ABSTRACT
Tourism, as an area of research, presents new trends on the supply, namely the development of sustainable products. As for the demand, it is possible to identify a set of trends that structure the tourist practices: an interest in the discovering of new sites and heritages, frequent holidays throughout the year, and search for active learning experiences. In this context, it is therefore reasonable to equate the supply of complementary products that reflect the character and uniqueness of one region, as a means of differentiation. In the Algarve, tourism had its start in the sixties in the 20th century with a model of tourism development based in the product “Sun and Beach”. Forty years later, the region faces several problems (dependence of generating markets and products and seasonality). The main purpose of the research is related to the analysis of the potential of tourism in urban areas as complementary tourism product to the main one of the region, and the assessment of the role of tourism activities in the urban regeneration of the city. This study concludes that Tavira (a city located in the Algarve coastline) presents a variety of resources (natural and cultural) that are visible in the range of visitors’ motivations. Strategies developed by the public authorities shows the existence of a “long-term and global planning approach”, that reveals itself of fundamental importance to attain a sustainable tourism development. The methodology used included a range of methods and techniques, from statistics to in-depth interviews with community leaders, visitor and residents surveys.

1 THE CONCEPTS OF URBAN PLANNING, TOURIST-HISTORIC CITY, TOURISM PLANNING AND SUSTAINABLE CITIES
It is possible to study the city under an almost infinite number of perspectives. The aim, however, is to study the city and its relationship with tourism. According to Grabler et al., (1997:30), the word city may have different meanings: “(...) it may either refer to an entity which offers functions, activities and an atmosphere, or it may refer to quite specific services or facilities”. In this context “(...) the tourist’s city may be confined to a small historic core area containing most of the city’s recognisable sites and attractions”.

According to several researchers, Urban Tourism constitutes a relatively recent concern that dates back to the eighties. As Ashworth states (1989:33): “A double neglect has occurred. Those interested in the study of tourism have tended to neglect the urban context in which much of it is set, while those interested in urban studies (…) have been equally neglectful of the importance of the tourist function in cities”.
This neglect has also characterized the urban planning until recent decades. But, after facing the decline of the established industries, the degradation of the historical centres and the high levels of unemployment, tourism started to be seen as a possible strategy for diversification (Law, 1994; Hintch, 1996).

Among other examples of city regeneration it is possible to point out Baltimore, in the United States, and Liverpool in England (Page, 1995). The transformation of public spaces (the set of buildings and places which use is significant for the urban community) is pointed out by Burgers (1995) as an important factor in the post-industrial city. Rodrigues (1999), Burgers (1995) and Meethan (2001) identify, in this context, the "return to the centre". People are more willing to visit museums, squares, historical buildings and to attend festivals. A number of significant social changes have lead to the development of new tourist spaces based on cultural attractions.

Murphy (1997) identifies a set of reasons for the lack of investment in the urban tourism and, among others, points out the miss articulation between tourism and heritage planning. The European Union understands urban tourism as: "(...) the set of tourist resources or activities located in towns and cities and offered to visitors from elsewhere" (European Commission [10], 2000:21). It comprises activities as leisure tourism, business tourism and meetings.

But despite the statement above, resources that support tourism in urban areas are varied and difficult to identify (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990; Law 1994). The authors state that urban tourism is more "unintentional" than "intentional". Evidence for this can be found in the fact that the number of excursions (one of the many aspects of urban tourism) and visits to the surrounding areas of the vacation site (city) is increasing.

Urban tourism is in a better position than resorts in the so called short breaks tourism, developing a leisure mix (shopping, sightseeing) and is, consequently, less exposed to seasonality. The European Union defends that tourism: "(...) is being seen as a cornerstone of a policy of urban development that combines a competitive supply able to meet visitor’s expectations with a positive contribution to the development of towns and cities and the well-being of their residents” (European Commission, 2000:9).

The British cities are an example. Since the mid eighties, many of them have prepared and implemented plans for tourism development (Belfast, Glasgow and Bristol). In Portugal, in Lisbon, the process of Expo 98 was responsible for the transformation of a large industrial and storage area in the city.

The urban regeneration was the focus of academic attention in the USA in the seventies. As confirmed by Fainstein et al. (1999:122): “In an effort to revive their flagging commercial and industrial districts, city governments in major metropolitan areas sought to attract the service-oriented growth industries that had come to dominate (...) finance, insurance, real estate and tourism.” The urban issue is becoming a priority in the political agenda for the European Union, countries, regions and cities.

On the first phase of the European “Urban Pilot Project” (1989-1993), the emphasis was on the regeneration of Historical Centres. The second phase links the urban regeneration to the role played by tourism. Other initiatives, within this framework, are related to information and experience exchange in networks of cities and conferences in which urban tourism is the main area of discussion.

It seems to be an official evidence that tourist and urban functions are interdependent (the development will create impacts on tourism and the tourism management policies will create impacts on urban development). The urban issue is becoming a priority in the political agenda for the European Union, countries, regions and cities.

There are some reasons for this to happen: the fact that cities are “natural” tourist destinations, tourism can provide more qualified jobs, has the potential to decentralize tourism demand (in resort areas), it helps to diversify the economy and provides more leisure opportunities for the residents. Urban tourism, however, might represent a threat to cities (creating mobility and
environmental problems, insecurity, disrespect for the locals and rejection of the tourism phenomenon by those, pressure on fragile areas, higher prices, among others). To prevent these situations from happening, there are some instruments, such as the Agenda 21. In this perspective, a way of managing costs/benefits must be found, so that tourism could represent a real advantage to each city.

The historical cities face a double challenge. On one hand, they have to go through the simply promotional stage of tourist management and face the need to integrate tourism in the urban reality. On the other hand, they have to regulate the visitors’ movements in order to integrate them in the tourist dimension, in a habitable, multifunctional urban reality. There is not an ideal formula, as each case requires a strategy related to its local specific features (Rebolo and Mir, 1994; Ashworth and A. Dietvorst, 1995; Cunha, 1997; Hall, 2000).

The observation of other experiences and the knowledge exchange between cities is crucial. In conclusion, only through planning will tourism turn out to be a sustainable industry, contributing to satisfy their inhabitants’ needs as well as the needs of small enterprises, with the capability of generating resources towards growth. It is possible, however, to insure that heritage-based tourism can play an important role. The promotion of these attributes might also work as a means of devolving pride and identity back to the residents (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 1990).

Ashworth (1988:163) defines the historical-city “(...) as a conceptualisation of a particular sort of urban phenomenon [which] is derived from far more than just the antiquity of the buildings gathered together in particular towns”. Moreover, the author states that this concept might even refer to the city as a complete self, in the point of view that it is taken as historical. It can also be used to describe a small part of the city, sometimes called “old-city” or “ancient-city”. In the urban context, heritage is a result of the interaction between past and future generations, the power of continuity from one generation to the next. In this context, Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990) can be considered pioneers, in trying to establish a relation between the “historical-city” and what the authors nominate the “tourist city”.

Although these two concepts have different origins and developments, it is obvious that the historical city is, most of it, defined by the tourist demand and that the tourist-city is greatly enclosed around the historical attractions. The authors assume that tourism is one of the activities within the historical city and suggest a further terminology: the historical-tourist city, recognizing that, many of the previous studies produced about planning, neglect the tourist-functions of the cities.

According to Ashworth (1989), the residential function is the most important of all. The residents help to keep the heart of the city “alive”. However it is possible that some conflicts between residents and visitors might happen. So, one can state that the relations inside the historical-tourist city are not straightforward. Besides creating a typology of the consumers of the historic-tourist city, the authors also identify different kinds of cities, according to their specific features: the mono-function historic-tourist cities (that can be developed based on the historical assets or based on the demand), and cities located in the area of the resort (regions with particular characteristics for the tourist activities). The second category is applied to this case study.

Until recently, little articulation existed between cultural (heritage) tourism and beach tourism, in functional and spatial terms. However, as will be seen in this case study, the “sun and beach” tourists can also be induced to visit historical attractions.

Focusing the attention on what has and is still happening in this matter, in Portugal, the early years of the 19th century were a difficult period. The country had to face the destruction resultant from the French invasions. Still, in the 20th century, in the sixties, Portugal faced the damage of several historic towns or at least some significant parts of them.

The main factors which contributed to the changes that occurred in the last 15-20 years were, according to Salgueiro (1992): 1) the emigration (which resulted on investments in the building of new houses, in the homeland cities), 2) the introduction of new construction materials and
technology (which were cheaper and simpler to use) that gradually replaced the work of old artisans.

Nowadays, the majority of Governments worldwide consider tourism an important sector for economy. Until recent years, many tourist projects emphasised the aspects related to the economic development, such as the employment and foreign currency. This approach (or its absence) revealed inadequate to deal with the tourist development registered from the seventies onward.

The negative environmental and social effects of tourism were ignored or devaluated, having been however totally neglected in the decades before, which correspond to the tourist boom (Mathieson and Wall, 1992). In the eighties there was a change in the functioning paradigm of the tourism industry, as the result of deep technological, social and economical modifications in the tourist market.

After some quantitative growth, the tourism industry finds itself on a crucial moment of its development, in which the competitiveness of the product and of the tourist regions assume a great importance, in a context of great concern for the social, cultural and environmental impacts of tourism Fayos-Sola (1996). The growth and change of tourist demand is putting a great pressure in the tourist destinations.

Since the eighties, an increasing number of papers about Sustainable Tourism Development have been published (Hall, 2000).

Orbasli (2000:31) integrates this concept in the urban context: “The city is an ecosystem, in a form a compilation of past and present layers providing a framework for the contemporary mechanisms of urban economy and life”. Masser et al. (1994:31) conclude this approach by stating that “It is not only something we want to hand down to future generations, it is also something we want to appreciate and experience to the fullest extent”.

These approaches are connected to Haughton and Hunters (1994:27) proposal for the definition of the sustainable city: “One in which its people and business continuously endeavour to improve their natural, built and cultural environments at neighbourhood and regional levels, whilst working in ways which always support the goal of global sustainable development”. In the tourism field, the WTO has been developing actions to put this concept into practice. Among other initiatives, we can count on a “Sustainable Tourism Development: Guide for Local Planners” (1998).

This point of view is shared by De Kadt (1992), who claims that sustainability became an “organizer/integrator” concept for the policies defined in the nineties, and supported by Bramwell and Lane (1993), which have identified as a crucial sustainable element the idea of “holistic planning”. It is not easy to define tourism planning.

During many years, this concept was associated to the use of land, infrastructures and lodging. Its nature, however, is more complex. The fast growth and the nature of tourism itself provoked a reactive response from the public sector (instead of a proactive one) towards tourist destinations: “Such an approach is the antithesis of planning”, concluded Hall (2000:10). So, planning must be seen as a crucial element to ensure the sustainable development of tourist destinations, in a long-term perspective.

As an area of research, tourism planning derives from urban planning. According to Getz (1986) it is possible to identify four planning traditions. However, they do not exclude each other, nor are they sequential. The first (boosterism¹), presupposes that development is, by nature, good and brings benefits to the community.

The second approach (economic) understands tourism as an industry. The third (physic/spatial) has its origins in urban and regional planning and tends to forget the social and cultural dimension of the destinations. The fourth approach (community) appeared by the end of the

¹ “Gain”
seventies, when negative social impacts of tourism began to show. Hall (2000) suggests the introduction of a fifth approach, the “sustainable approach of the tourist planning” or, in other words, an integrated tourism development planning. This means that tourism planning must be able to articulate the physical and economic dimension of tourism, ensuring, in a long-term, the viability of the tourism industry.

Boniface (1995) makes a good summary of this idea: “In planning, to see tourism as separate from other city functions is unrealistic and not useful”. Sustainability is becoming a central theme in most literature on tourism. However, the practicability of this concept is limited to non-urban areas. Orbasli (2003:3) explains this fact with the lack of a proactive planning, and mostly with the absence of communication between the important subjects for decision-making, “planning and conservation” and the “marketing and tourism management”: “it is surprising yet true that at a time when urban conservation and urban tourism are running parallel courses of development, the two fields of expertise directing them rarely communicate, and it is not uncommon for tourism development policy to be contradictory to heritage conservation”.

Since the late nineties, the strategic management in historic towns became a matter for discussion on the European Council (Pickard, 2001). Pickard pointed out three important parts in the management of a Historical Centre: the urban values (architecture, urban landscape, green areas, and monuments), the political and institutional context (by creating financial and regulating support measures and also agreements between public and private entities), and the intervener methodology, which has to do with implementing strategies for managing historical centres. In a long-term perspective, this strategy seems sustainable, as it prevents the risk of monoculture, simultaneously increasing the residents’ opportunity to be involved in the cultural spaces.

The concepts mentioned are connected by a temporal notion of past, present and future, which continuity results in a balance. Several authors’ state that urban and tourism planning require a “lateral thinking approach” (Healey, 1990; Jamal, 1995; Costa, 2001). In other words, planning must be designed in accordance to the actors’ creativity and the availability of resources, requiring a team work with representatives from different subjects and also an inclusive planning approach – with the support from public participation. A possible way of dealing with these issues could be the creation of a task force composed by those responsible for planning, representatives from the tourism industry and citizens who might be interested in participating effectively in the decision process.

From the demand perspective, it is possible to identify a set of trends that structure the tourist practices, a concern for the environment and a growing demand for cultural activities, frequent holidays throughout the year (short and city breaks). This new tourist is informed, more independent, flexible and more experienced (Poon, 1993; Ferreira, 2003). As for the supply perspective we can identify features as, new tourism destinations, the development of sustainable products, and also the fact that regions and cities are trying to develop strategies, based on cultural resources (architectural and industrial heritage, gastronomy, cultural traditions, events), in order to differentiate their image.

In this context, it is therefore reasonable to equate the supply of complementary products that reflect the character and uniqueness of one region, as a means of differentiation. This context justifies the study of tourism in the urban areas - It is certainly in the cities that we are able to find a diversity of heritage resources, particularly in the Historical Centres. This represents a potential for the creation of a distinctive character, at a local level. Precisely, these evidences from the literature review lead to this research.

The methodology used included methods and techniques, from statistics to in-depth interviews with community leaders, visitor and residents surveys. The residents’ perspective – with the aim of understand the opinions of the residents regarding tourism development, through a community survey. The community leaders’ perspective about tourism and cultural planning on a local level – through in-depth interviews with representatives from Cultural, Heritage and Tourism Departments and the city visitors’ perspectives (main reasons for visiting, opinions, sources of information, perceptions of authenticity and the experience of visiting the city), through a visitors survey.
2 CASE STUDY - TAVIRA

2.1 Regional context – Tourism, Planning and Heritage features

In the occidental extremity of the Iberian Peninsula and Southernmost province of Portugal, the Algarve occupies about 6% of the country. It confines with the Spanish region of Andalusia through the Guadiana River and in the West and South with the Atlantic Ocean, on a total of 5000 km². In 2001 the resident population was estimated in more than 750 000 residents in the high season, leading to pressure on the coastal area.

The primary industries represented around 11%, essentially agriculture. The highest percentage of working population, about 72%, is concentrated in the tertiary services. It is therefore possible to identify two different kinds of development: tourism and agriculture, both having to compete for the use of the land.

The climate in Algarve is typically Mediterranean with long dry summers and 3600 hours of sun per year. The main tourist resources are concentrated in the coastal area, which has approximately 220 Km of white, sandy beaches.

The Algarve was an isolated region until about half a century ago, for its intrinsic natural conditions (surrounded by the sea and the natural barrier of the mountainous region). During the decades of twenty and thirty some British families arrived in the Algarve, settling in a small community in Praia da Rocha. Today, the British still represent the main foreign market visiting the Algarve. In the second half of the 20th century, the atmosphere of peace and economic growth lead to the tourist boom from the more prosperous European countries. The opening of Faro International Airport in 1965 made the region accessible to the main tourist generating countries, giving a new impetus to the tourism practice. The sixties were the turning point for the Algarve. In 1970 the RTA (Regional Tourist Board of Algarve) was created. By that decade tourism was considered vital to the region (Gonçalves e Águas, 1997).

Portugal doubled its market share in international tourist arrivals in 1990 (15th place in the world ranking). The Algarve was a major contributor to this increase. From that point onward, the model of tourist development has been based in the product “Sun and Beach”.

In the eighties the growth of tourist demand and mass tourism started to get the attention of the local press (the Algarve was not following the primary sustainable development guidelines). So, the most important tourism destination was and is very affected by rapid tourism development and new measures are crucial to avoid environmental, economical and social deterioration. In 2000, the Algarve represented 43.1% of overnight stays (national and foreign) on a national level. Its main generating markets in 2005 were: United Kingdom (46.4%), Germany (21.4%) and The Netherlands (9.6%).

According to Gonçalves and Águas (1997:20), the Algarve has all the characteristics of the consolidation stage in the product life cycle model. Although there were initially some signs of concern for implementation of quality tourism, the main tourist promoters increased the supply in such a way that urban, cultural and environmental balances were forgotten. Consequently, some signs of stagnation appeared: the image of the resort dissociated from the environment and lower occupancy rates. The greatest challenge is now to prepare the region for a long-lasting stage of stabilisation, with special emphasis on an effective planning orientation on the public sector level.

The “Regional Plan for Tourism in Algarve” (PRTA) assumes that there is plenty in the history
of the region that represent a tourist potential. Moreover, the strong positive focus on this product (culture) includes the historical nuclei of some centres, the promotion of traditional historic-cultural events at a regional level, the diversity of handicraft and traditional gastronomy, and the existence of suitable facilities to support such cultural activities.

On the other hand, the weaknesses are: the deficient conservation of the heritage, and the fact that most of cultural events take place in a specific time of the year (high season). The cultural resources of Algarve, which do not constitute the main motivation for the tourists, comprise an important complementary role to the product “Sun and Beach”. An evaluation of the measures made in the PRTA points out to a degree of execution between medium and low, in specific matters related to heritage as a resource for tourism.

Furthermore, the analysis of the main regional dynamics makes one realize that tourism in the region maintains a character of seasonality, a dependence on the main generating markets and a spatial concentration. Fortunately, by facing this scenario, there were some changes in the measures and actions taken towards the role heritage plays in fighting these disadvantages: 1) value and safeguard of the relevant places (development of studies focusing on sustainable tourism), 2) rehabilitation of the historical heritage, 3) revisions of urbanization plans (revision, development, and monitoring).

According to the analysis of the policies defined for the sector, statistics trends and potentialities of the regional territory, the RTA defined the following strategies for tourism in Algarve between 2002 and 2004 (RTA, 2001): 1) qualify the touristy supply (equipments, services, products), 2) promote diversity and complementarities, 3) diversify the tourist markets, 4) diminish seasonality (emphasizing tourism for senior citizens, golf and nature), 5) increase the revenue generated from tourism.

In the analysis developed by the General Directorate of Tourism (DGT) in 2002 it is considered that the Algarve should choose a model of tourist development that would value two fundamental issues - quality and differentiation: 1) enrichment of the product, which is excessively concentrated in the costal tourism and in a limited range of activities, 2) enhancement of the market potentialities associated to the new trends of the demand (cultural and urban tourism, short breaks, seniors, sports and nature).

Concerning the process related to the built heritage in Algarve, according to the Director of Portuguese Institute of Built Heritage (IPPAR) "Built heritage is, in general, still degraded, despite a great effort from the municipalities to improve the situation". (Músico, 2001:11). The regional delegation of IPPAR (Portuguese Institute of Heritage) has been developing projects to register and value some relevant buildings, in a cooperative pioneering action between Portugal, Spain and Morocco entitled “Inquiry and Valorisation of Fortifications and Islamic sites in the Southern Iberian Peninsula”.

There is also the Project “Exhibition-Itinerary Lands of the Enchanted Moor”, the first itinerary produced within the scope of the Cultural Tourism Development Programme, created by the Government in 1997. Between 1998 and 1999 the expenditure of local administration with cultural activities increased 31%, reflected essentially in Monuments, Historical Centres and Protected Sites.

### 2.2 Local context - Tavira

The municipality of Tavira is the third largest municipality of the Algarve, occupying an area of 611 Km². The coastline extends for 18 Km of sandy beaches. It lies only 2 Km far from the sea, and is fully integrated in the Natural Reserve of Ria Formosa, one of the main wet areas in Europe. The main local economic activities are tourism and agriculture, followed by commerce, construction and fishing. Yet the service industries have been rising. Tavira is in an initial stage of tourism development, compared to other municipalities in the region.
2.2.1 Tourism, Planning and Heritage features

Tavira represents 6.2% of the supply for Boarding Houses in the region, 5.6% for Hotel Apartments, 0.5% for Tourist Apartments and 16% for Tourist Villages. There are also 7 units for Rural Tourism and a Camping Park in the Island of Tavira. In the year 2000 Tavira had 3% of the total of nights spent in the region, mainly from French tourists which represent 13%. The lodging capacity (nr of beds) represents 4% within the region.

A quotation from the Local Development Plan (PDM) of Tavira, (CMT, 1997:99) helps defining the role played by this city in the regional tourism context: “Although it has recently got the attention of promoters as an available area for new lodging facilities, the western sub-region has not yet integrated the tourist dynamic in the Algarve (...) so far, Tavira has managed to defend itself from speculative assaults which led to true attacks practiced against nature and the legitimate interests of the local populations.”

The Plan for Rehabilitation and Safeguard of Historical Centre (1986) allowed producing an inventory of areas of cultural value and the traditional construction techniques. This Plan gives a special attention to the main features of the urban structure, for instance: 1) The four water roofs – it is a unique building method in the region, used only in this city, which contributes to a unique style in city architecture, 2) The reixa doors – a technique that dates back to the 12th century, when the moors lived in the Algarve. Finally this Plan also references the humanized urban scale of the city, with 1 to 2 storeys, that contribute to high quality public areas. When the Plan was initiated 15 years ago, Tavira was almost intact in its Classical and Renaissance structure, where more than 80% of all buildings were prior to the 20th century.

The articulation between Tourism and Culture is established by the Municipality Cultural Department, which integrates the Culture and Tourism Divisions. Its strategy is based on 4 pillars: Culture, Tourism, Heritage and Environment and operates at two levels: physical intervention (on buildings and monuments), and fruition (through the organization of events inside these monuments: concerts, theatre, cinema, music lessons, among others), aiming to improve the city image and playing an informal educational role in the community.

The Local Technical Bureau of the Historical Centre (GTL) was created in 1999, with responsibilities in fields such as the definition of guidelines concerning the safe keeping of heritage, and urban procedures for the Historical Centre (orientations for urban planning, among others). It also issues reports related to private construction rules in the Historical Centre, and provides guidance on projects such as the RECRIA\(^2\) Programme.

Later this bureau was converted into the Heritage and Urban Rehabilitation Division, adding to the former responsibilities others related to Museums. In this scope, the municipality approved the creation of the National Museum of the City that will integrate the Portuguese Network of Museums. To modernise the traditional commerce, more than 4 million Euros of private investment were spent, and part financed by PROCOM (Programme for Commerce Modernisation) and URBCOM (Urban Commerce Program). Within this programme, a new Image for Tavira has also been prepared, which involves signalling, urban furniture, traffic control, and heritage interpretation. The new image for the city is connected to the Portuguese

\(^2\) With this programme, about 40 private buildings have already been recovered, which contributed to an Urban Planning Municipal Award.
History - the Portuguese Discoveries, in the 16th century with the new slogan “História Viva” (Living History).

The municipality has also applied for a programme in order to recover and adapt the old municipal market (19th century building) into a commercial and leisure area. This project represented the departure point for the global rehabilitation strategy, to be carried out by the local Municipality.

It is worth to mention the following: 1) the creation of the “Cultural Forum” project (a complex of cultural facilities, composed of several auditoriums, museums and classrooms for music and arts) in a building from the 16th century. It is the most notorious civil monumental building, mixing baroque and renaissance styles. 2) The creation of an “Environmental Interpretation Centre” which, through environmentally friendly activities aims to teach the new generations how to respect the environment, 3) the Public Art, 4) the creation of the “Municipal Library” through the rehabilitation of the old prison building, 5) an ancient Convent (16th century) was acquired by the municipality and a contract was signed with “Pousadas de Portugal” to transform it into a Pousada, 6) A “Handicraft Centre” where the artisans from the mountains region can sell their products and also a place where the visitors can see the artisans working live.

From the private sector investments there was the rehabilitation of the old Tuna Fishing structure and its adaptation into a hotel (comprising 162 rooms, a museum dedicated to tuna fishing and a chapel), the investment in an “Astronomic Observatory” dedicated to lectures, astronomic observation and courses and the rehabilitation of an old “water tower”, in which, through a system of lenses, it is possible to have a guided tour through the whole city without moving around. Tavira is also integrated in the AVEC Network – Alliance des Villes Européens de Culture – initiated in the cities of Tours and Pecs (respectively in France and Hungary). It is expected that these joint projects will reinforce the connections with European cities interested in valuing heritage and sharing common cultural projects.

The municipality is also issuing the Local Agenda 21 - Actions towards a Sustainable Tourism, with the purpose of promoting environmental sustainability in a joint effort involving all mediators in the tourism sector (public and private), residents and visitors. This measure allowed the city to earn a national award “Clean City 1999/2000”, in the “National Contest of Urban Public Cleaning”, within the category of cities between 20 000 and 40 000 inhabitants.

2.2.3 Results

The methodology which has been followed on this case study encompassed, from secondary (statistics and official planning documents), to primary data (visitor and residents surveys and in-depth interviews with community leaders, namely representatives from Tourism, Culture and Heritage Departments). A site survey (n=385) was conducted to visitors of the historical and city centre of Tavira in spring 2002. As to the visitors’ profile, perceptions of authenticity and experience of visit to the city, it was possible to conclude the following:

- Visitors are mainly from the European countries: United Kingdom (25.5%), Germany (19.2%), the Netherlands (12.5%), Spain (10.6%) and Portugal (8.6%);
- 62.5% of visitors with an academic degree; travel mainly in parties of two adults; an average of 3.1 trips during the last two years;
- The main reasons to visit the Algarve were “seaside holidays” (33%), “culture” (32%) and “nature” (23.1%);
- The main reasons to visit Tavira were “visiting the Historical Centre” (44.4%), “fun day out” (17.9%) and “learn something about the history of the place/local culture” (17.4%);
- They devoted 3.2 days to the visit of historical/cultural places during the holidays;
- For 80% of the visitors it was the first time in Tavira;
- The sources of information used in planning the visit to Tavira were “family/friends” and “tour operator brochures” (both 27.9%);
- 35% of the interviewees made the hotel and transport reservation directly.
TABLE 1

How important were the following aspects during the visit to Tavira?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main aspects during the visit</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Scenery</td>
<td>4.73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture (buildings in general)</td>
<td>4.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Historical buildings</td>
<td>4.37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Originality</td>
<td>3.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residents’ hospitality</td>
<td>3.77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Squares (public space)</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Restaurants/gastronomy</td>
<td>3.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety and quietness</td>
<td>3.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Festivals and events</td>
<td>2.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local traditions</td>
<td>2.48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shopping</td>
<td>1.99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Night life</td>
<td>1.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From 1 to 5 in which 1 = “Not at all important” and 5 = “Extremely important”)  
Source: Martins de Brito (2002)

It is possible to confirm the main drivers of the city: scenery, architecture, buildings in general and its originality (see Table 1). 76.9% of the visitors stated that “a place like the historical centre of Tavira should strive to be as genuine and historically accurate as possible, even if some modern facilities for visitors are lacking”. This is confirmed by the answers to another question: “should a place like this improve the visitor’s comfort and convenience even if some historical details are lost?” 75% said “no”.

As to the opinion about the experience of the visit to the Historical Centre, the main results are presented in Table 2. It is possible to identify some areas that should be better handled and improved by the local authorities, namely the information available about the monuments and also their opening hours (see Table 2). Finally, 64.7% of the interviewees stated that they were very satisfied with the visit and 88% will recommend it to their friends and relatives.

TABLE 2

Opinion about the experience of visit to the historical centre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Global ambience of the historical centre</td>
<td>4.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Heritage conservation</td>
<td>4.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Signs indicating monuments</td>
<td>3.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cleanliness</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Safety</td>
<td>3.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to the historical centre and parking</td>
<td>3.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visit support - information provided about monuments</td>
<td>2.84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Access to monuments and timetables</td>
<td>2.77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From 1 to 5 in which 1 = “Very bad” and 5 = “Very Good”)  
Source: Martins de Brito (2002)

Regarding to the residents’ perspective, a survey was conducted during March 2002, involving 174 interviewees to city residents, with the purpose of ascertaining the opinion of the community concerning tourism development in Tavira and its impacts.
The results demonstrated that 66% of the respondents believed the main reasons why tourists visit Tavira are the “Sun and Beach”, 22% identified “Culture” as the main reason to visit the city, 81% are in favour of tourism development in Tavira and 84% consider that the community should take part in it.

The majority agrees that tourism represents an important economic activity for the city, creating good job opportunities, and encouraging the development of several cultural activities, although some recognize its contribute to raise the price of goods (lands) and services (restaurants). The positive impacts thus exceed the negative impacts, as the tourism activity is seen as a life improving factor. Along with the results Table 3 shows the residents’ opinion in a scale of 1 to 5.

TABLE 3

The residents’ opinion on Tourism Impacts

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Impacts</th>
<th>Average</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Represents an important economic activity for the city</td>
<td>4,19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Encourages the development of a set of cultural activities in the city (shows, handicraft, etc)</td>
<td>4,15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to raise the price of goods (lands) and services (restaurants)</td>
<td>4,13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Creates good job opportunities for the residents</td>
<td>3,98</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to raise the cost of living in the city</td>
<td>3,86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to an increase of the traffic congestion</td>
<td>3,78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The positive impacts of tourism exceed the negative impacts</td>
<td>3,67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Due to tourism new facilities and equipments were built that the residents may also use</td>
<td>3,64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Contributes to improve the quality of life of the residents</td>
<td>3,54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The environmental impacts caused by tourism are not that relevant</td>
<td>3,33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Only a small minority benefits from tourism</td>
<td>3,32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tavira is very dependent on tourism</td>
<td>3,26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disturbs the peace and tranquillity in the city</td>
<td>3,08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affects the environment in a negative way</td>
<td>2,92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Produces negative impacts on the customs and traditions of the population</td>
<td>2,89</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(From 1 to 5 in which 1 = “Totally agree” and 5 = “Totally disagree”)


Further research conducted in 2006 demonstrated that the residents had a strong will in participating (see Table 4). Several forms of participation were identified: giving opinion, presenting ideas, participation in forums (39%) and through hospitality and professionalism (28%). These results confirm the reference made in the review of the literature, that “sustainable approach to tourism planning” requires an “inclusive planning approach” – with the support from the residents’ participation. It was also asked to how those would like to see the city in the future. The results demonstrated that the city image will be connected to Culture (for 51% of the respondents) and to Environment (30%). These results are in accordance with the motivations of the visitors and the city strategy as well (see Table 5). As stated by the community leaders, the city focus its strategy on Culture in order to encourage Cultural Tourism all year round, considering environmental quality and heritage rehabilitation, which will enable to consolidate and qualify the tourist supply.
TABLE 4
Ways of participation from the local community in the process of tourism development (residents’ perspective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participation</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Giving opinion, ideas, through meetings/forum</td>
<td>39,5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hospitality and professionalism</td>
<td>28,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Active role in problem solving</td>
<td>18,3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Developing commercial projects/events management</td>
<td>12,7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Supporting local authorities</td>
<td>1,4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


TABLE 5
City Image in the Future (residents’ perspective)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Image</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cultural city</td>
<td>51,2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental city</td>
<td>29,8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sports city</td>
<td>9,1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Industrial/commercial city</td>
<td>5,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>City of knowledge</td>
<td>5,0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


3 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research concludes that there is a need for a new approach in the way we look at visitors of our cities and for rethinking the model of development that has been followed so far. The perspective assumed in the past does not serve the reality of the present. In other words, the tourism industry requires a new approach. The tourist experience constitutes a means for information and education and what motivates the tourist to that visit is, most certainly, the desire for a pleasant experience. To achieve this, it is necessary to implement a “good tourist practice”, putting people, culture, and environment first.

The future of tourism will depend on the capacity of the destination to lead this new “good practice”. The emergence of this new paradigm is going to face the need to develop complementary activities to the traditional product. Improving the quality of the tourist destination is an essential strategy to satisfy the tourist demand and to guarantee a tourist development with benefits for the local community.

The cultural and heritage resources can contribute to the reduction of seasonality. They will also help reducing the geographical concentration of the tourism demand. The investment in the regeneration of urban areas, by the public authorities, will allow the creation of new products, and simultaneously, increase the opportunities of the local community.

The present analysis concludes that the city presents a variety of resources that are visible in the
range of motivations. As previously referred, the urban setting of Tavira (natural and cultural), received favourable opinions from the visitors, and the city presents potential to develop this distinctive character.

The analysis of tourism strategies, on a regional basis, allowed verifying that the tourist development in the nineties is fundamentally understood in a general way (the PRTA document recommends the Sun and Beach and the Golf as main products, being the Culture assumed on a complementary basis). However, the evaluation of the proposed measures for the Culture reveals a degree of medium and low execution, as to the development of tourism in historical areas.

Tavira has the potential for the development of a consistent tourist product that on a long term will be able to determine its competitiveness. Despite of its limited supply (lodging capacity) the number of same-day visitors, an important indicator, positioned Tavira as one of the most visited cities in the region.

As positive aspects highlighted, the investment in the reinforcement of the image of the city (heritage interpretation, urban furniture), the effort to benefit the local community through programmes and financial funds (restoration of buildings), investment in traditional products and the efforts developed to establish cultural networks with other organisations and cities.

It is expected that this last aspect will bring new experiences from other historical centres and, consequently, the creation of know-how. The cooperation between Culture, Tourism, Environment and Urban Planning Departments will be able to generate interesting synergies. The city is undoubtedly able to position itself as a short break destination, particularly for the Spanish and Portuguese markets, given the range of opportunities offered.

Finally, the local authorities can have an active role in the knowledge of the visitors, welcoming conditions and events management, through the development of a strategy that includes representatives of all the sectors of the community – public authorities, merchants, businessmen, non-profitable organisations, and the community itself.

The present research was assumed as an exploratory investigation. The author is now focusing the research on “Models of Tourism and Cultural Planning” – towards an integrative approach (studying the case of Algarve region). As for the methodology used, the focus group technique will be applied in order to understand the public authorities, private sector, non-profitable organizations, and community perspectives.

REFERENCES


