meeting strategy; MICE; Meeting organisers; Industry competition

## **Title**

Meeting Prerequisites and Transformation for the MICE Industry - A Case Study of fairs and its context in Stockholm

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## **Abstract**

The surrounding world has heavily influenced the meetings industry (MICE). For example, the Corona pandemic has significantly impacted fairs (Gössling et al., 2021). However, to understand the fair concept as a part of the meetings industry it is important to analyse the prerequisites for these fairs and how new competition emerge.

The purpose of this research project is to explore and analyse meeting prerequisites and transformation for the MICE industry and its context. Using a qualitative method approach fairs in Stockholm were chosen as investigation cases. For every case study an in-depth interview of the project leader, an observation and investigation of the fair homepage were conducted.

Some tentative conclusions are presented here about meeting prerequisites and transformation based on the meetings supply and demand side. The result from the case studies shows that there is a big debate about the meeting format, i.e. how to use physical, digital and hybrid meetings in the MICE-industry.

However, it seems that fair organisers using the physical format still try to use this format. In this context convention centres are important strengths for the MICE sector (Getz & Page, 2016). New fairs organisers also discuss how to transform the product to digital meetings.

There are important fair characters, such as non-venue-bound or venue-bound fairs (Kim et al., 2024). This character open for potential company strengths. In addition, physical fairs often have strong networks.

There is an overall societal pressure for all sort of industries and their companies, which will influence the business model for both the companies in the current and new fairs. Economic and environmental sustainability can be driven together with core social factors.

Customer fair demand is changing. The adoption of contemporary ICT, such as AI in business-to-business applications is an unstoppable trend. However, many visitors prefer physical fairs before virtual fairs. On the other hand, virtual activities could still be used to provide information and focused activities (Yu & Benson-Rea, 2024).

The 'tourism innovation typology-informed MLP' helps address both the interplay of landscape pressures, regime forces, and niche developments towards a more sustainable destination (Flood et al., 2023). Future destination will gain on big meetings and vice versa.

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**Keywords**

Meeting prerequisites; MICE; Meetings industry; Event prerequisites; Meeting transformation

**Title**

Digital Shifts in Event Practice: From Temporary Fixes to Strategic Integration

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**Abstract**

The digitalization of events has accelerated in response to crisis, yet the transition from short-term adaptation to long-term transformation remains uneven. This paper examines how a diverse set of recurring events—held in both fixed and changing locations—have reconfigured their practices, organizational models, and institutional logics in relation to digitalization (Scott, 2014; Geels, 2011).

Drawing on practice theory and institutional perspectives (Shove et al., 2012; Scott, 2014), the study identifies three distinct trajectories in how events engage with digital tools: limited engagement, where digitalization is seen as a temporary workaround; experimental engagement, marked by active but often fragmented exploration; and strategic integration, in which digital tools are embedded into event design, participation, and long-term planning.

Findings highlight changes in temporal structuring, economic models, and digital competence. Organizers increasingly co-shape event formats through socio-material tools rather than around them (Sheller & Urry, 2006). While tensions between tradition and innovation persist, we also observe signs of field-level coordination and learning (Chalip, 2006), suggesting that recurring events can become platforms for transformation.

The paper contributes to event studies by showing how digitalization is not merely a technical response but a reconfiguration of event logics and field-level expectations.

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**Keywords**

Recurring events; Hybrid formats; Digital competence; Cultural events; Innovation in events

# Monitoring and Evaluating Sustainability in Island Tourism

## **Title**

Recognizing the interlinkage between biological and cultural diversity at small island tourism destinations in Iceland: An overview of international legal and policy instruments

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## **Abstract**

Small island tourism destinations are often characterized by strong interlinkages between biological and cultural diversity. This applies to numerous small island cruise ship destinations in the North in general and to small island destinations in Iceland in particular. Here, the Westman Islands (Vestmannaeyjar) and the islands of Hrisey and Grimsey are favorite landings sites for domestic and international cruise ships, where especially the Westman Islands and the island of Grimsey have experienced significant increases of cruise ship landings and passenger numbers going ashore during the last couple of years. Biodiversity-wise, all three destinations are characterized by inhabiting important seabird colonies with species considered as Important Bird and Biodiversity Areas (IBAs) (BirdLife International). Moreover, important habitat types are present at these islands, demonstrated, for instance, by seaweed beaches at the Westman Islands, classified as an Annex A habitat type under the European Habitats Directive (EU Directive on the conservation of natural habitats and of wild fauna and flora). At the same time, small local communities of these islands share charismatic spiritual and religious values, knowledge systems, educational values and a certain sense of place and identity, also summarized as cultural diversity values, which are closely linked to the biological diversity of these areas.

Against this background, the planned presentation will provide an overview of key international instruments interlinking the protection of biological and cultural diversity, first and foremost the Joint Programme between United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) Secretariat (SCBD) (UNESCO-SCBD Programme) as well as others relevant instruments. It aims to provide a better understanding of the related international legal framework and to contribute to natural and social science research dealing with the planning and management of sustainable tourism at small island tourism destinations in Iceland and other Nordic countries.

Methodologically, this research will be predominately conducted as a legal desk study, analyzing international law and policy documents as well as academic research while using publicly accessible databases.

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**Keywords**

International law; Biological and cultural diversity; Small island tourism destinations

**Title**

GPS tracking of land-based visitors and cruise passengers on a remote Arctic Island destination: visitor behaviour and resident perspectives

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**Abstract**

Island tourism has become popular as tourists continue to seek out remote destinations. The cold-water island of Grímsey, located in northern Iceland, attracts both cruise tourists and land-based tourists arriving by ferry or plane. However, the island's local population has been classified as a "fragile community" due to depopulation, and its natural resources are considered vulnerable. This creates a delicate balance between promoting tourism for economic growth and community development and preserving the island's natural heritage. Strengthening management and planning efforts is essential for fostering sustainable tourism and positive interactions between tourists and residents.

This study uses a mixed-methods approach to analyse visitor motivation, socio-demographic characteristics, expenditure and spatial behaviour. It also explores residents' perspectives on tourist behaviour and tourism development. The findings, based on interviews with residents and surveys and GPS data from visitors, reveal differences between two key visitor segments, Arctic Explorers and Cruise Voyagers, in terms of their motivations and spatial movement on the island.

The results serve as a valuable foundation for destination development planning, with findings suggesting that targeting Arctic Explorers could enhance responsible tourism development. As their preferences align closely with those of the local community and therefore prioritising this segment may help Grímsey achieve a sustainable balance between tourism growth and community well-being.

**Keywords**

Cold-water island; tourist segmentation; global positioning systems; visitor behaviour patterns; mixed-method approach

**Title**

Adapting to change: from fisheries to tourism in northern Iceland sub-islands

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**Abstract**

As Arctic and island tourism continues to grow, small communities in the region encounter both opportunities and challenges as they strive to transition from fishing communities to tourism-based economies, continuing to rely on natural resources for their livelihood.

Grímsey and Hrísey are two small, inhabited islands on Iceland's north coast. They are known for their beautiful nature and diverse birdlife, and with Grímsey located far north in the Atlantic Ocean, the island is also known for the Arctic Circle passing through its northern part. Fisheries have traditionally been a key source of income for both islands' communities, but tourism is growing rapidly. Administratively, both communities have been part of the Municipality of Akureyri, a town of 20.000 residents on the main island, since the 2000s.

In this study, we explore external changes that have resulted in internal transformations in the small island communities. Specifically, we investigate how external and internal factors impact the nature and development of tourism in the islands, focusing on the perceptions of the local communities. Empirical material was collected in Grímsey in the summer of 2022 and both islands in the summer of 2023. A survey was conducted among residents in both islands and focus group interviews were conducted. Individual interviews with tourism stakeholders were also taken in Grímsey 2022.

The results show that decisions made by external entities, such as national and local governments, have significantly impacted individuals and the islands' communities for better or worse. Changes in the management of Icelandic fisheries, limited nationwide progress in sustaining remote settlements, amalgamation of municipalities, and a boom in tourism after 2010 are factors to be mentioned in this context.

As elsewhere in Iceland, until recently, tourism in both islands has mainly developed spontaneously without much planning or management. The residents are generally positive towards tourism and tourists but place concerns over the lack of maintenance and renewal of the islands' infrastructure as visitor numbers grow. In both islands, the importance of involving locals in all tourism planning and decision-making is highlighted in support of nature sustainability and community resilience.

**Keywords**

Arctic island communities; Resource dependence; External changes; Tourism development; Socio-ecological resilience

**Title**

The impact of destination on cruise passengers' mobility

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**Abstract**

The mobility of cruise visitors at their destinations is a relatively emerging research topic. The first works on this issue used observational techniques and time-space budgets (Debbage, 1991). However, the development of tracking technologies allowed a more accurate analysis. De Cantis et al. (2016) analyzed the spatial behavior of independent cruise passengers in Palermo by using GPS technologies. Navarro-Ruiz (2019) examined the different spatiotemporal flows of cruise visitors in Valencia. Domènech, Gutiérrez, and Anton-Clavé (2020) also checked for spatial-temporal behavior differences among cruise visitors in Tarragona based on their expenditure levels. All these studies share a common methodological framework, in terms of units under analysis (i.e. cruise visitors), sampling strategy and survey instruments. Given the availability of micro-level information, this paper aims at combining the three case studies, to compare similarities and differences in cruise passengers' behavior, for three Mediterranean destinations, namely Palermo (Italy), Valencia (Spain), and Tarragona (Spain).

From a methodological perspective, this study attempts to establish a robust method for resampling different case studies to achieve similar distribution of the samples on a set of relevant characteristics. From the empirical perspective, it contributes to expand and advance the understanding of cruise passengers' spatial-temporal mobility by examining three different Mediterranean destinations. A matching procedure is employed to balance data, reduce the selection bias, and control for variables difficult to measure (Rosenbaum & Rubin, 1985). Additionally, the current study attempts to identify which factors affecting the cruise passengers' mobility patterns are stable across destinations, and which one vary, according to destination's characteristics. These findings would provide practical implications for management of cruise tourism destinations.

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**Keywords**

Cruise tourism; Matching method; Spatio-temporal mobility; Tracking technology; Survey methodology

Multispecies Communities in  
Tourism 1 + 2

**Title**

Multispecies Entanglements on the Sørøya trail

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**Abstract**

This abstract, based on a chapter from my Ph.D. dissertation, explores the interactions and entanglements between myself and multispecies actors during fieldwork on Sørøya, an island off the coast of western Finnmark in northern Norway. Employing a qualitative methodology that combines ethnographic and autoethnographic approaches, my research aims to study hiking tourism from the tourist's perspective. However, as I traversed the island, I became unexpectedly enmeshed in the lives of other species. Katrin Anna Lund's observation that "the process of observation became entangled in a personal experience as nature put on its own performance in which I could not avoid participating" (2013, p. 169) resonates with my experience.

One such encounter occurred early in my five-day trek. Descending a slope, I was startled by the sudden flurry of wings as a ptarmigan flew across my path. The bird landed nearby and began a curious display, dragging its wing as if injured. I was mesmerized by the ptarmigan's dance-like performance. As I attempted to move forward, the ptarmigan blocked my path, its behavior growing increasingly insistent. In a moment of stillstand she stares me down. I make another attempt to move forward when chaos erupts—the heather comes alive as a flurry of grey-speckled creatures suddenly appears and scampers away. Chicklets! The ptarmigan again, successfully diverts my attention as the little one's scatter and disappears back into the heather. In an attempt at compromise, I retreat and trace a large circle around the ptarmigan. The bird accepts and lets me be.

This encounter exemplifies the interplay between human and multispecies actors in the field, challenging the idea of a clear divide between humans and nature. Instead, it highlights the reciprocal and performative nature of hiking experiences, where both human and non-human participants shape the stories that unfold. Through this paper, I seek to challenge the nature-culture divide by including multispecies encounters, emphasizing the entanglement and interactions between different species as integral to understanding the interconnectedness of life and the hiking experience itself.

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**Keywords**

Nature tourism; Multispecies; Entanglements

**Title**

Relations with seaweed in Nordic tourism

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**Abstract**

The Anthropocene puts life at risk of extinction, climate disasters, injustice, pollution, and disease. The interdependence of biocultural relationships underscores the pivotal role we play in the continued existence and well-being of flora and fauna (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2018). In this work, we focus on the relationship between tourism and seaweeds.

Seaweeds in coastal regions provide opportunities for non-extractive tourism activities focusing on wildlife watching, fishing, kayaking, snorkeling, and scuba diving. However, when tourism in a coastal region is growing, the pressure on marine ecosystems is increasing as well. To reshape the tourism development paradigm from mass tourism to ecotourism, Cavaliere and Branstrator (2024) called for an emphasis on biocultural conservation. Moreover, Higgins-Desbiolles (2018) asserted the need for a profound reevaluation of our values and for the rediscovery of concepts rooted in hospitality and connection, which should extend beyond human interactions to include our relationships with life other than humans (Wadham, Schuurman & Dashper, 2024). This transcendence aligns with the recent adoption of a posthumanistic approach in the realm of tourism (Cohen, 2019; Guia & Trisia, 2023).

In this qualitative, ethnographic case study of the relationship between tourism actors and seaweed along the coast of Northern Norway, we explore the ways in which tourism can enhance seaweed ecosystems, and vice versa. For this purpose, we apply the critical biocultural identity framework (CBIF) that was designed as a tool to address problems and conservation challenges related tourism that leads to extraction and infinite growth (Cavaliere & Branstrator, 2024). It centers on bicultural identities in conservation efforts and is informed by ecofeminist-posthumanistic perspectives. The CBIF guides conservation interventions by identifying diverse multispecies perspectives and validating emotional connections. We find that marine tourism actors have an emotional as well as ethetic connection to the seaweed, and that they are aware of a relationship of mutual dependence. Through raising awareness, involvement in the conservation of critical species like the Atlantic wolffish, and actively taking out sea-urgins and other threats to seaweeds, tourism is intrinsically and symbiotically connected to the health and wellbeing of seaweed ecosystems.

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**Keywords**

Biocultural conservation; Seaweed; Posthumanism; Regenerative tourism; Coastal tourism

**Title**

Gossiping with Multispecies Communities

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**Abstract**

The word ‘gossip’ derives from ‘God’s sib’ – fellow kin with whom we could share our spiritual, emotional, and honest conversations. The connotations of gossip have altered throughout history, not least due to witch-hunting and demonisation of gossip to break the solidarity that female friendship can generate (Federici, 2018). In other words, the shifting meaning of ‘gossip’ demonstrates the disempowering effects of modernity/coloniality. For us, the term ‘gossip’ is a good example of how we were brought up in a particular way of thinking, acting, and being. It has assisted us in revisiting and extending the meaning of kinship among humans and beyond. Similar to previous work that engaged with gossiping in a speculative way to address power relations in social relations (Adkins, 2017), our purpose here is to open up spaces for other ways of knowing, exchanging and being with.

This research journey departed from our reflections on human practices of gossiping, which later expanded to modes and qualities of mundane, more-than-human communication that may easily escape one’s attention. We engage with multispecies gossiping as a relational and speculative way of knowing that enables us to slow down, complicate and hesitate so that multiple voices can be heard (Haraway, 2016; see also Höckert, 2020). If human gossiping is reconsidered as an activity of creating shared norms and emotional bonds, one way to ‘being with’, our research is driven by a curiosity of: How might the idea of gossiping create spaces for and shape the processes of making kin in multispecies worlds? Which actors can the idea and act of gossiping engage in building multispecies kinship? How does gossiping challenge our ideas of knowledge of and connections with other kin that are embedded in multispecies kinship?

With these questions in mind, we wish to participate in the continuous discussions within tourism studies that recognise untidy relations and entanglements in more-than-human worlds, and critically engage with the meaning of ‘being with’. Aligned with Vinciane Despret’s (2016) wonderful, thought-provoking book ‘What Would Animals Say if We Asked the Right Questions?’, our research can spark further questions like, ‘What do mosses gossip about along the hiking trails?’ ‘Do birds care to gossip about tourists?’ or ‘What would trees say about forest bathers?’.

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**Keywords**

Gossiping; Epistemology; Qualities of kinship; Intimacy; Wonder

**Title**

Seasonal atmospheres: Encountering tussocks, aluminium and extinct species

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**Abstract**

This presentation explores the stories that an urban coastline narrates with its multispecies natureculture surroundings. It follows my walks along the coastline in Reykjavík during different seasons and explores the fluctuating moods that it expresses with ever changing lightscapes as well as humanscapes as it enmeshes with the moving choreographies of earth, water and air. These are choreographies that stir up atmospheres that capture those who delve in as they pass by in variety of ways, locals as well as visitors. There are two landmarks on the coastline that will be in focus. Both are artworks, made by contemporary artist Ólöf Nordal, each featuring earthly elements simultaneously in and out of context with the urban surroundings, an aluminium replica of the extinct Great Auk and a giant tussock that stands by the harbour. Both narrate stories that reflect on ways of living with and being with nature in Icelandic context in contrasting ways. Whilst the Great auk reflects on guilt and regret the tussock was raised in order to create a place of peacefulness.

The presentation is based on an auto-ethnographical approach. It follows my walks during different seasons, with different lightscapes and amongst different people to these artistic landmarks in order to explore the more-than-human choreography that takes place along the paths towards them and by the landmarks themselves. The aim is to reflect on how naturecultures are performed in different ways depending on the different narratives that emerge in different seasonal atmospheres

**Keywords**

Reykjavík coastline; Walking; More-than-human choreography; Naturecultures; Seasonal lightscapes

**Title**

Multispecies communication – conceptualising dog-friendly tourism entanglements

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**Abstract**

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people acquired dogs, which became integral to their lives. Globally, every third household owns a dog, increasing demand for pet products and services tailored for dogs and their owners. The global pet service market, including dog-friendly travel options, is projected to grow from 24.9 billion USD in 2022 to 50.1 billion USD by 2030. As dogs are now seen as family members, some researchers call these multi-species families (Owens & Grauerholz, 2019). Thus, more destinations are adopting a dog-friendly approach to branding. By introducing the concept of multispecies place branding, this conceptual paper critically discusses the impact on the communication of places when non-humans are placed at the centre. Animals are primarily absent from place branding research. Forristal and Lehto (2009) highlight wild animals in destination branding, and Mueller and Schade (2012) discuss animals as symbols of place identity. Yet, the role of domestic animals in pet-friendly branding remains unexplored. This study draws on Haraway's (2003) *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Others*, addressing the relationship between humans and non-humans, particularly dogs. In this manifesto and in multispecies studies, dogs are seen as agents, not just companions. Further, this study applies Houston et al.'s (2018) concept of 'multispecies entanglement,' critiquing the notion of humans as the sole decision-makers and place makers, while excluding non-humans. This conceptual paper illustrates points using case studies from dog-friendly destinations, including Chester (UK), Rimini (Italy), and Kalmar (Sweden). It employs qualitative methods like ethnographic chats, photos, multispecies ethnography, semi-structured interviews, and data from DMO marketing. This ongoing research highlights the role of dogs in place brand communication. The dogs are portrayed as passive agents, fur babies, and accessories to the human traveler. The communication captures a belief that humans and non-humans share the same interests and needs in experiences and environments. This could be seen as an example of human exceptionalism, where the human defines the dog's life world. To conclude, multispecies place branding emphasises humans' needs while neglecting dogs' perspectives. Therefore, the communication of dog-friendly destinations needs to be grounded in a multispecies perspective built on equal terms.

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**Keywords**

Tourism communication; Dog-friendly tourism; Multispecies place branding; Destination branding; Multispecies entanglement

**Title**

More-than-human commoning in tourism

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**Abstract**

In this conceptual paper, we aim to bridge the discussions on relational scholarship and tourism studies. We are especially interested in the question of how to integrate more-than-human relations in tourism economies. With the notion of more-than-human we refer to the entanglements of natural ecosystems and human sociocultural worlds that should no longer be researched or approached in isolation from each other (Bubandt et al., 2022). In the paper, we draw from the diverse economies literature and the literature on commons and commoning to understand the potential of ‘more-than-human commoning’ (see e.g., Bresnihan, 2016) in tourism context. Stemming from discussions in the field of feminist political economy, the diverse economies approach seeks to enhance new ways of thinking about economies and politics. It challenges the dominant understanding of the economy as a market-driven system based on monetary exchange. It argues that this one-sided notion belies a range of economic activities striving to sustain communities (Gibson-Graham & Dombrowski, 2020). Tourism scholars have been voicing critique towards the narrow focus on capitalist tourism systems and measurements of success in terms of economic growth and questioning whether the development and growth of international tourism is the only way to practice tourism (e.g., Kulusjärvi, 2020). Most of all, these debates have raised the question of well-being in more-than-human communities amid the ecological crisis.

The research on commons has gained increasing interest as a post-capitalist alternative to the dominating neoliberal ideas of economy. According to this literature, sharing and managing is not only a matter of institutional management regimes (Bresnihan, 2016) but also requires recognition of a more-than-human agency, the role of which is vital for understanding shared resources. This line of research invites us to re-think commons as sites for affective relations between humans and more-than-human entities and commoning as ways to maintain these relations (Walsh, 2018). Our discussion is based on feminist, posthumanist, and new materialist scholarship, which enables engagement with tourism economies through our immediately perceived lifeworlds and allows us to consider how these immediate encounters are connected to and intersect with the broader world (e.g., Braidotti, 2013).

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**Keywords**

More-than-human; Relational ontology; Diverse economies; Commons; Commoning

**Title**

In situ travelling with the seasons: attuning and transformation

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**Abstract**

This research explores the transformation experienced during an in situ journey hosted by the seasonal spiral along a patch of shoreline boreal forest outside my front door in Rovaniemi, Lapland, Finland. It began with a compelling curiosity about the continual subtle-yet-profound changes associated with the rapid flow of the eight seasons of Lapland and my subsequent intent to capture it in action using (i)photography. My inquiry became a daily practice in which I recognised myself as an in situ camera-toting tourist, a frequent traveller attuning to and exploring the affordances of my seasonal surroundings. It has led to a multi-year praxis, inquiring with proximity through engaging in regular walks, deep attuning, and a multi-level exploration of flora, fauna, and other processual features – human and other-than-human. Consequently, the dichotomous gap between host and guest has diminished, leaving me feeling less as a detached tourist and more a living element of the sentient forest. It has been an enriching journey of becoming through transformation of perspective.

The study is a demonstration of the transformative power and potential of in-situ travel where one might begin as a solo visitor but gradually encounters many more-than-human acquaintances and companions while developing intimate connections with them along the way. The in-situ element points to the prospect for an alternative concept of what it is to travel; we can stay in place while everything changes around us as the seasons spiral through time offering meaningful experiences of multispecies encounters and a fluidity of affordances to explore.

Attuning to particularly our natural surroundings, as in forest-bathing, not only improves multiple facets of personal wellbeing, but combined with a touch of curiosity and appreciation, it can lead to a deepened perspective on being, on one's relational position with the world. This more profound cognisance could contribute to a better and broader understanding of life-affirming attributes of the worlding world while transforming the unremarkably mundane into wondrous magnificence. Furthermore, the experiences and insights gained in this example of slow seasonal time travelling in place are in line with the segment of travellers in pursuit of transformation, meaning, wellbeing, and personal development, for which there may be no need to go further than stepping out of one's front door.

**Keywords**

In situ travel; Attuning; Relationality; Transformation; Seasonal spiral

### **Title**

Citizen Science as tourism product - An Arctic Microbiome science project turned nature-based tourism experience

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### **Abstract**

This presentation explores the potential of citizen science as a regenerative tourism product through the case of an Arctic microbiome research project conducted in Greenland. For two consecutive summer seasons, tourism experience professionals collaborated with researchers from the University of Copenhagen to integrate scientific fieldwork into nature-based tourism. Greenland Travel tour operators, already bringing tourists to remote and varied destinations across Greenland, became active partners in collecting soil samples for a large-scale study on Arctic microbiomes and their role in predicting climate change.

The collaboration demonstrates how research activities can be transformed into engaging tourism experiences without compromising scientific rigor. Tourists participated in the collection of soil samples, directly contributing to a study that generated the Greenlandic Soil Microbiome Genome and Gene Catalog; currently the most comprehensive genomic survey of Greenlandic soils. Through careful experience design, soil sampling was framed as a nature-connecting and culturally meaningful activity, combining ecological learning, hands-on contribution, and place-based storytelling.

The presentation discusses both opportunities and challenges of such academia–practitioner collaborations. Experiences show that citizen science tourism can strengthen visitor engagement with Arctic landscapes, foster awareness of climate-related research, and provide a regenerative dimension to tourism by linking leisure with planetary stewardship. At the same time, the case raises critical questions about scalability, measurement of impact, and the balance between scientific objectives and experiential quality. Ultimately, the Greenland microbiome project illustrates how interdisciplinary partnerships can co-create innovative tourism products that are scientifically valuable, culturally resonant, and aligned with regenerative principles. The presentation calls for further exploration of citizen science as a pathway for integrating knowledge production, visitor experience, and sustainability transitions in Nordic and Arctic tourism.

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### **Keywords**

Nature Experience design; Academia-practitioner collaboration; Citizen Science; Arctic; Nature-based Tourism; Nature Connectedness

# Nature Positive Tourism

**Title**

ECOLOGICAL PILGRIMAGE: Engaging with biodiversity through walking interventions

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**Abstract**

This paper presents our project in the making that explores how the methodology and societal innovation of ‘Ecological Pilgrimage’ could transform the recreational use of hiking trails to meet biodiversity conservation objectives. Departing from historical connotations of colonial expeditions or religious ceremonies, pilgrimage is approached here as a reparative journey that enables meaningful engagement with nonhuman communities amidst existential ecological crises. The project brings together social and natural science with artistic research, citizen science, and Indigenous and local knowledge to develop a methodology for participatory walking interventions and co-creating insights on how biodiversity and human activities can co-exist in creative, reciprocal, and regenerative ways. This ambition is guided by sustainability scientists who recognise biodiversity loss as a symptom of a more profound relational crisis and emphasise the importance of human-nature connectedness as a leverage point for sustainability transformations on individual and societal levels.

The project draws theoretical and methodological guidance from 'ecological reparation' as a bottom-up, relational approach that seeks to mend damaged ecologies and bridge the nature-culture divide. The notion highlights the importance of transversal experimentations and reinventions with knowledges, skills, and practices of repair that have been gradually lost in the predominant individualising and human-centric cultures of Global North societies. Guided by the notion of ecological reparation, the project's scientific objective is to develop and cultivate reparative practices that can transform human-nature relations and safeguard biodiversity in recreational settings.

The project focuses on situated biodiversity issues along four hiking trails in Norway, Iceland, Finland, and Sweden and forges new links between stakeholders in landscapes shaped and fragmented by industrial land use, infrastructure projects, nature conservation, tourism activities, foraging, and hunting. The 'Ecological Pilgrimage' walking interventions are designed to enable transnational learning among project partners, knowledge brokers and local guardians of ecological relations, hikers, outdoor and tourism associations, and municipality and regional council representatives to expand the potential of outdoor recreation and tourism amid the ecological crisis.

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### **Keywords**

Ecological Pilgrimage; Biodiversity; Walking methodologies; Reparative practices; Societal transformation

**Title**

First positive steps: Emerging biodiversity handprints in the Finnish tourism sector

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**Abstract**

The tourism industry has become increasingly aware of the global biodiversity crisis and its impact on the sector. In response, efforts are being made to reduce tourism's negative ecological footprint while enhancing its positive handprint (UNWTO, 2024; WTTC, 2023). Handprints refer to voluntary actions aimed at improving environmental conditions (Guillaume et al., 2020). This study examines the types, drivers, and effectiveness of biodiversity handprints implemented by tourism businesses in Finland. As natural values are a key asset for the country's tourism industry, biodiversity has been emphasized in Finland's national Sustainable Travel Finland (STF) program.

The empirical data consists of interviews with 35 purposively selected forerunner tourism businesses, primarily operating in two Finnish biosphere areas. These interviews were supplemented with data on biodiversity actions undertaken by all STF-certified companies between 2022 and 2024 (N=279–494 per year). The study categorizes different types of biodiversity handprints based on an adapted classification from Norris (2015) and Guillaume et al. (2020). The effectiveness of these actions was assessed in relation to negative environmental footprints to determine company-level contributions to nature-positive tourism (UNWTO, 2024). Additionally, the motivations behind biodiversity handprinting, as well as perceived agency and self-efficacy among tourism actors, were analyzed.

The majority of identified biodiversity handprints consisted of small-scale, direct actions carried out within businesses' own premises or operations. These efforts represent an initial step toward biodiversity-respectful tourism. However, their scale remains insufficient to counterbalance the broad range of negative environmental impacts caused by tourism activities and the necessary infrastructure. Consequently, the nature-positivity of the studied companies remains relative – meaning they are making improvements, but not yet at a level where their handprints outweigh their footprints.

The key drivers for biodiversity handprinting were intrinsic, stemming from the personal values of tourism operators rather than external pressures such as regulatory requirements or customer demands. However, the actors' sense of agency was largely limited to their own properties and operational environments. In contrast, broader external threats, such as deforestation and water eutrophication, remained beyond their sphere of influence.

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**Keywords**

Biodiversity handprint, Nature-positive tourism, Agency

**Title**

Unlocking Ecosystem Services for Sustainable Tourism in Saline Environments: Insights from the Netherlands' Wadden Sea Region

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**Abstract**

The North Sea Region is home to both natural and human-made saline environments that offer a range of unique ecosystem services. While these areas are often associated with biodiversity conservation and salt-tolerant agriculture, their potential for sustainable tourism remains underexplored. This study aims to identify and evaluate key ecosystem services provided by saline landscapes and assess how they can support diverse strategies for sustainable tourism development.

Focusing on the Netherlands, particularly Texel Island within the Wadden Sea area, this research maps ecosystem services across natural and agricultural salt-affected areas. It further explores the perceived value of these services through stakeholder interviews and participatory workshops.

Preliminary findings highlight the significant role of provisioning services, such as saline food production, and cultural services that foster nature-based tourism experiences. These insights underscore the multifaceted contribution of saline ecosystems to sustainable tourism strategies in the Dutch coastal context.

**Keywords**

Sustainable tourism experiences Saline environments; Saline agriculture

**Title**

Nature Positive Universities – The Challenge of Academic Flying

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**Abstract**

The Nature Positive Universities Network, an international initiative led by the University of Oxford in collaboration with the United Nations Environment Programme, aims to mobilize higher education institutions to emerge as leaders and exemplars in the sustainability transformation by advancing nature-positive goals. The University of Turku (UTU) is an active member of this network, and its involvement has encouraged a critical evaluation and improvement of the institution's operations. Since joining the network, UTU has successfully organized a campus-wide BIOBLITZ event in 2022 to identify species co-inhabiting the campus environment, calculated the university's biodiversity footprint, and is currently developing a comprehensive biodiversity strategy.

In alignment with the broader sustainability transformation, this study focuses on academic flying, a well-documented yet complex challenge within universities' sustainability efforts. This study examines academic flying at UTU through the following framework: (1) a review of the existing literature on academic air travel and sustainability; (2) a statistical analysis of air travel data from UTU staff; and (3) preliminary recommendations for future strategies to mitigate the environmental impacts associated with academic mobility while supporting academic collaboration and leadership.

The case of academic flying serves as an interesting lens for reevaluating leadership within higher education: truly nature-positive universities must not only protect biodiversity on their campuses but also critically assess their broader environmental footprints. By thoughtfully engaging with the challenge of academic flying, universities can demonstrate leadership, promote sustainability transformation, and genuinely align their practices with the nature-positive future that is urgently needed.

**Keywords**

Nature Positive Universities; Academic flying; Biodiversity footprint; Sustainability leadership; Higher education

# Nudging Sustainable Behaviour in Tourism and Hospitality

**Title**

Practicing circularity through sharing

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**Abstract**

Focus: This paper examines the relation between the Sharing Economy and the Circular Economy (CE) in tourism. It applies practice theory to explore how individual sharing practices are integrated in practice bundles and practice constellations that affect the CE of travel experiences, tourism market trends and activities beyond tourism.

Context: Environmental concerns are an important driver of the Sharing Economy, which is assumed to lower environmental impacts of consumption, also in tourism (Sørensen & Bærenholdt, 2020). While these assumptions can be questioned (Cheng et al., 2020) tourism research and practice lack a framework to picture the environmental impacts of sharing practices in tourism and for developing guidelines for environmentally beneficial sharing-based travel solutions.

This conceptual paper combines Sharing Economy, CE and practice theory to illustrate how practices of tourists and other relevant actors propel the sharing economy and how this results in environmental impacts, positive and negative, from a CE perspective.

Practice theory focuses on patterns of routinized human behavior, their development and change (Pantzar & Shove, 2010). Practice research can focus on single practices, on linked co-located and co-existing bundles of practices (Shove et al. 2012), on practice complexes of different actors' interdependent practices, and/or on larger constellations of practices (e.g. an economy) (Schatzki, 2016). Practice theory relies on a flat ontology, rejecting micro, meso and macro divisions, insisting instead that looking at smaller or larger phenomena means looking at different-sized slices of the plenum of practice-arrangement bundles, (Schatzki, 2016).

Results/conclusions: The paper illustrates how extended CE impacts, positive and negative, from sharing practices in tourism, and explanations of such impacts, can be identified as the perspective is moved from individual practices to bundles, complexes and constellations of practices, i.e. as focus is put on different slices of the tourism and extra-tourism systems' plenum of practices. It illustrates the importance of understanding how practices are interrelated when investigating and describing the impacts of tourism sharing practices. The conclusions indicate how policy initiatives should understand how individual sharing practices integrate into larger practice constellations and how conditions that sustain sharing-based CE solutions can be developed.

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**Keywords**

Circular Economy; Sharing Economy; Practice Theory

## **Title**

Beyond Businesses: Promoting Environmentally Responsible Behaviour in Public Tourism Spaces

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## **Abstract**

Visitors' uninformed or careless behaviour often causes environmental harm in tourism destinations. While antecedents of environmentally responsible behaviour (ERB) at the tourist level have been studied, less is known about how governance structures support such behaviour during visits. Internal factors primarily drive human behaviour but are challenging to address during short stays. On holidays, hedonistic motivations often prevail, making visitors pleasure-oriented and less inclined to exert effort for responsible behaviour. Therefore, external conditions that guide and support responsible behaviour play a key role in tourism contexts. While previous research has evaluated visitor behaviour in protected areas and event contexts, consistent strategies to promote responsible behaviour during visits remain unclear. This study investigates how ERB is supported at different levels of tourism governance (national, regional, local), particularly in public spaces, beyond the influence of service providers. The core research question is: how do governance actors perceive and enact their roles in fostering responsible visitor behaviour in shared public spaces? Estonia, one of Europe's least densely populated countries, promotes itself as a smart and nature-based tourism destination, enabling visitors to experience untouched natural environments. The OECD has identified visitor behaviour as a priority issue, yet Estonia lacks a clear framework to assign responsibility or mechanisms to address it. The National Tourism Board advocates sustainable tourism development, encouraging enterprises to join certification programmes like Green Key. Though sustainable choices exist at the tourism enterprise level, efforts to guide behaviour in public spaces remain fragmented.

This study addresses that gap by exploring how governance actors understand their responsibilities and which conditions support or inhibit ERB. Findings aim to inform more effective, context-sensitive approaches to encouraging responsible visitor behaviour at the destination level. The study draws on 13 semi-structured expert interviews, applying axial coding based on Corbin and Strauss' grounded theory. The sample includes representatives from different levels of tourism governance, and agencies managing outdoor recreation infrastructure on state-owned land. Data are analysed through both

inductive and deductive approaches. Results and conclusions will be available by June 2025.

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### **Keywords**

Destination governance; Tourist responsible behaviour; Destination management

**Title**

Exploring the underlying reasons for tourists' travel mode choices to peripheral nature-based destinations

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**Abstract**

In recent years, Nature-Based Tourism (NBT) has witnessed significant growth with a sharp increase in tourist flows to peripheral destinations (Fredman & Margaryan, 2021; Waleghwa & Ioannides, 2024). The majority of these tourists rely on private motorised modes to access peripheral Nature-Based (NB) destinations, despite the availability of alternative sustainable modes of transportation (Waleghwa & Ioannides, 2024). This behaviour exacerbates carbon emissions and threatens the sustainable tourism futures of peripheral nature-based destinations whose tourism portfolio essentially relies on the enjoyment of nature (Juschten & Hössinger, 2021; Waleghwa & Ioannides, 2024; Woods, 2010). Despite extensive research on leisure mobility, the existing research largely overlooks the underlying reasons behind tourists' actual inter-destination mobility choices and how they justify these decisions, especially when they opt against environmentally sustainable alternatives. Our study seeks to address this gap.

We employ a dual theoretical approach; consumer value triangulation and attribution theory, to explore the reasoning behind tourists' inter-destination mobility choices. The consumer value triangulation perspective provides insight into what tourists value in their transport mode choices (compositional approach) and how these values emerge from the connection between travel mode attributes and their universal values (dynamic approach). Attribution theory complements this by examining how tourists justify these choices. Using a soft laddering technique based on the means-end-chains approach, we conducted 22 in-depth interviews with mountain biking tourists visiting Åre, Sweden. We employed means-end-chains analysis to explore the tourists reasoning behind their inter-destination mobility choices whereas a thematic analysis was performed to understand their justifications associated with such choices.

By uncovering value-driven reasoning and attribution patterns, we seek to offer useful behavioural insights for designing more targeted interventions aimed at encouraging sustainable mobility behaviours among this specific tourist segment, ultimately contributing to the sustainable tourism futures of peripheral nature-based destinations.

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## Keywords

Inter-destination travel mode choice; Nature-based tourism; Sustainable mobility; Consumer value; Attribution theory

## Title

Sustainable food consumption during holidays among Generation Z:  
Analysing desired and actual behaviour

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## Abstract

Generation Z, comprising individuals born between the mid-1990s and early 2010s, is emerging as a powerful consumer basis shaping global trends in tourism and hospitality. This generation is generally believed to be the most sustainable generation. As such, it exhibits a heightened awareness of environmental and social issues, prompting a noticeable shift towards sustainable consumption patterns. Or this is at least what is often believed and stated in research on the values and awareness of sustainability relation issues (Kara & Min, 2024; Seyfi, Hall, & Strzelecka, 2023). Yet, both academic articles and newspaper articles significantly state that items as awareness of climate change and other factors displaying the need for more sustainable consumer choices does not always match with their actions in various sectors may it be long-distance travelling by plane, clothing choices or sourcing goods online regardless of long-term transport and needed packaging (Djafarova & Fouts 2022; The Economist, 2023; The Week, 2023).

This research is particularly focussed on travelling and food choices of Generation Z. This generation will become a major target group for tourism and is significantly concerned with their food choices (Halicka, 2025). Also, it has been research that Gen Z – such as their preceding generation Y – tends to eat healthier, choose more often for vegetarian or vegan option and chooses more often for local food. The two generations have only the slight difference that for Generation Z convenience is a more decisive factor (Chen, Xu, Tang & Zheng, 2024; Kılıç, Bekar & Yozukmaz, 2021; Orea-Giner & Fusté-Forné, 2023).

Indeed, food consumption plays a significant role in every tourist experience, leading to an expenditure of around a third of every tourist budget. In particular also local food plays a vital role in promoting sustainability by reducing the environmental impact of food production and distribution. When food is grown and consumed within the same region, it cuts down on the need for long-distance transportation and pesticides, which in turn lowers greenhouse gas emissions. Additionally, local food systems often support small-scale farmers who use environmentally friendly practices, such as crop rotation or organic farming. By buying local, tourists also help strengthen regional economies and preserve agricultural land and help tourists to interaction with the region they experience, e.g. by consuming local dishes, cultures or landscape.

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**Keywords**

Generation Z; Sustainable food consumption; Sustainable behaviour

Place Design: Transformative  
Processes to Empower People and  
Places 1 + 2

## Title

Tourism Growth in Rural Communities: Residents' Perspectives in a Cruise Destination in Western Norway

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## Abstract

The backdrop of this study is rapid growth in tourism across Europe, including the Nordic countries, which has been closely connected to concerns about overtourism, where tourism volume degrades visitor experiences, residents' quality of life, and negatively impacts natural and cultural values (Sæþórsdóttir et al., 2020). In Norway, 2024 marked a record for accommodation companies, with almost 38.6 million overnight stays. The largest growth came from foreign guests and the number of arrivals is expected to grow. Few studies have highlighted overtourism challenges in Norway, but in 2021, growing dissatisfaction among residents in rural areas with ample space and depopulation was recorded, periodically experiencing high visitor numbers. Growth places pressure on rural destinations, impacting nature, infrastructure, municipal services (Haukeland et al., 2021; Engeset & Urbaniak-Brekke, 2022). Residents feel displaced, especially in rural cruise ports (Sandven, 2023), now hosting more and larger cruise ships. This contribution focuses on residents of Eidfjord in Norway, a rural cruise ports. We examine residents' perspectives on the travel industry and how they utilize the municipal center during summer. Eidfjord experiences a summer tourism peak, contrasting with low winter activity. Situated along Route Rv7, it serves as a gateway to Hardangervidda, attracting numerous passing visitors. Since 2005, the cruise port has seen an increase in traffic, with 76 ships docking from April to October 2023. In 2024, a digital survey in Eidfjords' municipal centre gathered 352 responses from residents aged 18 or older. Challenges mentioned include increased traffic, with 76% adjusting their use of the center during cruise calls—avoiding it or only doing essential errands. Improved traffic management, pedestrian and cyclist safety, green spaces, and facilities like WC's would increase attractiveness. This analysis draws on theories of place-based displacement (Cocola-Gant, 2023), a concept rooted in research on gentrification and the psychology of place. Displacement is conceptualized as residential dislocation and is frequently associated with studies of spatial transformation in urban contexts (ibid). The authors aim to explore the applicability of the displacement concept within a Norwegian context. Preliminary analysis suggests younger residents in the rural cruise port experience spatial displacement.

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**Keywords**

Tourism growth; Overtourism; Rural; Residents

## **Title**

Enhancing Learning in Tourism Projects- Insights from the Interreg BSR Project Light in the Dark

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## **Abstract**

Most tourism destinations suffer from seasonality. Butler (1994:332) defines seasonality as “a temporal imbalance in the phenomenon of tourism, which may be expressed in terms of dimensions of such elements as numbers of visitors, expenditure of visitors, traffic on highways and other forms of transportation, employment, and admissions to attractions.” Seasonality is one major challenge in the tourism industry as it creates economic, social and environmental impacts, as well as labour market disruptions. Seasonality is a complex problem that a single company cannot tackle on its own. Henceforth, development projects, aiming at social learning through enhancing communities of practice (Bertella & Rinaldi, 2020) can support new innovations and inspire tourism companies to upgrade their business models for off-season.

In the coastal areas around the Baltic Sea, the tourism season is even shorter than in many other regions. The project Light in the Dark aims at developing a marketing concept for the dark season. The project was set off with a survey through which three experience categories were identified. The following step was to enable small and medium sized tourism enterprises (SMEs) to develop off-season nature-based services. (Light in the Dark, 2024). Entrepreneurs from the target regions participated in seven online workshops, organized by the coordinator of the project. The aim of the workshops was to support small tourism companies in product development and sustainable business model development.

The aim of this paper is to gain an understanding of how entrepreneurs participating in the Light in the Dark project describe their learning during the project. The study is based on five interviews conducted during spring 2025. The preliminary findings confirm that companies became involved in the project primarily to learn from each other and to create new networks. As one of the entrepreneurs expressed it: “how could we get inspiration for the continuous development work needed, without being involved in projects and thereby getting a possibility to learn from other companies. It is even more important for us to learn from companies offering completely different experiences, as this makes it possible to add new services to our offering that no one in our field has thought about”. Based on interviews, learning takes place after the companies have created relationships that feel trustworthy. From a project coordinator’s point of view it is, t

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**Keywords**

Off-season tourism; Project learnings; Coastal areas; SMEs

## **Title**

Designing more-than-human tourism landscapes

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## **Abstract**

In the Anthropocene, where biodiversity loss and climate instability intensify, traditional human-centric approaches to tourism and landscape design are increasingly insufficient for addressing complex environmental challenges. Our research explores how more-than-human perspectives—those that recognize the agency of non-human species, landscapes, and technologies—can transform tourism, landscape and place design practices to foster ecological sustainability and multispecies coexistence (Huijbens, 2021; Whatmore, 2002; Povinelli, 2021).

Focusing on two contrasting contexts—Singapore’s protected nature parks and Sweden’s Lake Vänern Archipelago Biosphere Reserve—we investigate how landscape, place design and mobile media shape environmental experiences, communication and processes. Nature reserves and other protected areas are increasingly understood as dynamic, multispecies systems. Through document analysis, participant observation, and landscape photography, we examine how tourists, nature guides, designation planners, conservationists and environments interact, and how design mediates these interactions. Rantala et al. (2020) and Rubin (2020) highlight how even non-living landscape elements can evoke emotional and ethical responses, which our findings affirm.

Preliminary insights show that multispecies-aware design and mobile media use can encourage inclusive environmental engagement, support biodiversity conservation, and cultivate affective, situated encounters with landscapes. These practices reveal how thoughtful landscape interventions can act as communicative tools, shaping the way people understand and relate to nature. Our research contributes to transformative tourism by proposing design strategies that empower both local stakeholders and places, fostering more sustainable and relational futures as well as climate justice.

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**Keywords**

More-than-human; Landscape; Place design; Sustainable tourism; Environmental communication

## **Title**

The invisible role of community in collaborative tourism innovation

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## **Abstract**

Although many tourism innovation phenomena involve collaborative activities, innovation research has largely focused on collaborative networks among firms, public organizations, and other formal parties, with very little exploration of collaborative innovation generated by communities from below. This paper argues that current theorization of collaborative innovation is insufficient for capturing the role of communities in collaborative innovation, a critical role in that the creation and maintenance of sustainable communities is likely crucial for future life on the planet and for sustainable tourism development. Most studies have focused on the preconditions for co-creation, while paying less attention to context (Mohammadi et al., 2021).

Drawing on insights from public value theory and using a case of tourism collaborative service innovation in three local communities in Western Jutland (Denmark) as an illustration, we explain how collaborative innovation can emerge within a community as it creates community public value from shared intentions (Benington 2011). These communities have developed what have been called “small tourism” (Bærenholdt et al. 2021). We enhance our argument by applying the two notions of community value and value contestation. This study contributes to research on collaborative innovation by conceptualizing community collaborative innovation and advancing scholarly understanding of the role of community value attribution and contestation in collaborative innovation. The study further contributes to understanding tourism innovation’s importance for development of local communities.

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## **Keywords**

Innovation; Collaboration; Local community; Value

## Title

Empowering people and places through a transformative design process

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## Abstract

The research aims to critically examine the intersection of rural places, digital development and sustainable practices through place design. Drawing on several years of research on how urban norms and technology-driven solutions are prioritised in tourism and place development, the research highlights significant shortcomings in rural community engagement, where local needs are often overlooked (Braunerhielm et al., 2023). This is also reflected in the digital representation of rural areas. In the media, rural areas are much less visible than urban areas, and if they are, it is often through preconceptions and stereotypes (Ryan Bengtsson et al., 2022).

Integrating geomedia studies (McQuire, 2016) creates a basis for critical and reflective questions about place, representation and power and how we (re)shape and design our (re)world. The design process, based on Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Brydon-Miller et al., 2003), supports the use of local knowledge, bringing into play the interaction between the mediated, spatial, and social dimensions of rural places. Understanding how technologies interact with places, influence outcomes, and create opportunities, inspires a less technology-centric approach to tourism and place design, contributing to Geomedia sensibility (Braunerhielm et al., 2023). Empirical cases in Värmland, Sweden, demonstrate how a transformative design process can assist in shaping rural areas, in collaboration with stakeholders, to reflect their history, emphasise rural potential, and foster connections between people and places. When technology is integrated and developed in harmony with people and places, it can serve as a means to forge social bonds and strengthen cohesion and solidarity.

Being socially and spatially sensible empowers a place to distinguish itself from others, offering a more nuanced understanding of media's role in shaping space – particularly, as a conveyer of how a place is and could be represented. This approach underscores the importance of identifying sensibility to local perspectives and inclusion of local history and culture, of inclusion and democracy (Braunerhielm et al., 2023). The tourism industry can thus play a key role in transformation processes for rural places by focusing on how current and future places are designed and developed (Braunerhielm et al., 2024). The design process can thus contribute to transformation processes that empower people and places, contributing to a local ownership.

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Vol 12 <https://doi.org/10.17645/mac.8157>

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**Keywords**

Empowerment; Place design; Transformation; Participatory action research; Geomedia

**Title**

Destination Design: a systematic literature review

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**Abstract**

Tourism has often considered a good opportunity for developing places but it has been always a challenge to figure out how to organize activities in destination so all the stakeholders would be happy. Over the years researchers have been coming up with different models and concepts, talked about interaction between social structures and space, transformation of the destination, destination management, destination leadership, place planning, spatial destination design, sustainable place development, destination place planning, destination zone planning, tourism planning, destination lifecycle model, spatial attraction model etc. Design has often considered as a “magic wand” to solve wicked problems and service design methodology offers opportunities to develop solutions that consider all relevant stakeholders in the destination.

The research gap lies in the insufficient understanding of destination design concepts and possibilities related to design thinking, using service design methodology and tools in context of destination development and management. This systematic literature review aims to contribute to the literature on combining previous research on destination and design thinking.

According to (“How to Write an Excellent Review Article,” 2024) good rule of thumb is to find at least 30 relevant primary research papers published within the past 2–3 years. A keyword search in Scopus, Web of Science and Google Scholar along with the application of the inclusion/exclusion criteria yielded the sample of 256 articles. Narrowing Web of Science search to look only for open access articles, remaining 76 articles mostly published in Journal of Tourism Futures (seven times) and Sustainability (also seven times). 333 keywords were first marked on service design, design thinking and destination theme. Based on those keywords different themes emerged.

**References**

How to write an excellent Review article. (2024). Nature Reviews Bioengineering, 2(11), 907–907. <https://doi.org/10.1038/s44222-024-00256-4>

**Keywords**

Destination Design; Service design; Design thinking; Destination management; Literature review

**Title**

The complexity of overtourism - with examples from Santiago de Compostela

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**Abstract**

Overtourism occurs when tourism reaches levels that negatively affect the local population, the economic structure, tourists and/or natural and cultural environments. In the public debate, overtourism has been highlighted by social movements as a situation where there is uncontrolled tourism development that is subject to the growth paradigm. The UNWTO (2018:4) defines overtourism as “the impact of tourism on a destination, or parts thereof, that excessively influences the perceived quality of life of its citizens and/or the quality of visitors' experiences in a negative way”. The relational dilemma is based on the perception of the current situation by residents, visitors and other stakeholders, with a focus on quality of life. However, the number of tourists, seen from a quantitative perspective, is not decisive but must be seen in relation to the place that is in focus in the context. This contribution discusses over-tourism in the light of tourism flows that affect tourist destinations. However, the problem is not new in itself; the impact of tourists on places has been studied for decades. Moreover, the question of who has the right to claim the perception of whether there is overtourism remains partly unanswered. Until now, studies on how overtourism is perceived have mainly been based on residents' perceptions. To concretize the problem, this discussion is related to Santiago de Compostela, Spain, the destination of the El Camino pilgrimage, where over-tourism has recently become an increasing problem. The increase in tourist flows there has led to growing tourism phobia and the emergence of anti-tourism movements, which increasingly seek to reclaim the identity of the place from the perspective of its inhabitants. The destination of Santiago de Compostela therefore seeks to balance and mitigate the effects of overtourism by developing strategic measures that ensure the economic benefits of tourism in harmony with social and environmental sustainability. Through a combination of regulation, diversification and innovation, it is working to preserve its cultural and historical identity, despite the pressure from tourists, who are at the same time an important part from an economic perspective. The purpose of this contribution is therefore to problematize over-tourism as a contemporary phenomenon with complex consequences for tourist destinations, their inhabitants and visitors.

**Keywords**

Overtourism; Local development; Destination development

**Title**

Gastronomic tourism and sustainability: Challenges and opportunities

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**Abstract**

Gastronomic tourism has become an increasingly central part of the global tourism industry, with food and drink being primary drivers of travelers' choice of destinations. Taste sensations, local ingredients and traditional cooking techniques play a crucial role in creating unique and memorable experiences where culture and identity are at the center and narrative serves as a key component. This form of tourism not only offers the opportunity to explore and appreciate new food cultures, but also acts as a catalyst for local economic growth by strengthening small-scale producers, restaurants and cafés. At the same time, too rapid an expansion of gastronomic tourism can give rise to challenges such as over-tourism, where the authenticity of products risks being lost. This in turn can lead to a weakening of local identity, undermining both the authentic experience and long-term sustainability. The purpose of this paper is to discuss place design from a gastronomy tourism perspective in light of the challenges this niche faces in balancing the economic benefits of tourism with the preservation of a destination's cultural and environmental integrity. The discussion relates to the 2030 Agenda and its goals for social, economic and environmentally sustainable development, where strategies to address challenges and promote a long-term, responsible gastronomic tourism are in focus.

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Lee, K.-H., Pac

**Keywords**

Gastronomy tourism, place design, overtourism, local development, destination development

# Taxation and Regulation in Tourism

**Title**

Tourism Revenue Transfer Models in the NPA: Mapping Fiscal and Alternative Approaches for Sustainable Community and Environmental Benefit

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**Abstract**

How can tourism taxation and regulatory frameworks be designed to strengthen the economic contributions of individual tourists to the local communities and environments they visit, without placing undue strain on the tourism sector itself? This question lies at the heart of sustainability discussions in peripheral and ecologically vulnerable regions such as those in the Northern Periphery and Arctic (NPA). In this presentation, we examine a range of models, both planned and implemented, that aim to channel tourism-generated revenues back into local systems, with particular attention to alternative mechanisms often overlooked in mainstream policy discussions.

This study, conducted within the RETURN project, is based on a structured review by participating tourism research institutions across the NPA. We analyze both fiscal models (e.g., tourist taxes, visitor levies, accommodation fees) and non-tax-based mechanisms. These alternative models are categorized as: (1) visitor-generated direct payments (e.g., entrance fees, trail use charges, voluntary contributions); (2) operator-linked revenue transfers (e.g., profit-sharing from lift tickets or entrance fees); (3) infrastructure-associated fees (e.g., parking or camping fees); and (4) shared governance models (e.g., destination stewardship funds or tourism improvement districts). Although these tools often fall outside traditional taxation frameworks, they increasingly support local environmental management and community services.

By offering this comparative framework, the presentation deepens understanding of how diverse tourism revenue mechanisms, both tax-based and alternative, can be used to support equitable and environmentally grounded destination development. The findings address ongoing policy debates in the Nordic region and beyond, offering guidance for more balanced and context-sensitive tourism regulation.

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**Keywords**

Tourism taxation; Tourism revenue mechanisms; Local communities; Regulatory models; RETURN project

**Title**

Second home mobility, multilocality and taxation

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**Abstract**

Second-home mobilities are conceptually situated at the intersection of tourism and migration. These mobilities are characterized by the recurrence or long-term duration of visits to second-home properties. This implies a significant presence of second-home users in destination communities, particularly in cases where second homes constitute a major share of the available accommodation supply. Consequently, it has been suggested that second-home owners engage in multilocal lifestyles and act as opportunity hoarders, utilizing the varying prospects of different places. However, from a community perspective, second-home owners are sometimes perceived as a group that is largely absent and does not contribute to the local community through tax payments.

Against this backdrop, this paper discusses the multiple relations between second-home ownership and taxation. This is achieved by reviewing literature on the topic and conceptually promoting ways to systemize and understand this relationship. Empirically, the paper draws on examples from Sweden but also offers an international outlook. A preliminary conclusion is that second homes are poorly captured in national taxation systems. Increasingly, multilocal lifestyles challenge established administrative systems and practices, providing systematic disadvantages for communities with large numbers of second homes.

**Keywords**

Second homes; Mobilities; Multilocal lifestyles; Taxation; Economic impacts

**Title**

Selling Sustainability: How Tourism Businesses Must Adapt to Stricter Green Marketing Regulations

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**Abstract**

This proposal for a paper reflects on the boundary between lawful green marketing and (illegal) greenwashing in the tourism industry, highlighting some compliance challenges businesses face in an increasingly complex regulatory landscape.

As environmental and social responsibility become more important, tourism businesses increasingly use green claims to attract tourists. However, the boundary between lawful green marketing and greenwashing remains blurred: Transparency is a critical issue: For instance, hotels often encourage their guests to reuse towels, claiming environmental benefits. But how can the tourist be sure it's not just a cost-saving measure, but it is a genuine sustainable initiative? Similarly, the use of eco-labels without proper certification raises concerns about misleading claims and greenwashing. Both businesses and tourists struggle to navigate in the available range of certification and labelling schemes.

In Denmark, the first major court case regarding green marketing was concluded in March 2024 involving Danish Crown A/S. The court found that the phrase 'Danish pig is more climate-friendly than you think' was not misleading. This case raises critical questions: Would alternative phrases as 'Danish pig isn't as damaging to the climate as you think' have led to a different outcome? And in that case; will negative claims be a path to lawful green marketing within tourism? Has the case clarified the legal landscape or created further uncertainty?

The Danish tourism industry faces further complexity with the forthcoming implementation of the Green Transition Directive and stringent documentation requirements from the Danish Consumer Ombudsman. Furthermore, the EU has proposed Green Claims Directive that aims to standardize green claims and is expected to impose significant compliance costs on businesses through mandatory certifications and labelling schemes.

The regulatory framework for green marketing presents both opportunities and challenges for tourism businesses. The keywords are to ensure that their environmental claims are precise, substantiated, and transparent. The future of green marketing is expected to become more expensive, but one thing is certain: this is a rapidly evolving area with significant costs associated with compliance due to documentation requirements for green marketing.

**Keywords**

Greenwashing; Green marketing regulations; Sustainability compliance; Tourism industry sustainability

**Title**

“Cheaper alternative to traditional summerhouses” – and almost unregulated!

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**Abstract**

Absentee ownership of year-round houses in rural areas (i.e. houses made for full-time residence, located in planning zones destined for year-round activity, or zones that had residence-requirements until recently) is a growing phenomenon in Denmark.

This presentation explores the change in the ownership and use of rural houses, inspired by the growing body of research on multilocality, mobility and part-time populations. It considers how these dynamics influence and redefine rural areas. The starting points are the unique Danish legal concept of “residence requirement”, and the historical practice of zoning for summerhouses, to keep the seasonal land uses separate from the residence/year-round residential areas.

Rural planners - and politicians and citizens – interpret the development in very distinct ways: Some argue that it is preferable with absentee owners even if they only come on a part-time basis, rather than for the houses to be unsellable and fall into disrepair. Others point out that the part-time use of year-round houses in attractive rural communities may have negative consequences too. Urban-based buyers may ‘displace’ local (potential) buyers of attractive rural homes. This can limit immigration, reduce the local labour force and undermine the sustainability of year-round life in these rural ‘pearls’.

While potential futures are hard to predict, there are obvious (income) tax implications for rural municipalities depending on whether a house is occupied by a local resident or an absentee owner. In addition, any income generated from subletting is also subject to taxation in the municipality where the owner resides. Do current regulatory and taxation tools lead to the outcomes, we intend for our society, rural as well as urban? The question is closely tied to broader issues of inequality—between rural and urban areas, and between rural residents and absentee, part-time owners or rural houses. The current regulatory frame seems to protect individual rights (as owners of private property), while offering less clarity or support when it comes to addressing the collective interests and needs of local communities.

The ownership structure is changing rapidly, with potentially long-lasting impacts on rural areas, rural residents, second-home owners as well as tourists and destinations, although outdated regulatory principles, lacking statistical categories and opaque terms allow these shifts to occur largely unnoticed.

**Keywords**

Part-time population; Multi-locality; Rural areas; Regulation; Inequality,

# The Sustainable Food Tourist

## **Title**

Collaboration and learning in the development of an attractive food destination

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## **Abstract**

Local food and food-related activities can strongly communicate the experiential value of a place and contribute to its appeal and talent supply. Food and drink also hold branding potential and are often used as symbols to create authentic destinations. However, establishing a place as a food destination is challenging, especially with competition from well-known culinary regions (Andersson et al., 2017).

A key step in food destination development is collaboration between public and private actors. Cooperation between entrepreneurs and authorities is increasingly vital in destination branding and development worldwide, including the Nordic countries. Yet collaboration is often challenging, as differing interests and perspectives may cause friction (Everett & Slocum, 2013).

Food events—like festivals, markets, and fairs—typically involve extensive collaboration. A local DMO or business association often plays a leading role, balancing diverse stakeholder interests. However, agreeing on a common concept can be difficult, and responsibility for the event’s future can be unclear (Andersson et al., 2017).

Many local food and drink companies are small-scale, with limited resources for collaboration and learning. Promoting local entrepreneurship is a recurring theme in discussions on sustainable food systems, yet more research is needed (Kwil et al., 2020). Entrepreneurs often struggle with profitability and face difficulties adapting to new business models. Broader challenges in the food sector also demand innovation and system-wide solutions involving companies, support actors, and external stakeholders.

Despite these challenges, both entrepreneurs and support systems show strong motivation and potential to develop. There is interest in joint initiatives, acquiring market knowledge, acting innovatively, embracing digitalization and AI, and working with or communicating sustainability more effectively (Björner & Sjölander-Lindqvist, 2024).

This study explores collaboration and learning in building an attractive food destination, with a focus on entrepreneurship, innovation, events, sustainability, digitalization, and communication. Methods include interviews, observations, and analysis of visual and written materials. The study focuses on Halland, southwest Sweden, for three main reasons: its long-term food destination efforts, its active branding, and the presence of engaged food entrepreneurs and collaborative initiatives.

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**Keywords**

Collaboration; Entrepreneurship; Sustainability; Food destination; Innovation

**Title**

Towards a better understanding of memorable wine tourism experiences: Antecedents and outcomes

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**Abstract**

Wine tourism is defined as tourism associated with “vineyards, wineries, wine festivals, and wine shows for which grape wine tasting and/or experiencing the attributes of a grape wine region are the prime motivating factors for visitors” (Hall et al., 2000, p. 3). Wine tourism has several distinguishing attributes that militate against using Kim et al.’s (2012) model of memorable tourism experiences to understand its antecedents and consequences. Accordingly, this study uses an alternative theoretical framework—the stimulus–organism–response theory—to develop an alternative model. Data were collected from visitors to a well-known vineyard in Yantai, China, and structural equation modelling and multiple group analysis were used to analyse them. The results suggest that experience co-creation, sensory experience, experiential satisfaction and appealing winescape are significant and positive antecedents of a memorable wine tourism experience, while eudaimonic well-being and wine purchase intention are significant and positive outcome variables. Visit frequency was found to be a moderating variable linking the winescape to memorable wine tourism experiences. Those who travel to the region frequently form a bond with the winescape that not only contributes to their well-being but also stimulates their future intentions to purchase its wine.

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**Keywords**

Memorable tourism experiences; Wine tourism; Well-being; Purchase intention

**Title**

Strategies and methods for obtaining sustainable food tourism

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**Abstract**

Problem/focus of the research:

Tourism's impact on local communities and their ecosystems is a continuous challenge, and there is a growing interest in the future sustainable development of tourism in many destinations. Such development entails a process of finding opportunities for tourist and visitors to make sustainable choices (for e.g. accommodation, eating and activities) as well as solutions for circularity within the entire food system. In this regard, the role of the destination stakeholders becomes crucial, and understanding their interest and perceived challenges to implement sustainable solutions is thus an important step in this process. The aim of this presentation is to provide a short overview of strategies and methods for studying stakeholder roles and interests in food tourism. In particular, the presentation will report preliminary outcome from the pilot case of sustainable food tourism in Bornholm, and a Community of Practice session with core stakeholders. The objective of the presentation is to stimulate a discussion for how such insights can add to identify and develop circular solutions for sustainable tourism.

Context and relevance of the research:

The presentation reports the very early findings from the VERNE project "The one-stop-shop of accessible circular solutions for sustainable tourism" (101181941). The project is funded by the European Union (Horizon) and brings together 15 partners from 10 European countries. The objective is to accelerate the transition of local and regional tourist destinations toward sustainable and circular models across Europe.

Methods/data:

The study uses Communities of Practice (CoPs) as a method for assessing stakeholders' perspectives on sustainable and circular solutions in tourism. The CoP method is developed in collaboration with the project partners and is understood as a group of people who share a common interest, profession, or domain of expertise and come together to exchange knowledge, solve problems, and develop new ideas through interaction and collaboration.

Intended results:

The aim is to identify stakeholders' engagement in and perceptions of possible sustainable and circular solutions, focusing on needs and opportunities as well as benefits for both the local tourism and food production, as well as the visitors. The outcome of the project will address possible ways to minimise waste and energy consumption from tourist activities in relation to food tourism.

**Keywords**

Sustainable food tourism; Food tourism stakeholders; Circular solutions; Methods; Communities of practice

**Title**

Building tourism competence in a boutique wine region

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**Abstract**

My presentation focuses on knowledge development and capacity building in wine-producing regions that are diversifying into tourism. I present findings from a completed empirical study conducted in a boutique wine region in the Italian Alps, where grape production is transitioning toward wine tourism.

As part of my fieldwork, I visited cellar doors of family-run wineries and observed how farmers and their families become skilled tourism brokers. I continued further with wine-themed events to see how “new” tourism competences is circulating across community.

The findings showed that wine farmers relied on informal, everyday methods, equipped winery environment, and methodological instruction from expert-like members in the mountain community to perform competently cellar door experiences. Although “new” tourism competence helps to use idle resources on wine farms and sustains wine farmers’ role as stewards of steep vineyards and high-quality wines, it cannot halt the decline of grape growing in the valley. Consequently, tourism development has likely contributed to the commodification of the winemaker persona and the positioning of wines as luxury collectibles.

**Keywords**

Tourism competence; Cellar doors; Wine tourism entrepreneurs; Family-run wineries

# Tourism and Rurality in Green Transitions

**Title**

Tourist experiences and consumption in landscapes of renewable energy

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**Abstract**

Iceland is characterized by vast open landscapes and sparsely populated rural areas apart from the capital region. Pristine and untouched nature has long been central to Iceland's tourism marketing and tourists consistently identify nature as the primary motivation for visiting. Thus, tourism in Iceland is heavily reliant on the country's natural landscape. The same applies to the energy sector as Iceland draws most of its primary energy (around 85%) from renewable sources, mainly hydropower and geothermal.

This paper presents findings from three recent surveys carried out among tourists visiting hydropower sites operated by the National Power Company of Iceland (Landsvirkjun). The surveys examined tourist experiences in landscapes shaped by renewable energy infrastructure, exploring their perceptions of wilderness, attitudes towards energy structures (e.g. dams, power lines and stations) and overall satisfaction with the visit. The questionnaire employed was at large comparable to those that have been used in studies in other power plant areas.

Findings suggest that natural surroundings are central to the tourist experience and a key factor in their satisfaction. This is in line with previous research in power plant areas where tourists tend to consider wilderness and untouched nature to be an integral part of the attraction of power plant areas. Among the infrastructure elements assessed, power lines were most frequently cited as detracting from the experience. Tourists were generally supportive of Iceland's use of green energy, especially geothermal and hydropower, and showed interest in solar and wind energy solutions.

While the overall sentiment was positive, the findings also reveal subtle nuances in expectations and experiences among different groups of tourists. These nuances highlight the need for further research into how tourists respond to rural development. The general acceptance of renewable energy among tourists suggests that green transitions do not necessarily reduce the appeal of rural destinations. These findings offer insights into how tourism and renewable energy can coexist in shared landscapes and support policy development that aims to meet diverse expectations while ensuring that different sites maintain their position as unique destinations where nature and structures combine into a holistic and positive experience.

**Keywords**

Tourist experiences; Renewable energy infrastructures; Iceland

**Title**

Tourism Placemaking in Rural Sweden: Insights from Residents of the Åsnen Area

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**Abstract**

Placemaking has become a common approach among practitioners involved in rural tourism development in Sweden. It focuses on planning places that are attractive to both residents and visitors, with the broader aim of supporting community well-being. In this approach, rural areas are envisioned as welcoming temporary homes for visitors while continuing to serve as lasting homes for local residents. Despite the growing popularity of placemaking, relatively little research has examined the actual outcomes of such efforts or how residents perceive and respond to them.

This study examines resident perspectives on the placemaking work of Destination Åsnen, a tourism network operating in the Åsnen area, which spans parts of the Växjö, Alvesta, and Tingsryd municipalities. Destination Åsnen was established to strengthen collaboration among local businesses, associations, and residents to collectively respond to increased visitor pressure due to the establishment of Åsnen National Park. Its activities aim to promote and preserve the natural environment of the Åsnen area, with a focus on supporting the well-being of the local population. The area around Lake Åsnen (including Sweden's newest national park centered on the lake's unique archipelago) is at the heart of these efforts.

Our study draws on a survey of 304 residents (November 2024 - April 2025), developed in collaboration with Destination Åsnen. The survey was distributed via flyers (approx. 5000 copies) containing a QR code linking to an online questionnaire and included both Likert-scale and open-ended questions to capture a broad range of resident views. In this presentation, we discuss the work of Destination Åsnen, the goals and results of our survey, and the methodological challenges of conducting resident surveys in rural areas of Småland.

**Keywords**

National park; Rural placemaking; Resident survey; Sweden

**Title**

Offshore wind power in coexistence with rural coastal tourism in Sweden

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**Abstract**

Offshore wind parks have grown in strategic importance as sources of renewable energy for many coastal countries such as Sweden. Offshore wind parks generate energy by harnessing the power of the wind at sea, thus providing alternative to traditional fossil fuel-based energy sources. They also provide an alternative to onshore wind power production. Despite the benefits of offshore wind power for energy sustainability goals, the public perception of these installations varies amongst different groups. Much research has gone into studying public perception of the impact of offshore wind farms on landscape, the environment, marine life, the future, well-being, and livelihoods because it is critical to the social acceptance of these installations (Bidwell, 2023; 2017; Westberg et al, 2015). Socio-political acceptance pertains to the widespread approval by the public, significant stakeholders, and policymakers of a renewable energy project. In contrast, community acceptance focuses on the approval of individuals residing in or around an area chosen for a renewable energy project. As such, there are many actors with different stakes involved in influencing opinions and acceptance in tourism areas.

We present the background, aims and preliminary results of the project “Offshore wind power in coexistence with tourism in the blue economy”. The project aims to enhance understanding of the perceived impacts of offshore wind power installations on rural tourism and thus establish a scientific foundation to guide decisions regarding the placement of these installations to minimize their adverse effects on the tourism economy. Marine areas and coastal landscapes matter to tourism and recreation in Sweden. However, there is a lack of research tools designed to facilitate dialogue and find solutions to address conflicts involving social groups, the wind power sector and tourism stakeholders. The project encompasses qualitative and quantitative data collection. The theoretical foundation for measurement development is drawn from a previous project assessing the value of tourist experiences in nature areas with wind turbines (Prince et al., 2024ab). This project advances research methodologies and promotes transparent and equitable decision-making in the expansion of offshore wind power installations touristic coastal areas in Sweden.

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**Keywords**

Offshore wind energy; Wind turbines; Coastal recreation; Rural tourism; Landscape

# Transformative Tourism Experiences

**Title**

The Transformative Outcomes of Co-Creating Tourism Experiences: A Service Provider Perspective

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**Abstract**

The purpose of this study is to understand the transformative outcomes service provider representatives may undergo due to tourism experience co-creation. Co-creation in tourism is grounded in marketing literature, particularly in the service-dominant logic, which emphasizes value creation through interactions between firms and consumers. In tourism, this interaction is crucial as the experience is co-created through interactions between tourists and service provider representatives. Previous research indicates that service co-creation can lead to long-term or permanent changes, i.e., transformative outcomes. These outcomes have usually been examined from the perspective of customers, focusing on cognitive, emotional, and behavioral outcomes of tourists. However, the service provider's perspective has received much less attention. Despite their active role in the process, little attention has been paid to the outcomes that service providers may derive from engaging in co-creation. This consumer-centric perspective has marginalized the service provider's viewpoint, leaving a gap in understanding how service provider representatives experience, influence, and are influenced by the co-creation dynamics.

The role of a service provider in co-creating a tourism experience is twofold: facilitating and managing the customer's experience, and participating in the process with their own experience of the co-creation situation and its outcomes. Currently, there are limited studies on the transformative outcomes that tourism service provider representatives and experience facilitators might undergo in their work. This study explores the perspectives of service providers and facilitators offering experiential tourism services that do not necessarily aim for transformation, or transformative tourism experiences designed to trigger long-term or permanent changes in customers' lives.

Data was collected through semi-structured interviews with 20 tourism service providers in spring and summer 2023, as part of a wider study in a Transformative Travel themed research project. This study focuses on the part of the interviews where informants described the transformative outcomes or changes they experienced at a professional and/or personal level in their work. The findings show that co-creating tourism experiences have triggered diverse transformative outcomes, ranging from business-level outcomes to individual professional and personal-level outcomes.

**Keywords**

Tourism experience co-creation; Tourism service providers; Transformative outcomes

**Title**

The Transformative Power of an Inner-city Tour in one of South Africa's most notorious urban neighbourhoods

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**Abstract**

Tours of precarious neighbourhoods, often called 'slum' tours, have become a distinctive feature of urban tourism in the Global South. 'Slum' tourism authors politicise these tours by emphasising equalities, power relations between visitors and hosts, persistent poverty and depravity, and limited benefits from tourism in impoverished areas. Hence, an enduring critique centred on the valorisation of urban poverty by visitors dominates the literature. While holding that the poverty voyeurism argument is valid, Booyens and Hoogendoorn (2025) argue that it presents a one-sided perspective. Critical urbanism, drawing on decolonial theory, offers alternative ways of thinking and knowing about places in the Global South by foregrounding the significance of contextual specificities and calling for nuanced understandings of everyday lives, urban complexities, and localised dynamics. In this paper, we draw on the example of the This is Hillbrow tour run by the NPO Dlala Nje in one of South Africa's most notorious inner-city neighbourhoods to illustrate how 'slum' tourism can be reconceived when place-based understandings, modelled on the critical urbanism literature, are incorporated into debates. By analysing TripAdvisor reviews (N=99) over four years (2020-2024), we determined that tourists regard the tour as a transformative experience that breaks down barriers, challenges territorial stigmas and benefits the local community. This case is a prime example of how tours can operate with a social imperative and of local guides presenting a place-based narrative centred on the everyday realities of the neighbourhood. In this paper, we accordingly foreground the voice of locals regarding tourism in their areas and the role of local institutions contributing to community improvement. Instead of emphasising poverty voyeurism in impoverished urban settlements and seeing these neighbourhoods mainly as places of deprivation and decline, we stress that there is indeed another side to every story told.

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**Keywords**

Slum tourism; Indigenous voices; Transformative experiences; Decoloniality; Everyday realities; Local agency

**Title**

Beyond the Self: Rethinking Transformative Tourism Through a Multidimensional Lens

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**Abstract**

The transformative potential of tourism is widely acknowledged, yet rarely interrogated. While much of the literature on transformative tourism experiences (TTEs) highlights their capacity for self-discovery, growth, and increased empathy, this focus remains largely limited to positively framed intrapersonal and intrapersonal outcomes. The transpersonal dimension—such as shifts in tourists’ connection to nature, pro-environmental attitudes, or ecological values—has received notably less attention. Questions also remain about what constitutes transformation in the first place, and how it differs from surface-level behavioural change. This conceptual paper forms part of a wider PhD research study that investigates the transformative capacity of tourism and the extent to which, if any it supports sustainability transitions. Drawing on interdisciplinary definitions of transformation and applying the analytical criteria of depth, breadth, and speed of change (Fazey et al., 2017), this presentation explores how transformation is defined, framed, and assessed in tourism scholarship. It highlights inconsistencies in current approaches and questions whether behavioural change alone—such as adopting greener habits—can be considered transformation without a concurrent shift in worldview or values. As a work-in-progress, this contribution offers a structured review of the literature on TTE outcomes and proposes a new conceptual framework that categorises them into three main domains: intrapersonal (e.g., identity development, self-reflection), interpersonal (e.g., empathy, social consciousness), and transpersonal (e.g., eco-spirituality, planetary ethics, nature connectedness). It further argues that the field’s emphasis on “extraordinary” travel experiences risks overlooking the transformative potential of more “ordinary” travel contexts, which may also provoke subtle but profound shifts. Therefore, the key ambition of this research is to offer a more holistic and critical perspective to the discourse on transformative tourism—one that aligns with sustainability goals while recognizing that transformation can be complex, nonlinear, and not always entirely positive. The presentation invites discussion on how we define, capture, and design for transformation in tourism—across emotional, behavioural, and existential dimensions — which goes beyond self-enhancement and toward planetary well-being.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/17565529.2017.1301864>

**Keywords**

Transformative Tourism Experiences; Tourist Transformation; Transpersonal Outcomes; Change vs. Transformation

**Title**

Pilgrimage as self-transformation

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**Abstract**

Europe's pilgrimage sites, established by the Catholic Church, have experienced an astonishing growth in pilgrimages in recent years, underlining the return and importance of religion and the religious as a contemporary phenomenon. The article takes its starting point in pilgrimage and how current post-secular currents in society color questions of individuality, place, tourism and religiosity. More specifically, the aim is to understand pilgrimage in our time as a path to personal transformation. Pilgrimage has its own forms of mobility capital that are not dependent on traditional religious values, in the sense that pilgrims strive for subjectively experienced, spiritually meaningful places where neither religious faith nor loyalty is prescribed. Being a pilgrim requires a certain investment in the self. This investment can strengthen one's social and cultural capital on return and is important for building one's identity, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between the touristic and the everyday. This development can therefore be seen as part of the social zeitgeist where self-realization is a clear goal and where the post-secular society, with its individualization of the religious, is a cornerstone. The empirical material in the article is mainly based on previous research on pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela, Spain and Trondheim, Norway. The results show that the Catholic Church still has power over the format in which the pilgrimage takes place, but power over the content is severely curtailed. In other words, the Catholic Church owns the body but not the soul. The results also show that contemporary pilgrimage is a performative and place-making phenomenon characterized by subjectivity and spiritual meaning. Furthermore, it is found that the religious place is created and renewed by the pilgrims' contemporary practice, their stories and experiences. The pilgrim fills its content with subjective, individual values, which color both the understanding and the meaning of the pilgrimage. The contemporary pilgrim finds his own way in the search for meaning in life. A search that prefers to borrow established pilgrimage for this purpose rather than create new ones. Thus, the sacred paths serve as spatial arenas to complete the search for oneself.

**Keywords**

Pilgrimage; Transformative tourism; Self, Pilgrimage sites

Visitor Monitoring and  
Management in Protected and  
Recreational Areas 1 + 2 + 3

**Title**

Destination Companies and Community-Based Development: A Split Between Expectations and Lack of Authority

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**Abstract**

Literature indicates that knowledge domains in tourism studies have been evolving along parallel pathways, namely sustainable tourism (ST), community-based tourism (CBT), and more recently, regenerative tourism (RT). A common challenge identified is the need for clear direction in governance, justice, and ethics. Additionally, local participation is crucial for enabling good governance at the local level, facilitating environmental stewardship, social justice, well-being, and sustainable local livelihoods.

In the Norwegian context, municipalities play a significant role in the development and management of tourism. Concurrently, the expectations and tasks performed by destination companies are escalating. On the one hand, they must provide services to the industry and keep pace with digital marketing and other commercial activities. On the other hand, they are increasingly drawn into tasks related to the management of natural and cultural heritage, planning, and local community development.

Given the current destination structures in Norway, this study aims to explore the legitimization of destination companies as key partners in destination development, sustainable visitor management, and commercialization. The study addresses the research question of why and what role destination companies should play in sustainable destination development and visitor management. An online survey will be employed as the data collection method, targeting managing directors of destination companies and community planners in municipalities across all counties in Norway. The study will contribute to the body of knowledge on governance and management of sustainable destination development, including place and community development, and the practical work of revising business and organizational models at destination companies.

**Keywords**

Destination company; Sustainable destination development; Municipality; Visitor management

**Title**

PPGIS-mapping of coastal and marine recreation and experienced problems in the Oslo Fjord

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**Abstract**

The Oslo Fjord is a popular recreation area involving both local recreation, one-day tourism and tourism overnight stays in cabins and boats along the fjord. With a population of 1.7 million inhabitants in the 26 coastal municipalities, the fjord is under high Anthropocene pressure from e.g. eutrophication, increasing urbanization, accessibility problems, and user conflicts. In response to the increasing planning and management challenges, the Norwegian Ministry of Environment is preparing a comprehensive plan for the Oslo Fjord but needed knowledge and spatial mapping of the recreational uses.

A PPGIS-mapping approach was used to collect data on the coastal and marine recreational activities and experienced problems in the Oslo Fjord. The study was conducted by the University of Copenhagen, based on a similar mapping in Denmark. To include seasonality, data was collected through Norstat through monthly distribution of a survey to a citizen panel over 1 year. Also, non-participants in outdoor recreation answered questions about barriers to participation.

Results (12,445 responses) show that the Oslo Fjord is a popular recreation area as most of the population (71 %) annually participate in fjord-oriented recreation activities and particularly in coastal recreation which is less seasonal than water-oriented activities. Participation is affected by socio-demographic factors such as income, education level, ethnicity, age, and children in household. The recreation mapping shows a broad use of the fjord but also hotspots around urbanized areas and cabin areas. The novel problem mapping shows that 27 % of the recreationists experience problems related to accessibility, environment, or other users.

The methodological approach adds new knowledge and spatial recreation data that can be overlaid and analyzed with the broad range of GIS-data on different nature conditions, protected area categories, water quality, etc. hereby adding socio-cultural data to natural science data. The mapping of experienced problems provides detailed and geospatial information on specific problems and user-generated descriptions and suggested solutions.

In conclusion, the study shows that PPGIS-mapping of coastal and marine recreation and experienced problems is highly relevant to planning and management in the Oslo Fjord and the methodology can be applied as a novel contribution to visitor monitoring and management in a wider range of protected areas and recreation sites.

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### **Keywords**

PPGIS-mapping; Coastal and marine recreation; Problem mapping; Spatial planning; Recreation management

## **Title**

The role of behavioural contagion in shaping visitor misbehaviour at a protected natural site

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## **Abstract**

Visitor misbehaviour is acknowledged as a serious problem in protected recreational areas, especially in destinations that do not have the resources to introduce prohibitive measures (Cooper et al., 2024). Relevant studies tend to focus on visitor monitoring or on testing interventions to discourage misbehaviour (Bradford & McIntyre, 2007; Brown et al., 2010; *ibid.*). We know little about the inevitable role of social dynamics in shaping visitor misbehaviour.

The current study explores the role of other visitors' behaviour in shaping misbehaviour at a protected natural site. Using wearable GPS trackers, we tracked the movements of 527 visitors to a UNESCO-inscribed hiking area in Greenland. Approximately half of the participants were treated with a pledge intervention, in which they committed to keeping to the marked trail. Previous analysis of this data has shown that participants who signed the pledge left the trail less often, for shorter distances and periods of time (Cooper et al., 2024).

We aim to understand the role of behavioural contagion in shaping participants' likelihood of leaving the marked trail. Behavioural contagion occurs when an individual observes another person performing a forbidden behavior (Wheeler, 1966). Witnessing non-compliant behaviour acts as a social licence for the observer to perform it themselves (*ibid.*). We expand scholarly understandings of behavioural contagion through investigating (1) the contagiousness of off-trail walking behaviour, and (2) the influence of repeated exposure to non-compliant behaviour and (3) an intervention on the contagiousness of off-trail walking behaviour.

We analyse behavioural contagion in our data by mapping respondent movements with QGIS and identifying compliant and non-compliant behaviours using tracker IDs, locations and timestamps. Through survival analysis, we investigate the initial act of non-compliance, predicted by observed non-compliance in others. We also apply panel data analysis to account for repeated violations and assess within-person variations in the likelihood of non-compliance. We are currently in the data analysis phase, but we plan to have results ready to share by September.

This study deepens our understanding of visitor misbehaviour in protected areas and makes a theoretical contribution to knowledge on behavioural contagion by exploring how

the nature of behavioural contagion changes under different conditions and how it interacts with a behavioural intervention.

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### **Keywords**

Behavioural contagion; Tourist psychology; Tourist behaviour; Social influence; Intervention

**Title**

Paying for Nature: Visitation and Financing Strategies in Latvia's Protected Areas

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**Abstract**

Given current trends in public well-being and health concerns, the need for outdoor activities and the use of the nature for community recreation continues to grow (Russell et al., 2013). Nature tourism is also being promoted as one of the strategic tourism destinations both in foreign markets and in the domestic market, taking advantage of the location and in many cases building on the network of specially protected nature areas.

But at the same time, the question arises: who pays for the creation of such amenities and, more broadly, for the public benefits provided by nature in specially protected areas? Is nature free for all, is a more precise segmentation approach used, and does the one who visits pay a little more, how can this financial responsibility for the creation and maintenance of the amenity be shared among the many stakeholders? Are there alternative models for maintaining access and amenity in a well-managed and well-visited protected area? These are the main research questions of this study, the answers to which are sought through an analysis of current practices in Latvia's Natura 2000 network of protected areas.

The main methods consisted of the following research approaches: structured collection of visitor data on the visitation of all protected areas, using GIS analysis techniques (Paramasivam & Venkatramanan, 2019) and segmentation of visitors by main motives, categorising all protected areas according to their level of visitation and dominant segments. Next, the sites available for visit were categorised according to the entrance fee and the affiliation of the existing site operators. At the national level, expenditure from different organisations for the establishment and maintenance of such sites was aggregated, roughly estimating the total cost and also the obligation or interest of these organisations to fund public goods in protected areas.

At present, substantial efforts have been made to create a GIS database for quantifying visitation and assessing and categorising all Latvian specially protected areas according to the motive and volume of visitation. In the coming months, it is planned to continue the study with a case study analysis of the different management and financing models chosen. The first findings already indicate that national categorisations that include the purpose of the protected area do not necessarily correspond to the current situation in terms of the motive and volume of visitation or its potential.

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**Keywords**

SPAs; Tourism; Recreation; Nature; Financing

**Title**

A Review of Management Approaches for Tourist Destinations Located in Specially Protected Nature Areas

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**Abstract**

This review examines management approaches for tourism in specially protected nature areas, such as national parks, nature reserves, and Natura 2000 sites, with a specific focus on the Baltic States (Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia). As nature-based tourism grows in popularity, the need for effective management strategies becomes increasingly important to ensure a balance between conservation objectives and tourism development. The study analyzes various governance models, visitor management methods, and sustainable tourism practices that aim to protect biodiversity while enhancing visitor experiences. Key considerations include the integration of eco-friendly infrastructure, community involvement, and the development of regulatory frameworks that support sustainable tourism. The review highlights successful case studies from the Baltic region, examines challenges in managing tourism in protected areas, and provides recommendations for improving management practices. These insights aim to foster long-term ecological sustainability, promote economic benefits for local communities, and ensure the protection of natural habitats. This research contributes to refining strategies for tourism management in protected natural areas, with a focus on the Baltic context.

**Keywords**

Specially protected nature areas; Tourism management; Sustainable tourism; Conservation; Natura 2000

**Title**

Come enjoy the silence – the tourism-tranquility paradox in municipal planning

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**Abstract**

There is a paradoxical relationship between tourism development and the preservation of tranquility in municipal planning. Natural soundscapes and peaceful environments serve many functions, and the touristic potential is clearly recognised. Municipalities face the challenge of promoting economic and recreational benefits of tranquil areas while safeguarding the very qualities that attract visitors, such as natural soundscapes and undisturbed nature.

In this study, I discover how tourism and tranquility are simultaneously framed, managed, and put into conflict within planning documents. The contradiction was explored through thematic analysis of municipal development plans (MDPs) in all 290 Swedish and 98 Danish municipalities. Using NVivo, I identified text related to tourism and tranquil areas through inductive coding. Coded text was analysed to examine definitions, motivations, and strategies for tourism and tranquility, treating MDPs as both technical tools and communicative documents reflecting municipal values.

Findings show that tourism is treated as broadly indicating how visitors contribute to the local economy at different times, in both rural and urban settings and based on activities ranging from business tourism to nature-based coastal tourism. Municipalities promote certain forms of tourism as compatible with tranquil environments, such as nature-based, wellness, and heritage experiences. Conversely, business tourism and mass tourism infrastructure are identified as incompatible due to primarily taking place outside of tranquil areas or having the potential to disrupt acoustic and ecological values. While general tourism is dominated by growth-oriented language, tranquil areas are more cautiously addressed, with an emphasis on preservation, ecological integrity, and human well-being.

While municipalities increasingly recognize tranquility as a valuable resource in the MDPs, there is a continuing need to align tourism strategies with those to preserve natural soundscapes and restorative environments for both human and non-humans to ensure that tourism supports, rather than undermines, tranquility.

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**Keywords**

Soundscapes; Tranquility; Municipal planning; Tourism

## **Title**

Empowering Visitor Management in Nature Areas: Leveraging Citizen Science for Enhanced Monitoring Practices

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## **Abstract**

This research explores the potential of Citizen Science (CS) as a values-based approach to visitor monitoring and management in natural areas, with an emphasis on creating participatory frameworks embedded in inclusivity, scientific credibility, community relevance, co-creation, and environmental learning. As outdoor recreation and tourism increasingly intersect with conservation concerns, there is an expanding requirement to rethink public engagement and data collection approaches to help improve the effectiveness and fairness of environmental governance through the democratization of scientific practices. This research draws on a systematic examination of the literature that includes contemporary CS projects and written evaluations spanning tourism, protected area management and monitoring, and outdoor recreation. It synthesizes promising practices and develops principle-based criteria that support successful, and transferable CS models.

The study is informed by the Principles-Focused Evaluation (P-FE) framework by Michael Quinn Patton, and in particular, the GUIDE framework—such that all the principles informing the study are Guiding, Usable, Inspiring, Developmental, and Evaluable (Patton, M. Q., 2018). Rather than basing this on output-oriented metrics, the study assesses whether CS programs do “what we think matters” based on values-based anchors such as stakeholder engagement, local relevance, ethical data generation, and learning outcomes. The extensive literature review forms the basis for the development of a participatory Citizen Science model to be implemented in Icelandic and Norwegian case studies, where empirical investigations will be carried out in close collaboration with local stakeholders and partners in the period 2025-2026.

The results of this review aim to demystify best practices, reveal challenges and prospects in CS uptake, and provide pragmatic recommendations for the incorporation of CS into visitor monitoring systems, while incorporating smarter monitoring methods. These findings will form the basis for evaluating robust, adaptable CS projects in Iceland and Norway. In this presentation, I seek to clarify the value-based approach, discuss key findings in the literature review, present early-stage indicators and outcomes, and outline the development of this research as part of my doctoral studies in the Marie Curie VIMAS network.

This research will be presented as part of an organized session as part of the VIMAS PhD Consortium: Visitor Monitoring and Management in Protected and Recreational Areas: New Challenges, Novel Solutions for the Anthropocene

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**Keywords**

Citizen Science; Visitor Monitoring; Visitor Management; Smart Monitoring;  
Democratization of Science

**Title**

Systematic review of ‘soundscape tourism’

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**Abstract**

The ISO (2014) defines soundscape as an “acoustic environment as perceived or experienced and/or understood by a person or people, in context”. This definition is very focused on the human perception of soundscapes. A recent definition by Mitchell, Aletta, Oberman and Kang (2023, 697) builds upon the ISO definition, but specifically includes the other-than-human perceptions of the soundscape, therefore opening up a new understanding of soundscapes and new possibilities in the research. The field of soundscape research is ever evolving and the importance of soundscapes to human health and the touristic value of soundscapes cannot be understated.

Visitors to natural areas often try to escape the constant noise of urban areas to find peace in the sounds of natural environments (Aletta et al, 2018). Visitors often feel more connected to nature when immersed in the sounds of nature (Francomano et al, 2022). There are many health benefits connected to spending time in nature as a whole, but natural soundscapes specifically have the potential to influence health and lead to restoration. This study focuses on reviewing the literature through surveying studies done on soundscapes and ‘soundscape tourism’ since the year 2000.

The focus of the study is to describe and summarize the scientific disciplines and methodologies used in current soundscape research. The methodologies are studied for inclusion and application in terms of visitor monitoring and management in the Scandinavian context.

The search terms used in Scopus and Web of Science fell under two main categories: sound terms and nature terms. The initial number of studies included for title and abstract review were 5913 papers. After excluding the irrelevant studies, just over 130 studies were included for full-text review.

This study should result in a description of a best practice methodology for soundscape research that can be applied to a Scandinavian context. This study will also contribute to a larger understanding of the soundscape field, especially in terms of visitor monitoring and management in nature-based tourism.

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## Keywords

Soundscape; Human-nature connection; Nature relatedness; Natural environmental sounds; Visitor monitoring and -management

**Title**

Understanding of Digital App Usage for Trip Planning in Nature-Based Tourism – Implication for Mitigating Visitor Disturbance to Wild Reindeer in Norway

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**Abstract**

With the increasing popularity of nature-based tourism (NBT) activities, timely visitor management strategies should be in place through the right channels to protect sensitive species and habitats. As digital technology takes over most aspects of human lives, digital tools are expected to play a vital role in NBT to enhance visitor experience and behaviors towards increased sustainability. However, there is limited literature on how NBT visitors use digital applications in different trip planning stages. Investigating opportunities to use digital platforms as a communication tool holds potential for more efficient visitor management.

The main goal of this study is to investigate digital app usage patterns and trip planning behavior among different visitor groups to wild reindeer mountain areas in Norway. This study employs a quantitative approach using a structured survey method to collect data from three diverse visitor samples, (1) members of the Norwegian trekking association (DNT), (2) members of the Norwegian hunters and anglers' association (NJFF), and visitors to one visitor center (Skinnarbu) focusing on wild reindeer information. The questionnaire consists of multiple choice, Likert scale and rating scale questions to explore frequency, diversity and stages of digital app use for several recreational activities, perceived reliability of information and app features on digital apps, and motivations and challenges of using digital apps. Moreover, the respondents are asked about their awareness of current communication efforts to raise awareness concerning disturbance to wild reindeer and visitors' willingness to change behaviors. The data will be analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical methods.

Findings are expected to provide insights into when and which digital apps are most effective as a communication tool to set up digital conservation interventions. For example, if the findings revealed that visitors mostly use trip planning apps such as UT.no/Outdooractive, etc. before the trip to map their route, conservation-related messages could be embedded in this user journey stage using an attractive method such as nudging or red alerts, etc. Findings from this study will contribute to a broader spectrum of digital communication in NBT resulting in a sustainable visitor management approach.

**Keywords**

Visitor management; Digital apps; Trip planning; Nature-based tourism; Conservation communication

**Title**

Using multiple data sources to understand compliance to a trail pass funding model under open access: A case of cross-country ski pass in Sweden

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**Abstract**

Recreational trails of high quality for activities like cross-country skiing or mountain biking (MTB) are often the main attraction that drives a visit to a destination. In countries where open access to the recreational landscape applies, user compliance to the funding model is a key for the long term economic sustainability of the trail product. Practically, trail providers struggle with obtaining knowledge about the actual quantitative use of their trails and ultimately to define the success of their funding model. From a research perspective, understanding of mechanism that makes a user to comply is a challenge.

This study aims to identify the actual compliance rate to a cross-country ski pass funding model at a Ski resort in the county of Dalarna, Sweden. The research question “What is the actual compliance rate to a trail pass system of visitors at the resort?” is answered by using three quantitative data sources; a) counters, positioned along the trail, capturing the actual use of the trails; b) the daily/weekly/monthly trail pass sales at the ski resort; c) on-site surveys that captures visitors’ demographics and skiing behaviour as well as the stated behaviour for the trail pass purchase, i.e. compliance to the funding model (I did not buy/ I do not want to answer). Comparison of the data sources a) and b) with c) as a complementary source, provides information about inaccuracies and conspicuous features, are used make conclusions about the actual rate of compliance and non-compliance. The paper also includes a discussion on funding models for cross-country ski trails, including the feature of trail pass badges/stickers that is requested by the resort to be worn visible and its effects on purchase behaviour. The results indicate that there is a discrepancy between stated compliance and actual compliance behaviour. Limitations, especially related to the installed counters and skiers that possibly slip through all three data collection techniques, are discussed and acknowledged.

**Keywords**

Recreational trails; Compliance behaviour; Cross-country skiing

### **Title**

Nature Experience Design with a goal of Nature Connectedness - A case study from Danish National Parks

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### **Abstract**

This presentation reports on a case study exploring how deliberate experience design in nature-based tourism can foster the subjective feeling of Nature Connectedness among participants. The research was guided by the question: *How, and by what means of experience design, is it possible to develop and sell a nature-based product that aims to provide participants with a perception of Nature Connectedness?*

The study combined theoretical perspectives from the fields of Experience Economy, Experience Design, and Nature Connectedness research. A specific product, *NATTERO* (Nightly Peace), was developed and implemented in Denmark's youngest national park, Kongernes Nordsjælland. The design process employed established frameworks such as the Experience Pyramid, Sweet Spot model, and Dramaturgical curve, while the product itself was grounded in sensory immersion, silence, and locally rooted storytelling. Methodologically, the research applied a qualitative, hermeneutic–phenomenological approach. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with two groups of respondents: six participating tourists and three “meta-actors” from the tourism industry, interviewed between 3 and 23 months after their participation, offering a unique longitudinal perspective. Observations during pilot tests further informed the empirical foundation.

Findings indicate that experience design can indeed facilitate awareness of, and in many cases the subjective perception of, Nature Connectedness. Sensory activities, embodied experiences, and dramaturgical structuring were identified as particularly effective in strengthening this outcome. The results suggest that carefully designed nature-based tourism products can serve both as commercially viable experiences and as tools for enhancing human-nature relations.

The presentation concludes by situating this case within broader discussions on rethinking tourism, arguing that integrating Nature Connectedness into product design offers regenerative potential for both human well-being and sustainable destination development.

### **References**

Wünsche, T. U. (in review). Nature Experience Design with a goal of Nature Connectedness - A case study from Danish National Parks.

### **Keywords**

Nature Experience design; Nature-based Tourism; Nature Connectedness; National Parks; B2B Tourism

# Tourism Mobilities

**Title**

Mobility as a Service in rural areas for Visitors (VRMaaS). Evidence from a rural visitor perspective

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**Abstract**

Mobility as a Service (MaaS) pilots have predominantly focused on city areas with pilots aimed at users commuting or are from a particular demographic such as the elderly, and more recently, visitors. Given that the tourism industry accounts for 22% of all transport emissions globally (UNWTO and ITF 2019), the sector is key to decarbonisation efforts, particularly for those visiting rural areas who often travel longer distances.

This research contributes to the rural evidence base by presenting the results from a specifically designed Rural MaaS (RMaaS) online visitor survey of 509 participants in the Cairngorm National Park, Scotland in 2022. The research provides insights on the challenges and opportunities presented by the concept of Mobility as a Service (MaaS) in rural settings from a visitor perspective. The evidence suggests a strong appetite for digital visitor services (VRMaaS) that would include a 3–5-day pass costing between £65-108. The service would provide customer support for the two stages of the experience, (planning and during the visit), in tandem with offering a ‘guaranteed ride’. As to whom the target audience is, the evidence shows that those travelling with friends or family or are a group of up to 4 people with at least one either in full, part time or self-employed work are most likely to purchase a pass.

This research contributes to the knowledge gap on rural visitors and MaaS whilst also discussing the results in the context of climate change and a just transition to decarbonising rural transport and mobility.

**Keywords**

Rural; Visitor; Transport; Mobility-as-a-service

**Title**

Hosting Friends and Relatives local tourism mobilities as socio-spatial de-segregation opportunity

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**Abstract**

The transformative power of tourism can be explored both in relation to environmental and social perspective. The focus of this research project is on the potential for transformation for the residents and their relation to the local place and society. Tourism entails the possibility of practicing out-of-routinary mobility, redefining personal geographies of places and challenging personal and collective perceptions of places. Through tourism experiences and mobilities, it is possible to engage in different dynamics of access to places, socio-cultural exchange, and intercultural communication, not only in international settings but also within domestic and local experiences with implications for social inclusion and participation.

The interest of this work is to concentrate on the micro scale and the relations between tourism mobilities and personal geographies at the local level, with a specific lens on personal mobilities. It discusses the potentiality of hosting friends and relative (HFR) tourism mobilities of first-generation immigrants to challenge the spatial dynamics of microecology-level segregation and the activity-space segregation, with a specific focus on the role of place identity. HFR tourism mobilities are seen as an extraordinary event which fosters a change in personal mobilities and geographies with implications for the creation and transformation of sense of place. This is seen in the light of a process of knowledge and skills acquisition, as becoming local through mobilities and experiences which can redefine the dynamics of access to and participation in place and society. Therefore, this is a conceptual contribution to reflections on the potentiality for de-segregation through personal tourism mobilities.

The empirical preliminary material consistent of both in-depth interviews and auto-ethnographic experiences documented through diaries and qualitative GIS mapping. Data are collected in Skåne (Sweden). It is analyzed through the conceptual lenses of time-geography life-paths and constraints complemented with the motility approach and a focus on the role of place identity and local personal networks in shaping itineraries and choices of places. The interest of this work is to reflect on the potential social value of local tourism mobilities, while reflecting upon (in)visible barriers to accessibility and place participation.

**Keywords**

Local tourism; De-segregation; Mobilities; Place identity; Hosting friends and relatives

**Title**

Mobility Innovations for Transport-Efficient Tourism: Insights from Insular, Peripheral, and Urban Destinations

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**Abstract**

The transition towards transport-efficient tourism destinations is essential for reducing negative environmental impact, improving visitor experiences, and fostering benefits for the local communities and industries. This transition is particularly complex due to the diverse mobility needs of visitors and residents, fluctuating demand patterns, seasonal dynamics, and the varying capacities of destinations. The destination's geography and type of tourism further affect mobility innovations. For example, peripheral tourism destinations often struggle with poor transport accessibility, ineffective connection options, and a lack of coordination between different transportation options, whereas many island destinations experience significant fluctuations in tourist numbers, especially during the peak season. Conversely, urban event destinations face the opposite challenge—managing high-intensity visitor flows within constrained timeframes and infrastructure—, leading to crowding, delays, and negative externalities for both residents and tourists.

We expand discussions on innovative mobility solutions for transport-efficient tourism destinations by exploring innovations targeted at transportation efficiency. We draw on insights from three cases: a) a peripheral destination in Northern Norway, b) an urban event destination in Southern Sweden, and c) an insular destination in Coastal Denmark. Through these cases, this chapter illustrates how mobility innovations contribute differently to improved transport efficiency.

We identified innovative and promising forms of multimodal transport integration, smart transport solutions, shared new mobility services, and micro-level practices that aim to reduce dependency on private vehicles and encourage more sustainable travel behavior. The study underscores the importance of governance structures, stakeholder collaborations among public and private actors, and local mobility behaviors, which are important for implementing transport-efficient destinations. Improving intra-destination

mobility, optimizing transport coordination, and integrating new transport modes enables more demand-responsive mobility systems and contributes to a reduction of environmental impact. Ultimately, this study provides actionable knowledge and insights for stakeholders such as destination management organizations and mobility providers on how to design effective strategies for sustainable tourism mobility transitions.

**Keywords**

Transportation; Mobility; Tourism destinations; Transport-efficiency; Sustainability

# Heritage Tourism

**Title**

How Does Tourism Contribute to Transform the Concept of Heritage Community? Insights from the Irish Pilot of the Secretour Project

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**Abstract**

This presentation describes how tourism can serve as a transformative force in reimagining and constructing heritage communities in areas described as “below-zero” scenarios from a tourist destination perspective. To this end, the definition of a heritage community from the Faro Convention will be considered. Drawing on Etienne Wenger’s theory of communities of practice, tourism is conceptualized not merely as an economic driver, but as a joint enterprise—functioning as a socially cohesive process that mobilizes local stakeholders, practices, and narratives around shared goals.

The presentation focuses on a case study: the Irish pilot of SECReTour, an EU-funded project within the Horizon Europe Cultural Heritage call. Through ethnographic observation and participatory research, it examines how, in the Irish context, tourism initiatives have catalyzed new forms of collective identity, memory work, and local agency. The findings illustrate key features of a community of practice, such as mutual engagement, shared repertoire, and identity formation, emerging through tourism practices.

By tracing the transformation from a “below-zero” context to an emergent heritage community, the presentation contributes to current debates on the socio-cultural impacts of tourism and the evolving nature of heritage and heritage communities. Ultimately, it highlights the potential of tourism not only as a driver of economic development but also as a catalyst for social cohesion in rural areas.

However, the emerging heritage community in the Irish pilot has faced challenges, including social engagement, which raises the question of how to strengthen the social sustainability of tourism. This case offers an opportunity to examine the complex nature of a community of practice and the challenges inherent in that complexity.

**Keywords**

Tourism; Rurality; Heritage community; Community of practice

**Title**

Play(th)ing with the past: The playful turn in museums as a transformative and strategic tool for cultural heritage tourism development

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**Abstract**

In recent years, play has emerged as a focal point of scholarly and curatorial interest in Danish museums, reflecting a broader institutional turn toward more participatory and affective forms of visitor engagement. This shift is not merely pedagogical or aesthetic; it is increasingly strategic, positioning play as a response to the demand for inclusive, imaginative, and socially responsive museum practices (c.f. Olesen & Holdgaard, 2024). As cultural institutions seek to attract diverse publics and remain relevant within an evolving tourism landscape, play is being reframed as a catalyst for experiential depth and institutional transformation.

Building on Erik Cohen's (1979) notion of tourism as play and Sheller and Urry's (2004) framing of places to play and places in play, this paper explores the potential of play in relation to museum-based tourism. It asks what happens when museums are not only visited but played with, and their artefacts and stories become part of a dynamic exchange between past and present, self and other, imagination and memory. While play is often culturally framed as a domain of childhood, it is in fact a lifelong mode of relating to the world: adaptive, affective, and profoundly social. In this light, play offers more than diversion—it offers a way of re-placing ourselves in time, of engaging with history differently, and of envisioning cultural institutions as active participants in broader societal change. Central to this exploration is the interplay between materiality and imagination in the museum space. Drawing on Tim Ingold's (2009) concept of wayfaring, the paper considers how visitors engage playfully with objects not as static "things," but as points of departure for experiential journeys. In this view, play is not detached from material culture but entangled with it: a mode of thinking with things rather than about them, in which past and present are co-composed through doing, sensing, and storytelling.

To ground these ideas, the paper presents early findings from a mixed-methods study conducted as part of the Moving Museums through Play (MMTP) programme, a strategic initiative led by the National Museum of Denmark. The current phase investigates how visitors already engage playfully, formally and informally, across eight sites including Frilandsmuseet, Frøslevlejren, Kronborg Castle, and Krigsmuseet. Rather than evaluating designed interventions, this phase explores spontaneous, embodied interactions that signal how people are already wayfaring through museums, engaging material culture in personally meaningful ways. These observations will inform future play-based strategies within the MMTP framework.

This paper does not offer fixed conclusions but proposes a shift in how we conceive of tourism's transformative role, particularly within heritage contexts. By foregrounding play as a speculative, materially grounded practice, it invites a reimagining of museums not only as custodians of the past, but as participatory spaces of becoming. In doing so, it responds to the symposium's call to examine the transformative power of tourism, suggesting that

the playful museum is a place where material encounters and imaginative wayfaring co-create new, more inclusive futures.

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**Keywords**

Play; Museum-based tourism strategies; Materiality; Engagement; Transformative experiences

### **Title**

The Lazgisphere and Tourism in the Thirdspace – a new potential for tourism via the intangible world heritage Lazgi (Uzbek dance) in Uzbekistan

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### **Abstract**

Lazgi is an old Uzbek dance that became an intangible world heritage in 2019 (Hamroeva, 2021b; Maxkambaevna, 2021). It dates back some 3000 years and is said to be linked to Zoroastrian time, early creation myths, and totemic beliefs (Vercoe, 2020; Skublewska-Pszkowska et al., 2021; Tolstow, 1953; Matyokubova et al., 2022). The dance has become more and more of a tourist attraction for international visitors since the opening of Uzbekistan for international tourism, especially post 2017, it.

Soja's concept of Thirdspace represents the analytical framework of this paper. The author combined this with an autoethnographic approach: before every visit to a Lazgi space (e.g., a museum, or an institution) the author recorded a voice message of how she personally imagined this space (the Secondspace). After the visit, she then recorded her personal observations of the Firstspace and the Thirdspace for the respective Lazgi place. The author selected a total of six Lazgi spaces: five in Uzbekistan and one in Germany. Autoethnography is another approach the author applies, this concept uses personal observations and experiences (auto) as primary data to describe and analyze (graphy) other cultures (ethno) (Ellis et al., 2011).

The qualitative method mix used in this study was complemented by ten semi-structured qualitative interviews with Lazgi experts, including teachers, dancers, and faculty members of universities in Tashkent, Samarkand, Bukhara, and Urgench, but also in Europe.

The Lazgisphere in Uzbekistan is alive in the private, official, and tourism space. Being an ancient dance of Khorezm it serves as an important element of Uzbek culture contributing to national identity. As a tourism product, Lazgi is performed at domestic occasions and international festivals and promoted abroad with the help of its status as an intangible world heritage. In doing so, it does not compromise on quality, and it is not changed as the master-apprentice system guarantees its preservation. Lazgi spaces as Thirdspaces, in the sense of Soja (1996), are attributed predominantly positive and are linked to tourism directly or indirectly.

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**Keywords**

Lazgi; Dance; Uzbekistan; Thirdspace; Autoethnography; Edward Soja

**Title**

What makes a place a *place to visit*? Understanding peripheral tourism destinations in the making

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**Abstract**

Arguably, the transformative potential of tourism – positive and negative – becomes more pronounced in peripheral and less touristified areas than in more touristified ones, while also posing different challenges (Buultjens, Wilde, & Crummy, 2011; Carson, Carson, & Hodge, 2014). The Horizon 2020 project INCULTUM – Visiting the Margins (2021–2024) has generated new insights into how such challenges vary depending on regional and local specifics by addressing 10 pilot cases across Europe (Borowiecki, Fresa, & Civantos, 2025). Key aspects are presently taken further in the Horizon Europe project SECreTour (2024–2027) with three more pilot cases added.

One salient observation is what has tentatively been dubbed the *below zero* scenario found in several INCULTUM and SECreTour pilots (Humblebæk, Smith, & Block, 2024: 40-41). This scenario is characterized by: (a) a lack of recognition of the area as something that could interest tourists by both locals and visitors; (b) insufficient or absent baseline data; (c) the need to identify and connect local actors who might engage in tourism development; and (d) minimal or no funding available for such initiatives. Key aspects of this scenario have been further scrutinized for the Portuguese INCULTUM pilot with a special focus on the naming of a place and its attractions as a critical factor for any further tourism development (Smith & Block, 2025).

This paper initiates a more versatile typologization of commonalities and differences between individual below zero scenarios by extending the scope with three SECreTour pilots: Monte San Giorgio (Switzerland), the Upper Vjosa Valley (Albania), and the village of Tomor (Hungary). In line with the SECreTour agenda, special emphasis is placed on how local heritage communities can come to play a more proactive role in heritage preservation and sustainable cultural tourism development. This includes the creation of alternative business models better suited for accommodating the below-zero specifics than traditional approaches. Results of ongoing inquiries will be presented which offer several indicative observations.

For instance, a common trait of the Portuguese and Swiss pilots is the need to crystallize a unidirectional reading of a certain territory known for isolated features but not recognized or valued as a cohesive whole. Different commonalities are present in the Albanian and Hungarian pilots in focusing on a territory that hosts the tangible and intangible cultural heritage of a minority group (the Vlach and the Romas) that remain scarcely told or explored. In this case, key differences lie in the attitudes of surrounding majority populations and the level of local authority support. These and other prominent patterns will be presented and visualized in schematized form.

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### Keywords

Cultural tourism; Heritage communities; Rural and remote areas; Place identity; Innovative business models

