



SOUTHERN EUROPE SELF-ORGANIZES AGAINST THE GROWING TOURIST FIRE

The mobilizations against touristification that took place last summer are the seeds of mobilizations to come and of the socio-economic transformation of touristified areas.

For decades, the tourism-driven exploitation of our cities and regions has provoked reactions and mobilizations against it, but those that took place last summer marked a significant leap, both in terms of quality and quantity. Even in the middle of spring, people in the 'ultraperipheral' Canary Islands, off the coast of north-western Africa, took to the streets to say 'Canarias ¡Se Agota!' (the Canary Islands are exhausted!) and "Canarias tiene un límite" (the Canary Islands have a limit), with unprecedented mass participation across various groups. This spark would soon spread to Mallorca, Barcelona, Cantabria, Donostia, Alacant (Alicante), Menorca, Cádiz, Granada... These grassroots mobilizations shared the same message: our cities and regions are not for sale and there is an urgent need to limit the growth of tourism, demand a change of course, and decide on a path to tourism degrowth as a way out.

Most of these demonstrations were huge or unprecedented, with images that went around the world and consolidated a narrative on tourism that would have been unthinkable until recently. It is the realistic narrative of an extractive industry that impoverishes people, making access to affordable housing impossible and concentrating our economies and jobs in this unfair and exploitative sector. It is an industry that, in the midst of an ecological crisis, pollutes our water, air, and soil, accounting for 9% of the emissions responsible for global warming and exhausts our planet's biophysical capacity in terms of energy and natural resources. It also monopolizes our cities and regions, trade and services, infrastructure and public transport, public sector funding and privileges. The impact of this affects us all, but not in a homogeneous way, since it amplifies structural injustice; tourism-driven exploitation is felt more by those who suffer discrimination due to racialization, gender, sexual orientation or ableism, who are affected in an intersectional way.

The Covid pandemic was a particularly cruel crisis for the people living in touristified areas, which confirmed our theses on tourism degrowth. The reaction of the public administration and the private sector, however, was even harsher. There was an increase in support for the tourism industry, which during the pandemic came in the form of a financial bailout, and new distraction strategies were created by tourism lobbies and public authorities. These acted as veritable fire starters, using their discursive bells and whistles to pretend that things were changing while the status quo was being maintained. Thus, the blue economy, sustainability, tax increases as a one-off policy, quality tourism and elitism, cultural and sporting events and large-scale events, became shortcuts to legitimize the growth of tourism. In fact, these were crude reformulations of the same old injustice and exploitation whereby they gain power and capital, while we lose people, cities, regions, and the planet.



TROBADA SUD D'EUROPA CONTRA LA TURISTITZACIÓ

PER LA TRANSFORMACIÓ SOCIOECONÒMICA DELS TERRITORIS TURISTITZATS

Every action aimed at imposing limits on tourism is an expression of a growing collective awareness that transcends borders. Today, tourism monoculture is part of the social debate and is rejected by the majority of the people living in touristified areas. Each demonstration marks a moment and, perhaps, a turning point. In this context, the Southern European Network against Touristification (SET), established in 2018 as a space for interregional mutual support, has organized this Meeting with the participation of various cities/regions as well as people and social movements from Barcelona and Catalonia, who will contribute with their voices.

There will be three days of listening, debates, collective learning, exchange, and creation. We must reflect on how to amplify the reach of our messages and actions with new forms of mobilization, organization, communication, and political impact. We must push for the changes and policies that our cities and regions, the people who live in them, and the whole planet need, limiting tourism-driven exploitation, transforming economic models by placing our lives and ecosystems at the centre, and putting an end to this model of tourism as blind and unlimited consumption of spaces, their resources, and local people.

We will achieve this through conversations, workshops and debates on different aspects of the situations in our cities/regions, and the actions carried out by the groups that are taking part to assess the situation and discuss new forms of mobilization, housing, strategies for labour struggles, mobility, the ecological crisis, distraction strategies, measures to promote tourism degrowth, and an economic transition plan. We will close the day with a symbolic action in the surroundings of the Sagrada Família, which will be an opportunity to launch future mobilizations against touristification, which will be coordinated between the different cities/regions.

This Meeting is already a success because it is happening and because we made it happen through self-organization. Today, we also announce that on 15th June, the cities and regions which are part of the SET network will be demonstrating against tourism monoculture, coordinated under a shared slogan. The voice of Southern Europe against Touristification will resonate throughout the continent and beyond, to put out the tourist fire that is ravaging the planet and initiate once and for all the indispensable socio-economic transformation of the cities and regions that have been exploited.

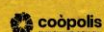
Anti-touristification collectives from: Bilbao, Canary Islands, Cantabria, Donostia, Ibiza, Iruñea, Genoa, Lisbon, Mallorca, Milan, Naples, Palermo, Pyrenees, Valencia, Venice, and Barcelona

25, 26 i 27 d'abril a Can Batlló - Bloc 4 (Barcelona)

Organitza: **ABDT**



Amb la col·laboració de



BLOC4BCN

Bilbo, Canarias, Cantabria, Donostia, Eivissa, Genova, Iruñea, Lisboa, Mallorca, Marseille, Napoli, Palermo, Venezia, Pirineu, Barcelona...

