

## CREO-LAB Tourism and Creative Industries

# REVITALISING RURAL BEAUTY AGAINST OVERTOURISM

Chiara Borella, Marta Franchello, Fatemeh Gholami, Alessia Pinna

### Introduction

Rural areas can be a great alternative to urban tourism, but the risk of overcrowding is present. It is necessary to enhance their appeal but keeping in mind to respect the carrying capacity of the place, avoiding the negative impacts that tourism brings. In our project, carrying capacity problem in tourism destinations, is addressed by taking advantage of the opportunities identified linked to heritage preservation and restoration, to find creative solutions to promote a sustainable and responsible tourism.

### THREATS

#### Tourism and the carrying capacity of the destination



Tourism carrying capacity is the maximum number of people that may visit a tourist destination at the same time. When exceeded, it creates problems to the environment of the place, to its inhabitants and to the same tourists.

#### FACTORS



### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Preservation and restoration of local resources



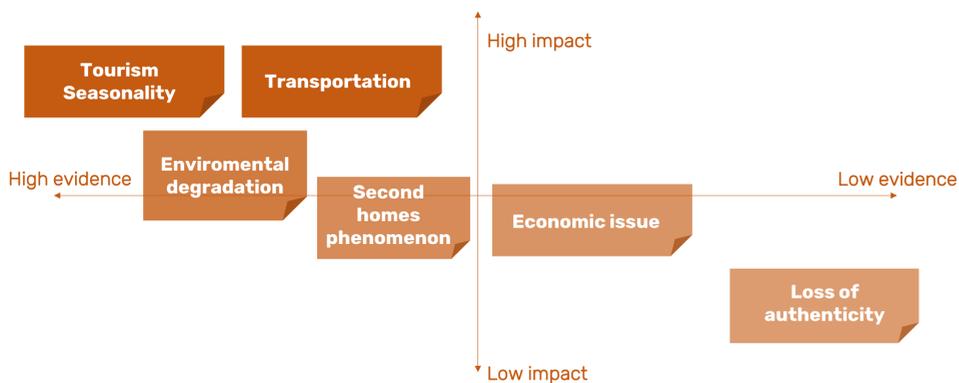
**PRESERVATION**  
involves different activities that aim to protect and valorise the heritage as identity of a place

**RESTORATION**  
consists in returning structures or sites to their original appearance

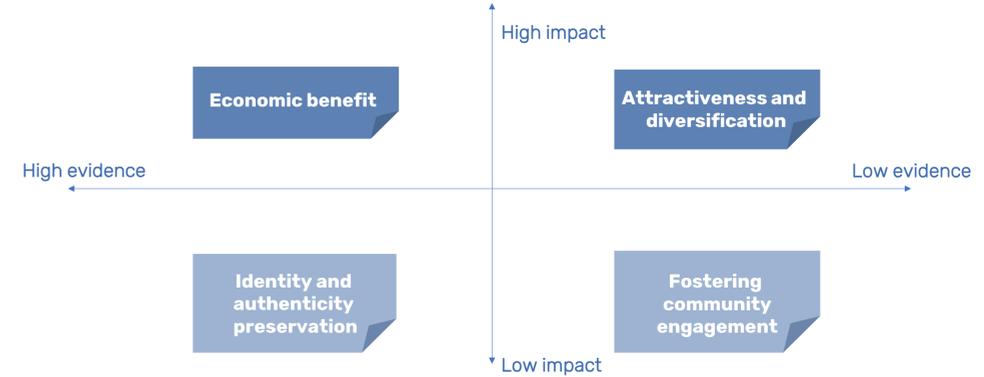


The synergy between tourism and cultural-creative industries unlocks new opportunities for a sustainable tourism and allows travellers to build a deep relationship with the destination and the local community.

#### Which factors affect tourism carrying capacity in Brembana Valley?



#### How to value cultural and creative resources in Bremabana Valley?



### Stakeholder map

- INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER**
- ✓ Local organizations (DMO, Proloco, GAL)
  - ✓ Accommodation establishments
  - ✓ Restaurants
  - ✓ Farms
  - ✓ Ski resorts (more than 30: Piani di Bobbio, San Simone, Piazzatorre)
  - ✓ Tourist office
  - ✓ Tourist attractions (ex. museums, thermal baths, mines)
  - ✓ Shops
  - ✓ Entrepreneurs and artists
  - ✓ Schools and University



- EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER**
- ✓ Lombardy region
  - ✓ Province of Bergamo
  - ✓ Municipality
  - ✓ Local communities
  - ✓ Public Transport (Teb)
  - ✓ Visitors



### Benchmark analysis

#### VISIT SCOTLAND

##### Environmental degradation due to overcrowding

**OBJECTIVE** - Address the problems rural areas are facing, enhancing visitor's experience and protect the environment.

**SOLUTION** - Strengthen responsible tourism through education and promotion; different plans and strategies with specific objectives.



#### RURALLURE

##### Enhancing rural areas

**OBJECTIVE** - Promotion of rural heritage along the main European routes

**SOLUTION** - Creation of a portal and mobile apps for travelers to build personalised itineraries according to their interests and discover the surrounding areas supported by the local stakeholders.



### Conclusions and some operative solutions

Brembana Valley, often grappling with over-tourism in peak seasons (summer and winter), has a hidden gem - its cultural and creative resources. These lesser-known treasures can create opportunities for sustainable tourism development. How to? By developing tourism proposals where the tourist co-creates his/her experience and becomes more aware of the value of local creative and cultural resources. For instance:

- Itinerant festivals and events (including existing ones) in less popular places (open air in summer, in symbolic buildings in other seasons).
- Themed dinners with local products and great storytelling (e.g. folk tales by locals).
- Treasure hunts and escape rooms in small villages centred on unique cultural resources.
- Cooking classes and workshops with locals, with opportunities to spend the night in homestays in connection with nature.

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# ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY IN PERIPHERAL AREAS THROUGH SLOW AND CREATIVE TOURISM

Bihan Banerjee, Nguyen Nam Phuong Hoang, Alessandra Misani, Shelly Porretta

### THREATS

#### Physical accessibility



Physical accessibility refers to the ease of navigation and **access to spaces** through infrastructure and transportation networks to accommodate diverse **mobility needs** for an assorted set of actors.

Physical access includes:

- ✓ accessible routes
- ✓ curb ramps
- ✓ parking and passenger loading zones
- ✓ elevators
- ✓ signage
- ✓ entrances
- ✓ restroom accommodation.

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Slow and creative tourism

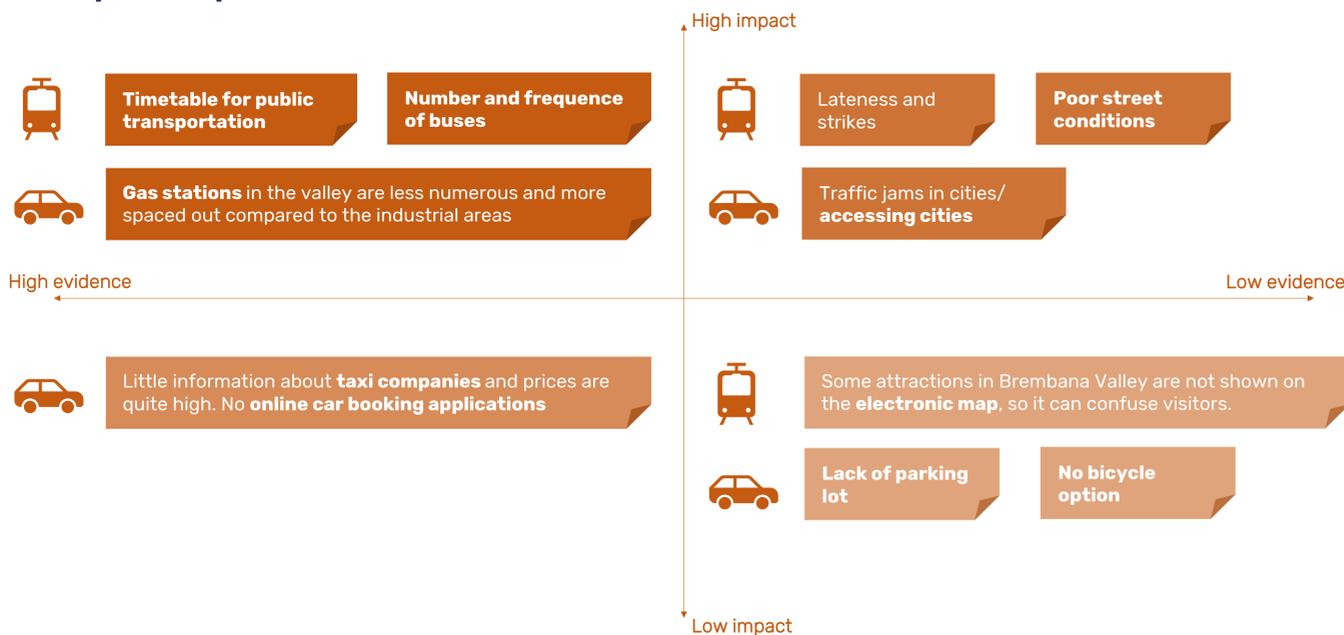


**PROMOTE SLOWER, IMMERSIVE AND MEANINGFUL EXPERIENCES** leverage on culture, landscape and connections with the local territory to **engage travelers** in a slow-paced and deeper understanding of the destinations

Slow and creative tourism has the potential to generate **alternative forms of mobility** and improve accessibility.

**PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY** - inclusiveness for all users and relieves the pressure on road traffic. It revitalizes the connection between humans and nature.

### Assumption map



#### High impact and High evidence

- Surpassing the pre-pandemic numbers of national and international arrivals.
- Ancient communication routes: walking paths
- Bike paths in Valle Brembana

#### High impact and Low evidence

- Room for people with disabilities.
- People in general are fed up with the fast-paced chaotic life of cities and are increasingly looking for fruitful and rejuvenating weekend experiences.
- Path is a key service - minimum accessibility requirements for key products and services
- City-valley long haul bike rental service with app.

### Stakeholder map

#### INTERNAL STAKEHOLDER

##### SLOW AND CREATIVE

- ✓ Slow Tourism Offers
- ✓ Local Municipalities
- ✓ Hospitality School
- ✓ Artists (ex. wood sculptors)
- ✓ Farms and producers
- ✓ Multidisciplinary creative environmental organization
- ✓ Accommodations



#### EXTERNAL STAKEHOLDER

##### PHYSICAL ACCESSIBILITY

- ✓ Public transportation companies
- ✓ Touchpoints at Railway Station and Airports
- ✓ Tourist Stakeholders - DMO (Visit Bergamo)
- ✓ Lombardia Facile
- ✓ AISM (Associazione Italiana Sclerosi Multipla)
- ✓ ENAT (European Network for Accessible Tourism)
- ✓ Local community
- ✓ Tourists



### Benchmark analysis

#### VENOSTA VALLEY RAILWAY LINE

Railway line connecting the cities of Merano and Malles in the peripheral Venosta Valley (Alto Adige). A drive for social, economic and tourism development in the valley.

**PROBLEM** - The railway was closed in 1990 because of the low importance attributed to peripheral areas

**SOLUTION** - The railway line was restored and restituted to the valley users in 2005



#### AGRITURISMO FERDY

Farm, restaurant, accommodation, offers educational and entertainment activities.

**PROBLEM** - Need for an alternative tourism proposal in Brembana Valley

**SOLUTION** - Multifunctional and creative business promoting and preserving the local territory and culture through slow tourism experiences



### Conclusions and some operative solutions

Slow tourism can be a great solution to promote tourism in rural areas thanks to creative offers that attract an always greater number of responsible travelers. This plan would be an optimal opportunity to **boost infrastructure, mobility connections** and economic development into the rural areas.

## CREO-LAB Tourism and Creative Industries

# VALORISING AUTHENTICITY AND EMPOWERING LOCAL CULTURES THROUGH CREATIVE INDUSTRIES

Laura Bona, Nicole Della Torre, Laura Maggioni, Negin Momayezan Marnani, Valeria Romano

### Introduction

Starting from a theoretical reflection on the problems of **staged authenticity** and **commodification** in the **tourism sector**, our research aims to tackle the authenticity issues through the search for a **balance between tourists and host community needs**. We explored the opportunities offered by the involvement of **local stakeholders**, especially small and medium enterprises working in the **cultural and creative sector**, to develop more sustainable tourism models.

### THREATS

#### Staged authenticity and commodification



**STAGED AUTHENTICITY** derives from tourists' **search for authenticity** combined with their lack of discernment between reality and fabrication

**COMMODIFICATION** an experience or event can change form and function becoming mere **commodities** to be sold to tourists



host community transformation strategies and compromises to **meet tourist consumption needs** that frequently result in the **loss of the original value and appeal for local population**.

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Community-Based Tourism



Community-Based Tourism entails the **community participation** in tourism to increase **awareness of local culture value** and enhance local employment, **entrepreneurship opportunities** and capacity building.



**EXAMPLES** Homestays

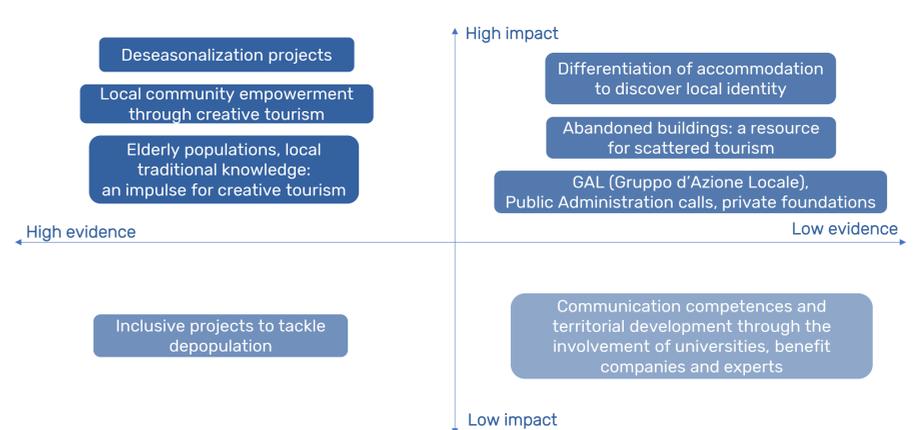
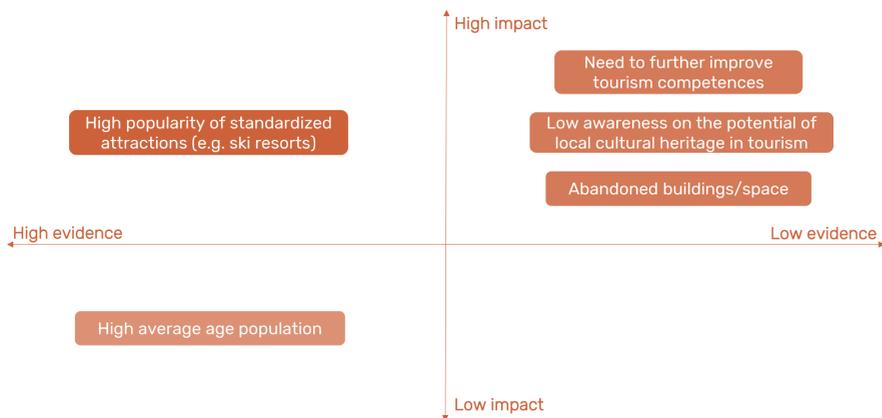
Scattered hotels



**TARGETS** Travellers looking for authentic travel experiences

Root tourists

### Specific threats and opportunities related to Val Brembana



### Stakeholder map

#### External Stakeholders

- Government** → Regional level (Lombardy Region)  
National level
- Customers** → Tourists  
One day visitors  
Skiers
- Non-gov entities** → NGOs  
Third sector associations (ex. Proloco)

#### Internal Stakeholders

- Suppliers** → DMOs
- Society** → Local population: young people but most of all elderly people
- Government** → Municipality
- Owners** → Ski facilities owners  
Property owners (of the abandoned buildings in the village)
- Employees** → Ski facilities employees  
Ski resort employees  
DMO employees

#### External Stakeholders

- Suppliers** → University
- Government** → Regional level (Lombardy Region)  
National level
- Non-gov entities** → NGOs  
Third sector associations (ex. Proloco)
- Customers** → Emigrants from Valle Brembana  
Tourists interested in authentic tourism  
Cultural tourists  
Slow tourists  
Outdoor enthusiasts

#### Internal Stakeholders

- Suppliers** → Artisans  
Farmers  
Ethnographic/scattered museums  
DMOs (e.g. VisitBrembo)  
Local Tour Operator (e.g. OTER)
- Society** → Local population: young people but most of all elderly people
- Owners** → Restaurant owners  
Scattered hotel owners  
Homestay owners
- Employees** → Restaurant employees  
Scattered hotel employees  
Homestay employees

### Benchmark analysis

#### CENTRO CA'MON

##### PROBLEM

- ✓ Risk of forgetting the traditional knowledge, know-how and ancient crafts
- ✓ Risk of losing a symbolic place for the community
- ✓ Disused building from 2008 to 2021, used as a deposit by the public administration

**SOLUTION** – Create a place where the traditional knowledge linked to the past is shared by the community for it to be cherished, valued and used in the future.



#### CASA DEL PARCO ADAMELLO

##### PROBLEM

- ✓ Lack of employment and livelihood opportunities
- ✓ Risk of losing the traditional knowledge, know-how and ancient crafts
- ✓ Disused building with unsuccessful previous management experiences by public administration

**SOLUTION** – Create a place of encounter for the community to discuss and pass on mountain culture and traditions, to imagine new possibilities for upcoming challenges and to enhance the local resources.



### Conclusions and some operative solutions

Inclusive projects such as *Centro Ca'Mon* and *Casa del Parco Adamello*, together with the collaboration of many entities including internal and external stakeholders, which aim at **empowering local communities**, show how it is possible to **promote the culture and authenticity of a destination**, thus avoiding commodification.

## CREO-LAB Tourism and Creative Industries

# CULTURAL KNOWLEDGE AS A BOOSTER FOR THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF THE TERRITORIES

Chiara Fassoli, Ecem Nazli Kurtoglu, Syeda Rubab, Arianna Tebaldi, Parisa Yazdi

### Introduction

Creativity has gained considerable importance in the planning and development of tourism experiences. From the economic point of view, integrating creative content with tourism experiences can add **value** to the sector and create **new job possibilities**, but there are still challenges to be overcome.

Among all the problems on the economic side, it is notable the **lack of funding**, whose main reason is **underinvestment** due to a general **lack of knowledge** about the potential of creative sectors.

### THREATS

#### Lack of Funding and Investment Risk



#### HIGH LEVEL OF RISK

- Intense Competition
- Environmental Risks
- Political and Socio-Economic Instability

According to some findings, investors decide to not invest for different reasons, the main one being the **lack of knowledge** of the sector (BAE, 2023).

### OPPORTUNITIES

#### Economic Development



Synergy between tourism and creative industry can support economic development:

- ✓ Economic added value through innovation
- ✓ Economic growth
- ✓ Exports increase
- ✓ Contribution to the GDP and resilience in time of crisis
- ✓ Employment opportunities (economic, social, environmental benefits)
- ✓ Creation of new kinds of jobs

#### Lack of Knowledge

High impact/High evidence

Low awareness about the opportunities linked to investment  
Taking the pulse of the European investor  
(EIT Report 2023)

High impact/Low evidence

Job Loss due to Covid-19 and lack of new job opportunities  
Lack of investment

#### New Job Opportunities

High impact/High evidence

New Jobs and SMEs development  
Entrepreneurship and business development  
(Report OECD 2022)

Low impact/High evidence

Economic Growth (GDP contribution)  
Report about the GDP contribution  
(Richards, 2014)

High impact/Low evidence

Economy and Ecology  
Overview of all creative industries in UK and their impact on the environment  
(BOP Consulting NESTA 2022)

### Stakeholder map



### Benchmark analysis

#### WE ARE CREATIVE UK

Not-for-profit organisation (2021)  
Created by merging Creative England (ex non-profit organisation) and the Creative Industries Federation (national organisation)

**SOLUTION** - This organisation is aimed at creating a **network to unite the creative industries**.

It promotes the development of creative companies by **finding strategic investment partners**.

Creative UK



#### CREATIVE ENTREPRENEURS ACTING FOR THE FUTURE MEDITERRANEAN

European project that aims at **strengthening businesses and entrepreneurship** in the cultural and creative industries in the Mediterranean area

**SOLUTION** - This project **supports entrepreneurs, start-ups and SMEs**, with a focus on young people and women.

Increases the capacity of cultural industries to **create jobs** and brings together actors to build a network.

CREAT-MED  
CREATIVE MEDITERRANEAN



### Conclusions and some operative solutions

- ✓ **Gastronomy** is a creative resource that plays an important role in adding value to the tourism sector and create new jobs.
- ✓ The promotion of **events, festivals or exhibitions** can be an opportunity to drive attention of local stakeholders on the added value generated by investing on creative resources.
- ✓ The creation of a **network** among local entities and different social actors (such as a "Patto di comunità") enhances investments and fosters new job opportunities, which become fundamental to keep the territory alive.