

Addressing the Need for DMO Legitimation through Behaviourally Disaggregated Tourism Impact Measurement: Evidence from the province of Bergamo

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Abstract

Destination Management Organizations (DMOs) are increasingly expected to demonstrate the economic relevance of tourism, especially in diversified, manufacturing-oriented regions where the sector remains undervalued. This paper presents a spatially disaggregated impact assessment framework designed to strengthen DMO communication and positioning. Co-designed with VisitBergamo, the DMO for the province of Bergamo (Italy), it is applied to a territory that has recorded strong tourism growth yet still struggles to affirm tourism's role. The methodology integrates tourist expenditure surveys, anonymised mobile data, and qualitative stakeholder interviews, calibrated across six macro-areas using an input–output model. The framework reveals uneven economic contributions of visitor segments and shows how impact evidence can support data-driven storytelling, more effective stakeholder engagement, place-sensitive destination governance, and stronger DMO legitimacy in policy and planning.

Track: Tourism Marketing