2017

# Welcome to Hipsterville: In Search of Urban Sustainable Tourism

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**Title:** Welcome to Hipsterville: In Search of Urban Sustainable Tourism
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**Session Type:** Presentation

**Abstract:**
Hipsterville is an interesting place, not necessarily beautiful, but nice. In Hipsterville, you can visit craft breweries, drink fair trade coffee, eat at vegetarian restaurants, buy fresh carrots at farmers' markets, take a guided tour by bicycle, or visit ecological beauty parlours. The concept indicates that there is a supply of services, based on particular place-based qualities related to new interpretations of cultural capital.

Hipsterville has many locations, primarily in Europe and North America. The name of this "place" refers to urban districts, mainly in large cities, which are dominated by particular subcultures. They are often former working class districts, in different stages of gentrification, located away from traditional tourism districts. In these districts, clusters of small scale innovative firms may develop, which are dependent of the consumption of local residents and the vicinity of other similar firms. In many cases these firms have ambitions to be socially and ecologically sustainable. Hipstervilles are often highly international in character, as both inhabitants and cultural influences tend to be highly mobile. In the last decade, incoming tourism has become an increasingly important part of local activities and consumption in these districts. Increasing tourism may create enhanced opportunities for creative local innovation, but it may also, through the economic power of tourism consumption, become a vehicle of negative social change, for instance by rising rent levels due to tourism induced gentrification.

This phenomenon is discussed in two different sets of literature. There are tourism scholars looking at new forms of urban tourism in new and innovative settings, studying, for instance, sustainable food systems or the role of sharing economies. And there is also literature from urban studies and critical urban geography mainly emphasizing the negative effects of gentrification, partly as a result of tourism development. There is also some literature trying to combine these traditions, and this presentation aims to add to this effort.

This presentation builds on a perspective inspired by political ecology, which emphasizes path dependencies in urban development and interdependencies between phenomena on different geographical scales. It aims to discuss three main things:

- How can we define these new forms of urban tourism-related services? What roles do they play in their local contexts?
- What are the driving forces behind the development of this kind of tourism? How do they relate to one another depending on geographic scale?
- What effects do they have for social and ecological sustainability?

In the presentation, I will shortly introduce some preliminary thoughts (in the form of preliminary definitions and a preliminary model) as a starting point for discussion. This project on urban sustainable tourism is, however, still in its initial stage, meaning that I will have more questions than answers to present.