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***S-03 Opportunities, risks and challenges of the digital transformation in tourism Sustainability,
Sharing hospitality and CoVid-19 (M. Beghelli)***

New trends in tourism:

Digital transformation and sustainability

Bernardina Algieri* & Rosetta Lombardo*

****Department of Economics, Finance and Statistics, University of Calabria, 87036 Rende Italy***

ABSTRACT

Tourism is an engine of socio-economic progress and cultural development. The sector generates 10.4% of the total world GDP, creates jobs, supports one in 10 occupations worldwide, drives exports, and generates prosperity across regions (WTTC, 2021). However, it could create detrimental effects on the environment. The emergence of new technologies usually indicates a change in the economic systems and the ways of consumption, including the possibility to provide tourist services in a different form. In particular, this latter aspect can be a further driver of economic development.

Digital technology has made all destinations compete with one another in the global market. Digitalisation is making the tourism sector face a new stage of development such as smart destinations, smart cities, smart airports, smart seaports, smart hotels and other industries that adopt digital transformation (Buhalis, and Amarangga, 2013; Buonincontri and Micera, 2016). The sector is also affected by social changes, climatic changes and unexpected independent factors (e.g. shocks such as COVID-19). It would be interesting to understand whether digitalisation could take the feature of sustainability into account and if it can be seen as an engine for the transformation of the tourism sector in the age of the internet economy.

In this context, the aim of the study is twofold: i) to analyse the relationship between the level of digitalisation progress and the development of the tourism sector for a group of EU countries/regions and ii) to shed some light on the relationship between the development of the tourism sector and sustainability factors. We will thus explore the factors affecting the tourism sector and the complex inter-linkages among digitalisation of the tourism sector, sustainability and economic growth. To this end, adopting a time series/panel framework, we will distinguish among three groups of variables: ICT variables, Sustainable Development Goals variables and Economic-Tourism factors. We will consider data from EUROSTAT and the national statistics for our analysis.

Keywords: **Tourism, new technologies, sustainability**

References

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