



Special Session Proposal

Searching for tourism resilience in the post-pandemic world

Special session organizers

Bogdan-Constantin IBĂNESCU (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania)

Karima KOURTIT (Open University, Heerlen, the Netherlands / Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania)

Ramona ȚIGĂNAȘU (FRUNZĂ) (Alexandru Ioan Cuza University of Iasi, Romania)

Sebastien BOURDIN (EM Normandy Business School)

Abstract

The crisis from the late '2000s and the ongoing pandemic revealed new and unforeseen challenges for tourism destinations, challenges that questioned the role of tourism as driver of regional development and sustainability. Tourism activities proved very sensitive to the onset of economic, environmental, social, or health crisis. In fact, during both the abovementioned shocks the decline in tourist numbers manifested rapidly and abruptly. Nevertheless, the after-shock recovery rate of tourism industry from 2010-2011 proved to be higher than the recovery rate of other economic sectors and for some localities tourism became a fail-safety mechanism for economic growth after natural or socially induced-shocks. While many researchers and policy-makers hope for a similar swift comeback following the end of the pandemic, there are still several elements to consider when analyzing the recovery capacity of tourism destinations.

New concepts joined the policy discourse during the last decade based on a notion that previously gained popularity in social sciences: **resilience**. In terms of regional development, the resilience is seen as the capacity of a system to bounce back following a shock, by either returning to its original state, adopting to a different state, or by creating a new state of social, economic, and environmental equilibrium. In tourism studies the concept of resilience offers a new and challenging perspective on local and regional development in a time when the number of transformative shocks grows from one day to another. Resilience has become a major objective in many tourism strategies, providing an useful framework capable of building a bridge between competitiveness, and (sustainable) tourism development.

The scientific approach on the subject focused on two main themes: *resilient tourism destinations* and *tourism-induced resilience*, however there is still much to investigate in this

area. This special session aims to bring together new theoretical approaches and empirical research results on tourism resilience, focusing on the relevance of the resilience concept for tourism studies and on the utility of resilience building in an unpredictable world. The main themes of interest for the special session will be:

- The relevance of the resilience concept for tourism development;
- The role of social and institutional factors on building tourism resilience;
- Evidence-based studies assessing the resilience capacity and tourism-induced resilience in the post-pandemic world;
- The drivers for assessing the tourism resilience at local and regional level;
- The impact of tourism activities upon individual and community resilience;
- Strategies for resilience building and recovery following COVID-19;
- Implications of resilience models for cohesion and growth policies;
- Qualitative methods (interviews, surveys) and quantitative methods (resilience indices, statistical time series models) for approaching the resilience assessment in tourism destinations;
- Urban-rural differences in resilience capacity building and the implications for policy-makers.

Besides the abovementioned themes, the special session is open to other novel approaches that challenge the current understandings of tourism resilience-related topics, like AI, smart tourism, or Big Data.

Accepted papers for this session could be submitted for publication in Eastern Journal of European Studies (<http://ejes.uaic.ro/>), journal indexed in Clarivate Analytics, Scopus, Index Copernicus, ProQuest, DOAJ databases.