Ît a cà, "are you home?"
Governance of sustainable travel for local enhancement: the experience of the IT.A.CÀ Salento Network
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In Bologna (Italy), when a traveler comes back, he or she is usually been asked *"Ît a cà?",* which means "are you home?" in local dialect. IT.A.CÀ. is also the name of the first italian festival devoted to sustainable tourism. Launched in Bologna in 2009 by COSPE Onlus, YODA and NEXUS Emilia Romagna, ten years later the festival involves about 700 subjects at local, national and international scale. In 2018, IT.A.CÀ. was awarded by UNWTO for excellence and innovation within the field of tourism. The same year, in September, the Salento edition took place for the first time.

There are at least two innovative aspects: on one hand, the vision of the festival aims to stimulate a process of awareness in the *tourist-traveler*, who is intended as a "temporary citizen" while experiencing a place; on the other hand, the organizational structure of the festival is based on a complex networking system both vertical (national board and local networks) and horizontal (local stakeholders identified among institutions, companies, cultural and tour operators, associations): it represents an interesting example of governance of tourism conceived as a tool for local

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development stemming from the enhancement of natural and cultural heritage.

The contribution analyses the experience of IT.A.CÀ. Salento Network in its first three years. More than 30 territorial actors (mainly associations, but there are also tour operators and public bodies) have met and cooperated during the first three editions; moreover, in 2019 edition four municipalities granted their sponsor, together with University of Salento and Archaeological Superintendence of Fine Arts and Landscape for the Provinces of Brindisi, Lecce and Taranto. The upcoming edition is involving around 15 actors among associations, tour operators, research centers.

Methodology - The research is based on ethnographic methodology, largely spread within social sciences and, also, geography (Cook, 2020, Crang, 2005). In particular, the contributions shows the results of direct observation of what the network has made since 2018, being the authors part of the network themselves. Such narrative is then supported by quali-quantitative data collected through semi-structured surveys to the stakeholders involved in the organization of the upcoming edition of the festival, aimed at investigating whether being part of I.Ta.Ca. has had any effects on proactivity, networking attitude, reliability.

Expected results - The aim of the research is to underline both potential and effective effects of a new alternative tourist supply within a territory, Salento, that hosts huge, highly seasonal tourist flows, with a subsequent polarization of traditional tourism activities to the detriment of other areas characterized by a potentially higher attractiveness. In addition, despite the undoubted beauty of the landscape and the prestige of Salento's tourist destinations, the area still has to face a number of environmental criticalities, such as the spread of

xylella, burial of toxic waste, illegal landfills, excessive levels of emissions.

On this basis, the focus is on the study of local network as a key tool in promoting a new way to interpret an innovative governance of tourism. More specifically, I.TA.CA' Salento can be intended as a territorial driver for social innovation, as it triggers a virtuous auto-poietic process, according to which synergies among the stakeholders engaged in the network favor new opportunities for cooperation and co-design aiming to local, culture-led development.

References

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Crang, M. (2005). Qualitative methods: there is nothing outside the text?. *Progress in human geography*, *29*(2), 225- 233. doi: 10.1191/0309132505ph541pr

https://www.festivalitaca.net/