

# An urban icon? The case of the Iceman Ötzi

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## Abstract

Cultural tourism is one of the fastest-growing tourism markets. Many governments are investing in tangible and intangible cultural assets as a means to attain comparative advantages, enhancing and supporting the most recent glocalisation phenomenon. Amongst other cultural attractions, museums have been defined as an efficient marketing tool for urban tourism and as a flagship of urban development. The literature shows that museums play a key role in attracting tourists in urban areas contributing to the revitalisation of the city. Museums have a role of as repository of cultural heritage and not replicable public good able to produce revenues and other positive spill-over effects. In this respect, Italy provides an outstanding case study, as the country hosts an immense heritage. This paper explores the factors that influence cultural tourism. Within a microeconomic setting, the objective of this paper is to provide evidence on the attitude of a museum visitors regarding culture and their overall vacation motivation. As a case study, visitors' experience to the South Tyrol's Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano (Italy), best known as "Ötzi", is analysed. A zero-truncated negative binomial model is estimated as a generalization of a Poisson distribution. It is possible to understand in which manner each variable of interest affects the length of stay, taking into account tourists' heterogeneity. The empirical findings show variations in such factors correspond to variation in the span of the vacation that is also positively affected by the presence of the icemen Ötzi in the museum as well as by the presence of other cultural attractions. These findings provide an essential tool to plan the future tourism development around the Ötzi museum.

**Key words:** Length of stay; cultural tourism; museum; zero-truncated negative binomial; management implications.

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