



Proceedings E-book

SPORT TOURISM

New Challenges in a Globalized World

Sport Tourism Conference - STC'14



Coimbra College of Education

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New Challenges in a Globalized World

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WELCOMING LETTER

On behalf of the Presidency of Coimbra College of Education it was with great pleasure that we welcomed you to Coimbra and to the Sport Tourism Conference 2014 (STC'14), organized by Coimbra College of Education, in collaboration with the International Research Network In Sport Tourism (IRNIST).

The main theme of the conference was "Sport Tourism: New Challenges in a Globalized World" and we are proud to have presented a programme with such distinguished researchers and leaders in this field of work: Claude Sobry, Derek Van Rheenen, Mathieu Hoerberigs, Sandro Carnicelli and Sean James Gammon. These keynote speakers shared with us the knowledge, resources and experience to help us pave our way into the future.

The conference offered a worldwide forum for attendees from academia, industry, government, and other organizations that actively exchanged, shared, and challenged state-of-the-art research and case studies on Sport Tourism.

Thank you for making this event a memorable one.

I look forward to seeing you in Coimbra again.

Yours sincerely,

Rui Mendes

President of Coimbra College of Education

PRESENTATION NOTE

From 10th to 12th of December 2014 the International Sport Tourism Conference (STC'14) was held at Coimbra College of Education - Coimbra, Portugal. STC'14 was a joint organization between Coimbra College of Education and the International Research Network In Sport Tourism (IRNIST). This was the 2nd edition of a series of conferences about Sport Tourism, developed in the scope of the IRNIST.

STC'14 aimed to gather researchers, professors, students and professionals interested in the Sport Tourism topics. It aimed to stimulate research and the dissemination of scientific knowledge, providing a platform to increase inter-disciplinary discussions and comparative approaches, enhancing knowledge and experience while promoting scholarly cooperation and collaborative work among researchers from all over the world.

STC'14 focused on a wide variety of topics related to Sport Tourism studies within the theme of "Sport Tourism: New Challenges in a Globalized World". With this broad theme, it was our intention to discuss the challenges that globalization has brought to Sport Tourism, considering its threats and opportunities. We were also interested in linking academic studies to real market needs. The subtopics suggested in STC'14 were directly linked with this idea: policies, development studies and sustainability studies towards increasing positive and reducing or eliminating negative impacts; innovation, competitiveness, management and event studies, to improve organizations and best practices; market approaches to suit offer and demand; analysis of new trends to understand the tendencies of the market and to project new research problems and new research lines; and the history of Sport Tourism as a way of predicting the future.

In a short balance of the STC'14, 56 communications and 4 keynote speeches were presented; participants representing 22 different countries including: Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Croatia, England, Finland, France, Germany, Iran, Italy, Malaysia, Morocco, New Zealand, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Scotland, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, and United States of America. Concerning the most represented topics, we can highlight the presentation of 11 communications about Sport Tourism events, 10 on Sport Tourism management, 8 on environmental, economic and sociocultural impacts, and 7 about Sport Tourism and new consumption spaces, representing 64% of the total conference communications, demonstrating the trends of research in Sport Tourism. We also had a good number of master or PhD communications: 9 in total.

It was our intention that this conference was a time for both science communication and to reflect about the new challenges imposed by the globalized world. The papers included in this book are expected to function as open doors for knowledge sharing and reflection about these issues.

On behalf of the Organizing Commission of the STC'14

Yours sincerely,

Ricardo Melo

Coordinator of the STC'14

PROGRAMME

Day one: 10th December 2014

08.30h - Welcome and Registration
09.00h - Opening Session
10.30h - Coffee Break
11.00h - Parallel Session 1
13.00h - Lunch
14.30h - Parallel Session 2
16.30h - Coffee Break
17.00h - IRNIST Meeting
18.00h - Networking
20.30h - Gala Dinner

Day two: 11th December 2014

09.30h - Parallel Session 3
11.30h - Coffee Break
12.00h - Keynote Session 2
12.30h - Lunch
14.00h - Parallel Session 4
16.00h - Coffee Break
16.30h - Keynote Session 3
17.30h - Closing Session
18.00h - IRNIST Meeting

Day three: 12th December 2014

Social Day - Full-day guided visit to Coimbra Old Town - World Heritage by UNESCO

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ADVENTURE TOURISM FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES IN PORTUGAL: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

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Abstract

Recently, tourism for all appears as a phenomenon of strategic importance within the world. Contemporary society recognizes the need for inclusion of all and the universal right to participate in tourism activities that enhance human and social development. At the same time, it is important to stress out that, this relatively recent concern and sensitivity, is strictly related to two other global phenomena, aging population and quest for healthier life styles. Therefore, knowing that new realities imply alternative solutions, we believe active tourism combines symbiotically with accessible tourism, emerging as an opportunity for progress at different levels. Within this context, a more dynamic dimension of the tourism offer, adventure tourism for all, should be considered an opportunity for personal well-being, or else, quality of life of its participants. In addition, developing adapted adventure tourism activities to the disabled population will simultaneously provide new business opportunities. In Portugal, we have witnessed a growing interest in accessible tourism and observed the promotion of various public and private initiatives responding to the new tourism development trends. Thus, we suggest a new challenge for the sector under the adapted adventure tourism, presenting two perspectives of reflection in terms of the viability of the proposal and management of the tourism destination. In this paper we will discuss the relevance of accessible adventure tourism activities as an innovative development strategy, responding to new market demands, and potentially adding value to tourism products and destinations. We will base our presentation on a literature review as well as on the analysis of case studies undertaken in Portugal. This could have a pedagogical effect both on those responsible for the tourism sector and on tourists themselves, with or without disability, thus contributing to fight against stereotypes and prejudice still present in our society.

Keywords: Accessible tourism; Adventure tourism; Disability; Tourism for all.

1. Introduction

Tourism currently assumes a growing economic and social importance, capable of generating wealth and promoting socio-economic development of the territories involved. On the other hand, it is a way to promote well-being, contributing to the quality of life of its participants, therefore, essential to ensure equal rights and conditions to all citizens, that is, Tourism for All.

This requires the development of efforts to ensure the accessibility of tourism goods and services for people with disabilities, who constitute a broad framework of differentiated audience, people who have permanent or temporary disability, those traveling with small children or elderly, women in advanced state of pregnancy, obese people, among other situations. Thus, enhance the participation of people with any disability (temporary or permanent), to be precise, improve access to tourism for the entire population, is of great relevance and importance, responding to current global trends and at the same time helping to bring out the importance of an integrated and sustainable development planning for tourism destinations.

Development of Accessible Tourism for All implies the provision of answers and integrated solutions at the territory level, which requires the involvement of different actors, namely, the private, associative or voluntary and public sectors (Deville, Garcia, Carvalho & Neves, 2012).

We propose to examine scientific research carried out in this field, reflecting in particular on the challenges faced by the agents of the active tourism / adventure tourism sector to be able to meet the needs of tourists with disabilities. Consequently, we seek to understand these issues by analyzing some examples of good practices that have been emerging in Portugal, which makes us think of a backdrop of positive change. We reflect on the conditions / potential of the destination "Portugal" to the adapted adventure tourism practice and the resulting importance of the involvement and awareness of the different providers of active tourism services.

2. Benefits of adventure tourism for tourists with disabilities

Tourism and leisure in general, are increasingly important for improving and promoting quality of life of all people. Participation in tourist activities, being a vehicle for improving social interaction, personal development and identity formation, is linked to quality of life, being recognized as one of its indicators (Mactavish, MacKay, Iwasaki, & Betleridge, 2007).

Empirical evidence shows that people with disabilities have the same needs and desires as others, in relation to tourism (Buhalis et al., 2005; Przeclawski, 1995; Yau, McKercher & Packer, 2004). However, several studies stress the fact that these experiences are felt more intensely by people with disabilities, either through interpersonal relationships, or by strengthening their self-esteem (Shaw & Coles, 2004; Smith & Hughes, 1999; Daniels, Rodgers & Wiggins, 2005).

Although, benefits of tourism activities are more frequently and directly associated with physical and psychological health, they are also related to mental health. Experiences in which people cope with feelings of self-determination and perceived control, key aspects of the tourist experience, are intrinsically motivating and often result in psychological benefits (Caldwell & Gilbert, 1990). On the other hand, the meaning attributed to the tourism experience helps reduce feelings of weakness, vulnerability and lack of control and therefore is important for the self-efficacy of the person with disability and their self-empowerment (Blichfeldt & Nicolaisen, 2011; Iso-Ahola, 1982; Caldwell & Gilbert, 1990).

There is growing evidence on the critical need for social relationships in the lives of people with disabilities, as social isolation and dissatisfaction with social life are recognized as a social and individual problem in several studies related to this topic (Caldwell & Gilbert, 1990). Participation in tourism activities can play a key role in community integration, while allowing the development of social contacts and the social ability improvement of such people, which has a positive effect, by decreasing the sense of isolation (Bedini, 2000; Goodwin, Peco, & Ginther, 2009). It, thus, enables the development of social relationships, increase confidence and trust in others, important to influence the significant level of interpersonal communication progresses (Blichfeldt & Nicolaisen, 2011; Lobożewicz, 1995; Przeclawski, 1995; Carruthers & Hood, 2004; Goodwin et al., 2009). In this sense, through adventure tourism activities, people can develop social skills that enable them to be successful, not only in the field of leisure, but in all aspects of life.

Experiences shared by people with disabilities and other people during tourism activities put them close together, creating favorable conditions for the removal of existing stereotypes and providing an opportunity to face them within society (Przeclawski, 1995).

Apart from the integration and education functions which are encouraged by tourism, it is also important in the rehabilitation area. According to Caldwell and Gilbert (1990), leisure services are core under rehabilitation for two reasons: (i) they provide fun, rest and escape of institutional routines and also (ii) allow the realization of relevant experiences for all human beings. Moreover, these services can likewise be used clinically to help individuals acquire and improve social skills, physical functioning and cognitive abilities.

On the other hand, participation in activities in open spaces, in contact with nature, may result in increased physical strength and resistance, leading to improved energy and vitality (Goodwin et al., 2009; Lobożewicz 1995) and, for these reasons, tourism activities may be important to consolidate clearing mechanisms formed in the rehabilitation process.

In addition, integration, education and health promotion practices associated with tourism seem to assume a more crucial significance for people with disabilities in contributing to the development of more positive personal narratives. Indeed, tourism, by allowing the escape of usual environment, contact with new social environments, knowledge of other cultures and direct immersion in nature, becomes an important source of knowledge and social integration, and also a strong emotional experience (Szczygiel & Piotrowicz, 1995). Consequently, provides a change of focus, important for general balance and stress relief of individuals with disabilities (Moura, Kastenholz & Pereira 2012).

Blichfeldt and Nicolaisen (2011) refer that people with disabilities, like all others, feel the need to escape the bonds of their day-to-day life, though the reasons why they desire it may be different. The fact that people with disabilities often have a very structured day possibly contributes to a more intense need of escape. People with disability give greater emphasis on rest and relaxation provided by holiday, as it is an opportunity to strengthen family relationships and improve their general well-being (Shaw & Coles, 2004).

In summary, the scheme in Figure 1 intends to systematically organize the various benefits described, based on the review of the literature conducted (Bedini, 2000; Goodwin, et al., 2009; Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Szczygiel & Piotrowicz, 1995). There are three types of markedly positive effects provided by tourism, counting social benefits of participation, perception of independence and also personal and social rehabilitation.

Figure 1. Summary of the adventure tourism for people with disabilities benefits.

TYPE OF BENEFITS			
SENSED BENEFITS	SOCIAL PARTICIPATION	INDEPENDENCE PERCEPTION	PERSONAL AND SOCIAL REHABILITATION
	Cognitive development	Understanding actual/ real limitations	Strengthening of physical abilities
	Social inclusion	Perception of the imposed limitations	Personality development
	Isolation decrease	Interdependent relationships with new people	Social skills increase

Source: Goodwin *et al.* (2009).

Considering the research carried out by Yau et al. (2004), tourism consumers with disabilities state that the simplicity of being given the opportunity to be at a certain destination, feel the triumph of participating in tourism or just witness a narrative about

objects or spaces, smells or sounds, is sufficiently important for a satisfactory tourism experience. Thus, the positive effects of tourism result in eloquent social factors, not only for those involved directly in tourist activities, but for contemporary societies in general. The accessible adventure tourism, in particular, may be an important engine for promoting long-term well-being, i.e., the quality of life of individuals with disabilities and simultaneously a means of awareness, acceptance, respect and integration of all social groups.

3. Growth trends on accessible tourism demand

Demographic data show a growing trend in travel by people with disabilities. According to World Health Organization (2007), in 2020 there will be 1.2 billion people aged over 60 years, being this phenomenon even more pronounced within the major origin markets. In fact, the aging population in developed countries, combined with the strong link between age and lack of mobility as well as the gradual increase of the discretionary income of people with disabilities as a result of the promotion of equal access to employment and other policies integration will lead to a significant increase of people with disability holding economic conditions for travelling. On the other hand, also the scientific and technological development, which promotes autonomy and independence, contribute to the increasing number of people that, even with a disability, do not stop travelling, being their travel decisions heavily influenced by the conditions of accessibility offered by tourism destinations.

Consistent with Buhalis and Michopoulou (2011), the total market demand for accessible tourism reaches in Europe, approximately 127 million people, which correspond to about 25% of the population. If we consider the effect of the disabled companions, the potential of this travel market varies between 134 million and 260 million, whose revenue ranges from 83 billion to 166 billion EUR, just considering the European tourism market (Buhalis, Eichhorn, Michopoulou & Miller, 2005). In the near future and according to Darcy and Buhalis (2011), it is predicted that by 2030, this number would rise to a billion people, which means that one eighth of the population will have some kind of disability, what represents an increase of about 140%.

In parallel, it is important to underline that the tourism consumer with a disability does not travel alone, so the economic value of this market segment is immediately doubled. Neumann and Reuber (2004) certify that 52% of the respondents in their research depended on the assistance of at least one companion during travel and Tourism Queensland (2002) confirms that the majority of disabled tourists travel in groups of 2 to 5 members. Further research consolidate the growing interest of the disability market, particularly in Australia, where there are 10% of consumers with disabilities (Darcy, 2003), in the U.S.A., where 27.6% of tourists believe that an accessible destination to all is a reference variable weighting in their choice for a holiday destination (Ministry of Tourism of Ontario, 2007) or in Canada, where 21.4% of travelers mention that access or the accessibility of a destination is a very important or important aspect for their choice of the destination (Ministry of Tourism of Ontario, 2007). In this context, the analyzed data provide evidence of a latent demand, with the disability market showing growth potential if barriers to participation in tourism activities are removed.

4. The adapted adventure tourism challenge in Portugal

Acknowledging the centrality of the theme, the national tourism authority, Turismo de Portugal, IP, has developed several initiatives linked to the issue of accessibility. We highlight the Good Practice Guide for Accessibility in the Hospitality Industry (Turismo de Portugal, 2012), the awareness actions about disability and accessibility among tourism entrepreneurs, the project "Accessible Beach - Beach for All", the recognition of the Portuguese quality standard within accessibility for tourism services, among other initiatives.

The National Strategic Plan for Tourism 2013-2015 review (approved by Resolution of the Council of Ministers No. 24/2013, of April, 16) includes, as part of strengthening the competitiveness of destinations, several references to the need to develop efforts to transform Portugal into an accessible destination for all, alerting for example, for the need for more training about disability and to the creation of hospitality conditions bearing in mind infrastructures and tourism services.

The Project Accessible Beach / Beach for All, created in 2004, was one of the arising initiatives from the Portuguese European Year of People with Disabilities to harmonize various local initiatives already undertaken to make available and accessible to disabled the Portuguese beaches, extending them to larger possible number of bathing areas (both coastal and inland), occurring not only in compliance with the law, which already specified the technical standards for parking, toilets and access ramps to the beaches, but also creating conditions for mobility in the sand and water through the existence of personal vehicles.

The actions necessary to obtain the designation of "accessible beaches" and the right to be awarded the indicative of full accessibility, includes a number of aspects, ranging from the proper access to the beach, pedestrian access, adapted toilets, etc.

Specifically, in the field of active tourism, it was launched in February 2013 a Good Practice Guide for Accessibility, developed by Turismo de Portugal, IP, in partnership with the Portuguese Federation of Sport for People with Disabilities. This guide includes a set of information on the main outdoor activities that can be undertaken by tourism companies to customers with special needs, envisaging the requirements for each activity, the issues to be addressed by type of disability, support products and specific recommendations (Turismo de Portugal, 2013). Thus, it is intended to provide a useful tool to support tourism agents and industry, in general, to the urgent need to diversify services for this growing segment of the tourism demand.

Tourism recreational activities are therefore a highly relevant factor for national tourism. The National Strategic Plan for Tourism also highlights the need to develop distinctive and innovative products contents, event promotion and the minimization of bureaucracy as a stimulus to the creation of new and established businesses of recreational activities, and the launch of an Annual Calendar of tourist Entertainment.

APECATE – *Associação Portuguesa de Empresas de Congressos, Animação Turística e Eventos* considers as the main challenge for Portugal, the training or education, which depends on adaptation to current needs and trends of the demand and, consequently, product design foreseeing sustainable and quality tourism. These trends and current needs will meet enriching experiences demand, integrating not only the static elements of traditional tourism, but rather dynamic offers and active recreation. In this context, it is then important to consider that active tourism is as relevant to general public as to people with disabilities, requiring few changes, making it accessible for all.

Adapted or accessible adventure tourism associated with national strategic products development, such as cultural and scenic touring, nature tourism or health and wellness tourism, can be a determining factor for the differentiation of the destination "Portugal ", not only nationally, but also internationally, providing all individuals with the possibility of enjoying, in safety and comfort, the same leisure activities, and outdoor recreation. Therefore, accessible adventure tourism can be assumed as an instrument to attract a greater number of domestic and foreign tourists, while allowing the association of "Portugal" to a "social label" that is becoming increasingly relevant in international markets, as an aspect that potentially contributes to increase tourism demand and strengthens the competitive position of Portugal as a destination.

Research developed by Kastenzholz, Pinho, Eusébio and Figueiredo (2010) revealed that accessible tourism or adapted recreation activities promoters in Portugal are usually nonprofit disability institutions, mostly concerned on social and individual benefits resulting from its development. Thus, we realized that recreational tourism entrepreneurs in Portugal are still not fully aware or sensitive to reality or tourism for all opportunities. The same authors, Kastenzholz et al (2010), also concluded that tourism or recreational activities identified by individuals with disabilities as having greater potential of attractiveness and development were nature activities, outdoor and sports.

In this sense, we can conclude that the development of adapted adventure tourism products clearly responds to latent market needs and thus helps to increase attractiveness and population retention of territories, minimizing weaknesses such as seasonality, and fostering the rise of multiplying effects on local economies and, gradually, leading to an evolution of its ability to offer more and better infrastructure, equipment and services.

5. Some examples of good practices

Thereafter, we analyzed three cases of good practices that have been developed in Portugal, in this scope. Our research allows us to highlight the emergence of initiatives coming from the public, associative and private sector, which gradually boost the development of adventure tourism for people with disabilities in Portugal.

These initiatives have been taken by Turismo de Portugal (National Tourism Authority), as mentioned above, and demonstrate the interest and perceived opportunity by different social actors in promoting more inclusive tour services.

The examples were selected to give relevance and to sustain the main theoretical issues that we considered in the literature review. So, we begin by portraying what has been developed by the private sector, strengthening the business opportunity and the competitive advantage associated with Accessible Tourism. The company selected was Accessible Portugal, the first company specifically created for this purpose in Portugal. However, the survey carried out allowed us to identify several companies in this field, all over the country, that offer adapted adventure tourism products, in its multiple facets and activities, allowing to empower tourist destinations where they operate .

We selected, then, the case of Lousã, which allows us to show the importance of local stakeholder's involvement/ commitment and the need for a systemic view in order to make it an accessible tourist destination. Finally, we take the matter further by highlighting the important role played by associative movement in promoting more accessible tourism experiences, in this case, the Salvador Association.

5.1. Accessible Portugal

Initially established as Travel Agency and Tourism Entertainment Company, Accessible Portugal has as target audience people with reduced mobility and their family and friends, offering them different tourism services capable of providing memorable tourist experiences, while ensuring the accessibility of all quadrants of activity. Gradually, their offer has expanded to new audiences, especially through the promotion of actions aimed at people with sensory disabilities.

In the planning of each trip, Accessible Portugal ensures accessible transportation to wheelchairs users in vans; accessible accommodation; personalized support; accessible restaurants; monitor or guide throughout the trip or activity; accessible museums and places of historical interest; rental product support (technical assistance) and "nature and adventure activities" adapted to customer needs and tastes.

What distinguishes this company from other tour operators is their ability to address the major problems faced by the customers. The company's policy is based on the integration of people with disability, trying to give them unconditional support with a strategy directed to their utmost satisfaction.

Despite the focus on offering tourist services for people with disabilities, it is highlighted as an essential feature the fact that a substantial proportion of customers do not have mobility restrictions, however being conditioned by friends or family in those conditions.

It is therefore important to eliminate or overcome barriers to provide, to all and simultaneously, the same moments of leisure. In this context, the Accessible Portugal's final mission is to provide a tourism service of excellence. Responding to the goal of the National Strategic Plan for Tourism, ensures quality and competence in offering increasingly accessible tourist services. In such scope, this company has also been involved in several advisory projects in order to qualify the Portugal tourist offer and thus develop their activity. The innovative nature of this company work has been recognized nationally, and internationally, with the award of several prizes and honors.

5.2. Salvador Association

Salvador Association is a Private Institution of Social Solidarity, founded in 2003, whose mission is to promote the integration of people with physical disabilities in society and, in that context, its scope of action includes different projects developed in the fields of integration, accessibility, research and technology.

Salvador Association has been doing an outstanding work in raising awareness and ensuring the rights and opportunities of people with disabilities in Portugal. In the field of tourism, this association has developed several initiatives in defense of global accessibility to tourist destinations, alerting and strongly defending the rights of tourist consumers with disabilities. Therefore, we highlight the promotion of television programmes for the dissemination of the day-to-day life experiences of individuals with disabilities, the survey and inventory of accessible tourism offer in Portugal and the creation of the "Accessible Portugal" website (available online at www.portugalaccessivel.com), which acts as a reference guide in providing reliable tourist information on physical accessibility of different tourist services in Portugal, namely on adventure tour itineraries for people with disability.

This "Accessible Portugal" guide, created in 2008, includes information in Portuguese, English and German on the physical accessibility of about 3,500 spaces across the country - accommodation, culture, leisure, beaches, restaurants, health, transport and other services.

The accessibility of spaces included here is evaluated by members of the Association, allowing interaction and exchange of experiences among the community of people with physical disabilities and at the same time is an awareness tool for public and private entities about the importance of accessibility. This project was awarded in 2009 by the Tourism Awards Portugal, with an Honorable Mention in the Services Category.

5.3. Lousã: Accessible Tourism destination

The Lousã village is located in central Portugal, about 20 km from Coimbra, a mountain region where the main tourist products are based on nature, but also in their cultural resources.

From the social development point of view, Lousã has a long tradition in the field of accessibility and inclusion for people with disabilities, represented by ARCIL¹ (Associação para a Recuperação de Cidadãos Inadaptados da Lousã), founded in 1978. The work of this association has been fundamental in building a culture of accessibility, changing attitudes and instituting respect for difference, while it has been expanding its sphere of action.

Another major initiative in the growing of this project was the completion of the first National Conference on Accessible Tourism in Lousã held in April 2007, a result of the joint effort of the following stakeholders: Provedoria Municipal das Pessoas com Incapacidade da Lousã², Escola Superior de Educação de Coimbra³ (ESEC), ARCIL, Instituto Nacional de Reabilitação⁴ (INR, IP), Direção Regional de Economia do Centro⁵ (DRE-Centre) and Dueceira – Associação de desenvolvimento do Ceira e do Dueça⁶.

This pioneer meeting allowed to extend the discussion of disability and accessible tourism development, bringing to the discussion the cases of good practices that have stimulated the interest of the business community, and academic and policy which resulted in a special edition, released in September 2009, the scientific journal *Development of Tourism* and the University of Aveiro, dedicated to the theme of Accessible Tourism.

The project "Lousã Accessible Tourism Destination" was thus the culmination of a process of development, which is now accepted as a strategic commitment of the Municipality of Lousã. To operate and formalize the project, a "Task Group" was formed, coordinated by a technical team which integrates different local actors from tourism and social areas and also has the support of national and international experts. The assumed model advocates a participative management philosophy, which is represented in the accommodation sector, catering, activities, entertainment, and other socio-economic structures of the municipality. Led by a "Task Group", the implementation of the action plan has required the coordination of local actors. This reinforces the idea of the need for a systemic view, where the joint work of different actors is the lever of the qualification strategy and differentiation of this target. Thus, this process is the result of the convergence of social, cultural and political enablers of building a culture of accessibility, which extends beyond the sphere of tourism.

The studies carried out under this project resulted in several recommendations on organizational context, infrastructure and facilities, transport and tourist entertainment and adventure destination Lousã. Currently, many of these recommendations have already been

¹ Association for the Recovery of the Lousã Inadaptated Citizens

² Municipal Ombudsman for Persons with Disabilities Lousã

³ Coimbra College of Education

⁴ National Institute for Rehabilitation

⁵ Regional Directorate for Economy - Centre

⁶ Association of the Development of Ceira and Dueça

implemented, having made Lousã's tourism reality more inclusive and sustainable, while others are still in the process of implementation, since we cannot forget that tourist accessibility is a complex process and should be understood in a long term perspective.

Finally, it is stressed the effort of organization, management and administration of the destination through various initiatives, highlighting the Certification of Destination through the European Network for Accessible Tourism (ENAT). It is also of particular relevance the promotion of accessibility culture practices involving numerous and complementary actions to the implementation of the entire project, such as creating an Accessibility Award for tourist enterprises and commercial establishments, awareness events, actions of specialized training, among others.

The analysis of some examples of what has been developed in this field in Portugal sought to aware the importance of involving local actors and the need for a systemic approach to a more accessible tourist destination. There is a growing political interest in this subject and a greater commitment of public and private actors in the field of universal accessibility and, particularly, in the tourism sector. In this sense and according to the European Concept for Accessibility (European Concept for Accessibility), we highlight the seven interdependent success factors for projects or initiatives that are intended to be accessible: decision-maker commitment, coordinating and continuity, networking and participation, strategic planning, knowledge management, resources, communication and marketing (Sagramola, 2008, p. 18).

6. From tourist perspective to tourist destination management

The gains of tourism for the well-being of individuals are increasingly evident and testify the need to the urgent development of comprehensive and inclusive tourist approaches.

As mentioned before, several authors underline the importance of tourism activities, especially outdoor or adventure activities, for the rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, not just physically, but also socially (Loy, Dattilo & Kleiber, 2003; Hutchinson, Loy, Kleiber & Dattilo, 2003). Garcia-Villamizar & Dattilo (2010) even conclude that attendance at recreation activities positively influence the quality of life of adults with disability.

It is also important to note that adventure travel involves contact, socializing and interaction, presenting itself as a great asset in terms of opportunities for social inclusion. The adventure tourism is at the outset of a powerful tool for eliminating constraints to active participation of people with disabilities in society, contributing to the individual personal development (Przeclawski, 1995), with remarkable physical, psychological, emotional, social, spiritual and aesthetic level effects (Henderson & Bialeschki, 2005), not forgetting the decisive contribution to the growth of self-confidence and improving interpersonal communication (Goodwin, Peco, & Ginther, 2009; Hood & Carruthers, 2007; Lobożewicz, 1995; Loeffler, 2004; Przeclawski, 1995). It is also noted that the benefits referred are not restricted to the moment of participation in tourist and adventure outdoor activities, but also have repercussions over time, contributing to the perceived quality of life of individuals with disabilities (Anderson, Schleen, McAvoy, Lais, & Seligmann, 1997; Goodwin, et al, 2009; Carruthers & Hood, 2007).

On the other hand, considering the destination management perspective, the involvement of all stakeholders emerges as a critical issue for the successful implementation of accessible tourism (Devile et al., 2012). Improving accessibility is reflected in the improvement of the different departments involved in the tourist experience, opens

opportunities for new markets, stimulates diverse tourism offerings, improves operational management and brings competitive advantages to service providers and the destination as a whole (Anderson et al., 1997; Goodwin, et al, 2009; Carruthers & Hood, 2007).

For this to take place in reality, cooperation and the establishment of strategic partnerships are basilar requirements. These depend on the ability of actors, from the public sector, to encourage and work with various stakeholders from the private sector and non-governmental organizations, with different interests, resources and goals (Michopoulou & Buhalis, 2011).

In summary, it is possible to understand that the competitiveness of a tourism destination is associated to its accessibility, not forgetting that this is not just physical or architectural (Devile et al, 2012; Scheurer & Curtis, 2010). Thus, it is crucial to involve all stakeholders in the development destination, reconciling interests and responsibilities, establishing networks and commitments between the different actors of the tourism system (Darcy & Dickson, 2009). This approach requires strategies and joint actions to gain another critical mass, as well as motivation and identification with the process. All actors in the tourism system should join efforts to promote accessibility, not only in the destination, but also, effectively, from the usual environment of the tourist, once they leave home, and throughout their journey (Soares, 2012).

7. Final considerations

Accessible adventure tourism is one of the tourism phenomenon responses to new tourist trends and concerns of contemporary societies. Hence, the accessible adventure tourism can be considered more than one type of tourism, translating into a global tourism and progressive actual version. Additionally, as is suggested by Ray and Ryder (2003), adventure tourism activities adjusted to the characteristics of the target population, encourage the development of physical, social and cognitive skills, such as self-confidence.

Another factor that deserves mention is the high degree of loyalty of the tourists with disabilities (Burnett & Baker, 2001) that, when satisfied, tend to return to those destinations that guarantee them the enjoyment of safe touristic experiences. This has significant economic implications, increasing the destination attractiveness and competitiveness. Another important issue in the economic terms is the accessible tourism latent demand, estimated in about 10% of the world population (World Health Organization, 2007), with potential for exponential growth in the next twenty years by approximately 140% (Darcy & Buhalis, 2011).

Thus, accessible tourism issues are relevant both socially and ethically, and also include an important economic dimension. The analysis of some examples of what has been developed in this field in Portugal sought to aware the importance of involving local actors and the need for a systemic approach to the development of adventure tourism. These factors, being only small signs of the long road still to go, help to establish a scenario for change, which gradually gives rise to concrete development and recognition of the Tourism for All.

In conclusion, there are already empirical evidence and research that justify the relevance of adventure tourism market as well as the benefits of this type of tourism for people with disability case. It becomes clear that accessible tourism increases the quality of life of local communities and their visitors, and should therefore be regarded as the new

paradigm of tourist development, supported by tourism quality, competitiveness and sustainability.

Inclusion, disability, aging are areas of study increasingly the target of scientific research with an increasing importance in modern societies (Darcy & Buhalis, 2011). Thus, considering the significant implications that these constructs have for the development of adventure tourism, both on the supply and demand side, it would be interesting to research on other aspects of relevance, particularly in the context of technological innovation, to create materials and equipment suitable for the practice of adventure activities that do not yet allow the participation of individuals with a disability.

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