

IASA CONFERENCE ABSTRACT – KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The historical migration of The Serchio Valley and the relating Roots Tourism phenomenon

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Abstract

This paper has the purpose to study the historical migrations from the Tuscan Serchio Valley area towards foreign countries during the past centuries. A specialised focus on socio-economic reasons for migrations represents the initial approach to investigate migrants' descendants retourning effects, that influence contemporary tourism dynamics. In particular, the research analyses 'roots tourism' origins characterizing recent cultural and genealogical tourism behaviours, by considering the emerging community involvement in local heritage valorisation and identity awareness. In light of this, the Serchio Valley area is currently a proactive territory for roots tourism development, as concerns its migration history, and also regarding stakeholder involvement in policies fostering cultural and ethnographic territorial elements. According to this study perspective, roots tourism represents the present social reply to the past diaspora, as a new tool of: cultural exchange, socio-economic growth and country mobility. In the light of this, roots tourist study approach leads to a reflection on spill-over effects that have recently promoted this specific tourism segment, such as: new business models' development, environment repopulation of mountain areas of the Serchio Valley, as well as a new touristic way to discover ethnic values belonging to generational memories.