

The Role of Local Authority in Tourism Development in Vlora

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Abstract: *Economic and social opening of Albania after 1991, gave a new momentum to the country's tourism development particularly the one to the coastal areas, using individual private investment, which structured small-scale tourism, coupled with cleavage to extreme local landscape. Governments after 1991, rightly considered tourism development as a big opportunity on developing the country in a short term. Local authorities have many direct and indirect mechanisms at their responsibility and disposal to influence the development of tourism as they are providers of public goods and services, supervisory bodies of economic activities, builders of public infrastructure, responsible for economic development and accountable for the natural environment. The local authorities have focused on the distinctive challenges of governance for sustainable developments.*

This article discusses the development of the tourism industry in Albania and Vlora. It calls for both local and national agencies, and respective stakeholders to support the idea where tourism is an important sector in the process of economic development. The study is based on a structured survey which was developed in Vlora. The questionnaires were structured in such a way that it contains the information needed to answer a hypothesis: "The Local Authority play an important part on tourism development in Vlora". For processing questionnaires, SPSS software (descriptive Statistics, Frequencies, Compare Means, and Independent Samples T-test) and Mega Stat (Hypothesis Test, Compare Two independents Groups) were used. In Vlora, tourism is one of the many driving forces promoting the directions and opportunities for local developments. The research question of this article is whether tourism can be sustainable. The true proof of "sustainable tourism" will be the sustainable development of local communities which are tourist destinations as the time is right for more focus on this challenge.

Keywords: *Vlora, Albania, tourism, sustainable tourism, local authorities, local developments, policy making.*