

## ABSTRACT

Urban tourist destinations are more and more struggling with the high number of tourists' arrivals. Cities like Amsterdam and Barcelona are responding with strict policies and responses to these current developments. For example, Barcelona has a moratorium for new hotel projects in the city in order to manage the high number of tourism flows. Despite the current debate on the so called 'overtourism', various stakeholders are included into the debate. However, research is lacking an understanding of the various perspectives of stakeholders and their responses to this phenomenon. This study aims to explore the hoteliers' perspectives on the topic of urban tourist destinations and high level of tourists' numbers. By conducting in-depth interviews with representative of a hotel chain in the city of Vienna, perspectives and response strategies are explored. In doing so, the thesis aims to understand how stakeholders respond on their individual manner and how a city can support these response mechanism.

The opposition of local communities to growing tourist arrivals generally not being a new one, this thesis approached the phenomenon of "overtourism" through giving an overview of the development of urban tourism and theories linked the composition of destinations, its attributes and features and the sentiment of the local communities. Stakeholders are introduced as intermediary of the tourism development. The role and extent to which they influence the development is depended on the specific response strategy chosen by the destination.

This thesis looked at the Vienna Tourist Board's response strategy of introducing the visitor economy focusing on generating value for tourists and residents alike. This elaborated strategy highlights a wide network of stakeholders as essential to its success, with every stakeholder having particular roles, responsibilities and interests. This thesis illuminated the role perception of one specific one – the hotels. Namely, in-depth interviews revealed the role perception of one hotel chain that is represented with three properties in Vienna. The interviews were conducted with both, front-line managers and managers having the overall picture in mind, in order to get in insight on how the operational level and the strategical level see their responsibilities.

The results of the interviews revealed that hoteliers see their role and responsibilities in the urban tourism context not only limited to one specific one and rather see a responsibility for activities that are interlinked and create a virtuous circle for positive tourism development.