The role of innovation in the Spanish Tourism policy

Isabel Rodríguez Sánchez (isabel.rodriguez@ua.es)
Institute for Tourism Research
University of Alicante
The role of innovation in the Spanish tourism policy

- Spain, a long trajectory innovating in its tourism policy? A brief review of our recent national tourism policy
- The appearance of innovation as an strategic aim in the most recent tourism policy. The creation of specific tools to promote innovation in tourism: Segittur
- Innovation policy and tourism policy: a weak and relatively new relationship
- Other innovative platforms existing in Spain: Exceltur, ITH and regional innovation centers
- Some examples of tourism policy innovation.
Spain, a long trajectory innovating in its tourism policy?

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### 50-80s’
- **Spanish Constitution**
  - Decentralisation of the tourism policy
  - Need for coordinated actions
  - Regional planning policy

### 80-90s’
- **White Paper of Spanish Tourism**
  - Framework for subsequent tourism policies
  - Central/regional cooperation

### 1992-95
- **FUTURES I**
  - Specific programme of Modernisation and tourist innovation

### 1996-99
- **FUTURES II**
  - 2 programmes: Technology and innovation R+D

### 2000-06
- **PICTE**
  - Own standardisation system (Spanish Tourism Quality System) and certification
  - Innovative projects and instruments

### NATIONAL TOURISM PLAN 2020
- Innovation and technological development

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**POLICY MILESTONES**

- **Tourism Growth policy**
  - Maximum growth in quantitative terms (offer and demand) without planning
  - Central tourism policy

- **Crisis of the model**
  - Deep reflection about our weaknesses
  - New policies to differentiate the offer
  - Innovation as a means of survival

- **Competitiveness / Sustainability**
  - Need to adapt to the global changes of demand with social, economical and environmental criteria
  - Similar policy-positive context
  - Demand-driven innovation

- **Quality**
  - Total quality
  - All sectors
  - Firm/Destination approach
  - Positioning innovation

- **Knowledge and innovation**
  - New challenges from a prospective view of Spain
  - Innovation as a means of survival
Innovation a central and essential to compete issue
Diagnosis: barriers to innovate linked to policy framework, firms size (SMEs) and lack of collaboration

- Customer value
- Product and experiences improvement
- Firms management
- Sustainability

TOURISM 2020

2007

- Awareness on innovation importance
- Creation of innovative clusters
- New technologies investment

Operational tool to support the policy

2012

- R+D+I-SICTUR-THINKTUR Specific projects
- Entrepreneurs support - AYUDATUR
- Promotion/Commercialisation
- Innovative tourism clusters

A GOOD STARTING POINT BUT ISOLATED AND DISCONNECTED ACTIONS. NO STRATEGY IN THE LONG TERM
Political changes bring new policies...and now what?

Similar policy  
Less consistent plan

TOURISM 2020

- Innovation a central aim to stop the decline and activate growth
- Innovation based on customer
- Talent and entrepreneurs

NATIONAL TOURISM PLAN

2007

- Innovative management destinations: Intelligent destinations

2012-2016

- Unique project, pioneers in Europe
- Definition, minimal requirements to be certified
- New technologies funding for the management of mature destinations
- The XXI century Tourism Office
- Platform of knowledge exchange for the regional government

- Talent and entrepreneurs
- Funding access for innovative entrepreneurs
Policy... but also other innovative platforms
Innovation policy and tourism policy: a weak and relatively brand new relationship

National innovation policy

No explicit connections

National tourism policy

Planning and strategy level

Ministry of Industry, Tourism and Commerce

R+D+I National Plan

National strategy

Specific programme to support the creation of innovative clusters

Promotion of collaboration in an specific geographical area or sector of activity (different agents of the system, specially SMEs)

4 years trajectory of the tourism sector with a pioneer participation on it

Policy implementation level

Evaluation?
Some examples of tourism policy innovation

Tourism Growth policy

Competitiveness / Sustainability

Knowledge and innovation

50-80s’

1996
FUTURES II (1996-1999)
PLAN LOCAL AGENDA CALVIÀ 21

2007
TOURISM 2020
PLAYA DE PALMA PROJECT
Some examples of tourism policy innovation

- 1910, creation of an inexistent hotel infrastructure in Spain
- 1928, first Parador built in a scenic location
- Subsequent establishments created on historical monuments located on outstanding beautiful sceneries. Nowadays, a network of 90

A pioneer project

- Instrument of innovation policy to develop a quality product in order to gain a good reputation abroad
- Maintenance and value of the heritage. Regional gastronomy promotion. Development of non touristic areas and pole of attraction of investment
- Government owned chain
- Attempts of imitation: France (castles) and Portugal (posadas)

Traces of innovation
But how to innovate in a complex scenario?

Photo: Jesús González
Where the prevailing values are...
Cheap, banality, standard
Calvià, a pilot destination in the 90s

- **Initial stage**
  - As a tourist destination dates back to the 60s
  - Unsustainable path: massive construction, carrying capacity exceeded, lack of attractiveness, etc.
  - A pilot destination to test participative policies and more sustainable projects: Plan of Excellence and Local Agenda 21

- **Innovative measures**
  - Stopped the urbanisation process: eco-measures introduced in the urban planning instruments.
  - Innovative policies with an “*sponge effect*” on the urban spaces: demolition of obsolete buildings and conversion to green areas.
  - De-seasonalisation: European Winter destination
  - Strong component of social innovation. Social participation (specific forum, home-delivery questionnaires...). Attempts to change social values regarding the meaning of growth
  - Strong political commitment
Three-level efforts (national, regional, local) to innovate at a destination level: the case study of Playa de Palma in Mallorca.

- **The initial stage**
  - Environmental degradation, inadequacy to the current demands and trends
  - Deteriorated, poorly constructed buildings. Old hotels (72% from before 1970) in the low-mid categories (2-3 stars). Cheap prices
  - Low quality urbanism, low level of investment, low levels of trust for the future, no signs of local identity.

- **Innovative measures**
  - Radical change in the current tourist destination model under the *large scale urban development projects philosophy*.
  - Urban attractiveness: a network of symbolic urban pieces. Spaces of experiences, green areas, urban landscape improvement...
  - Radical change of thinking as for urban growth: containment and decreasing
  - A real try to truly apply the principles of governance
  - Targeted results expected: 50% reduction of the hotel capacity, increase the quality of the offer
  - Foreign investors attraction
Immediate actions /long term actions (Adaptation of the urban environment to the climate change new scenario: 0% balance CO2 emissions, 100% renewable energies for 2050)

Mobility, green pedestrian areas
Recovering areas for enjoyment
Free spaces

Photo: Jesús Gonzalez
New products
Bio hotels

High performance Training Centre

Photo: Jesús Gonzalez
Key issues

- Our evolution as a tourist country has forced us to INNOVATE in order to remain competitive.
- Periods of crisis have further stimulated innovation
- External-internal changes are force drivers of innovation: Changes open new scenarios to whom policies and actions must adapt. Every tourism national policy is forced to be innovative.
- Most tourism policies are innovative by nature. Innovation is a transversal topic in policy even though not explicitly considered.
- Polices aim to promote innovation but do they achieve it? There are no tools or procedures to measure the efficiency of the actions taken. Unfortunately, policies are bigger than resources.
- The implementation gap of innovative ideas in the form of plans and projects. Political changes do not help.
- No definition of the innovation has been done in the tourism plans: not enough reflexion bring inconsistency to the implementation.
Key issues (cont.)

- Innovation is costly. Public governmental cost-sharing might not be enough. In an scarce resources scenario, what is the allocation of funds criteria for this large scale projects?
- Traditional public administration leadership but difficulties to involve the private sector.
- In playa de Palma, can the project really lead to a complete change of the model?
From the 50s’ to the present time... 60 years of unavoidable and incremental innovation in our policy?

Thanks