EDITORIAL
Fiorella Dallari

The 2015 winter number of Almatourism can be considered a manifold issue, proposing reflections on the dream of tourism: is it a social practice able to produce new social space? Is it developer of green, or better blue, economy? Is it an important driver of sustainable development or not in the iconic and strong destinations as the off the beaten tracks? Is practitioners' attitude changing and are the most important market actors acting in a more sustainable way and developing reports on their eco-friendly performances? Are tourists aware of the existence of a code of ethics for tourism?

Certainly the international tourists flows continue to increase rapidly even in 2014: according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO World Tourism Barometer - vol. 13 - October 2015), arrivals grew by 4.2%, touching share 1.133 billion, or 46 million more than in 2013. International tourism marks therefore robust growth for the fifth consecutive year, leaving behind the fall in 2009.

In this general scenario, thus, the Europe remains the most visited area of the world: has reached 580.6 million arrivals, with about 13.7 million tourists more than in 2013; the increase is noticeable especially in Southern / Mediterranean area (6.9%) and in the North (5.4%). It recorded a 5% growth between January and October 2015 fueled by a weaker euro and a gradually improving economy. Despite to ongoing global challenges, including increased safety and security concerns, demand for international tourism remains strong.

There are lot of the questions around the tourism and we know that it doesn't deceive many local communities but at the same time it continues to grow facing the deep contemporary crisis, maybe because it is an important socio-spatial practice for the people and the places where it occurs?

The researchers of 2015 winter solstice issue try to answer if tourism basically remains a social activity, which has been typically associated with numerous positive and negative impacts.

Tourism, itself, is a very important actor of territorial impact, as a series of regional and local studies case, very different between them, demonstrate; as you can see in the case of urban touristification of Pernambuco State (Brazil), or in that about heritage and competitive branding policies in the medium mountain regions of Himachal Pradesh (India) and in Val di Sole (Italy). The same happens for the urban gay tourism revitalization were cities offer a combination of its primary and secondary tourism elements (Jansen-Verbeke, 1994) with a tourist clusters, spatially separate and with distinct features,

depending on the tourist use, usually consumed by both tourists and local residents.

Thus tourism can be an important driver of sustainable development, when ethics and culture support sustainable behaviors by the communities and local actors along with tourists involved in this lifestyle; the increasing number of studies focused on sustainable tourism demonstrates a growing interest about this topic. The Northwestern European coastal tourism destinations are reinventing themselves, and their brand, concentrating on sustainable reinvention of the seaside, and emphasizing product development and image enhancement: Coastal tourism destinations in Northwestern Europe have been going through a change on the organizational and operational levels.

By the way of the current level of sustainable awareness among tourists, it is a case in point Pisa, one of the most important tourist destination in Italy and an iconic destination recognized worldwide thanks to the attractiveness of the leaning tower. A face-to-face survey among tourists in Pisa (Piazza dei Miracoli, during May 2015 with a structured questionnaire). Their eco-friendly behaviors, their concerns about sustainability planning their vacations and their habits during the stay are focused and related to main aspects of tourist services: transport, accommodation, food and beverage.

At the end tourism basically remains a social activity, which has been and is typically associated with numerous positive and negative impacts! In this approach a fundamental frame of reference for responsible and sustainable tourism, the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism (GCET) is a comprehensive set of principles designed to guide key-players in tourism development to help maximize the sector's benefits while minimizing its potentially negative impact on the environment, cultural heritage and societies across the globe. Adopted in 1999 by the General Assembly of the UNWTO, its acknowledgement by the United Nations two years later expressly encouraged UNWTO to promote the effective follow-up of its provisions. Although not legally binding, the Code features a voluntary implementation mechanism through its recognition of the role of the World Committee on Tourism Ethics (WCTE), to which stakeholders may refer matters concerning the application and interpretation of the document. Overall the WCTE is a frame of mutual understanding and respect between tourists and their hosting societies in tourism destinations.

Finally, this issue is at its second collaboration, after the Vol. 5, No 3 (2014) Special Issue ItFits, with the Italian Forum on Tourism and Sustainability (ItFitS) born with the aim of becoming an annual event that explores the theme of the relationship between tourism and sustainability, proposing subjects, products and solutions really and concretely applicable, whether in the short, medium or long term. The ItFitS is supported by Italian University of Foreigners of Perugia, and the Italian Centre for Advanced Studies in Tourism CAST - University of Bologna and Tourism Promotion (CST), founded in 1982, one of the best

established tourism management schools in Italy. In fact the second Edition of the Tourism and Sustainability International Conference held in Assisi (September 2015) contributed with three essays (Galal M.H. Afifi; Timo Derriks, Tara Hoetjes; Silvia Sarti, Giuseppe Aliperti) and some notes.