TOURISM IN HISTORIC CORES, CONFLICT OR OPPORTUNITY?

THE STAKEHOLDERS POINT OF VIEW IN MADRID'S CASE

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Abstract

In this contribution Madrid is presented as a tourist destination based on its cultural appeal, most of it consisting in the museums and other similar activities (exhibition halls, art fairs, art galleries, e.g.). A point to be underlined about this issue is the highly concentrated spatial pattern. Even so, Madrid's historic centre keeps playing the role of major destination of tourist flows. It is there that a program of interviews has been carried out with the help of a very well selected set of stakeholders following a methodology designed to be implemented in the historic centres of Brussels and Rome as well. The outcomes obtained point out a few controversial opinions about the relation of tourism with the city's historic centre; the tourist economic sector emphasized the role of tourism as an opportunity. On the other hand, the socially inspired organizations see it basically as a source of conflict that can be counteracted by means of integrated policies for the whole historic centre.

1. Some basic features of Madrid as tourist destination

Spain is a politically decentralised country with its capital Madrid situated at the geographic heart of the Iberian Peninsula. The continental-Mediterranean climate has strong seasonal differences. Madrid's origins are quite recent in comparison with other Spanish cities. In 1561

Philip II moved the royal court, with Madrid becoming the new capital of Spain. Between 1950 and 1960 Madrid attracted a large number of migrants and therefore the population grew from 1 to 3 million in the post-war period. From 1975 to the mid nineties Madrid's population decreased because of the economic crisis. Since 2000 an important demographic growth has taken place due to the arrival of half a million immigrants pushing the population in 2008 to 3.28 million inhabitants (16. 9% immigrants).

Madrid is Spain's main point of entry (and Europe's as well from South America) for international air traffic. Therefore, as a tourist destination Madrid presents a very different profile from other parts of Spain. A considerable number of visitors in Madrid are day-trippers, tourists passing by, or simply sightseers. Taking into account only the travellers staying in the hotels of Madrid the figures increased from 2.7 million in 1980 to 8.9 million in 2009. Amongst tourists who spend the night in Madrid, the reason for the journey is mainly linked to some work related activity. Because of this there is an increase in income per traveller and the negative effect of the low season is strongly reduced. However it also reduces the average stay per tourist in comparison with other tourist destinations.

1.1. *Culture as a major factor of attractiveness for tourism in Madrid*

Madrid stands out for its unique model for tourism. Visitors are attracted by its extraordinary historic and artistic heritage, its vigorous economic activity and its excellent advanced services. In Madrid there is an outstanding concentration of heritage, art and culture mostly in the historic centre and its surroundings. Therefore, it is one of the richest cities in the world for museums. Although many of them are quite specialised (e.g. railway or naval museum), art galleries are the most prominent type of museum. In fact the Prado Museum is among the best art galleries in the world.

1.2. *Museums and other linked activities,*
    core of Madrid's tourist offer

Museums are the core element of an important cultural axis running from Plaza de Cibeles through Paseo del Prado to Atocha Railway Station including the Prado Museum, the Thyssen-Bornemisza Gallery, The Queen Sofia Centre of Art and the Caixa Forum Culture Centre. In 1992 Madrid was nominated European City of Culture. It gave rise to many cultural events, enhanced existing facilities and created new ones as, for instance, the Museum of the City. Museums are an essential part of Madrid's cultural appeal as shown by the figures listed in *Table 1*. The flagship and engine of cultural tourism in Madrid is the Prado Museum with almost three million visitors in 2008. There have been constant improvements in the surrounding area, as an extension of the museum area along the Prado Promenade, known as «Art Walk». Even more, something like a museum quarter has grown up in the area surrounding the Prado Museum. Since the 80s Madrid´s trade in art and culture has been given a significant boost, for example, the ARCO Art Fair. A good demonstration of Madrid's position on the world art stage is its increase in number of art galleries, mostly located around the museum district (*Fig. 1*).

1.3. *Problems of the wealth of cultural offe*
    in Madrid's city centre

The huge density of visitors in the city centre, around 5 million per year, causes many impacts: traffic congestion, environmental degradation, etc. However, there is no real plan of museum decentralization toward other districts of the city. Nevertheless, there are many initiatives for new expositive facilities, mostly along the north-south axis. Besides that, a new urban project is being developed for the el Prado Promenade devoted to reducing the area´s environmental problems and to reinforce its cultural function. Many agencies, both public and private, are involved in the process of intra-urban museums and in the decentralization of exhibition facilities.

Tab. 1
Visitors to Madrid's main museums (1991-2006).

Museums	1991	1997	2004	2006	2008	Variation 91/08 %	Absolute values
Museo del Prado	2.043.864	1.709.771	2.001.500	2.166.000	2.759.000	25,9	715.136
Palacio Real	567.425	768.096	720.700	883.000	958.000	40,7	390.575
C.A. Reina Sofía	s/d	858.341	1.445.200	1.422.000	1.769.000	51,5	910.659
Museo Thyssen	s/d	538.200	683.500	737.000	753.000	28,5	214.800
Museo de la Ciudad	s/d	185.000	182.000	185.000	148.000	-25	-37.000
Museo Arqueológico	233.604	203.400	251.800	220.000	159.000	-46,9	-44.400
Museo Sorolla	34.822	46.688	85.400	88.000	102.000	65,8	55.312
Museo Cerralbo	s/d	23.442	34.900	17.000	s/d	-37,0	-6.442
Museo de Bellas Artes	31.337	46.007	61.800	93.000	129.000	75,7	97.663
Museo de las Descalzas	75.103	66.812	56.500	56.000	57.000	-31,7	-9.812
Museo de la Encarnación	15.374	16.189	18.200	19.000	19.000	19,0	3.626
Museo Municipal	30.304	44.368	39.600	46.000	36.000	15,8	5.696
Museo de América	s/d	61.217	69.400	69.000	54.000	-13,3	-7.217
Panteón de Goya	s/d	43.846	s/d	61.000	71.000	38,2	27.154
Rest	606.846	1.142.000	2.762.200	1.539.000	2.092.000	70,9	1.485.154
TOTAL	3.638.679	5.753.377	8.414.704	7.601.000	9.106.000	60,0	5.467.321

Source: Instituto de Estadística de la Comunidad de Madrid. Anuario estadístico.

Fig. 1
Madrid museum quarter (source: own elaboration).

Among the private interest groups the financial sector stands out (banks and saving banks, insurance companies, etc.). Regarding the public sector, all the responsible administrations, and above all the local and regional ones, are taking part in this process: the central government is developing a project for the creation of the Museum of Virtual Arts; the regional government is involved in an exhibition hall in a disused water supply facility and the local government in a culture centre called «Proyecto Matadero».

2. The case study: an overview of Madrid's historic centre

2.1. *Urban historic centres as tourist destinations*

This issue has involved a wide range of scientific approaches since the 80's (Jansen-Verbeke 1988). The issue of tourist and historic cities as places with a high potentiality of being sold with the help of marketing techniques has been analyzed, among others, by Ashworth and Voogd (1994). From the point of view of demand some authors have underlined how the cities of art are excellently gifted for leisure and recreation, in some ways because their attractiveness is stimulated by tour operators in order to enhance incoming tourist flows (Van den Borg 1994). Many contributions, under focus of the «world heritage cities», are paying special attention to the tourists' and visitors' impact and how it can be managed in places as Amsterdam, Bruges and Venice among others (Van de Borg and Gotti 1995). According to the Spanish tourist cities, the idea that all the components should be gathered together in an integrated tourist destination is widely spread (Calle 2002).

2.2. *The state of the art on tourism: bibliographical survey*

There is a general agreement concerning Madrid's historic centre: it is, as with many other big cities, a place with excellent conditions that enable a set of cultural tourist experiences to be enjoyed. Nevertheless, apart from heritage other elements are worth quoting, as the exhibition opportunities: theatre, traditional costumes, handicrafts, popular flea markets and their atmosphere as a whole. In any case, it has to be said that most of the tourist pressure gathers round the outstanding monuments (Royal Palace) and the museums. Finally, the favourite topic of many contributions is mostly devoted to the huge concentration of museums along the Prado Promenade (Gali Spelt 2002; Gutiérrez Ronco and Alcolea 2002; Vacas 2005, 2008). For the moment, other kinds of heritage are scarcely being taken into consideration as tourist attractions for inner and outer tourism (Hidalgo and Palacios 2008) (*Fig. 2*).
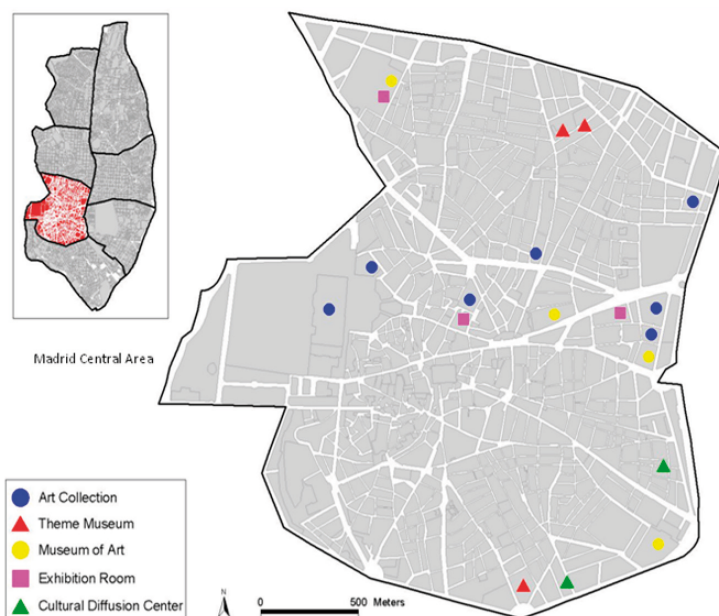

Fig. 2 - Madrid historic core (source: own elaboratio).

Focusing our attention on tourism in the historic centre, Madrid does not follow the model of the tourist historic city described by Ashworth and Tunbridge (1990). The lack of overlap between the historic city and the tourist city is particularly clear when compared to other Spanish cases as Toledo, Salamanca or even Seville (Baker and Towner 1996). There are deep differences between these cases and Madrid, mostly but not only because of the scale so enormously different, Madrid being the major metropolitan region in Spain, which generates particular forms of relation with tourism in the whole metropolis, but also because Madrid's city centre requires the knowledge of multiple factors which operate at regional and local scale. It goes without saying that, unlike the cities of art, in Madrid the contribution of tourism lies neither in terms of visitor flows nor of local income.

2.3. *The field survey and its methodology*

The methodology followed in this chapter for Madrid's case study is the result of the guidelines established by the team created in the PLACE project in order to compare the impacts of tourism on the historic centres of Rome, Brussels and Madrid. As previously arranged, all the case studies should put in practice the same procedure to obtain the stakeholders' point of view in the selected cities. The increasing number of tourists arriving in the city centres and what was to be done to reduce the impact on the quality of the experience and on the residents' quality of life, were considered the heart of the problem.

The sample selected. To achieve this purpose, it was decided to interview a selected number of stakeholders belonging to the most representative fields of activity related to the economy, the administration and the social organizations living or operating in Madrid's historic centre. Anyway, the tourism stakeholders related to the historic centre of Madrid have some peculiarities in comparison with those operating at the whole city level. In any case, even when they belong to an organization of national or international scale, they are really aware of the great influence the inner historic quarter has on tourism in the whole city.

Focusing on the way stakeholders have been selected for this research as interviewees, we have followed the methodology decided by the PLACE project research team. Six sectors have been selected to analyse the stakeholders' point of view in the case of Madrid's tourism: tour operators (4), tourist guides (2), NGOs focused on cultural heritage protection (1), consumers' associations (2), neighbourhood associations (1), public authorities (2) and hotel keepers (6), restaurants and coffee house owners (4). The majority of them are based in Madrid's historic district, two of the hotels are privately owned and the others belong to different sized national hotel chains. The tourist guides were also linked to the historic area because of their everyday professional work, the same as consumer associations; even the public authorities in charge of heritage protection and tourism promotion have their headquarters in the historic centre, just as the NGOs; the tour operators are the only stakeholders without any branch in the city centre (*Fig. 3 and Tab. 2*).
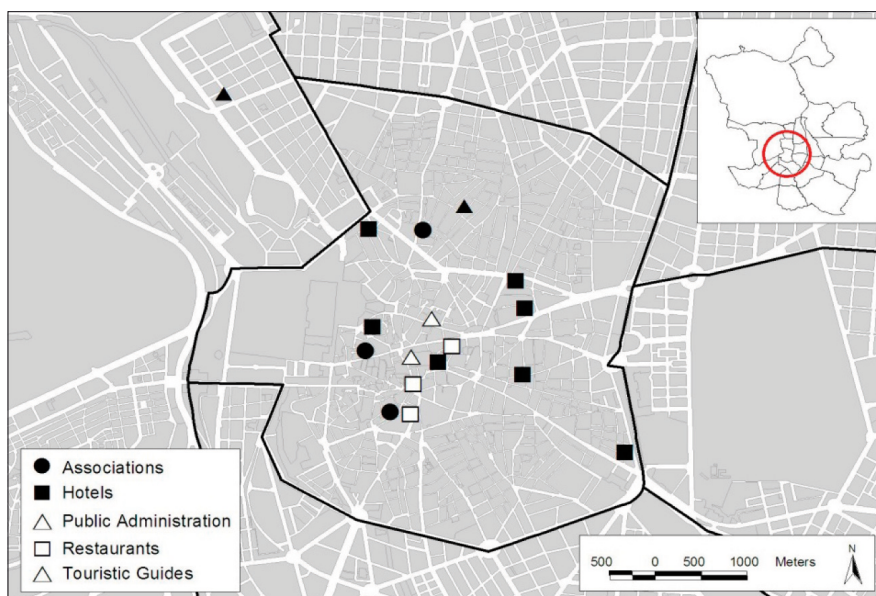

Fig. 3
Stakeholders interviewee localization in Madrid's historic centre (source: own elaboration).

Tab. 2
Stakeholders interviewed.

TOUROPERATORS	
Creatur	Specific niches of tourist demand
Iberoteam	Specific niches of tourist demand
Mundicolor	Mass tourist demand
Viajes el Corte Inglés	Mass tourist demand
TOURIST GUIDE ORGANIZATIONS	
Carpetania	Innovative tourist itineraries
The professional Association of Tourist Guides (APIP)	Specialized guides in museums visits
HOTEL KEEPERS	
Casón del Tomes Hotel	Family hotel
Catalonia Las Cortes Hotel	Medium size hotel chain
NH Nacional Hotel	Big size worldwide hotel chain
Petit Palace «Posada del Peine Hotel»	Small size hotel chain with 14 hotels in Madrid
Regina Hotel	Private hotel owner
Senator	Medium Spanish size hotel chain
RESTAURANTS AND COFFE HOUSE OWNERS	
Botin restaurant	The oldest restaurant in Europe (XVIII century)
La Ópera de Madrid Restaurant	High quality restaurant
Museo del jamón	Middle quality restaurant
Taberna del Capitán Alatriste	Located in a historic building recently restored
NGO'S	
Ecologist in action	Very active in heritage matters
CONSUMERS' ASSOCIATIONS	
Confederation of consumers and users (CECU)	Regional wide consumers' organization
Organization of consumers and users (OCU)	Nationwide consumers' organization
NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION	
Opera Quarter Neighborhood Association	Headquarters in Madrid's historic centre
PUBLIC AUTHORITIES	
Heritage General Directorate of the Madrid Regional Government	With competences in heritage protection
Madrid Municipal Tourist Board	With competences in tourism promotion

Source: own elaboration.

The questionnaire. As agreed within the PLACE research team, the questionnaire has been organized in three points: tourists, visitors and residents in the historic city (point 1); the quality of experience of users of the historic city (point 2); and quality of life of residents in the historic city (point 3). Each one has been developed following different criteria. Point 1 is connected with the consideration of tourism as an effective policy for urban development and even for relaunching metropolitan areas which are in industrial decline. So the questions have been related to the consequences of an increasing number of tourists. Point 2 is focused on the tourist planning and the growth of the number of visitors. Questions have to do with the standardization of urban planning. Point 3 is linked with the analysis of the competition between residents and city visitors for the use of spaces and services. Questions have been used to identify environmental impacts and changes in the traditional activities (*Tab.* 3).

Tab. 3
Questionnaire Preserving places. Managing mass tourism,
urban conservation and quality of life.

1. In your opinion, what could be the positive and negative consequences of the growing number of tourist in Madrid's city centre?

2. What measures should be developed to get a continuous tourist flow taking into account the specific circumstances of Madrid's city centre?

3. What is your opinion about reducing the tourist pressure on Madrid's city centre through spreading the cultural appeal outside?

4. Do the city centre's public spaces have the same urban or administrative regulation as the whole city? If the response is affirmative, is it a positive or negative issue? How does regulation affect the tourists' and residents' experience and the activities existing in the city centre?

5. Do you think interventions in public spaces and cultural heritage are causing a tourist appeal banalisation of the city centre?

6. Do you think there is a trend towards standardization the European city centre? How can this trend be reversed?

7. What should be done to increase or maintain Madrid's city centre tourist appeal as unique, special and distinctive?

8. What are the main environmental problems generated by the growth of tourism and visitor flows in Madrid's city centre?

9. What are the changes induced by tourist flows that can weaken traditional economic activities?

10. What are the changes induced by tourist flows that can strengthen traditional economic activities?

2.4. *The outcomes*

With the 22 interviews obtained during the field work a double entry table has been constructed in order to carry out a coherent reading of the stakeholders' opinions. The aim was to compare them in order to identify the main ideas of each group for each specific question. Of course, the outcomes presented below are only a first approach to a qualitative source that the authors want to explore in depth in a future paper.

2.4.1. *The tourist flow impact on Madrid's city centre*

Madrid, with about 8.5 million tourists annually, mostly attracted by its cultural appeal, is the only destination that is increasing the flow of visitors during the current crisis period. But what do the stakeholders interviewed think about its effects on the historic core? The majority of them have a positive opinion about the economic and labour benefits due to tourism. Some of them (especially restaurants) even think that tourism is helping improve the image of Madrid's public spaces and architecture. The reason could be linked with the incomes generated by the activities located in the historic centre, as they make the restoration expenditures affordable.

However there are some negative effects, due to tourist flows, identified by stakeholders. The associations interviewed emphasized the loss of public facilities due to tourism but also to the intensive public administration's occupancy of buildings. For the Tour Operators the problem arrives in a selective way only in some areas, in some periods and because of some specific types of tourists. The real solution for them would be to increase the quality of tourism. From the point of view of restaurant owners Madrid's Historic centre is not perceived as saturated. For the Hotel keepers it would be very useful to rationalize the tourist flow throughout the year.

Therefore, proposals for deciding what to do about the tourist flows to the historic centre are highly controversial. For tour-operators and restaurant owners it would be desirable even to increase the number of tourists. For that reason, they propose to increase the quality of the offer and to improve tourists´ safety. The only real restrictive measures

where all the subjects interviewed agree are those devoted to traffic restrictions and to pedestrianization.

Consequently, when stakeholders are asked about extending the cultural appeal outside Madrid's historic centre, their opinion can be considered to be almost the same as they don't consider it necessary whilst neither being against the possibility. The hotel keepers appear to be the most supportive of the historic centre as main attraction for the tourist flow. On the opposite side, the point of view of the public administrations is that they are the only ones who consider it beneficial to decentralize the cultural offer in order to promote Madrid as an integrated tourist destination as a whole.

2.4.2. *The quality of the tourist experience in Madrid's historic centre*

Selected samples from the subjects interviewed do not guarantee an accurate understanding of the different kinds of regulation present in the historic centre. Therefore, the answers do not allow clear conclusions about the real regulatory situation. Some of them (tourist guides, associations and public administration) show to be up-to-date about the different kinds of regulations that distinguish the historic centre from the other urban areas (planning, heritage protection, shop opening hours, etc.). For others, the only regulations taken into account are those linked to their activities (restaurants) as they make their business relations with the public administration more difficult. But in general, the opinions are positive regarding the cultural heritage protection, the building regulation, and the tourist buses access restrictions.

The respect of the regulatory system for the historic core of those interviewed must be pointed out. Concerning tourism, regulation is considered beneficial (administration and hotel keepers). But, on the other hand, for the residents it is not clear whether there are more benefits or drawbacks (administration). Therefore, the tour operators propose that in some regulations the residents should be positively discriminated. On the other hand, the idea of improving the security regulation is widely shared. In some cases tour operators' opinion is contradictory because they think that some aspects are strictly regu-

lated while in some other activities, mostly in open public spaces, they say there is lack of regulation.

When asking about the interviewee's opinion on the historic centre's standardisation due to or devoted to tourism, answers follow quite variable directions. On the one hand, some of them perceive an excess of adaptation to tourism with danger for the quality of life of the residents (tourist guides and associations). This approach arrives at the conclusion among the hotel keepers that residents consider a very high level of regulation to be negative as it prevents the arrival of new population (real estate value increases). On the other hand, if the regulation is too strict, even if the planning regulation favours beauty and functionality of historic buildings, it can damage the business profits (restoration). One interesting conclusion of the associations interviewed is the need to achieve a multifunctional historic centre enjoyable for both residents and tourists.

What about the banalisation of Madrid's historic centre due to tourism? Answers show disagreement about lost identity among many interviewees (tourist guides, hotel keepers and tour operators.) On the contrary, the present regulations go in the direction of improving its image and of restoring its traditional features in such aspects as celebrations, festivals and costumes. The only tourist banalisation activity which is widely perceived is in commerce because franchises generalise in retail and also in tourist souvenirs which are sold in specialized shops. Therefore, interviewees do not agree with the idea of the European historic centre as seen in a process of standardisation, except in specific fields such as fast food restaurants, even if they share similar problems and aims.

Some proposals collected from the interviewee's opinions and connected with the implementation of historic centre polices must be emphasized, such as underlining their traditional elements without forgetting the specific demands of specialized tourisms (conference and fair tourism) and other kinds of visitors: short stay visitors from the same city and day trippers. Another very widely spread idea is to reinforce the everyday life equipments for people living in urban historic areas. It would not be convenient for the historic centre to become a place only for tourists and for the activities linked to their needs. On the

contrary, recovering historic centres as residential areas for many kinds of people is an aim to be achieved. Another idea to be emphasized is the need of a global promotion of the city, underlining the unique nature of the historic centre.

When asking about what should be done in order to achieve a special and unique appeal, specific of the historic centre of Madrid, the answers are also strongly diversified. Some opinions are worth being mentioned: quality as background of the actors involved (restaurants); the character of Madrid as a lovely and lively city open to everybody (restaurants); some specific appeals are quoted by those interviewed such as traditional shopping, flea markets, a very diversified gastronomy, cutting edge art exhibitions and the nightlife; Madrid lacks a clear and strong tourist identity because of having neither a logo nor an architectural landmark such as the Eiffel Tower, Big Ben or so on.

2.4.3. *The quality of life of residents (population and activities) in Madrid's historic centre*

The answers to the question about the main environmental problems caused by tourism are very similar among the stakeholders. The general feeling among them is that tourists do not cause substantial environmental problems. The only tourism linked with environmental impact comes from coaches taking tourists to hotels located in the historic centre. The real environmental disturbance in the city centre occurs at weekends because of a high number of people coming from other areas of the metropolitan region to spend the night in a wide range of leisure facilities. In such circumstances a kind of short stay tourism (drinking tours for instance) can be considered as really environmentally dangerous.

A last controversial issue suggested by the interviewed stakeholders was the impact of the tourist flow on the traditional economic activities. The core question was to know whether tourism is weakening them or on the contrary even revitalizing them. A previous doubt concerning this topic has to do with the hypothesis about how much of their decline depends on the global urban economic evolution. In this context the role of tourism in the economy of the historic centre is fully ambiguous

(association). On the one hand, the demographical decline would have caused the economic one as well. On the other hand, tendencies towards standardization would have come from tourists in such commercial sectors as fast food, and international shopping chains; there is obviously a set of causes explaining this issue and the solution must be integrated.

Concerning the positive impacts of tourists in the traditional economic activities, the answers of the subjects interviewed adopted the wishful thinking philosophy; Let us choose some ideas as an example: thanks to tourism some traditional activities (folk performances, handcrafts, flea markets, gastronomy etc.), (tourist guides and hotels) survive. The reason is that tourists appreciate genuine traditional products (tourist guides). Even if there is no danger for traditional activities due to tourism, a selective fall in family managed businesses (restaurants) exists. The real problem for their survival lies in the training of businesspeople and workers and also in the generational change-over (tour operators).

3. Discussion on the issues and on the results obtained

Despite the comparative analysis of the interviewees' responses, the questionnaire doesn't clarify the main point: is the impact of tourism on Madrid's historic centre positive or negative? As a matter of fact, the answer in the case of Madrid is not easy to find. It can be discussed whether the interviewees selected or the questions proposed have been relevant to the target pursued. In our opinion, the existence among the stakeholders of two very clearly defined groups is a fact that speaks for itself. One group, the tourist economic sector, has its own interests in increasing the tourist flows toward the historic centre (tour operators, hotel keepers and restaurants and coffee house owners). The other one, made of consumers, ordinary people, guides and heritage associations, is worried about the conservation and quality of life. Finally, the public administration plays a role of balance between both.

Leaving aside many possible issues and interests of the stakeholders, it is worth going into some issues which were agreed with at some

level. For example, there is consensus on the negative effect tourism has in those historic centres that are easily accessible by car or coach. Therefore, restrictive municipal measures concerning access to the city centre for cars and buses, and a boost of pedestrianization are welcome. There is an almost general agreement that tourism itself is not the origin of vandalism and environmental problems in Madrid's historic centre. The visitors' flow from other parts of the city, the metropolitan area or region is mostly concentrated during weekends and short holiday periods («puentes»), and is identified by the stakeholders as the main problem. Finally, the most relevant issue, where almost all the stakeholders are in agreement in an explicit o implicit way, is the need to develop a more sustainable kind of tourism in the historic centre. There is a general feeling that many kinds of positive policies related to almost all the aspects (built, economic or social) of the inner city are highly compatible with the historic centre, as the URBAN project recommends (Valenzuela 2000: 110-111). It is much better than the restriction measures affecting the behaviour of all kinds of visitors and the sensibility of the entrepreneurs, as J.Van den Borg and alii. suggest (Van den Borg, Costa and Gotti 1996: 309). For that reason it is necessary to have all the components of the urban environment in mind, besides the heritage and the cultural offer, operating at all levels, from the individual building to the whole city.

All kinds of pollution must be considered, and also important is paying attention in an integrated way to all the elements of the historic city (urban fabric, activities and population). As Van de Borg noticed in Venice and in other cities of art, residents are more capable of perceiving disadvantages caused by an excessive number of visitors; in any case, that is not the only cost of the loss of quality of life in their surroundings. On the contrary, a socially balanced, enjoyable and well-equipped historic centre is the best ally for a highly qualified urban tourism. Seen from this integrated perspective, cultural tourism promotion can become the cornerstone of the inner city regeneration programs. Firstly, to achieve this aim it is essential to put together the multiple dimensions and variables associated with tourism in historic centres (heritage, culture, commerce, leisure, e.g.) in order to integrate all these elements in the tourist product. Besides that, the partnership between public

administration, entrepreneurs, local population and the associations involved, in short the stakeholders, must not be lost (Valenzuela 1999: 413; 2008: 64-65). Unfortunately, this perspective has not emerged in the field study; the problem is the capacity of policy-makers to respond properly to such a big endeavour.

4. Conclusions

There is some kind of consensus among stakeholders about tourism in Madrid's historic centre, of which it is worth underlining the following.

Tourism has more benefits than inconveniences for the historic centre; therefore, no specific measures are needed except for buses in the historic centre and the extension of pedestrian areas. Because of this view it is seen as unnecessary to spread the cultural appeal outside the historic centre.

The existence of specific regulations for the historic centre is considered positively by the various stakeholders, as this does not imply introducing any danger for its identity and becoming standardised. On the contrary, they consider the residents in the historic centre as the real losers, because of the specialization in tourism.

Stakeholders think that the maintenance of traditional activities is one of the most effective ways of keeping historic centres appealing for tourism. On the other hand, the overspecialisation in tourism can favour their decay without forgetting that the real cause is the economic change and the resulting loss of human resources. Unfortunately, they normally go hand in hand in the historic centre urban process.

Finally, stakeholders all emphasize the idea that the real attraction of Madrid's historic centre lies not only in its cultural appeal but also in its lively and friendly atmosphere.

The members of the PLACE project who have taken part in the establishment of the guidelines for this part of the paper are: Anya Dieckmann (Brussels), Barbara Staniscia and Armando Montanari (Rome) and Manuel Valenzuela (Madrid).

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Riassunto

In questo saggio Madrid viene presentata nella sua veste di destinazione turistica la cui offerta è basata sulla cultura ed altre strutture simili (sale per mostre, fiere d'arte, gallerie d'arte, etc.). Su questo tema bisogna sottolineare che il modello spaziale è molto concentrato. Anche così il centro storico di Madrid mantiene il ruolo di una delle maggiori destinazioni dei flussi turistici. In questo contesto è stato condotto un programma di interviste ad un selezionato campione di stakeholders secondo una metodologia scelta per essere gestita anche nei centri storici di Bruxelles e di Roma. I risultati ottenuti evidenziano alcune opinioni controverse sulla relazione tra il turismo e il centro storico; il settore economico turistico ha evidenziato il ruolo del turismo come una opportunità. D'altro canto le organizzazioni sociali vedono il turismo essenzialmente come una fonte di conflitti che può essere contrastata mediante politiche integrate per l'intero centro storico.