

A Conceptual Framework for Tourism Transition Areas Based on Territorial Capital: a Case Study of Vinci

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to review past literature on destination competitiveness policy, vision, identity and image and to offer a conceptual framework that relates to the concept of the territorial capital as the key component in the establishment of a shared and integrated vision for tourist destinations. The framework is tested on the case of Vinci, Tuscany, and the findings are based on a focus group and a SWOT analysis. The results reveal that the level of awareness policy makers and other primary stakeholders have in recognizing and adopting the territorial capital concept for the development of a shared, integrated and sustainable strategic vision is absent. The major contribution of this work is inter-disciplinary since, to our knowledge, is the first attempt to analyse an in-transition tourist area through the role of a geographical concept, the territorial capital, and to link it to destination policy and strategic management terms, such as vision, identity, and image.

Keywords: Destination; Identity; Image; Territorial capital; Tuscany; Vinci; Vision

Introduction

Tourism is a complex and growing sector that is recognized to be a key one for many advanced economies, especially in the European area. The focus on the tourism sector as a possible viable strategy of the EU's Growth and Jobs Strategy finds its *raison d'être* in the Lisbon Treaty that outlined a specific competence for the EU in this field. The EU bio-n.27 Commission has recognized the strategic role of the tourist sector carrying out many activities; it has lately and especially showed its aim with the 2010 Communication on Tourism and with the development of a rolling implementation plan with the aim of outlining major tourism-related initiatives to be implemented at various territorial levels. The EU tourism policy gives indications for facing new challenges, such as a growing global competition, sustainability concerns and evolving demand patterns for specific forms of tourism, so that the main themes EU countries and regions should focus on are Innovation and Competitiveness, Sustainable and Socially Responsible Tourism, and the Image of Europe as a tourist destination.

In this context, the EU strategic goals are the improvement of sustainability and competitiveness of the tourist sector, which should be supported by investing in activities concerning innovation, intangible and tangible assets, cultural tourism, high-quality destinations, ability to reach out to new publics and segments of the market, capacity of enterprises to exchange experiences, to network with other stakeholders and to create clusters.

Because of the severe economic and financial situation of European countries, a sustainable political choice for European localities is becoming the theme of territorial cohesion and participation in local development as promoted by the Strategy Europe 2020, the planning document of the European Commission. The new Strategy Europe 2020 states that all policies have to pursue three strategic priorities:

- 1) Growth based on knowledge and innovation (intelligent growth)
- 2) Pursuing energy efficiency and making a more competitive green economy (sustainable growth)
- 3) Promoting an economic growth that ensures high levels of employment and guarantees economic, social and territorial

cohesion (inclusive growth). Therefore, during next few years the main goal of localities and their actors will be to combine sustainability with competitiveness, also because in the long term the competitiveness of the tourist sector on the local scale will depend more and more on the level of social and environmental sustainability reached by local policies and local public and private actors.

In this context, this paper presents an exploratory study on the vision, and its formulation process, of primary public stakeholders (institutions) as main drivers of change for a local area that is evolving into a tourist destination. The focus will be on the vision(s) of the place and its connections to the past history expressed by the territorial capital and its future position (sustainable and competitive area) determined by top-down *meso* policies. The destination is Vinci (Italy), an agro-industrial area characterized by the presence of agricultural, industrial and service activities, with an important cultural heritage and natural capital, moving forward in the development of tourism as the key sector for its future growth – a shift from being an agro-industrial area to an agro-cultural-tourist area. Vinci is interesting in many respects: it is located in Tuscany, an area close to international tourist destinations such as Florence, Pisa and the Chianti area; offers a huge potential for the tourist sector, with an interesting local symbolic capital that should make it a benchmark for similar destinations; it is in-transition rural area developing as a tourist destination rich in art and history; it has been selected by the European NECST our Network, the Network of European Regions for a Sustainable and Competitive Tourism, as home to one Tourist Destination Watch on Sustainability and Competitiveness.

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Received November 14, 2014; Accepted September 11, 2014; Published November 21, 2014

Citation: Tortora M, Randelli F, Romei P (2014) A Conceptual Framework for Tourism Transition Areas Based on Territorial Capital: a Case Study of Vinci. J Tourism Hospit 3: 135. doi:10.4172/2167-0269.1000135

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After reviewing the literature on destination competitiveness policy and the role of vision, identity and image, we introduce the concept of the territorial capital, as recently presented in regional development studies, as the key component in the establishment of a shared and integrated vision. The results of a focus group with local primary stakeholders will reveal the level of awareness policy makers and other primary stakeholders have in recognizing and adopting the territorial capital concept for the development of a shared and integrated strategic vision underlying a future destination competitiveness policy.

Literature

Destination competitiveness policy

Destination is a ubiquitous and subjective concept that depends on the tourist's image and expectations of a place. For these reasons destination has received many definitions. It should be defined as the sum or set of goods, services, physical and artificial elements that attract tourists to a specific geographical place, or as amalgams of individually produced tourism amenities and services (accommodation, transportation, catering, entertainment, etc.) and a wide range of public goods (such as landscape, scenery, sea, lakes, sociocultural surroundings, atmosphere, etc.) that present some common characters such as attractions, accessibility, amenities, available packages, activities, and ancillary services (the 6As) and are branded together under the name of the destination [1].

Thus a place becomes a destination only when there is interaction between the place, the offer and the demand, a sort of triangulation where a place becomes a destination on the basis of strategies and policies that start a series of goal-oriented structural, organizational and managerial processes on different, mainly local and regional scales that catch and serve the expectations of tourists.

In this context destinations need an effective strategy capable of developing a guiding framework for all stakeholders involved. The main strategic goal of these frameworks is competitiveness. An effective strategy places the destination in a competitive way in multiple markets and makes its position within the industry a long-term profitable and sustainable one on the basis of its attractiveness, its relative competitive position, and undertaken activities [2].

The political framework that informs the governance of a destination, and that is promoted first of all by the public sector, acts as a guide for planning and development actions. Crouch [3] proposes a destination competitiveness model in which destination policy is accountable for the destination's strategic or policy-driven framework that can help to ensure tourism development in a competitive and sustainable way. The basic competitiveness attributes of the destination policy are:

- 1) System Definition - the framework requires an explicit recognition and common understanding among stakeholders concerning the definition of the tourism destination system.
- 2) Philosophy/Values - philosophical perspectives to address economic, social, environmental, and political goals through tourism development.
- 3) Vision - the crafted sense of the community's desired future.
- 4) Positioning/Branding - the destination's efforts to create a tourism identity [*sic*] through an overall destination marketing strategy.
- 5) Development - quality and cohesiveness of policies for tourism

development; the quality of a cohesive and integrated system of policies designed to govern and regulate tourism development.

- 6) Competitive/Collaborative Analysis - evaluation of how the destination relates and compares to other destinations and to the international tourism system.
- 7) Monitoring & Evaluation - monitoring and evaluation of policy outcomes can provide useful information for the improvement of a destination's competitive position.
- 8) Audit - destination attributes' strengths and weaknesses, problems and challenges, past and current strategies and overall performance.

While the first five points are the responsibility of the public sector, the last three involve *ad hoc* organizations – destination management organizations DMOs – which have an overall responsibility for the entire destination as a product. The product is nothing but the same destination conceived as an integrated territorial product with a unique image and specific features [4]. These organizations should therefore become the guardians of the image and resources of destinations. Therefore, from our perspective, of the basis for any sustainable and competitive destination policy is the identity, which represents the dynamic and evolutionary history of the place depicted by the *genius loci* and moulded by the local tourist system's mission, and its image, as developed and promoted by branding and positioning policies.

But the competitiveness of a place is also about the future, the vision or the future desired image/position of the destination. Primary stakeholders, who want to make their tourist destination competitive and sustainable, have to design their strategies and policies on the basis of a common shared integrated vision that needs a local shared and strong identity rooted in a territorial capital.

Crouch states that a strategic policy-driven framework can help to ensure bio - 3 tourism development. To be effective, this framework must comprehend and put into relation.

- (1) The identity of the place (the spirit of the place as intended by the local community)
- (2) The image of the place (the demand side, the market) in order to forge its shared integrated vision.

To understand the relationships between identity and image, we should imagine bi-directional flows for which, on one side, the image is based on expectations nurtured by previous experiences of the same or other tourists and communicated in various ways. Those experiences are shaped by the meeting with the local community and its identity in specific time-space coordinates. On the other side, the image is moulded on the basis of choices about the identity and symbolic capital by local primary stakeholders. Thus, the identity and the image of a place are the outcome of an evolving dialectic process between internal (stakeholders' choices) and external forces (tourist's experiences and expectations) that influences the realization of its vision. In order to achieve a sustainable growth, the local tourist system should have a strong, clear and shared vision based on the local identity and image.

In our analysis, we introduce a fourth element to enforce the destination visioning process in order to make it more effective for policy analysis and decisions. The fourth element is the territorial capital. Before introducing it and concluding with the SWOT analysis that will drive our analysis on the main findings of the qualitative study, we first focus on the concepts of vision and its main pillars, identity and

image, to understand their role in assessing the competitiveness and attractiveness of a place.

Identity and image, the vision's main pillars

The first major factor of competitiveness and attractiveness deals with the local identity, promoted through a strong image that stimulates emotions and feelings that can be translated into values delivered by the place as a tourist product (brand).

The destination's identity reflects the traditions and history of a place and its evolutionary path. To design a strong and unique identity Eljarque [5] focuses on four main factors of destinations (benefits, personality, culture, amenities) in order to link amenities with culture, to sustain the destination's personality, and to offer the market a wide range of benefits which cannot be found elsewhere, because they are strictly embedded within the site.

Ensuring a proper level of coherence and uniqueness to the identity of a destination, all the stakeholders have to be involved in the identity development process so that every single actor should take it as a basic and starting framework for its activity. If that happens, high levels of coordination and synergies, better communication and promotion approaches will be ensured so that benefits will be released to all the parties involved.

On the other side - the demand perspective, the most important criterion for visiting a destination or not is its image. The image is the set of expectations and perceptions a prospective traveller has of a destination while the destination's image is the 'lens' through which tourists perceive all characteristics of a destination.

The degree of consumer satisfaction will depend on the assessment of the overall experience of the destination versus anticipated expectations and perceptions. Thus raising consumer satisfaction means to raise the perceived quality of the destination that is the attractiveness of the place.

When the destination gives tourists a positive experience (positive emotions and feelings) their expectations are confirmed in that the communicated image at the core of the destination's spirit is based on a coherent and unique identity. Developing the right image for destinations will therefore determine their ability to satisfy visitors as it will allow them to develop realistic expectations and to stay successfully in the market.

In literature, the image of a place as a tourist destination is usually associated and described with reference to destination marketing strategies [6] and destination branding [7-12]. Both converge into the recognition of the importance of a destination's image in the tourism market as a product shaped by the contact between perceptions of tourists and branding strategies to position a destination. Moreover, some research shows that the image of a destination in the tourism market is critical to a destination's competitiveness in that it is a possible amplifier of opportunities: image is ranked 9th among thirty-six destination competitiveness attributes in terms of importance and 5th in terms of determinacy.

In this regard, more research should be developed to study the relationship between the image of a place as perceived by tourists and the image in the minds of the local community, especially primary stakeholders, those stakeholders who have a say in the development of strategies, policies and management of the destination, established and developed over years on the basis of the local identity and the territorial capital. The analysis should be supported by researching the common,

shared, integrated vision of the place stakeholders have, especially linking it to the *genius loci* that is rooted in the territorial capital to find information about the local identity and awareness.

Indeed, efficient strategies and policies directly depend on the capacity to increase the attractiveness and competitiveness of places. This ability rests and leverages on attributes such as, among others, location and image. Because tourism destinations are successful when competitive and attractive, and that depends on the mix of positive emotions and experiences tourists have, the image of destination assumes a strategic role underlying the overall sustainable strategy of tourism development.

In turn, the image of a destination depends on the ability of primary stakeholders to establish and develop a strong and shared identity that could support and inform first of all tourism development policies. Thus, the destination strategy directly depends on the image of the destination designed and promoted by primary (public) stakeholders. Contrary to the concept and management of identity, image is open to external forces and influences and its management is much more difficult and critical because destinations are perceived by tourists on the basis of what is said in the external world.

In conclusion, the competitiveness and attractiveness of a place depends first of all on its identity and image, where image and identity are not two separate factors but are mutually dependent on each other. Identity is (especially) the basis for any image and vision construction process that guides strategies and policies.

Vision and destination visioning

The conceptual and organizational roots of destination visioning have been reported by many authors since it was introduced to explain some specific cases [13-15], and derives from strategic planning studies [16,17].

What is a vision or visioning, and why is it so important for destination strategy and development?

A complete framework to understand the role of the vision is given by the work of Raynor [18] for whom a vision should be defined as the desired future position of a company within its industry. To develop a meaningful and complete vision requires the understanding of the conceptual 'building blocks', i.e. vision is the result of two main factors: internal (mission) and external (market forces). The market forces impact the company's activities, so shaping the nature of its desired future position, while the mission influences the formulation of a vision on the basis of its two main components: core values and competencies. In turn, core values and competencies define the identity of the corporation or, as in our case, of the destination on the basis of facts and paradigms adopted to interpret the former in a conceptual way. In conclusion, a vision depends on present and external facts and the way an organization construes them through the accepted paradigm.

For destinations policy and management, recent facts say that the fourth industry in the world [19] is becoming more and more complex and competitive and even more demanding of societal and ecological issues. For these reasons, tourism stakeholders must strategically act as 'future makers' rather than 'future takers' in order to ask what the future should be and how to meet it. For them, vision should reflect the values of stakeholders for whom it is developed, since stakeholder values are a fundamental component of any vision that seeks to involve the public in its sustainable approaches to development and growth, or should be a statement or understanding of what the destination's philosophy or values logically suggest makes most sense for the destination in terms

of its desired future. These two definitions specify the concept of vision linking it to sustainability and the role of the territorial capital.

On the basis of these definitions, visioning refers first to a place occupied by a local community for which strategies and plans are developed and implemented, since within a strategic vision values and principles are outlined to work as guidelines or frameworks to define and reach long-term goals on the basis of the local resources selected as main input of the local economic cycle.

Thus visioning should be defined both as a community-based [20] and as a sustainable planning approach [21] for tourist destinations whose process is based on three key actions:

- 1) Bring together the views of the whole community and all tourism stakeholders
- 2) Reach consensus and endorsement of the future
- 3) Define the long term development of the destination.

Cooper states that these three actions characterize each specific visioning process that is described as a project of different stages whose outcome, the vision, is primarily crafted by the involvement of local communities in the process. Thus this approach is simply a further evolution of strategic planning processes whose advantages in formulating strategies and policies are that visioning takes into account the complex relationships within a destination, and recognizes the impact of decisions upon future generations [22,23]. Cooper refers to the potential problems with this approach on the basis of the works of Ritchie and Helling [24]. These are the difficulty of:

- 1) obtaining representation across the community;
- 2) obtaining consensus on controversial issues;
- 3) recognizing and avoiding 'tokenism';
- 4) effectively integrating other economic sectors;
- 5) implementing the vision.

One possible solution to reduce the complexity of such an approach and find common ground for all the involved stakeholders should be the introduction of the territorial capital and its powerful symbolic representation at the core of the vision definition.

Enforcing destination visioning on the basis of the territorial capital

All places have local resources or assets, but there is a date in recent history when this capital was referred as 'territorial'. The concept of territorial capital was first proposed by the OECD in its Territorial Outlook [25], and then reiterated by DG Regio of the Commission of the European Union [26-29] for which each area/region has a specific 'territorial capital'. This capital is unique and distinct from that of other areas and generates a higher return for specific kinds of investments, those that are better suited to the area and use its assets and potential more effectively. Thus, according to the European Commission, territorial development policies (policies with a territorial approach to development) should help areas to develop their territorial capital [30]. Accordingly, the OECD has drawn up a long list of factors acting as the determinants of territorial capital, and which range from traditional material assets to more recent immaterial ones, from the area's geographical location, size, the factor of production endowment, to climate, traditions, natural resources, and quality of life. There is also 'an intangible factor, 'something in the air', called the 'environment'

and which is the outcome of a combination of institutions, rules, practices, producers, researchers and policy makers that make a certain creativity and innovation possible".

Likewise, Berti [31] states that a territorial capital refers to the specific material and immaterial assets of an area that, as unique local resources, once they have entered the economic cycle, should be the basis for a place's competitive advantage. These local resources, once they have entered the local business cycle as input, are transformed into "territorial capital", that means the stock of specific resources of a place, available for people belonging to and living in that place. This localized group of common goods is characterized to be not-divisible, not-privately-appropriable, motionless, specific, and having a net-worth [32].

Thus, the concept of territorial capital is useful since it entails all material and non-material, private and public assets that play a role in defining economic performance. Camagni proposed taxonomy of territorial capital to identify the main elements of it. These elements can be organized in two groups. The first comprehends elements entering directly into a traditional production function (physical capital, labour and infrastructure; social capital). The second group comprehends elements characterized by less sharply defined boundaries and more complex definitions. They form the "glue" of a society, stemming from complex cognitive processes that are cumulated in a society over time, acting on knowledge creation and knowledge exploitation, and therefore on the way in which physical factors (capital, labour and human capital) are combined, giving rise to increasing returns. For other authors, the territorial capital is composed of seven main capitals:

- 1) Environmental
- 2) Economic
- 3) Human
- 4) Cultural
- 5) Social
- 6) Institutional
- 7) Symbolic.

The latest one should be defined as the capital of the (other) capitals because each kind of capital manifests itself in symbolic/transfigured terms. It follows that the symbolic capital is at the core of all other territorial capitals because it represents the group of all the symbols produced by the local community, and especially it gives information on how the local community wants to be communicated to external environments and actors (external perceptions - image), and how it constructs its own identity in terms of awareness.

Current new econometric models [33,34] interpret local growth according to territorial specificities (i.e. territorial capital) as a competitive and socio relational process, based on supply rather than demand elements. Intended as relational space, territory is not the mere geographical place where development occurs; rather, territory generates increasing returns, cumulative self-reinforcing mechanisms of growth in the form of dynamic agglomeration economies. Therefore, local economic growth becomes the result of interregional interaction processes, rather than the result of inter-regional resource allocation decisions or of an increase in resources endowment. Given this interpretation of local growth, the reasons that explain the relative performance of a sub-regional territory have to be found in its territorial capital, which covers all genetic aspects of local growth. Territorial

capital may be seen as the set of localised assets – natural, human, artificial, organizational, relational and cognitive – that constitute the competitive potential of a given territory.

Moreover, state that ‘territory’ is a better term than (abstract) ‘space’ when referring to many elements such as systems of localised externalities (both pecuniary and technological); of localised production activities, traditions, skills and know-how; of localised proximity relationships (social, psychological and political capital); of cultural elements and values; of rules and practices defining a local governance model.

According to our aim, focusing on a system of cultural elements and values is mandatory due to the fact that such system gives sense and meaning to local practices and structures, defines the local identity, acquires an economic value whenever these elements can be transformed into marketable products or boost the internal capacity to exploit local potentials. It follows that policy making has to acknowledge the integrated nature of any policy strategy and the

added value on intervening on different but linked assets at the same time, while promoting network relations and cooperative agreements and supporting innovative projects. From the perspective of the vision process rooted in the genius loci of the place, one large class of territorial capital elements on which policy making should give attention is the so called cultural and identitarian capital, encompassing cultural heritage, landscape and natural capital. It follows that for those areas choosing to be a tourism destination, local resources and their symbols become constituent elements of the cultural and identitarian – symbolic capital, and that happens when the local network of actors use these resources to attract tourist inflows and to satisfy their experiential needs. One of the consequences is that in order to understand the formulation and development of a vision and its related process, primary public stakeholders have to recognize the stock of local resources/assets that are present in a place and to develop their visioning strategy on the symbolic capital as the blending of the other local capitals, as expressed in the following pictures (Figure 1).

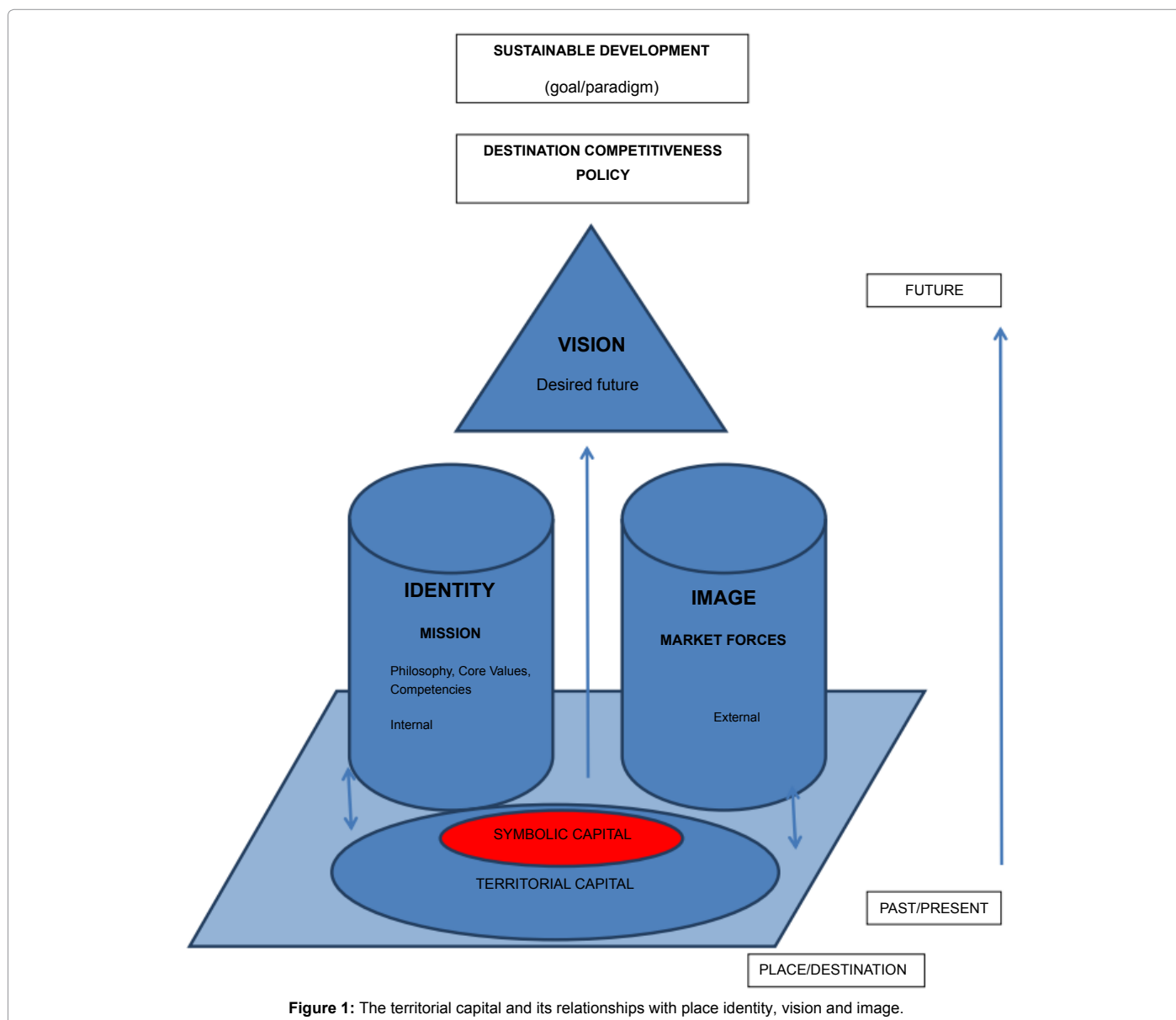


Figure 1: The territorial capital and its relationships with place identity, vision and image.

Thus, in this paper it is argued that if underlying the political framework there is a shared integrated vision of the place as a tourist destination developed on the basis of the peculiarities of the territorial capital, then tourism should be an effective strategy for local sustainable development. The following paragraph introduces the analysis of Vinci as a future tourist destination, to understand how and if the destination visioning process is linked to the territorial capital.

The Analysis

Vinci's profile

The municipality of Vinci (54.42 km²), one of the 287 municipalities in Tuscany, is composed of Vinci and twelve other villages. According to the last Census ISTAT [35] the population numbers 14, 582 inhabitants. In the last thirty years the population's dynamics has shown, on one side, stability and, on the other side, a progressive abandonment of young people migrating from rural areas to industrial centres, a flow determined by job opportunities. For this reason the majority of people live in the valley specialized in manufacturing and related services activities: clothing, ceramic, tourism, rubber and plastic, food, furniture, glass, commercial distribution, olives and wines. Thus, on the plain there is specialization in industrial activities and related services while up on the hills and in intermediate areas agriculture and tourism are the main source of revenue. On the basis of these data and according to recent studies [36], we should define Vinci as an agro-industrial area characterized by growing tourist inflows (Figure 2) (in terms of overnight stays, around 1% of the total. (Table 1).

The background

Our analysis is organized on our research experience deriving from a previous study developed for a multi-year research project funded by the Tuscany Region, the TURRU Project [37,38]. In that context, our group studied the economic and environmental aspects of rural tourism in Tuscany, proposing and focusing on the case of Vinci as a tourist destination in rural areas. Tuscany in Italy is considered the leading region for rural tourism especially due to the high number

of *agriturismi* (farmhouses). In 2010 the percentage of farmhouses in Tuscany was 22.5% of the total nationwide (4,200 out of 18,674 in Italy) [39]. For a long time many farms have undertaken the transition towards tourism, and today agritourisms cover over 60% of beds in many rural municipalities. Thus, rural tourism is a stable driver of rural development in Tuscany, and performances in some of the indicators of tourism (nights and beds per capita) are higher than those of the region as a whole. The analysis of the success of the rural tourism in Tuscany takes into account a complex set of factors: the wealth of local resources, the landscape, the quality of food products, the presence of numerous art centers less common in rural areas (San Gimignano, Volterra, Cortona), and finally, its proximity to major urban centers (Florence, Pisa, Lucca).

In order to highlight the different stages of tourism development in rural areas of Tuscany we examined a number of indicators. First, we identified municipalities and rural areas within the region. To this end, we selected three different indicators as to understand the social, economic and ecological effects of rurality. As a result, we classified as rural those municipalities that met at least one of these three indicators:

- 1) The social dimension - population density <150 inhabitants per km² (OECD threshold)

Destination		Arrivals	Overnight stays
Florence	Italians	880.332	1.932.164
	Foreigners	2.530.753	6.350.766
	Total	3.411.085	8.282.930
Vinci	Italians	9.662	17.051
	Foreigners	8.689	30.186
	Total	18.351	47.237
Tuscany	Italians	5.364.525	19.700.889
	Foreigners	6.794.890	23.336.956
	Total	12.159.415	43.037.845

Note: our elaboration from data by the Regional Statistical Office

Table 1: Tourism flows in Vinci in comparison to Florence and Tuscany (2013).



Figure 2: Vinci and the Florentine area (Tuscany, Italy).

- 2) The economic dimension - the percentage of workers in agriculture > 4.09% (regional average)
- 3) The ecological dimension - proportion rural or non-urbanized (forests , farmland, semi-natural areas, beaches, rivers, lakes , etc.) > 95.92% (regional average)

Then we collected a series of statistical data on the phenomenon of tourism at the regional level. We found that the number of tourists per capita (14.51), and of total beds per capita (0.20) in rural areas are higher than the regional average (respectively 11.42; 0.13). This is extremely interesting if we consider that the regional average includes art cities of international level such as Florence, Pisa, Siena, and Lucca.

Finally, we selected a number of indicators to represent the different stages of development of tourism in rural areas. We considered the tourism dynamics in the last decade (2000-2010) and the quality of the tourism offer. Specifically, the indicators selected were:

- a) Total number of tourists per inhabitant;
- b) Total beds per capita;
- c) Trends of accommodations and beds;
- d) Number of highly capital-intensive farms with at least one service such as pool, restaurant, golf and tennis. The results showed three not contiguous main rural areas with different levels of development of tourism:
 - 1) Mature and consolidated rural areas (black);
 - 2) In transition areas, with a significant growth in the last decade (dark gray);
 - 3) Under developed and marginal areas (light gray);
 - 4) Urban areas (white) (Figure 3).

In conclusion, we found that rural tourism in Tuscany is very developed in mature rural areas such as Chianti, Val d'Orcia, Maremma and in the countryside surrounding the town of Siena. Among these areas, San Gimignano, Pienza, San Quirico d' Orcia, and Radda in Chianti show a number of tourist arrivals per capita higher than 50 units pushing local government policies towards discussing and finding new ways to constrain the access to small rural villages. It follows that in mature areas the main problem is not growth, but rather the consolidation and sustainability of tourist presence. By contrast, other areas are instead moving from the first stage. In these areas, the growth in the number of tourists is still an important goal to achieve in order to make tourism a driver of local economic sustainable development. Among these in-transition areas, there is Vinci.

The qualitative part of the project analysed Vinci from the perspective of the local community (tourist system's identity) and of Italian and foreign tourists (the image). It resulted as a tourist destination in a rural area with a complex identity and history. The findings can be summarized in terms of:

Identity - the local community thinks that tourism should be a resource for local development, but:

- 1) Their town does not have many strengths or potentialities;
- 2) Local entrepreneurs are not capable of new investments and operations;
- 3) More actions are needed to preserve the rural territory represented by the landscape. Main assets: the landscape and the geographical localization in Tuscany. Main threats:
 - 1) Capacity and ability to welcome tourists;
 - 2) The levels of local tourist entrepreneurship and services;
 - 3) Inefficiency of public services.

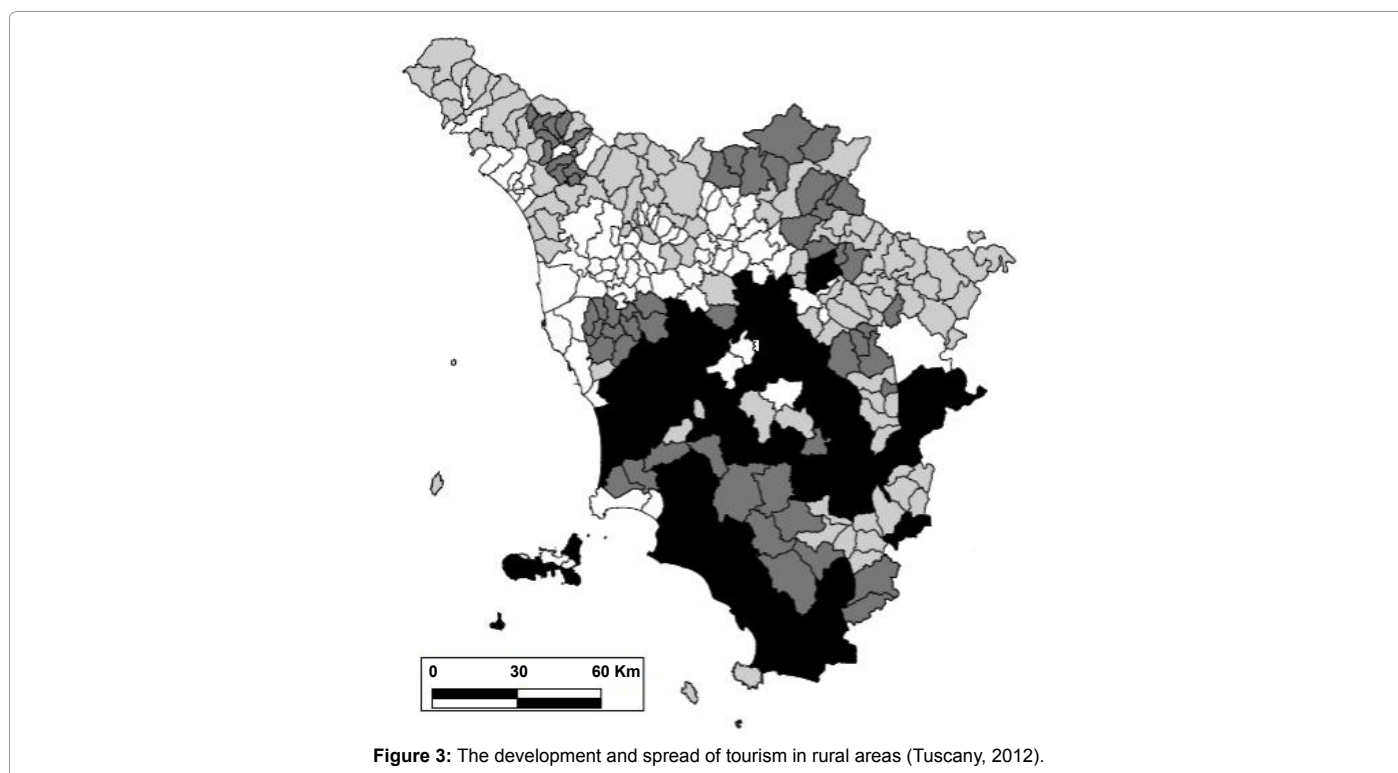


Figure 3: The development and spread of tourism in rural areas (Tuscany, 2012).

Image - for tourists Vinci is a tourist destination whose main assets are:

- 1) Arts;
- 2) Food;
- 3) Rurality/Landscape;
- 4) Quality of hospitality

The emerging gap between the identity (local community) and the image (tourists) should be reduced through policies oriented to analyze and promote a shared territorial capital, and to invest in a shared strategic vision in order to promote it to the local community and the market.

Methodology

Because the vision topic was not part of the research project, our group organized a focus group after the conclusion of the research to show only to primary public stakeholders its main findings and to stimulate participants in discussing on the assets of Vinci and its future possibilities.

The method of the focus group was chosen for two main reasons: i) to use the same effective method used in the research project ; ii) to obtain through comparative and dynamic discussion in-depth information describing stakeholders' attitudes and perceptions of the process of tourism development, information not emerged in previous research [40-43]. As noted by Wilson et al. [44], a focus group is an informal, small-group discussion designed to obtain in-depth qualitative information, then an excellent method to study processes.

More specifically, the focus groups explored and discussed the possible future paths of development of Vinci focusing on its main strengths and weaknesses. The aim was to stimulate a comparative and dialectic discussion with the help of the representatives of the NECST our European Project and Watch in order to analyze the visioning process with a focus on the role of the territorial capital.

Participants were asked to discuss in detail, on the basis of their experience, their policy and actions in stimulating tourism processes. Principal investigators were three researchers from our group including the assistant moderators who took notes during the session. The principal investigators conducted debriefings and took field notes after focus group. The length of the discussion in the focus group was

around three hours.

The main public stakeholders involved in the focus group were: the Mayor and the vice-Mayor of the town of Vinci; the Director of the museum; the Director of the URP office (the Public Relations Office) of the Municipality of Vinci, and one of the managers of the Tourist Office; one representative of the Tourism Destination Watch (TDW); and one researcher from an independent regional research institution working for the TDW. This composition helped guarantee reliability and consistency.

Visioning Vinci on the Basis of the Territorial Capital: Results and Discussion

The results confirmed the previous findings. The identity of Vinci is a complex and multiple one because of its geo-economic profile (multiple specialization) and its nature as a multi-level node connected to multiple tourist destinations and networks on many scales from the local (Tuscany), to the global (foreign locations exploiting the image of Leonardo). This complexity linked to the two main (symbolic) elements - the landscape and the image of Leonardo da Vinci - explain the disagreement on the future desired position, which underlines the lack, at this time, both of a strategic integrated vision and of a deeper analysis of the territorial capital (Tables 2 and 3).

In more detail, what is the future of Vinci as a tourist destination? What is the level of awareness on the importance and role of the territorial capital? What are the main elements of its territorial capital that can support a strategy of development? The SWOT analysis (Table 1) makes it clear that there is not a unique and shared idea in terms both of the vision of the place as a tourist destination and of the territorial capital (main assets to be employed for future development) (Table 2).

According to the discussion, Vinci's vision - future paths of development - should result in one of the following:

- 1) the green space of the extended metropolitan area including Florence, Prato and Pistoia;
- 2) a World Heritage tourist destination (the surrounding hills called *Montalbano* have been proposed to UNESCO as a World Heritage Site);
- 3) the place for innovation, combining the industrial expertise of the plan with the historical heritage of the Museum;

	Identity	Image
Local Community	Vinci is an industrial place with a tourist future	Vinci it is not a tourist destination, but it has a rural landscape
Tourists	Vinci is a tourist destination	Place of Arts, Culture and Rural landscape
Stakeholders	Complex and multi-level	Leonardo da Vinci and rurality

Table 2: Summary of results.

	Positive	Negative
	Strengths	Weaknesses
Internal	Landscape - the image of the Genius Open and multi-level connected area Cultural capital and innovation Entrepreneurial activities	Lack of services to tourism Lack of consciousness on the potentialities of tourism No tourist systems No integrated information system Different ideas of vision, tourism and development
	Opportunities	Threats
External	New information and communications networks New and growing interest for the image of Leonardo Possible synergies with other external players located at home and abroad	Image mediated by foreign media Folk vision of Leonardo and his hometown Fragmented top-down promotional activities Multi-level competition Foreign competition exploiting the "brand" Leonardo

Table 3: The SWOT analysis framework.

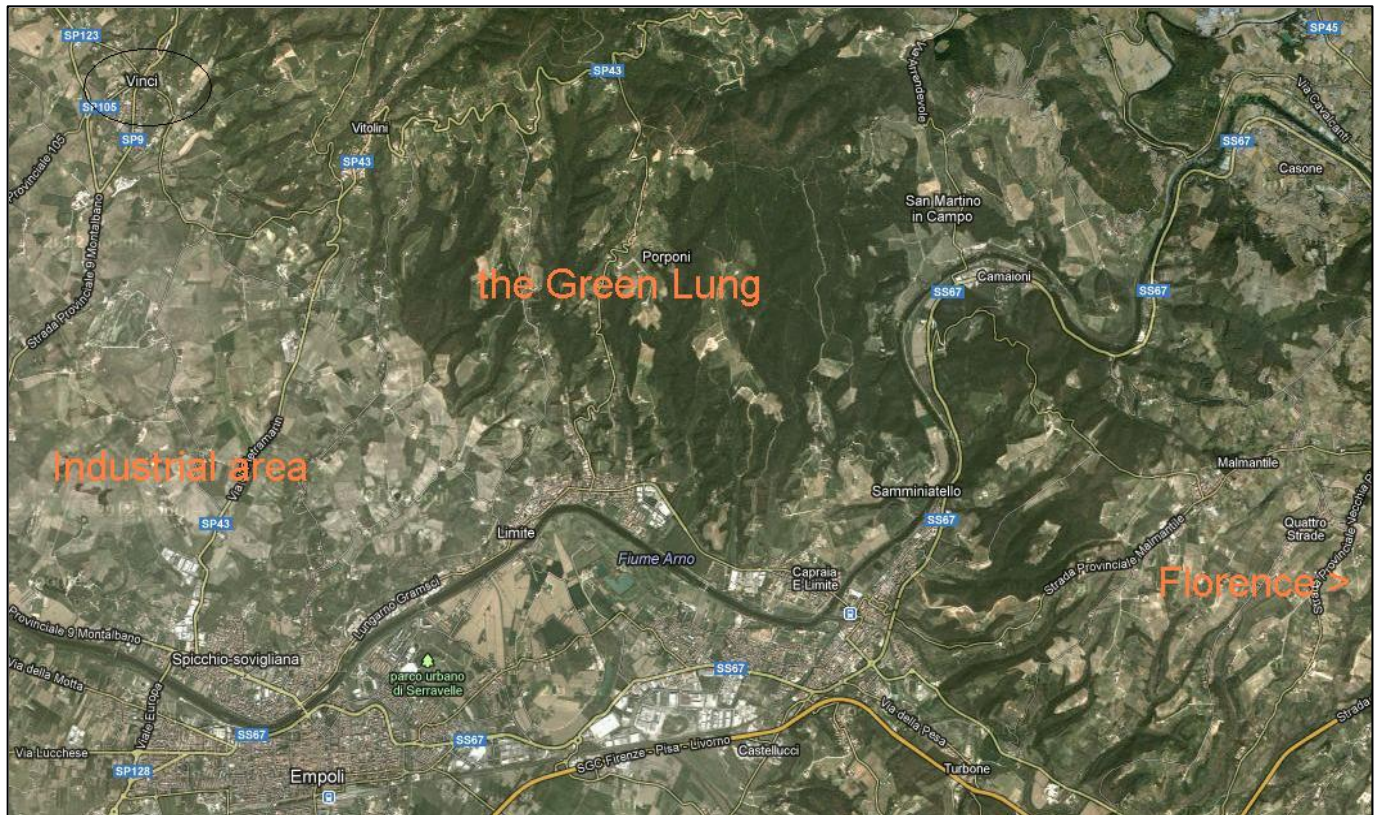


Figure 4: Vinci and the surrounding areas.

- 4) a multi-kind tourist destination (eco-, green-, food-, cultural-, quality-of-life-, mass- for students [sic], big events/shows-tourism);
- 5) the birthplace of Leonardo da Vinci, with the idea of changing the name of the Genius from “Leonardo da (from) Vinci” to “Leonardo di (of) Vinci” to give more evidence to the cultural and natural heritage of the place then to its famous son (Figure 4).

In terms of the existence of a strategic shared vision, we should say that the main stakeholders of the public sector recognize the importance of Vinci as a tourist destination, but the vision is fuzzy, and its fuzziness derives from a) the lack of a defined and shared territorial capital; b) its complex identity; 3) its image, too strongly dependent on the image of Leonardo da Vinci.

Thus, at this stage of the analysis, there is no compromise and agreement on what development path to invest in (destination policy) or which unique and shared image (or brand) has to be promoted.

Even more serious is the fact that the main paradigm of sustainability (social and ecological) and its relationship with a destination competitiveness policy (economic sustainability) as intended by the European Union did not enter into discussions, or it did only indirectly. Neither were these concepts organized in terms of territorial capital.

For instance, the ecological sustainability was cited only in connection with rurality, where rurality is understood to be like the landscape (“like in a painting of Leonardo”), or in promoting the area as

the green space of a larger metropolitan area. Ecological sustainability can directly refer to territorial strategic assets (tangible and intangible goods, private, semi- and public goods). Those cited - landscape and green area – if categorized as capital imply determined and specific actions (environmental protection laws, green investments and innovation, energy efficiency schemes, etc.) that were not mentioned. Social sustainability (more involvement of other stakeholders and the local community) was not cited though it has the same strategic role for the development and competitiveness of an area (new job creation, low level of unemployment, social integration, immigration flows, etc.).

Both pillars of sustainability (ecological and social) were reported only by the representative of the Tourism Destination Watch. The main goal of this institution is to promote Vinci as a competitive and sustainable destination through the involvement of stakeholders – thus, underlining the top-down European vision and strategy for destinations more than a bottom-up local vision and strategy of development based on territorial capital. It emerges that the complex meaning of sustainability as the main paradigm defining the local vision is not very clear to stakeholders yet. This result is confusing, since the social and ecological sustainability are reported in official documents (Statute of the Municipality of Vinci) and confirmed by official acts (establishment of the Tourism Destination Watch within the European program NECST our) or by public acknowledgements (Orange Flag for Sustainable Tourism granted by the Italian Touring Club). It is clear that, without a well-defined strategic shared and integrated vision based on the territorial capital, corresponding policies could not result in a systemic and holistic framework.

Policy making will be effective only and if the implicit links between

the vision and the territorial capital will be made explicit and organic to a systemic strategy. Our suggestions lead towards the elaboration of a territorial development policy for tourism that be based on the territorial capital. The first step is the analysis of the territorial capital and its sharing with the local community. Then follow the actions aimed to stakeholder involvement, connectivity, integration and cooperation among different levels and nodes of multiple networks in order to develop new investments and innovation. It is desirable for the resilience of the local system to guarantee a good level of consciousness, a necessary condition for the implementation of effective policies, plans and actions oriented towards sustainable goals and based on the sharing of common assets.

Conclusions

Leonardo da Vinci was born in Vinci in 1452. Today the territory of Vinci is a place with multiple vocations: developed as a productive place especially in its plain, in recent years it has been trying to define a stronger cultural identity especially on the international scale on the basis of the attractive capacity of some local cultural and natural resources (the Museum of Leonardo, the historical centre of Vinci, the landscape) and the powerful image that Leonardo projects all over the world.

In this context, tourism is not a mass phenomenon, rather in the perception of local actors it is a relatively recent phenomenon, with a low local impact, as recent as the awareness of the high quality of natural capital (morphology, landscape) and of the human capital (historic-cultural) that the territory owns.

Thus Vinci is an evolving tourist destination that is trying to diversify its offer combining historic, cultural and arts tourism (focus on Leonardo's places) with rural tourism (rural, green, food).

The vision of the place firmly rests on two pillars that belong to the image of the destination and not mainly to its identity: the landscape and the cultural image of Leonardo that charms millions of tourists all around the world. Therefore the future challenge has to be played at more levels, starting from the need for systemic and integrated policies based on a shared sustainable vision promoted by public stakeholders that could fill in the gap between the international image of Vinci and the local identity, and that could integrate the local community in the strategic decision-making process, while investing in a deeper analysis of the territorial capital that should sustain economic development. At this stage of the destination visioning process, an analysis of the territorial capital seems to be mandatory.

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