

Innovation and Growth in Tourism



ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC CO-OPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT

FOREWORD

A number of OECD countries face growth problems in tourism. Globalisation implies that, to remain competitive, OECD countries should be at the cutting edge of the development of new products and ideas in tourism. With innovation, this report touches therefore an important dimension of the tourism economics rarely examined at international level. *Innovation and Growth in Tourism* aims to provide an important contribution for research and policy work in this area.

Innovation and Growth in Tourism clarifies the conceptual issues behind the dynamics and the characteristics of innovation in tourism and how innovation is transforming the tourism business models. For example, one of the new basic innovations which transform tourism is the trend towards an “experience economy”.

Innovation and Growth in Tourism shows that innovation processes in tourism are mainly aimed at increasing productivity, profitability and quality, thus improving the overall competitiveness of the tourism economy. Innovation is to be considered as a major driving force for structural changes in the tourism industry. It shows, for example, that the small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) are mainly introducing innovation by imitation.

Competition is the main driver of innovation in the tourism sector but co-operation is essential to stimulate structural change and innovation in tourism. This is certainly a main rationale for governments to intervene in the fragmented tourism sector, as new structures and innovation can only emerge if there is cooperation. *Innovation and Growth in Tourism* illustrates the need to push the diffusion of best practices in tourism innovation (e.g. in the areas of environment, education, ICT), notably in micro and small tourism enterprises and the important role to be played by public authorities.

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