

Social repercussions on places declared World Heritage Sites

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A researcher from the Economic and Business Sciences Faculty of the University of Seville, together with a group of teachers from Malaysia, has published a study of the factors that influence the perception of tourism of rural and urban residents living in declared UNESCO World Heritage sites. This project was carried out in Malaysia, in the city of George Town, on the island of Penang, in the north of Malaysia, in the Lenggong Valley, and in the north of the country, which is an example of a rural area with developing tourist activity.

The researchers analyzed four factors: the residents' emotional link with their local communities, the value the residents place on the care and preservation of the heritage and nature, the [economic benefits](#) that the members of the community obtain from tourism, and the degree of resident participation in the planning and decision-making processes connected with the [development](#) of tourism in their community.

"In this way, in the [rural area](#), the factor that was perceived most positively regarding [tourist](#) development is the economic benefits that this activity can generate for the community. In the urban area, it is resident participation in the process of decision making linked to planning regarding the development of tourist activity in their community that is perceived most positively," explains José Luis Roldán, professor at the University of Seville and co-author of the study.

On the other hand, another significant difference that the results showed is that participation by rural residents in tourist planning provokes more

[negative perceptions](#) of the development of tourism than is the case with the urban community, where its impact is invaluable.

By applying the Partial Least Squares technique (PLS), the experts examined whether there is a significant relationship between the four factors and the opinions held by the residents of the two communities, and determined which of these factors has the greatest impact when predicting these perceptions, and if there are significant differences between each community.

"PLS is a fairly versatile technique whose use has substantially increased over the last 20 years. In fact, the areas of knowledge in which it is used are quite varied. Among those in which it is commonly used are strategic management, marketing, accounting, operations management, systems information, etc.," says Roldán.

More information: S. Mostafa Rasoolimanesh et al, Factors Influencing Residents' Perceptions toward Tourism Development: Differences across Rural and Urban World Heritage Sites, *Journal of Travel Research* (2016). [DOI: 10.1177/0047287516662354](https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287516662354)

Provided by University of Seville

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