

## The integration of sustainable tourism policies in European cities.

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**Abstract:** European cities have experienced an intense growth in tourism and other related mobilities. This pressure on urban centers has increased the public's perception of the need to design more sustainable tourism policies that deal with the various associated dilemmas. This article compares the tourism policies of eleven European cities considering what governments have introduced, or avoided, in their tourism policy documents. The objective is to observe the extent to which these actions directly related to sustainability are being incorporated. The results indicate that local tourism policies are moving away from a model of public action based only on considering the economic impact of tourism and are starting to work with a wider range of associated impacts. In this scenario, the ideas of balance and sustainability find a much clearer accommodation. This research presents a pre-crisis tourism framework that can be challenged during post-Covid19 transitions.

**Keywords:** Public policy; Sustainable tourism; Tourism policy; Urban tourism; European cities.

### La integración de la sostenibilidad en las políticas turísticas de ciudades europeas

**Resumen:** Las ciudades europeas han experimentado un intenso crecimiento del turismo y otras movi- lidades relacionadas. Esta presión sobre los centros urbanos ha aumentado la percepción de la necesidad de diseñar políticas de turismo más sostenibles que aborden los diversos dilemas asociados. Este artículo compara las políticas turísticas de once ciudades europeas considerando lo que los gobiernos han intro- ducido o evitado en sus documentos de política turística. El objetivo es observar en qué medida se están incorporando estas acciones directamente relacionadas con la sostenibilidad. Los resultados indican que las políticas turísticas locales se alejan de un modelo de acción pública basado únicamente en la consid- eración del impacto económico del turismo y comienzan a trabajar con una gama más amplia de impactos asociados. En este escenario, las ideas de equilibrio y sostenibilidad encuentran un acomodo mucho más claro. Esta investigación presenta un marco de turismo previo a la crisis que puede ser deafiado durante las transiciones posteriores a Covid19.

**Palabras Clave:** Políticas públicas; Política turística; Turismo sostenible; Turismo urbano; Ciudades europeas

### 1. Introduction

In the last two decades, most European cities have experienced a sustained growth of international tourism mobilities, either in mature destinations like London or Paris or in emerging destinations such as Lisbon or Reykjavík. This phenomenon has greatly challenged European urban cohesion and the sustain- ability agenda, making the governance of the socio-spatial transformations even more conflictive, derived

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from the increasing penetration of temporal mobilities and international capitals, the rise of short-term rentals mediated by digital platforms, and other issues within the overtourism phenomenon. Recently, the European Parliament covered some of these issues with the publication of a report (Peeters, et al., 2018), where overtourism is highlighted in the first policy-cycle stage of agenda-setting in European cities (p.19).

The accelerated dynamic of urban tourism is linked to and explained by other processes of globalization which are constitutive of contemporary cities. In this context the urban is becoming omnipresent, thus contributing to the urbanisation of lifestyles facilitated by the connections of metropolises (Amin & Thrift, 2002). However, the diffusion of information and communication technologies has led to a radical transformation of space ontology, creating tension between “flows” and “places” (Castells, 1999). Cities and regions are becoming ‘spaces of flows’ and ‘spaces of places’ considering as staging posts of perpetual flux of mediated infrastructural flow, movement, and exchange (Graham and Marvin, 2001). These processes tend to support the construction of highly valuable spaces, like tourism/recreational urban spaces and the housing market for temporal dwellers (Graham and Marvin, 2011). Global trends such as the low-cost travel, the universalization of social networks and the global spread of new speculative housing capitals increase the rate of urban change in cities, reinforcing their attractiveness (Anton Clavé, 2019). Consequently, cities are fleetingly disrupted and reassembled by mobilities, which is believed to have profound implications for how social and economic processes are played out there (Amin & Thrift, 2002), this having wide implications for democracies (ibid.). For Colomb & Novy (2017), the development of cities as tourism spaces is inherent to globalization and the (neo) liberalisation of cities as entrepreneurial global agents competing among themselves, and urban planning increasingly focusing on place marketing and image-making.

The consequences of the unequal mobilities backed by the overtourism phenomenon and the neo-liberalization of urban tourism for people living in cities is being documented by an increasing number of scholars and non-academic organizations. Recently, several works have been reporting socio-spatial inequalities derived from the high penetration of short-term-rental accommodation mediated by platforms like Airbnb, contributing to touristification of areas already impacted by tourism and gentrification (Arias-Sans & Quaglieri-Domínguez, 2016; Quattrone, et al 2016); other studies have found out how tourism induces gentrification (Cocola-Gant 2018), opens rent gaps (Wachsmuth & Weisler, 2018;), drives the displacement of residents (Yrigoy, 2019; Cocola-Gant 2016) and how mega-events exclude immigrant minorities (Duignan & Pappalepore, 2019). The adaptation of urban spaces for food consumption has also led to *foodfication*, which has brought unequal urban transformations targeting wealthier people in different European cities (Stock & Schmiz, 2019; Mermet, 2017; Dimitrovski & Crespi Vallbona, 2018; Gonzalez & Dawson, 2016; Guimaraes, 2016). Student agency is also challenging urban transformations, as well as changing local class and household structures (Kinton et al, 2016). Other studies have emphasised how overtourism is spreading widely around European cities (Peeters, et al., 2018) and others how place congestion around attractions and city centres contributes to forms of spatial mobility exclusion of residents (Quinn, 2007; Brandajs & Russo, 2019). The increasing socio-environmental issues related with transport infrastructure like cruise ships have been reported at European and regional levels (Transport & Environment, 2019; Carić & Mackelworth, 2014). Researchers have also discovered out how the hospitality sector is contributing to job precarisation, particularly for women and immigrant workers (Cañada, 2018) and the sector has witnessed a significant expansion of informality due to the advent of the “sharing economy” (Heo, 2016).

All these issues have been increasingly contested around European and worldwide cities (Colomb and Novy, 2017). New forms of coping and community empowerment against uneven forms of urban tourism development are also being reported (Ibid.).

The role of governments in managing all these issues is a fundamental issue. Public policies are proposals for intervention designed and implemented by governments to try to deal with the public problems they face. The complexity of the design and implementation of this type of action has been the subject of research for decades (Capano et al. 2019; Hill & Varone, 2016; Peters & Zittoun, 2016). From the very first studies, emphasis has been placed on the fact that public policies are determined by their context, both in terms of institutional structures and the socio-political forces which characterise the different arenas concerned and other specific conditions which determine each situation.

From these contexts, decision-makers prioritise the objectives they wish to achieve and choose the instruments they will use to do so, considering political and institutional constraints and opportunities.

Previous analyses have pointed to the need to improve the understanding of the role of local governments in addressing sustainable development within tourism destination contexts (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010; Dinica, 2009; Wray, 2009). This is something especially true in a context where research points out that, beyond the discourses and narratives advocated, most destinations are

still pro-growth, and focused on traditional concerns of economic returns (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010; Dovers & Handmer, 1993; Harrison, Jayawardena & Clayton, 2003; Wight, 2003). Critics of the ‘sustainability fix’ (Jonas, 2015) point out that mitigation policies with respect to tourism externalities are often subject to hegemonic expansion imperatives and face non-local, ‘liquid’ and enmeshed agencies, resulting in incoherent and piecemeal reaction tactics which have shown to fall short of providing structural solutions.

This has been demonstrated in different cases, like in that of urban tourism water consumption in Majorca, where the “sustainability fix” creates a lock-in to a conventional growth model in the urban water sector (Hof and Blázquez-Solom, 2015); by the scant voice that local or regional governments have in the face of the development of infrastructure networks and their local effects (Russo & Scarnato, 2017); by the leeway provided by the EU technology and competitiveness agendas in the face of contentious issues brought locally by the ‘platform economy’ (Dredge and Gymothy, 2015); and in the formulation of tourism policies in London, where environmental issues are often left to one side (Maxim, 2016).

This also has been approached as an implementation gap or deficit, between the discourse of sustainable tourism goals and practice (several authors in Hall, 2011). In relation to this gap, the scale also matters, as the larger the scale the more the sustainability of tourism is affected by what is occurring outside of the tourism policy domain (Ibid.).

## 2. Methodology

This paper takes as its starting point an earlier report, produced in 2018 (González-Domingo, et al., 2018). This report selected the cities with the highest number of visitors for each EU28 country. Subsequently, we carried out a search on tourism policies in each one, discarding those that did not have any published online or not confirmed upon request with city administrations. Finally, we selected the cases of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, Dublin, Lisbon, London, Paris, Reykjavik and Vienna.

This analysis compiled the binding plans and measures related to tourism in the city. The starting point was the main tourism plan for the city, as it is summarized in Table 1. When it was necessary to go deeper on some points, other documents relevant for tourism were consulted. This is the case of cities such as Amsterdam, Paris, or Barcelona, where measures not explicitly included in the tourism plans were identified. By instance, in the case of Amsterdam, the document “City in Balance” was included. This programme of actions establishes a vision of how tourism fits into the city, and which in turn deploys other instruments such as the short-stay policy, and dialogues with other policy such as the sharing economy strategy.

**Table 1: List of documents analysed for each city**

City	Policy documents
Amsterdam	Strategische Agenda Toerisme in de MRA 2025 City in Balance 2018-2022
Barcelona	Tourism Strategic Plan 2020 Decree 159/2012, 20 <sup>th</sup> of November, Tourist Accommodation and Private Holiday Rentals.
Berlin	Sustainable and City-Compatible Berlin Tourism Plan 2018+
Brussels	Plan Stratégique 2016. Sized for tourism & meetings
Copenhagen	The End of Tourism as we Know it. Wonderful Copenhagen
Dublin	Tourism Strategy for Dublin City 2017-2020
Lisbon	Plano estratégico para o turismo da Região de Lisboa 2015-2019 País, V. (2018). Lisbon Urban Tourism Policies & Sustainability. Camara Municipal de Lisboa.
London	A Tourism Vision for London 2025
Paris	Stratégie Tourisme 2022 ALUR Law: loi n°2014-366 24 mars 2014 pour l'Accès au Logement et un Urbanisme Rénové
Reykjavik	Tourism strategy for the city of Reykjavik “A City for All Seasons”
Vienna	Tourism Strategy 2020

Source: Authors

The analysis consists of carrying out a critical and interpretive analysis of the contents of the current programmatic instruments for tourism. In this line of policy research, Fisher and Gottweis (2012) propose to analyse the formulation of public policies. Furthermore, tourism plans gather multiple and useful information to better understand the government and management of tourism (Velasco González, 2008). Thus, a systematic review of tourism plans allows us to observe how problems are interpreted and prioritized by public authorities and which solutions are contemplated to solve them.

A comparison between tourism plans of different destinations makes it possible to note different ways to understand and to manage issues that might put into question the sustainability of urban destinations. For doing that a selection of indicators are proposed in Table 2, which are mainly based on Santos-Lacueva, Anton Clavé and Saladié (2017):

**Table 2: Indicators of analysis**

Planning period (Years)		If the planning period permits the inclusion of this strategic principle, considering that sustainability requires long periods to be established.
Diagnosis		What are the problems or threats included that might affect the sustainability of tourism in the city.
Policy goals	Strategic vision	How sustainability is included or otherwise in the vision of the plan.
	Main strategic lines	Whether sustainability appears in the main strategic lines, and if yes, in what way.
Instruments	Measures	If there are any measure or instrument related to the sustainability of tourism, and if yes, which ones.
	Prioritization criteria	Whether the criteria for prioritizing the measures (if any) determine the accomplishment of sustainability development for tourism.
Governance		Explicit coordination with other policy areas or stakeholders: whether proposals related to political coordination between tourism and other departments are included, and if yes, which ones.
Mentions		Frequency of keywords: Number of times that sustainable/sustainability appear by number of pages of the document (mentions/pages).

**Source:** Authors own elaboration based on Santos-Lacueva, Anton Clavé and Saladié (2017)

### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1. Strategic dimension: period, diagnosis, vision and main strategic lines

##### 3.1.1. Planning Period

The most long-term tourism strategies are founded in Amsterdam (9 years), London and Reykjavik (both 10 years). The rest of cities' tourism plans are shorter-term. Table 3 gathers the planning period of tourism plans for each city.

Only long-term strategies which extend across elections make it possible to effectively include complex and global issues that tourism needs to deal with to guarantee its sustainability (Hall, 2011). However, long-term planning does not mean long term implementation because changes of government usually result in the creation of new strategies even though the previous ones are still in force (Santos-Lacueva, et al., 2017).

In any case, the Reykjavík City Government is the same since 2014, which also explains the maintenance of a long-term strategy. The government of the city of London was elected in 2016, the year in which it launched the current strategy and government of Amsterdam, elected in 2018, also approved its plan the same year.

**Table 3: Planning period**

City	Planning period														
	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Amsterdam															
Barcelona															
Berlin															
Brussels															
Copenhagen															
Dublin															
Lisbon															
London															
Paris															
Reykjavik															
Vienna															

Source: Authors

### 3.1.2. Diagnosis

The tourism plans show a variety of points of view about the impacts of tourism in cities. The diagnosis might reveal not only which problems are recognized by authorities and decision-makers, but also the magnitude and the urgency of those problems. Nevertheless, few plans include a specific part for diagnosis and most of them include this information throughout the document. There are some of them, such as the case of Dublin, Lisbon and Reykjavik that do not contain negative effects of tourism. On the other hand, Barcelona has a very critical approach to tourism considering a wide range of impacts caused, or intensified by, which led to complicate the management of the city. Berlin also takes a more critical look at the management of tourism in the city, incorporating the concept of sustainability *as a guiding principle for the city-friendly further development of Berlin tourism* (Berlin, 2018).

As it is shown in Table 4, the most common issues among the different cases analysed are overcrowding, mainly of the city centres; and gentrification, frequently linked with the balance between residents and visitors or with housing issues. These problems are recognized by authorities in the plans of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Brussels, Copenhagen, and Paris. Moreover, we identify other problems which are not recognized in all cities: such as the impacts of visitors on the quality of life (Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, and Copenhagen); labour conditions (Barcelona and London); mobility (Barcelona, Berlin and Paris); infrastructures and services saturation (Barcelona, Berlin and Paris); new modes of accommodation (Barcelona, Berlin and Paris); economic issues (Barcelona and Vienna) and impacts on the public space such as cleanness and security (Amsterdam, Berlin and Paris).

**Table 4: Problematic issues identified**

Problematic issues identified	Am	Ba	Be	Br	Co	Du	Li	Lo	Pa	Re	Vi
Residents vs. visitors/ Quality of life											
Overcrowding											
Gentrification											
Labour conditions											
Mobility											
Infrastructures and services use											
New modes of accommodation											
Economic issues											
Public space (security, cleanness)											

\*Am=Amsterdam; Ba=Barcelona; Be=Berlin; Br=Brussels; Co=Copenhagen; Du=Dublin; Li=Lisbon; Lo=London; Pa=Paris; Re=Reykjavik; Vi=Vienna

Source: Authors

### 3.1.3. *Vision and main strategic lines*

Including sustainability in the vision or the main strategic lines appears to be a signal that the criteria of sustainability are part of the key policy values and guidelines for the management of tourism. Seven cities explicitly consider the sustainability in their vision: Amsterdam, Barcelona, Berlin, Copenhagen, Dublin, London and Paris.

On that sense, Amsterdam aims “to set up goals for 2025 jointly for (the sustainable growth) tourism”. Barcelona’s tourism plan recognizes in the vision that it “needs to integrate all the available tools and mechanisms so new sustainable future scenarios can be built to ensure that the generation of wealth from tourist activities does not compromise the future of the destination” and “the destination’s sustainability has to be guaranteed by incorporating environmental issues, job quality and the local economic fabric.” Berlin estates “sustainability as a maxim for action to ensure Berlin tourism continues to develop in a way compatible with the city (economically, ecologically and socially)”. Copenhagen proposes the idea of “localhood for everyone” and in the explanation of the vision aims “a future, where tourism growth is co-created responsibly across industries with the destination’s sustainable development and the locals’ wellbeing at heart.” Dublin plans to “build on the City’s strengths, its cultural and sporting life, and the diversity and richness of its built and natural assets to create a thriving sustainable tourism industry which delivers major economic, cultural and social benefits to the City and to the Dublin Region”. London enhance the balance between visitors and Londoners: “The tourism industry will work together to manage the expected significant growth in visitor numbers in a sustainable way. And we will achieve our vision by balancing the needs of Londoners and visitors, with more Londoners recognising the importance of the visitor economy and benefiting from its social and economic impact.” Finally, Paris establishes that “in 2022, Paris is the city that hosts the most visitors in the world, but also the city that ensures the best welcome in the world, through its high-quality, sustainable tourism that creates jobs, and is a source of international influence.”

Moreover, two of them, Barcelona and Paris, add sustainability in the main strategic axes too. In the case of Barcelona, seven initial provisions are the starting point of the plan and one of them is “Sustainability and competitiveness: An unbeatable pairing.” This plan estates that “today there is no question that a destination’s competitiveness has to be tackled under sustainability and responsibility criteria.” Moreover, sustainability is one of the five criteria established to build the framework for tourism policies. In the case of Paris, the Plan organizes the strategy in four areas, one of them linked with sustainable tourism: “Develop sustainable tourism: A harmonious city, thanks to its solidarity-based, sustainable tourism development model that respects its environment and residents”. Two main ideas structure this section: Harmonious and solidarity-based tourism and tourism that respects the environment.

Brussels, Lisbon, Reykjavik and Vienna do not include the sustainability explicitly in the vision of their plans. However, Reykjavik and Vienna mention different issues which are related with the sustainable management of tourism. For example, in the case of Reykjavik “bolster the diversification of the economic and cultural life of the city” is a priority; and in the case of Vienna the plan promotes the balance between residents and visitors and the quality of the tourism offer as follows: “Vienna 2020 will be global (worldwide, cosmopolitan, optimally networked and prominent), smart (innovative, intelligent) and for the benefit of guests and Viennese residents) and premium (committed to excellent quality)”.

Regarding the main strategic lines of tourism plans we find issues related with sustainable tourism even though sustainability is not explicit, except the cases of Barcelona and Paris as we pointed previously. For example, Amsterdam’s plan sets four main objectives, the second aims to spread visitors across the MRA in order to guarantee the quality of life in the future, because “the live ability in crowded places is under pressure.”

Berlin establishes the following priorities in the main axes: “Actively channelling the flow of tourists to improve distribution and open up potentials; Cultivate and expand a culture of hospitality; Increasing acceptance through heightened awareness and participation; Preserving a diverse neighbourhood culture and maintaining public space; Brand management for city-compatible tourism; Better exploiting the potential for cultural tourism; Accommodation regulation; Supporting tourism infrastructure and mobility; More effectively exploiting potentials in the meetings and conventions sector; and plans for enhanced security”. Brussels proposes the adaptation of the strategy to guarantee a balance between attendance and habitability and to ensure that the tourist and event offer develops in harmony with the citizens of Brussels; and the deployment of the tourist and cultural offer in the 19 municipalities of the Region, by strengthening collaboration with the various players. Copenhagen establishes five strategic axes and one of them is “Tomorrow’s business today” which refers to sustainable development ideas. Dublin’s plan includes three strategic axes which gather sustainable principles such as respect, diversity



and accessibility: To enhance the visitor experience by creating a safe, stimulating and respected City centre that welcomes people from all walks of life; To improve the visitor offer by creating a diverse and vibrant cultural, social and leisure economy that attracts people to the City to experience and enjoy its many possibilities; To make a connected City by creating a highly accessible City through the provision of improved public transport, cycling and walking facilities. London sets four lines to guide the management of tourism in the city and one of them - Infrastructure and amenities- is closely related with sustainable management: “Ensuring London can sustain and accommodate growing numbers of visitors”. Reykjavik develops the strategy in four pillars (Cultural City, Conference City, Health City, Winter City) and four values (Green, Child-friendly, Quality, Cooperation). The green value establishes a direct correlation between the city’s environmental and tourism policies and look on environmental factors as yardsticks for the evaluation of tourism projects. Vienna has three fields in the vision: global, smart and premium. Smart Vienna 2020 includes three strategic axes, two of them can influence the sustainability of tourism in the city: Smart mobility management; and New poles of attraction for visitors.

Diversification of tourism is also recurrent in the strategic lines of plans. It might contribute to the sustainability of the destination; however, in these cases, the main objective is **tourism growth** and it is not related to the sustainability of this activity in the city (i.e. Berlin, Lisbon, and Vienna). Moreover, we identify different connotations in the use of the concept of sustainability: some cities use the idea focused on the economic dimension and pursue the growth of tourism but in a more sustainable way (i.e. Amsterdam, Copenhagen, London); others’ plans seek to guarantee the balance between residents and visitors in order to be sustainable (i.e. Amsterdam, Berlin, London, Paris, Vienna).

Some plans do not include sustainability criteria either explicitly or implicitly in the vision or in the main strategic lines. This is the case of Lisbon. The vision of the plan is “raising Lisbon to a new level of tourism excellence”. It has three strategic lines to achieve the vision: “1) Forging a closer relationship between the city of Lisbon and the region: Launch of a tourism-development model that can boost the Region’s integrated approach to tourism; 2) Improving the diversity of the Lisbon Region’s tourist attractions: Development of new tourism products in the Region, adding to the wealth and scope of what it offers; 3) Making the most of the Lisbon Region’s existing assets: Development of tourism products linked to the Region’s major assets, and ensuring they are recognized and publicized”. This is implemented through three strategic lines oriented to promote tourism attractions and products in the Lisbon Metropolitan Area

### 3.2. Action dimension: instruments

It seems that the application of appropriate policy instruments determines the possibilities of policy success. Policy instruments are tools used by governments to pursue their objectives. In the literature, policy instruments have primarily been studied as neutral devices that could be classified according to their purpose. Thus, Verdung (1998) distinguishes: 1) legislative /regulatory instruments, 2) economic/ fiscal instruments, 3) agreement based/co-operative instruments, and 4) (traditional) information/ communication-based instruments. Hood (1993, 2007) suggests considering the nature of the instruments according to the governmental capacity that is used in each case (Hood 1983, 2007). In this sense, it proposes to distinguish between tools that give access to knowledge (nodality), related with authority (authority), means that give access to public funds and resources (treasury) or instruments based on the use of organizations (organization).

However, governments cannot select between that broad an array of policy instruments, their choice is often limited due to their embedding in a larger framework of established policy regime logics (Howlett, 2009) also conditioned by the public policy sector trajectory and agency according to the level of state and regional decentralization.

In the following subsections, examples of the most important instruments to promote the sustainability of tourism activity in European cities were identified and classified according to the type of instrument and the field of action.

#### 3.2.1. Type of instruments

Hood’s proposal allows us to understand the actions planned in the field of tourism (Velasco, 2016). Authority tools are related to command-and-control regulation instruments, self regulation, standard-setting and delegated regulation or advisory committees and consultations (Hood, 1986). What we see is the deployment of instruments based on the coercive capacity of governments and the use of their position to impose different aspects.

Concerning the idea of **control and regulation** different governments develop land use regulations mainly related to tourist accommodation. We observe two main topics to be regulated: new hotel developments and short-term rentals.

Regarding the former, we find three main examples. Barcelona passed the PEUAT (Special Tourist Accommodation Plan), a land-use regulatory instrument for accommodation that divides the city into three areas, according to different spatial prospects: de-growth, zero growth and controlled growth. Second, Reykjavik establishes that new hotels must leave the ground floor open for services to the general public (tourists and residents). Third, Amsterdam Hotels Plan, which includes a sustainability check to open new hotels (National Hotel Strategy 2016-2022).

Regarding the regulation of short-term rentals, we also identify different proposals. For example: Amsterdam limits homeowners to 60 days/year tourism rentals; Vienna applies the same rules as for traditional accommodation; and the Parisian ALUR Law establishes rent control, including a time span for leases and mechanism to regulate short-term tourist accommodation in the peer-to-peer economy.

Moreover, we also find regulations about tourist mobility (i.e. Reykjavik) and noise pollution (i.e. Barcelona), in this case we can distinguish between tourism-oriented and multi-user oriented. For example, between a tourism mobility plan or regulations to improve sustainable mobility (bike lines, transit rules) which are oriented all kind of urban users. Through instruments of authority that are not strictly based on rules, we find several cities that in their tourism plans incorporate instruments imposed to improve mobility infrastructure and transit rules, such as the initiative in Dublin to increase the number of bike lanes and pedestrianisation, and the coach mobility restrictions in the city centre of Reykjavik or, in the same city, the extension cycling/walking paths and improvements to public transportation. Lisbon proposes a new ordering of tourist transportation and public space use. Paris, for its part, promotes a sustainable mobility strategy including an increase in bike lanes and walkability, promoting bike tourism (Accueil vélo Label), coach emission reductions and improved metropolitan public transport. Other actions of authority instruments might include the Litter Management Plan 2016 – 2018 of Dublin.

Other examples are mobility cards for tourists, such as Vienna's mobility card for tourists or convention participants with access to city bikes, car parks and car-sharing as well as discounts for tourist attractions. Similarly, the tourism public transport cards offered by Barcelona and Paris.

Additionally, Amsterdam is introducing small-scale experiments to spread visitors more evenly throughout the city and reduce nuisance. Copenhagen supports people-based growth initiatives to enable positive encounters between visitors and locals. Lisbon is working on the diversification of points of interest in the historic centre and improvement of the public transport network. London supports the development of guidance for local authorities to encourage planning that supports cultural infrastructure and implement "Legible London" to help both residents and visitors walk to their destination quickly and easily. Paris is seeking to improve tourist services, such as by keeping tourist sites clean, increasing the number of public toilets and improving accessibility in transport, museums and in the tourism offer.

On the other hand, certifications already have a long tradition as policy tools. As examples of the studied cities we can mention that the city of Brussels established an Eco-dynamic Label to encourage CSR; Barcelona aspired to promote a fair work certification and eco-labels of products/services; and Paris promotes good environmental practices in businesses and the label "Destination for everyone". Awards can also be a means to get actors to align with the proposed objectives, functioning as incentives. London implemented the Green Tourism for London Scheme that worked with this logic ([www.green-business.co.uk](http://www.green-business.co.uk)), it awards grades to hotels that meet various sustainability criteria.

Regarding **treasure tools instruments**, the most common are grants or loans, user charges, taxes and tax expenditures and funding. Taxes to obtain resources are common for the management of tourism. Traditionally these incomes have been designated for the promotion of destinations. As a new development, we found that Barcelona aims to re-invest part of the tourist tax on the city instead of on just on tourism promotion. Other examples are differentiated tourist taxes for the city centre and metropolitan area (Amsterdam) or creation of a tourist tax 2016 (Lisbon). We also find the use of funds related to sustainability and tourism, such as the tourist Iceland Site Protection Fund in Reykjavik.

About **nodality or information tools**, we find different instruments such as information collection and release, advice and exhortation, advertising, or inquiries. Instruments related to knowledge are mostly aimed at research or data creation. For example, Copenhagen carries out citizen assessment research to stay updated on local feelings towards visitors and the need for adaptive measures; London wants to provide visitors with up-to-date information on congestion levels and queuing times at popular attractions; Paris and Barcelona propose Tourism Observatories to produce knowledge that improves



decision-making and Berlin suggest instruments for monitoring tourism. In fact, Berlin's Plan goes further, proposing a new information tool that aims to create an innovative information and guidance system in the urban area.

Communication instruments have been traditionally oriented to the promotion of destinations. Here we recognize some measures for the promotion of sustainable practices, such as the web to sustainable meetings in Brussels. Moreover, we identify communication instruments oriented to increase awareness among the different stakeholders and tourists. For example, concerning stakeholders, we find the examples of Brussels, which encourages the dissemination of good practices for sustainable events among stakeholders; and Paris promotes environmental practices in businesses. For the case of communication addressed to tourists to increase awareness, we find the examples of The Icelandic Pledge to encourage responsible tourists in Reykjavik, the Barcelona's campaign for tourists about sharing accommodation and the idea of promoting fair encounters with locals of Paris.

Regarding **organization instruments**, examples could be the direct provision of goods and services, use of voluntary organizations, market creation and government reorganization to increase the sustainability of tourism in cities (Hood, 1986).

### 3.2.2. *Fields of action*

After analysing the documents, we distinguished eight fields of action: 1) overtourism, 2) sustainable mobility, 3) tourist accommodation and housing, 4) accommodation, 5) MICE, 6) heritage and culture, 7) environmental impacts and 8) labour conditions. Table 5 summarizes the different fields of actions identified in the tourism plans of each city.

**Overtourism** is related to overcrowding and the balance between locals and visitors. Most of these measures are addressed to the city centre, to spread visitors, to promote diversification of tourism experiences and to improve the relations between visitors and locals. We found these instruments in all analyzed cities, except Brussels, Dublin and Vienna. It is coherent with the major problems identified in the diagnosis which were related with the relationship between residents and visitors, the quality of life, overcrowding and gentrification. Concrete examples of instruments to deal with overtourism are the followings:

- Amsterdam: Tourist taxes for the city centre and metropolitan area; small-scale experiments to spread visitors more evenly throughout the city and reduce nuisance.
- Copenhagen: Carry out citizen assessment research to stay updated on local feelings towards visitors and the need for adaptive measures; people-based growth initiatives to enable positive encounters between visitors and locals.
- Lisbon: Diversification of points of interest in the historic centre.
- London: Ease demand at peak periods by providing visitors with up-to-date information on congestion levels and queuing times at popular attractions.
- Paris: Promote fair encounters with locals.
- Reykjavik: Hospitality strategy to avoid concentration of services on neighbourhoods.
- Barcelona: De-concentration strategy.

**Sustainable mobility** is the other big issue we identified in the measures proposed in most cities, however, just a few of them recognized problems at this stage in the diagnosis. These instruments aim to increase cycling mobility and pedestrianisation (i.e. Brussels, Dublin and London); to improve public transport in general (i.e. Lisbon, Paris and Barcelona) and to reduce GHG emissions (i.e. Paris), and to improve transit rules for coaches (Barcelona, Reykjavik). For this purpose, some cities incentive the use of public transport by tourist through transport cards (i.e. Vienna and Paris), and others implement restrictions to reduce pollution of cities (i.e. Reykjavik). Specific examples of instruments to deal with sustainable mobility are the followings:

- Brussels: Develop a tourist cycling plan.
- Dublin: Increase bike lines and pedestrianisation.
- Lisbon: Improvement of public transport network.
- London: Legible London that consist of help both residents and visitors walk to their destination quickly and easily.
- Paris: Increase bike lines and walkability; promote bike tourism: accueil vélo label; coach emission reductions; tourism public transport cards; improve metropolitan public transport; organize tourism coach and improve accessibility in transport, museums and tourism offer.

- Reykjavik: Bus mobility restrictions in the city centre; extend cycling and walking paths and improve public transportation to outdoors.
- Vienna: mobility card for tourists and convention with access to city bikes, car parks and car-sharing as well as discounts for tourist attractions.
- Barcelona: Tourism Mobility Plan.

Tourism measures that seek to solve **housing problems** seek to regulate private accommodation rentals offered in platforms. For example, this is the case of Amsterdam, Barcelona, Paris and Vienna that propose the following actions:

- Amsterdam: Private holiday rental policy that includes limiting homeowners to 60 days per year.
- Lisbon: New housing policy which comprise. eviction restrictions for old people and affordable housing for residents.
- Paris: ALUR Law establishes rent control, including a time span for leases and mechanism to regulate short-term tourist accommodation in the peer-to-peer economy.
- Barcelona: Increasing resources to avoid property-mobbing and illegal accommodation.

Regarding **accommodation**, we also found rules for new establishments (i.e. Amsterdam and Lisbon); incentives to accomplish sustainability criteria (i.e. Brussels and London); campaigns to increase tourist awareness about private rentals, increase inspection for illegal accommodation, mediation services between residents and legal tourist flats (i.e. Barcelona). More in detail, examples of these instruments are the followings:

- Amsterdam: Amsterdam Hotel Plan that comprises a sustainability check to open new hotels.
- Lisbon: Revision of the Lisbon Master Plan, creation of rules for new tourist establishments, tourist transportation and public space use.
- London: Green Tourism for London Scheme ([www.green-business.co.uk](http://www.green-business.co.uk)) awards grades to hotels that meet various sustainability criteria.
- Vienna: Regulation for private accommodation offered on platforms such as Airbnb, 9flats, etc. the same rules as traditional accommodation.
- Barcelona: PEUAT is a special plan for accommodation that plans de-growth, zero growth and controlled growth areas; increase inspection for illegal accommodation; mediation services between residents and legal tourist flats; campaign for tourists in Barcelona about sharing accommodation such as <http://www.fairtourism.barcelona>.
- Brussels: Tailor-made tool to quantify and stimulate demand for hotels and respectful places to the environment.

Regarding **environmental impacts**, we found measures related to the waste management (i.e. Amsterdam and Paris), the reduction of noise pollution (i.e. Amsterdam and Barcelona), the promotion of friendly environmental practices in business (i.e. Paris), and ecological products/services and the accommodation footprint (i.e. Barcelona). Examples of instruments to cope environmental impacts are the followings:

- Amsterdam: Noise Policy to reduce noise levels in the city.
- Dublin: Litter Management Plan 2016 – 2018.
- Paris: Keep tourist sites clean; increase public toilets; and promote environmental practices in businesses.
- Reykjavik: The tourist site protection fund.
- Barcelona: Promotion of eco-labels of products/ services; reduce carbon footprint in accommodation: training, regulation, data-management and awareness; cruise waste tax, and an environmental bylaw to reduce noise.

Actions specifically focused on the sustainability of **MICE** are only found in the case of Brussels. This city proposes a web resource for sustainable meeting and to disseminate good practices for sustainable events among stakeholders. Concretely:

- Brussels: The web resource: “sustainable meetings” disseminates good practices for sustainable events among stakeholders; and Certify Visit.Brussels with the “Eco-dynamic” Label from Brussels City Council and encourage CSR.

Another minor area of action is **heritage and culture**. In this case, we can mention the increased protection of historical places (Lisbon); and the preservation of cultural infrastructure (London). More in detail, examples of instruments regarding heritage and culture are the followings:

- Lisbon: Increase protection of historical places and historical stores (Lojas Com História).
- London: Preserve London's cultural infrastructure, including the support and guidance for local authorities to encourage planning that supports cultural infrastructure.

Finally, we observe measures to deal with the precariousness in the **labour market** in the tourism and hospitality sector, only in the Barcelona tourism plan. It comprises the promotion of fair work certification, training programs, the encouragement of good practices in businesses and the participation of the Tourism Observatory. Nevertheless, the precariousness in the labour market of tourism sector is a common problem of most of destinations.

**Table 5: Fields of action**

Field of action of instruments	Am	Ba	Be	Br	Co	Du	Li	Lo	Pa	Re	Vi
Overtourism											
Sustainable mobility											
Housing											
Accommodation											
MICE											
Heritage and culture											
Environmental impacts											
Labor conditions											
Others											

\*Am=Amsterdam; Ba=Barcelona; Be=Berlin; Br=Brussels; Co=Copenhagen; Du=Dublin; Li=Lisbon; Lo=London; Pa=Paris; Re=Reykjavik; Vi=Vienna

Source: Authors

#### 4. Limitations and future research

Researchers have only accounted for local policy level approach and tourism-related policies. Despite of considering alternative instruments, a systematic revision of these instruments is difficult task as alternative measures are not always included in planning documents and in many cases are led by diverse municipal departments different than tourism areas. In addition, the management of tourism is a matter of multi-level governance, which have limited our understanding of power relations on urban management regarding the tourism policy. Therefore, a more nuanced analytical design to understand the politics of sustainability in urban tourism should incorporate the analyses of diverse policy areas which directly or indirectly are related with management and regulation of tourism economy, socio-spatial orders and transnational mobilities considering aspects of economic, housing, social affairs, environmental, urban land-use, labour and migration policies. Moreover, we have not focus on the implementation and impact of policy instruments which are necessary to understand the real effects of public action on urban sustainability and justice.

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