

TOURISM AS A LAND CHANGE GENERATOR

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I. INTRODUCCIÓN

Tourism like any other social and/or economic phenomenon has direct effects on the land where it takes place. In Spain, mass tourism appeared in mid-20th century and it has turned into mega-mass tourism nowadays. This circumstance has had significant effects on land. Tourism development in Spain, seen in a double concept as a space of production space and a place for consumption, has played an important role as generator of land changes. Mass tourism and mega-mass tourism have developed in Spain in the last fifty years and have implied social-economic, cultural and environmental changes, transforming the pre-existing coordinates. Tourism is a system in which actors, conducts for leisure time and territory inter-act, and it encloses such key elements as tourists, places, territories, tourist networks, market, practices, laws, values and institutions (Knafou, 2006). Tourism is differentiated by its high inter-action with land, which symbiotically plays an essential role within tourism system in function of the spatial and time connotations of tourist activities. Tourist experiences are characterised, on one part, by a practice that is carried out and enjoyed away from the usual place of residence and, on the other, by their duration because they usually are ephemeral events completed with the actor's return to his permanent place of residence after a period of days, weeks or months. Therefore, tourist destination places are visited for other purposes than a permanent stay or a paid employment. Any way, it must be pointed out that at present tourism conventional definition presents some problems linked to time

limits and to the definition of permanence, as this concept may vary depending on the analysis of its motivation, legal residence requisites and/or time restrictions, the terms of which are different according to the countries (Williams-Hall, 2000; 2002). The impact of tourism on land is, then, one of the most determining stages of the interaction among tourist activity, space and time. It implies a high pressure on land and generates changes in the existing situation involving both different impact levels and different social and/or territorial replies (Ivars, 2005) (see fig. 1)

Land consequences of tourism implementation process and its implications on land organisation are basically expressed in tourist urban development, understood as the creation of specific urban spaces designed for recreational consumption, because tourism is one of the key components of developed societies' consumer culture defined by easy travels and leisure production, which so much have affected urban development and the constant re-structuration of tourist space (Antón Clavé, 1998, p.18 and ff.). The analysis of the consequences that tourist activities implantation and growth had had on land in Spain can enable us to face the challenge of tourist places' present situation and find our consolidated tourist towns solutions for the changes that are taking place in international tourist markets.

In Spain both international and domestic tourism have generated a rise in consumption and they are the basic economic factors at a global level for Spain and at a particular level for different autonomous communities where tourism is very well implanted. Moreover, its role as a generator of employment has had a call effect for a large immigration, both of Spaniards and foreigners. All of this has meant a re-distribution of the Spanish population and new patterns of social behaviour, while having effects on social structures and impacts on traditional land coordinates. Tourism, besides, has acted as a promoting and advertising element for several Spanish regions that have been chosen as a temporary and/or permanent place of residence by a large number of foreign residents, especially of a large number of retired and/or pre-retired people from different European countries. An issue that rises another of the defining doubts about if they are long-stay tourists or luxury migrants (Salvà, 2005). All these facts have made possible a real-estate-tourist developmental process that has had significant consequences on land.

From a global point of view there are different land change models on which two essential processes of tourism land appropriation play an important role: places specifically created for tourism, and tourist use and/or overlapping over pre-existing urban spaces. The former means using traditional places, a procedure that is more usual in the first stages of tourism implantation, while the later are “ex novo” urban estates, built on rural and/or natural spaces which have implied settlements on virgin lands.

II. PRESENT SITUATION OF TOURISM IN SPAIN: A HIGH CONCENTRATION OF INTERNATIONAL TOURIST IN-FLOWS FROM THREE COUNTRIES ON SIX AUTONOMOUS COMMUNITIES

Nowadays it can be said that tourism is consolidated in Spain. Throughout its implantation process, it has undergone different stages, considerations and/or attitudes. Its perception has also evolved ranging from being considered just as a currency-gaining activity in its first stages, to be seen by different institutions as a minor evil and/or a punctual Spanish economic activity. Today it is seen as an advanced services industry.

In the first stages of tourism development and implantation, there prevailed the concept of economic growth maximization, which at a long term has implied massification and land consumption and has resulted in a fall of living quality and welfare. Although these circumstances are not general all over the Spanish land, they represent at least the most significant patterns in the six autonomous communities that receive the largest tourist in-flows, in 2006 they got more than 90 % of foreign tourist arrivals. In 2007 international tourism arriving to different Spanish autonomous communities amounted to 59.2 millions of tourists from foreign countries.

Present state of tourism in Spain can be summarized as follows:

- a) A constant growth since early 21st century, when international in-coming tourism had gone from the 48.2 millions of tourists arrived in 2000 to present ciphers (see fig. 2).
- b) The evidence of its unequal distribution and its concentration in six autonomous communities, five of them specialized in a coastal tourism, basically developed around the mass tourism of Sun and Beach (Autonomous Communities of Catalonia, Balearic Islands, Canary Islands, Valencia and Andalusia). The only

inland autonomous community having a significant relevance in tourism is the Autonomous Community of Madrid, by virtue of its capital city functions and the concentration of an important fairs-and-conventions tourism. (see fig.3).

- c) An increase of inner or domestic tourism of Spaniards, very much concentrated in the same tourist destinations preferred by foreign tourists, where beaches and lodgings are located. Spanish tourist mobility amounted to 166.3 millions of travels in 2006, of which 93.57 per cent was about Spain. Only 6.43 per cent of travels were to foreign countries. Spanish tourist preferences, then, match the main destinations of international tourists, specially in the case of tourist places located on the Mediterranean coast. Andalusia has become the main destination for 17.9 per cent of Spanish tourists, followed by Catalonia with 14.1 per cent and the Valencian Community with 11.1 per cent. These three autonomous communities get 43 per cent of Spanish tourists. Inland autonomous communities are basically destinations for a Spanish itinerant tourism: Castilla y León (10.3% of Spanish tourists), Castilla-La Mancha (8.7%), Comunidad de Madrid (6.8%) and Galicia (6.8%). However, the main issuing communities are the Comunidad de Madrid that sends 18.1 per cent of Spanish tourists, followed by Catalonia (16.0%) and Andalusia (15.3%).
- d) As a consequence of the above spatial characteristics of tourist distribution in Spain, most impacts and largest land changes have developed in coastal areas and they present also a seasonal concentration, as tourist practices coincide with the months of largest sun exposure (May to October). One of the main problems of sun-and-beach tourism, prevailing in Spain, is its seasonality.
- e) International tourists come, basically, from three European countries: the United Kingdom, Germany and France. The two first countries concentrate a large part (45 %) of foreign tourists, percentage that rises to 61 per cent if France is included. The United Kingdom is in the first place, with 16.2 millions of British tourists that amount to 27.65 per cent of the total, and their preferred destinations are the Balearic and Canary Islands, where they concentrated 40 per cent of their arrivals. On its part, Germany amounted in 2006 to 10.1 millions of tourists (17.23% of the total), of which almost 40 per cent chose the Balearic Islands as their tourist destination, and in a second place the Canary Islands. In both cases flying has a high relevance. The third tourist issuing country is France; they amounted to 9.2 millions of tourists (15.69%) in 2006.

Their main destination is Catalonia, with half of their arrivals, where they basically get by road.

- f) Tourist expenses of international tourists amounted in 2006 to 48,227 millions Euro, of which 91.8 per cent is concentrated on the six communities with the largest international in-flows. This high spatial concentration of international tourism is even more significant if we take into account that almost two thirds of tourist expenses are made in three autonomous communities, Canary, Catalonia and Balearic Islands.
- g) With respect to the arrival means to different Spanish tourist destinations, the most relevant one is flying. In 2006, flying amounted to 72.6 per cent of international arrivals, with 42.4 millions of travellers. Traditional air companies concentrated 68.4 per cent of international flows, while low-cost companies (CBC in Spanish) with 17.4 millions of passengers experienced a relevant rise and were 31.6 per cent of the total of flying international travellers. On the other hand, arrivals per road amounted to 13.9 millions, especially of French tourists. The other means, ports and railway, are less important and they only amount to 3.6 per cent of international arrivals. This behaviour is very different in the case of Spanish tourists who make use of their private car in most cases (82.5 %).
- h) Most foreign tourists keep opting for hotels where 63 per cent of them are lodged. Travels are organised privately basically (66 %), while tourist tour packages amount to 34 per cent. The situation is different for Spanish tourists as well; only 17.9 per cent of them lodge in hotels, while it is important the loan of a relative or friend's house (40.6%) and the own home (22.9%).

A detailed analysis at the level of Spanish autonomous communities shows, in the first place, that Catalonia maintains its relevance for international tourism. In 2006 it overpassed the 15 millions of international tourist arrivals, and it is in the first place. International tourist arrivals to Catalonia present some differences with respect to other tourist communities, especially in relation to the tourist issuing countries. French tourists are clearly dominant (32.6% of arrivals), followed by Britishers (14.2%). The second place in the international tourist arrivals ranking is taken by the Balearic Islands. This community consolidates then its recovery with a tourist rise that exceeded 10.1 millions, amounting to 17.3 per cent of total international arrivals to Spain. Tourists arriving to this autonomous community come from two main countries: Germany with

40 per cent, and the United Kingdom with 34 per cent. The main problem is still is high seasonality. The autonomous community in the third place is the Canary Islands. They have experienced a tendency shift and after four falling years (2001-2005), they got 9.6 millions of international tourists, of which 37.5 per cent come from the United Kingdom while 28 per cent are from Germany. Andalusia, on its part, is in the ranking fourth place, with 8.5 millions of international tourists (14.6 % of arrivals) of which the British market is the main issuing country with 35.7 per cent. However, it must be pointed out that French, Belgium and Portuguese tourists have increased. Lastly, the fifth autonomous community is the Valencian Community; in 2006 more than 5.6 millions of international tourists (9.4 %) arrived, of which almost half of them were British.

Apart from Mediterranean coasts and the islands, the other relevant case is the Autonomous Community of Madrid. It recorded a total of 3.9 millions of international tourists, from a large diversity of countries, led by France, United Kingdom and Italy. The other autonomous communities have a lower relevance, although there are some rises in international arrivals recorded by Murcia, the Basque Country, Galicia and Castilla y León. In the remaining communities, domestic tourism is the most important; they record less than 500,000 international tourists, and in many cases there has been a fall in international arrivals (see fig. 3).

III. A SHORT HISTORY OF LAND TRANSFORMATIONS RELATED TO TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

The discussion over land transformations in Spain shows that no spatial management culture has ever existed in the places where tourism has implanted. Tourism has become one of the main land consuming activities and has exercised a strong pressure over the existing agrarian and/or forestry uses, establishing extensive and/or intensive land uses in the form of residential and/or touristic estates that have needed the implementation of large infrastructures and commercial equipments. Land re-organisation processes in connection to new patterns of tourist settlement have also implied conflicts between the new tourist activities and those that were already implanted in the area.

In the process of land allocation related to tourism implantation in Spain the following aspects must be taken into account:

- a) The unequal land distribution of tourism in Spain means that the autonomous communities specialized in Sun-and-Beach mass tourism suffer a stronger increase of impacts and territorial transformations. Therefore, any large land changes are restricted to the Peninsular Mediterranean coastal strip and to the two Balearic and Canaries archipelagos. At first it implied changing the land on the waterfront, especially through “ex novo” urban development of rural spaces. This unequal tourism distribution in Spain has caused as well the appearance of deep territorial and demographic inequalities resulting, on one part, from the high land demand for tourist use and, on the other, from the high migratory mobility of workers who from inland and/or foreign regions move towards the economically more dynamic tourist regions.
- b) On Mediterranean coastal tourist destinations we have to add the progressive influence of domestic tourism that, although it recorded a certain delay with respect to the relevance of international tourism, has become intensive since the 1980s due to the rise of the living level and to a mimicry process of international tourists' sun-and-beach holidays.
- c) In the rest of Spain, there are different impacts and/or transformations according to the different types of prevailing tourism. In most of them the largest impacts are linked to urban development of rural space, specifically on the peri-urban areas close to large Spanish cities, where second homes are built. On the other side, other local and punctual changes are related to the growth of snow tourism which has meant an increase of winter resort activities, with the enlargement of the existing resorts and/or the creation of new ones. Snow tourism has become an important attraction for domestic tourism. In the same line other new tourism types: rural tourism, natural spaces tourism, sport and/or adventure tourism, have implied impacts and changes on traditional agrarian, cattle-rising and/or forestry land functions.

Present situation in the most developed tourist regions is the result of fifty years of mass tourism, whose main feature is its constant and continuous growth with very few exceptions. Mass tourism take-off started in mid-1950s; its weak growth turned around in 1959, as a result of political changes in Spain, its new economic coordinates and its joining the United Nations. From that date, international tourist in-flows rose much, accelerating its pace from 1960s to 1973, years when Spain consolidated as one of the

largest tourist destinations for Europeans. Local and/or regional policy looked for economic impacts and took investments as a strategy for economic-tourist development. Although the oil crisis of late 1973 coincided with a stage marked by an uncertain growth that alternated increases and decreases, the global growth tendency was always positive. The first period for mass tourism consolidation ended in 1973; from the point of view of land changes it is a period defined as the chaotic “boom” of Spanish tourism, a fact translated into an absolute lack of land planning. On its land consequences, we can aggregate different attitudes that define the most relevant land occupation processes:

- a) Tourist offer in Spain was the reply to the unplanned and increasing demand for urban-developable land. The final goal of land managers in those stages was to have a short-term economic profit through land speculation means.
- b) The impressive growth of international tourist inflow hid the effects of its impacts, because the then-managers were only interested in getting foreign currencies entering the Spanish economy. It implied that no land control was kept in general, and managers were only concerned for not having enough hotel infrastructures to meet the mass tourist arrivals. The mass demand implied a land expansion and the opening of new tourist-consumption spaces on virgin non-urban land. It must be pointed out that most of hotel establishments existing then in Spain were concentrated in large cities, and that family lodgings existing in different coastal areas were soon depleted due to the rising demand. Its consequence was an increased construction activity on the coast and a land allocation process that resulted in deep changes and a land artificialisation. Urban and/or para-urban land represents 2.1 per cent of the total land and it had risen 29.5 per cent from 1987 to 2000.
- c) The construction sector experienced an impressive development in this stage and it basically concentrated on expanding tourist areas. This relevant building increase is to be related in a first stage to the need to reply to the international tourism demand of lodgings and tourism infrastructures, so it is essentially linked to hotels and tourist-use apartments buildings. But in the second stage, the activity increase is related to the need to meet the demand of apartments linked to domestic residential tourism. The large land changes and tourism development impacts were worse because said accelerated urban developmental expansion, related to external and internal tourist demand, was carried out

anarchically and speedily, with no type of tourist or urban planning. The combination of construction and tourism also meant high investments in infrastructures (roads, airports...). The final outcome was a growth model depending on land massive-use sectors. On the other hand, it was thought that tourism was a punctual activity, a temporary fashion, and everybody was to get the most of the chance, a situation that generated a free traffic of capital, work force and technology. The following situations arise from the above:

1. The non-existence of any urban development plans related to the creation of new tourist places or to the expansion of the existing ones. This factor must be linked to the public authorities and private promoters' perception that the implementation of any time-taking urban development plans would mean the loss of many possibilities for tourist business and profit. Many people thought that tourism was something punctual or a fashion and that tourist behaviour implied changes in destination and/or practices.
2. When urban development plans existed, they fitted the outstanding growth expectations linked to the demand increase in tourist beds for international tourism and/or to the apartment demand for domestic tourism. Therefore, urban development and/or sector regulations were not, in general, adequate or they just did not exist.

In consequence, it is possible to affirm that land policy was not based on a search for land balance and/or land impact relief. It caused the erection of large urban concentrations, linked to the development of sun-and-beach tourism and to tourist usage and consumption along certain Spanish coastal areas. To these direct effects due to international tourism, we have to add the intensified domestic demand of the Spanish population resident in large cities especially, due to the general rise in living standing, improved communications and the growing access to private cars. Also important is the mimicry effect that translates into the perception that progressivism is to approach Europe's manners and that gives place to the development of domestic or inner tourism, that began to demand mass touristic services. Said mimicry process also generated a shift in the tourist destinations preferred by Spaniards; from that moment on, most Spanish tourists leant towards the Mediterranean coast. It meant that Spaniards replaced the traditional tourist destinations in the North of Spain by destinations in the Mediterranean peninsular coast. The area already concentrated an important demand

segment for tourist lodgings linked to the domestic demand, which refers to summer-season secondary homes demand, an use that was always concentrated in summer. It has resulted in an important development of residential tourism, as a consequence of the mimicry popularisation of sun and sea bathing, tendency that started in the industrially advanced Europe especially after the World War II, and in some cases in the 1920s. The popularisation of summer holidays implied also replacing the home-village for the coast as summer destination. It also presented in many cases a disjunctive between the week-end second home versus the beach apartment. Both inner and external demands explain the jumbled growth of tourist infrastructure, which enclosed transport networks, a mass construction of hotels and apartment-buildings, water supply networks and recruiting competent personnel. The overflowing of tourist activity and its needs of lodgings and services prevented a harmonious planning and a rational balance. A debate was started among the extreme defenders of the 1960-type permissiveness, who thought that such a speedy implantation was only possible thanks to these speculation-related equipments. Barriers went down, but nobody was aware of the consequences, improvisations and private initiatives out of any urban planning or tax control that would result in selfish speculations and interests, linked most of them to investors-oriented policies.

It was at the end of the 1980s when a reflection process was started with respect of a better re-structuration of the sector, although many damages were already irreversible. From 1989 to 1992 an inner and external circumstance-caused recession took place. Spain suffered the impacts and/or effects of some unfavourable mixture: a diminution of the demand due to the Persian Gulf war, the irruption of new tourist destinations, and the decay of Spanish tourism competitive situation. However, from 1993-94 on, the tendency began to change towards a positive growth that consolidated itself since 1995, a fact linked to Europe's economic improvement and increased tourist demand, to the crisis suffered by some of its Mediterranean destinations-rivals, such as the Yugoslavian coast, the North of Africa, and Turkey. The Spanish tourist destinations recorded then one of the best expansion stages which in some cases may even brim over land capacities. However, the perspectives of a new demand and/or growth gradual decrease in the first years of the 21st century implied starting a debate on whether certain coastal tourist developmental models were aged, about the renewal possibilities of mature tourist destinations, while some recovery strategies of urban landscape were proposed

such as Excellence Plans or Revitalising Policies among others. Until now, no Spanish tourist policy has changed and/or modified the tourist demand that is usually centred on the coast.

IV. TOURISM AND LAND CHANGES NOWADAYS: FROM CONVENTIONAL TOURISM TO RESIDENTIAL REAL-ESTATE TOURISM

One of the most important challenges of tourism nowadays in Spain is about consolidated tourist spaces; they are the result of the large land changes related to mass tourism implantation and consolidation in Spain. Environment has recently become a key variable in the decision-taking and management processes of tourist space, which implies difficulties when implementing strategies related to a sustainable development. Spanish tourist destinations suffered from the concentration of tourist offer and demand on large coastal areas, which in many cases attempted to solve their problems by creating and/or enlarging new infrastructures, increasing then their un-sustainability. This circumstance has opened in recent years a debate on the need to renew, re-shape or enlarge the existing tourist areas, which implies having new strategies to act with. Many times mature destinations continue spreading, exporting their tourist activity and incorporating other productive and consumption spaces, a process that implies intensifying present tourist destinations even more: exporting the tourist developmental model to other spaces near coastal destinations and located on the hinterland by creating beach-unrelated attractions (golf resorts, thematic parks, pleasure harbours), offers that spread to the hinterland because there is no cheap land and first beach line is mass built. These are actions deriving from the concept of tourism as a land depredator and generator of land changes.

The shift from the conventional tourism to a residential real-estate tourism is one of the processes affecting nowadays land changes. This new situation is influenced by the intensification of tourist real-estate offer, which has resulted in an outstanding increase of good-quality tourist housing and therefore in a new tourist dimension. Residential tourism rose much in the 1990s when many urban estates were built; it has given place to a real-estate specialization in most Spanish coastal tourist destinations. This urban development achieves demand fidelity through tourist housing purchase. Thus, the residential tourism has been promoted and, from its initial location on first coast line, it has spread toward hinterland strips near the coast. Spain has become the largest tourist

real-estate park of the European Union, with 34 per cent of the Mediterranean first-km strip fully urban-developed.

Second home tourism refers to tourists that spend their summer holidays and/or weekends in their non-usual home. It has experienced a strong demand by European citizens on the coast and islands, and it has generated a tourist real-estate developmental model. The significant offer of tourist-oriented housing, helped by advertising campaigns in mature tourist destinations, has favoured the appearance of a relevant residential tourism. Its basic model relates tourists and landowners, specially among retired resident tourists, the so-called international migration of retired people (Rodríguez, Casado; Huber, ed. 2005). This situation leads to residentialism, when the tourist second home becomes the main place of residence once the residential tourist turns into a usual resident (Salvà, 2005).

V. CONCLUSIONS: LAND CHANGES CONSEQUENCES DERIVED FROM AN INTENSIFICATION OF TOURIST USES

Land changes consequences of mass tourism in Spain are due basically to the intensification of tourist land uses. Tourism as a land change generator has implied land, socio-economic and/or environmental impacts. Tourism implantation process has lacked a true debate on management of land changes, a fact that must be related to a lack of ant land management traditions.

Tourist developmental effects are due to a lack of growth controlling measures, and their main result is the progressive movement of the population towards the coast. The increased environmental sensibility has implied having environmental concerns as key elements of tourist strategies, affecting planning and managing, and resulting in an increase of public interventions both as general guidelines and as planning, and the introduction of different regulations (Tourism Acts passed by Spanish autonomous communities, Marketing Plans, Tourist Excellence Plans, Dynamization Plans, *Agendas Locales 21*, among others). These initiatives, however, are not yet clearly reflected on land, on the tourist coastal areas in the peninsula and the islands where urban estates of tourist second homes are still recorded. Land management in Spain is still centred on short-term profiting strategies and does not include growth-containing actions. Destinations are, then, still massified and keep a real-estate offer in excess. In

times of prosperity, they only wanted to obtain benefits and did not think that a large part of recent growth was due to punctual circumstances, basically derived from factors of geopolitical insecurity in different emerging Mediterranean destinations.

The last stage has been registered since mid '90s; it is characterised by a prevailing real estate-tourist implementation process that has promoted the building of a large number of new housing on coastal areas and/or their surrounding ranges. Its growth pace is not parallel to the demographic growth in Spain and it does not match the moderate increase of households. Its dynamics follow the foreign demand of second homes as a tourist temporary and/or permanent residence. Its effects have implied a rise of housing prices in clear contrast to the moderate increase of Spanish incomes. It is therefore a revaluation of real-estate on the basis of an expansion of speculative demand. These circumstances imply the need to make a detailed re-definition of the tourist model started in the 1980s and accelerated in the 1990s, characterised by: an intensification of real-estate offer, new lodging types, offer re-qualification, the expansion of tourist-residential-urban developmental models to the hinterland, and a diversified tourist offer (Navarro Jurado, 2006).

Until now the effects of both conventional hotel-staying tourism and of residential tourism and the demands of a permanent residential immigration, existing at present, are still land-consuming factors. The existing tourism must be re-oriented towards more sustainable structure and/or models. The sun-and-beach model must be re-conducted to keep under control the proliferation of residents and/or foreigners' second homes and to increase the environmental quality of tourist destinations. It must not be forgotten, however, that other types of non-coastal tourism such as snow tourism, rural tourism or mass cultural tourism make impacts on land too.

Changes of the production system, generated by mutations in the tourist demand, will keep tourism as a land transformer, especially in any consolidated tourist destinations. Any future scenarios do not present a rupture or exhaustion of sun-and-beach tourism, but a re-adjusted model. From this point of view, the model must be re-defined in such a manner as to present a quantitative holding down of its growth and to control the real-estate model expansion with the final purpose to consume less land in a better balanced manner, by accepting limits in the urban-developmental load capacity. Present changes

imply a shift from an intensive and use-integrated tourist urban model, present in conventional tourism, to a tourist urban developmental model based on dispersed settlement (semidetached and detached single-family houses, etc...) and a spatial segregation of activities, as demanded by residential tourism. The consequences that these changes are having on land show that the tourist real-estate model still has a negative impact because it increases land consumption while causing larger needs for urban development resources. It is a shift from a vertical land occupation to a horizontal land occupation. All of this implies a need to draw a code of tourist good-practices where sustainability is to prevail as the conduct to follow on land.

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FIG.1. DPSIR MODEL APPLIED TO TOURIST ACTIVITY

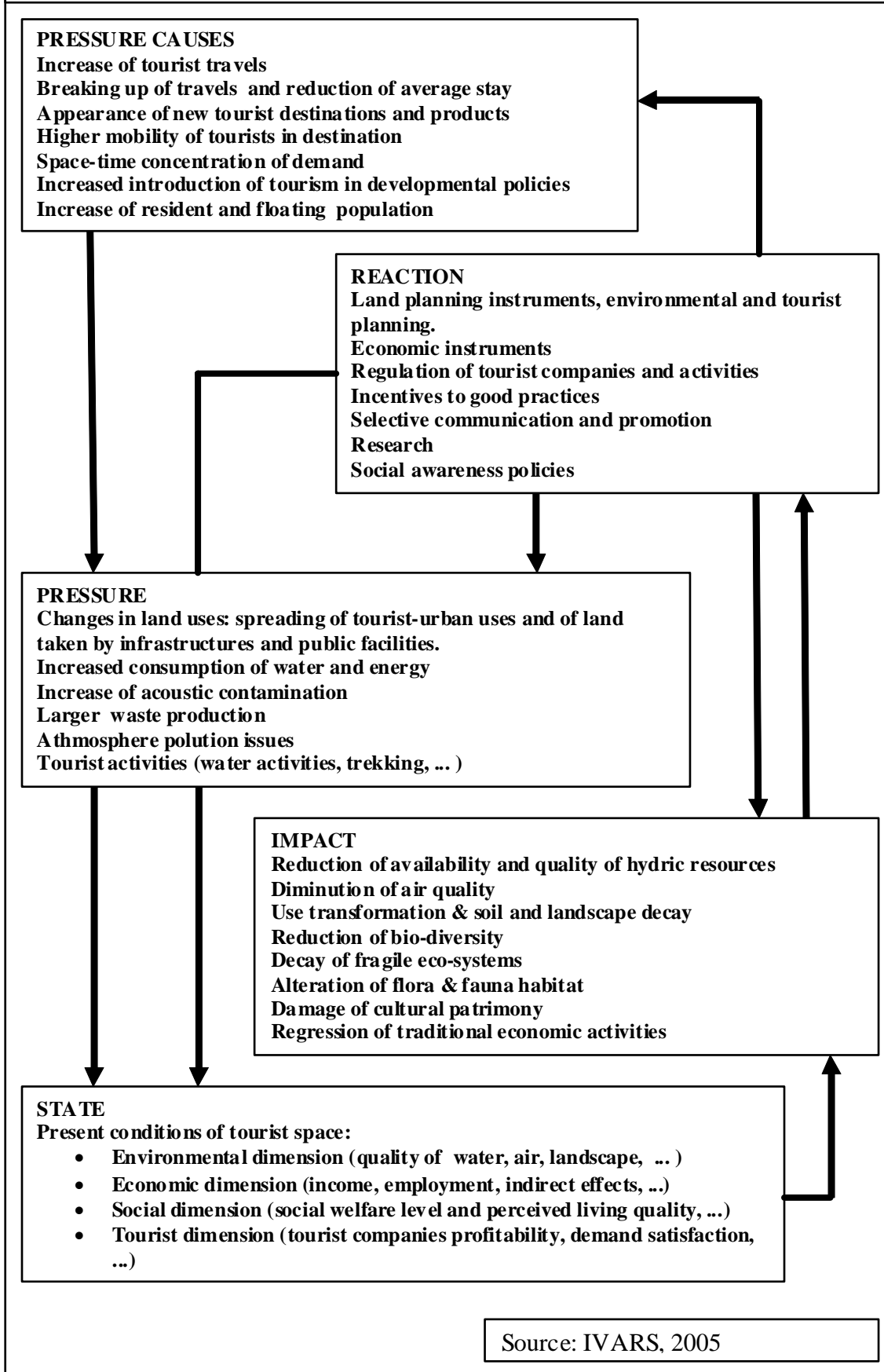


Fig. 2. Evolución de la afluencia turística internacional. España. 2000-2007

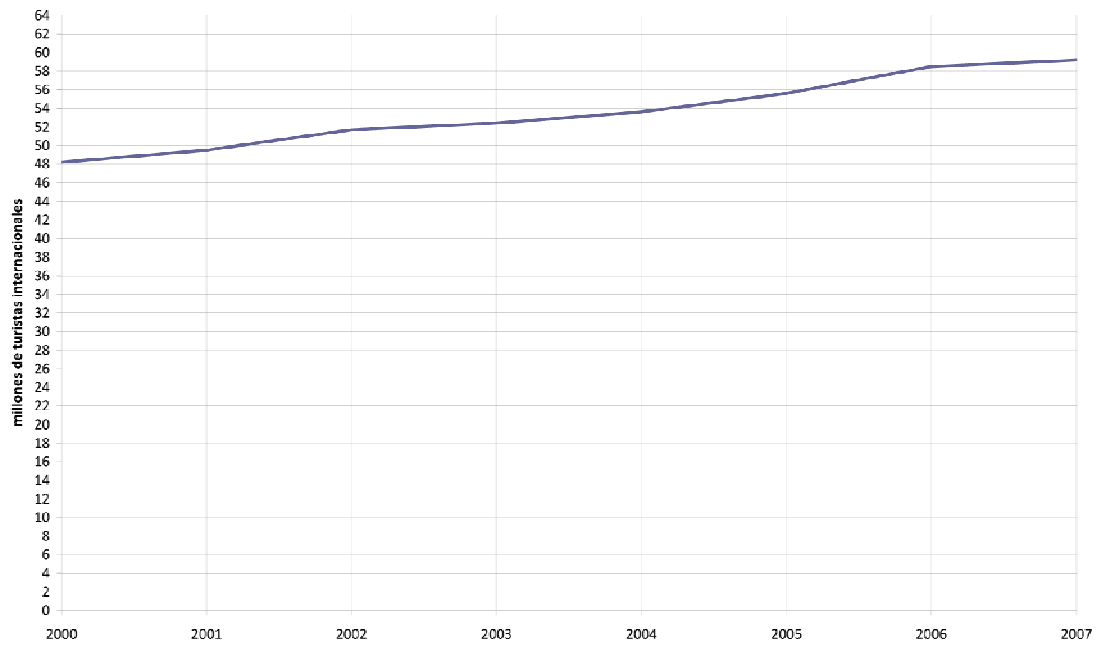


Fig. 3. Afluencia turística internacional por comunidades autónomas. España. 2006

