



## THE ROLE OF TOURISM IN STIMULATING LOCAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN DISADVANTAGED AREAS

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**Abstract:** In the context of persistent development gaps and limited employment opportunities in disadvantaged areas, tourism is increasingly being analyzed as a vector for stimulating local entrepreneurship. The relevance of the topic derives from the potential of tourism to generate small and medium-sized economic initiatives, to capitalize on local resources (natural, cultural, gastronomic) and to contribute to the diversification of the economic base. In this context, the article aims to examine the role of tourism in the development of local entrepreneurship and the mechanisms through which tourism activity influences the initiation and consolidation of businesses in disadvantaged communities. The results indicate that tourism contributes significantly to stimulating local entrepreneurship, especially in areas such as agritourism, public catering services, trade in traditional products and recreational activities.

### • Introduction

In disadvantaged areas, characterized by low investment levels, limited economic opportunities and dependence on traditional activities, local entrepreneurship is an essential factor for economic revitalization. In this context, tourism becomes an important catalyst, capable of stimulating entrepreneurial initiatives by creating demand for local services and products.

The relevance of the topic derives from the need to understand the relationship between tourism development and local entrepreneurship dynamics, especially in regions where economic alternatives are limited. Tourism contributes to the diversification of economic activities, encouraging the emergence of micro-enterprises in areas such as accommodation, public catering, production of traditional goods and recreational services.

Thus, the analysis of the role of tourism in stimulating entrepreneurship offers important perspectives for the development of public policies oriented towards sustainable economic development and social inclusion.

### • Material and method

The research methodology is based on a mixed approach. The quantitative component uses statistical data on the dynamics of tourist reception structures, the number of local enterprises (SMEs, PFA), the rate of business start-ups and indicators of local economic activity. Correlation and regression analyses are applied to highlight the relationship between tourism development and the intensity of entrepreneurship. The qualitative component consists of identifying motivational factors, barriers and opportunities associated with business development in the tourism sector.

### • Results and discussions

The results highlight the existence of a direct relationship between tourism development and the increase in the number of local entrepreneurial initiatives.

The results show that the most developed activities are those directly related to the tourist flow, especially accommodation and public catering, but an increase in related activities is also observed.

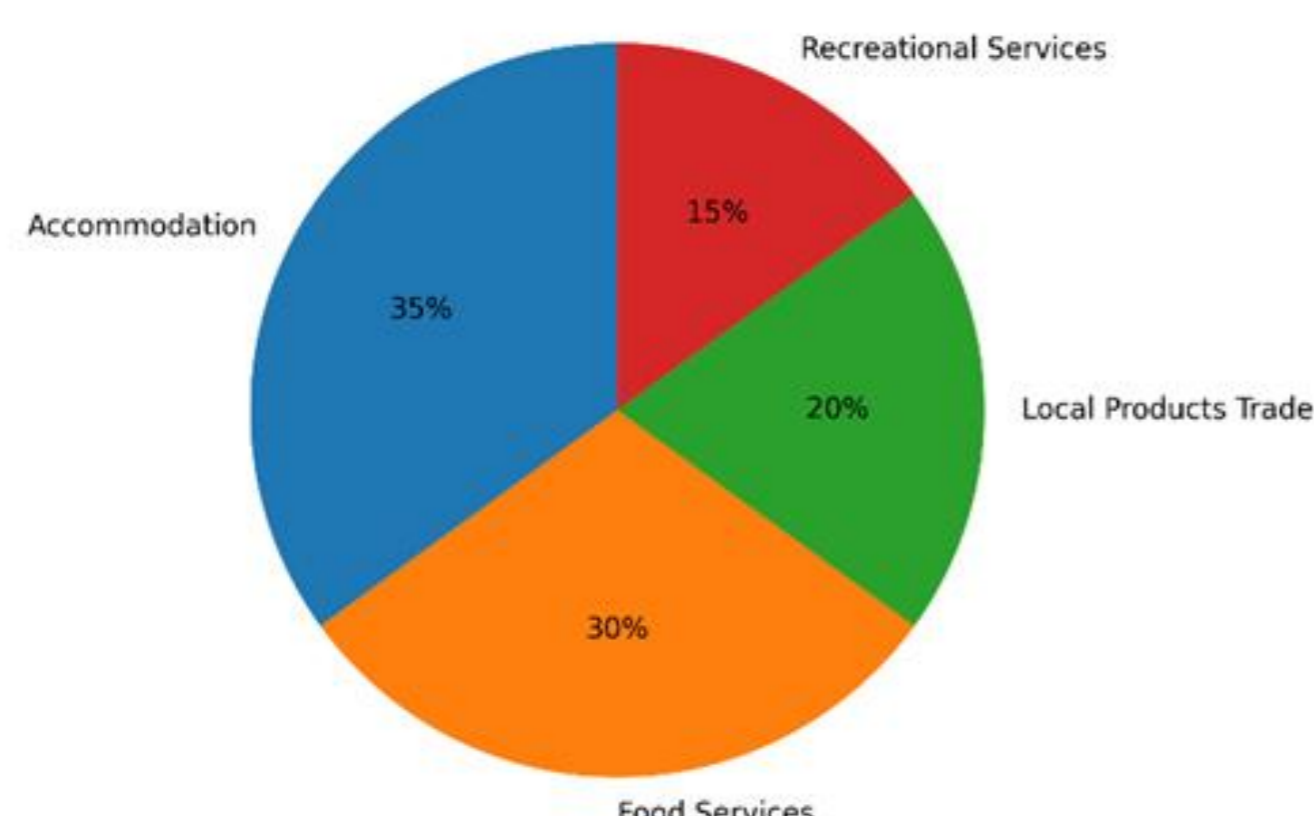


Figure 1. Structure of types of local businesses stimulated by tourism

The figure highlights the structure of local entrepreneurial activities stimulated by tourism, indicating a predominant concentration in the accommodation sector (35%) and public catering services (30%), which reflects the direct dependence on tourist flows. At the same time, the presence of trade in local products (20%) and recreational services (15%) suggests the existence of economic diversification effects, but with a lower share. This distribution indicates that, although tourism generates various business opportunities, the development of complementary activities remains limited, which underlines the need to expand the local value chain to maximize economic benefits.

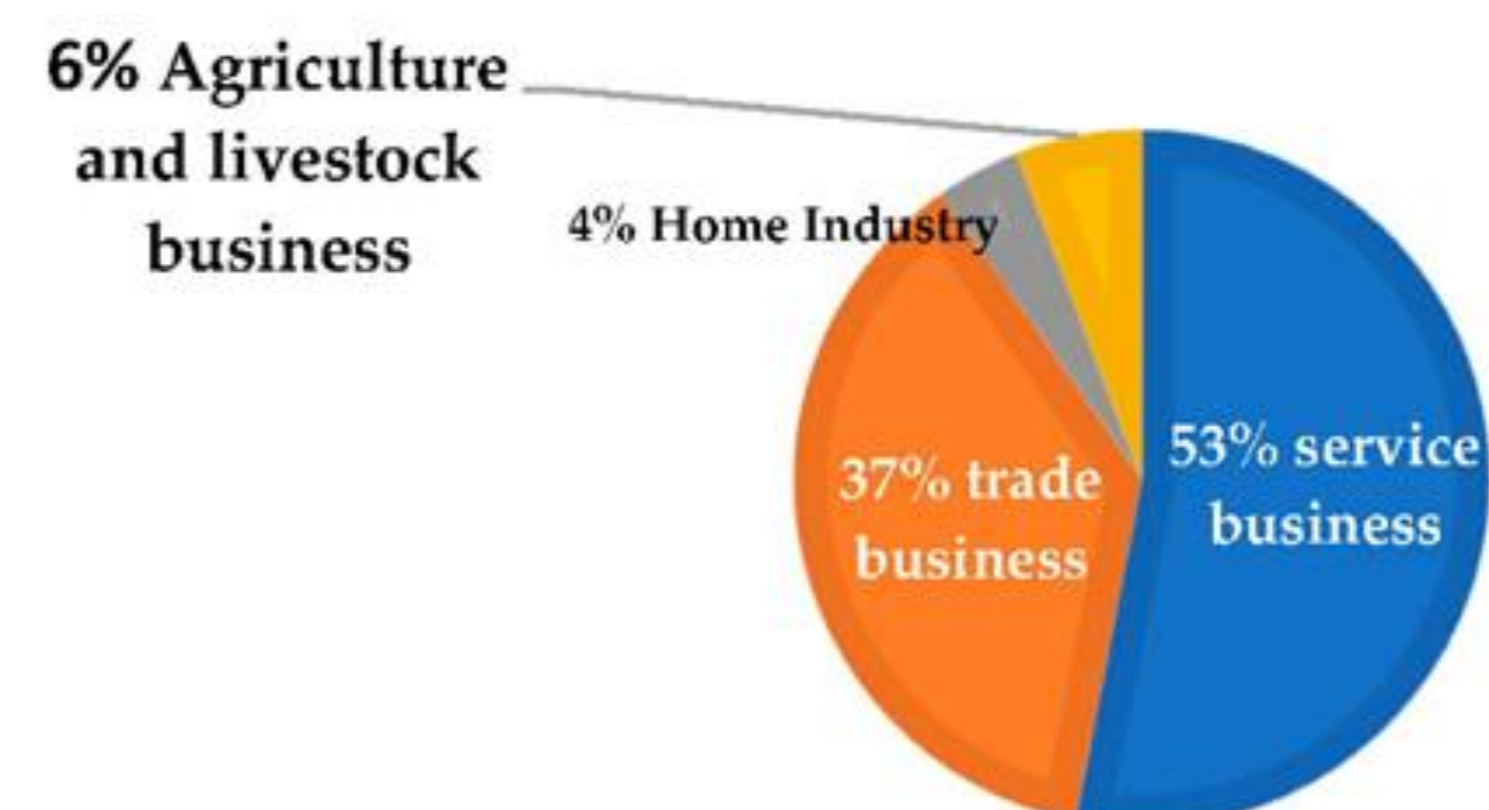


Figure 2. Business sector village-owned enterprises

The figure highlights a clearly unbalanced distribution of economic activities, with a strong dominance of the services sector (53%), followed by commercial activities (37%), while productive sectors, such as agriculture and animal husbandry (6%) and cottage industry (4%), have a significantly lower share.

This structure suggests an orientation of the local economy towards tertiary activities, directly influenced by the demand generated by tourism. The predominance of services reflects the development of activities such as accommodation, food and other tourist services, while the high share of trade indicates the capitalization of tourist flows through the sale of local products or souvenirs.

At the same time, the limited contribution of agriculture and cottage industry highlights an insufficient integration of these sectors into the tourism value chain, which may reduce the multiplier effects on the local economy. Therefore, the figure highlights the need to strengthen the links between tourism and local productive activities, to increase economic diversification and the sustainability of community development.

Overall, the results highlight that tourism acts as a catalyst for entrepreneurship, but its impact is influenced by local conditions and the institutional framework.

### • Conclusions

The study confirms the essential role of tourism in stimulating local entrepreneurship in disadvantaged areas, by creating economic opportunities and diversifying activities. Tourism contributes to the development of the local business environment, increasing incomes and generating jobs.

However, entrepreneurial potential is limited by factors such as limited access to finance, poor infrastructure and skills shortages, which underlines the need for strategic interventions.

However, the positive effects are conditioned by access to finance, the level of entrepreneurial skills, local infrastructure and the degree of cooperation between economic actors. It also highlights the existence of structural constraints, such as the seasonality of tourism demand and dependence on external flows.

The study highlights that tourism can act as a catalyst for entrepreneurship in disadvantaged areas, but to capitalize on this potential, integrated policies are needed to support local initiatives, facilitate access to resources, and strengthen the entrepreneurial ecosystem at the community level.

In conclusion, to fully capitalize on the role of tourism, it is necessary to implement integrated public policies, oriented towards supporting local entrepreneurs, developing infrastructure and stimulating innovation in rural areas.