

EDITORIAL

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Education is a fundamental subject in every Society; its importance is threefold: it supports and allows the access of young people to employment, it is a permanent service delivering continuous learning to those already employed, who have to act within constantly evolving markets, and it has relevant political importance for the cultural and civic development of societies.

This issue (n.4) of *AlmaTourism* is devoted to the subject of Education, in the wake of the international conference on "Higher Tourism Organization: Issues and Practices" organized in October 2009 by the Faculty of Economics of the Rimini Campus of the University of Bologna. This Campus was born on the trail of half a century of teaching experience in the field of tourism, in a city that is also an important tourism destination. It offers a three-year first cycle degree called "Economics of Tourism" together with a second cycle degree, "Tourism Economics and Management" that, starting from the academic year 2012-2013, will become an international course (with lectures in English); in addition to university courses, the Rimini Campus offers international summer schools, higher education courses, seminars and laboratories. Finally, the Higher School of Tourism Sciences completes a remarkable offer of education, research and consultancy.

Although the University Campus of Rimini has achieved important international recognition, the whole Italian educational offer on tourism-related subjects is rather weak, especially if compared with other European competitors. Hence, the reflections and analysis presented on this issue are extremely useful for the development of skills and competencies on national and international tourism management.

In Italy, the first degree courses on Tourism appeared only at the end of the 90s, they usually belonged to two classes of degree: Class L15 on Tourism Sciences and Class L18 on Economics and Business Administration Sciences. In 2009, in Italy there were 39 first cycle programs offered by 33 universities. As for the second level - Master - there were 26 programs offered by 24 universities, mainly belonging to LM49 (Design and Management of Tourism Systems) and LM56 (Economic Sciences) classes.

Finally, there are few Ph.D. courses (7, with around 15 Ph.D. students), which are very heterogeneous and located in the South of Italy; this situation is very peculiar, if we consider that IREST (Institute for Tourism Research and Higher Studies) of University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne has a Ph.D. course attended in 2011 by 25 students. In The most important European countries, the offer of first and second cycle degree courses in tourism is as follows: in United Kingdom there are about 624 first cycle degree courses and 74 second cycle degree courses, Switzerland has 9 first cycle courses and 9 second cycle courses, in Spain there are around 71 first cycle courses and 52 second cycle courses, and in France there are around 66 first cycle courses and 42 second cycle courses. These quantitative data allow to highlight the gap between the United Kingdom and other countries, including Italy, with reference to first cycle courses, while they show greater homogeneity with regard to the number of second cycle degree courses. The number of degree courses should be measured and evaluated on the basis of many other factors, as proposed by Alessandro Capocchi (International Comparison. First report on university education in tourism, May 2011, document released by the author). However, for countries that are destinations of excellence, such as those mentioned before, the educational offer becomes an enabler for strategic growth.

In this scenario, the contribution by Moira Kostic Bobanovic and Jasmine Grzinic on the complex and strategic importance of the English language skills in the tourism sector

highlights, by means of a questionnaire analysis, how the need for good communication skills and how educational programs should be oriented to the needs imposed by tourism management.

The experience of International Summer Schools and their recent development in Italy is illustrated by Silvia Grandi, Valeria Macchini and Fiorella Dallari; this paper shows how Summer Schools has to potential to integrate university curricula and Ph.D. courses and how they represent opportunity for both professionals and young researchers. The Summer School of Geography of Tourism held in Rimini is a meaningful case study, like the VALORTUR European Summer School in Science of Tourism, aimed at the tourism exploitation of natural resources held in July 2011 at the University Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne.

From a different perspective, the contribution on the Civic Museums of Rimini, by Angela Fontemaggi, Orietta Piolanti and Errica Dall'Ara, analyze the educational role of these museums, while the paper on the Library of the Rimini Campus, written by Alessandra Citti, shows the cultural role of such a library, with particular reference to university research and teaching support.

Finally, this issue presents a contribution which is important for two reasons, that of Giacomo Corna Pellegrini, a geographer who in the 60s devoted his studies to tourism among other things, and peacefully passed away at his home on August 15, 2011. He enthusiastically took part in the inauguration of this Journal and on that occasion presented the contribution we reproduce here together with his biography to make him better known, to reveal his modernity and his love for places and communities, for environment and culture. Geographer and man of knowledge, relentless traveler, he was always attentive to the young and ready to cooperate and help. He saw tourism as a major field of study of geography, in a mutual effort to know and understand the world. Pursuit of knowledge, explanation of reality and of realities to meet, along with a continuous commitment to education, have made it one of the most esteemed and respected masters of the Italian geography, popularizer of Italian geographic research abroad, member of the European Academy of London, honorary member of the Italian Geographical Society and the Italian Association of Geography Teachers.