

Best practice 4: Tourism Observatory of Avila, Spain.

Scale: Urban

Stage of tourism development: Mature

Main objective: Tourism quality management, Destination promotion

Categories of effects:

Effects on urban governance

- Cultural Tourism Strategy
- Steering government
- Destination management
- Stakeholder participation

Effects on quality of life

- Built heritage diversity
- Cultural practices and representations
- Urban economies
- Social life, local values and traditions

In 2002, among other activities promoted within the framework of the “Plan de Excelencia”, Ávila inaugurated its Tourism Observatory. This instrument was conceived to monitor and evaluate the evolution of the tourism in the city, and its objective is to collect and process in real time any information that can be useful for the authorities responsible of the culture and tourism sector, and for the local agents. The observatory started to work first thanks to an agreement between the Municipality of Ávila and the Universidad de Salamanca. Since 2003 the agreement was between Ávila and the Universidad Complutense de Madrid, which provides the analysis of the data collected. Its main tasks are: the creation and maintenance of databases with information about tourism; the periodical analysis of the information, and comparison with previous analysis; the development of specific surveys about events that generate tourism; the redaction of the Informative Bulletin of the Tourism Observatory of Avila. The Observatory has been functioning continuously for the last 4 years and has produced so far 10 bulletins. Among other results, it has assessed such different issues as the success of the enhancement of the Walls as tourist attraction, or the relationship between the increase of tourism in 2004 and the exhibition “Las Edades del Hombre: Testigos”, or the impact of the gastronomic fair “Ávila en tapas” or the weight of the offer of Spanish language courses in the offer of the city. These results allow the managers and local actors to correct and improve their strategies in order to enhance positive effects and minimize negative impacts of tourism in the city.

Source: AA.VV., *Boletín Informativo del Observatorio Turístico de la Ciudad de Ávila*, n. 1, Ayuntamiento de Ávila, Concejalía de Turismo, 2002.

Link:

http://ayuntavila.250free.com/Turismo/Boletin_09_OT_Avila.pdf