

Sustainable Tourism and the Alpine Convention. Policy insights and a strategic roadmap from the work of the Italian Task Force.

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The Alpine Convention (the European transnational body committed in fostering sustainable development in the Alps region) has always placed great emphasis on the importance of tourism for the Alps and a strong interest in the policy implications of a sustainable agenda for mountain destinations. This has led to the appointment of a Task Force on 'Sustainable Tourism' over the Italian Presidency coordinated by the Master in Tourism Economics of Bocconi University. Through its mandate the Sustainable Tourism Task Force evaluated the different aspects which characterize sustainable tourism in mountain regions with the aim to identify a set of key strategic priorities and tools. The final report of the Task Force takes into account the different aspects of mountain sustainable tourism and presents a deep reflection on the opportunities and challenges for the territory as well as the impacts for the inhabiting population and the tourist. It offers points for reflection for tourism management also in a transboundary context. Specific emphasis is given to the role of local communities, to the difference between large Alpine resorts and small destinations, and finally to destination management tools. Among the main tools, the Task Force, in cooperation with the Italian National Institute of Statistics – ISTAT, worked specifically on the identification of some indicators which can be concretely applied with the statistical data currently available (as such they are confrontable among different Alpine destinations) and which represent a valuable tool to support tourism strategic planning in the mountain regions. Further discussion and confrontation is required on this aspect that represents a current key issue for the Alpine Convention.