

A UNESCO Site as a Tool to Promote Local Attractiveness: Investigating Stakeholders' Opinions

Giovanni Peira ^{1,2,*}, Giacomo Pasino ¹, Alessandro Bonadonna ^{1,2} and Riccardo Beltramo ^{1,2}

¹ Department of Management, University of Turin, Corso Unione Sovietica 218 bis, 10134 Turin, Italy

² NatRisk—Interdepartmental Research Centre on Natural Risks in Mountain and Hilly Environments, University of Turin, Largo Paolo Braccini 2, Grugliasco, 10095 Turin, Italy

* Correspondence: giovanni.peira@unito.it

Abstract: UNESCO World Heritage Sites are a useful tool to protect and promote the legacy human beings leave over the centuries. Ivrea, a 20th century industrial city, is the second Italian industrial site recorded in the UNESCO World Heritage List. It is a city in the North-West of Italy, historically known for the Olivetti factory, which made it world-famous by combining visionary ideals and a careful entrepreneurial policy. Our study focuses on the tourism value of the Ivrea UNESCO site and, in particular, aims at analyzing the level of integration of local stakeholders and their ability to identify guidelines for the promotion of the UNESCO site in terms of tourism. The research process was conducted with an in-depth analysis of the perception and consideration of public and private stakeholders concerning this topic. A questionnaire was prepared by a group of experts and individual interviews were conducted using the Delphi method; then, the results of the interviews were presented and the identification of priorities was carried out using the nominal group technique. Results show that the new UNESCO site in Ivrea has great potential, both in cultural terms, continuing the dissemination of Adriano Olivetti's ideals, and in terms of tourism, because it may turn into a tourist attraction capable of generating new tourist flows and promoting the Olivetti approach.

Keywords: Olivetti; Ivrea; UNESCO; land; tourism; culture heritage; industrial heritage

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1. Introduction

The industrial archeology concept was promoted in the 1950s in the twentieth century in the United Kingdom. From the 1970s, massive deindustrialization started in Western Europe and the United States: it mainly affected sectors that had been protagonists of the Industrial Revolution (textiles, mines, steel), and huge industrial complexes were abandoned. The material industrial heritage made up of machines, archives, tools and transport infrastructures, and the immaterial one made up of knowledge were in danger of disappearing [1,2]. The challenge was to try and preserve the authenticity of the goods [3].

Only starting from the 1990s, especially in Italy, attention was no longer limited to enhancing industrial architecture and conceiving industrial property as heritage. One of the general themes was the identification of best practices for the recovery and management of industrial sites of the UNESCO World Heritage [4]. The findings of some studies conducted in Europe among those involved in the protection and promotion of these sites underline the importance of integrated heritage management with public and private entities [5–7].

Over time, industrial heritage became linked to the concept of industrial culture. The latter has a broader approach, seeing industry not only as an economic player but as a determining factor in understanding both landscape and cultural identity of an area [8]. In this sense, UNESCO listed 49 industrial sites, of which 9 are in the UK, 7 in Germany

and 2 in Italy. The younger Italian site is “Ivrea, an industrial city of the 20th century”, registered in the list of World Heritage by UNESCO in 2018.

The aim of the research is to involve local stakeholders in defining the state of the art pertaining to the “Ivrea, an industrial city of the 20th century” UNESCO World Heritage site from a tourism point of view and to boost opportunities to promote Ivrea and its area, Canavese, thanks to the UNESCO recognition.

Starting from the above considerations, this research is oriented to stimulate an open debate on the potential tourism value of UNESCO sites, in particular by investigating Ivrea and the related area involved in the UNESCO assignment for the Olivetti heritage. On the one hand, the study aspires to increase literature dedicated to the value of UNESCO sites; on the other, it intends to identify the main activities which should be implemented for improving the tourism value of the area by the involvement of local stakeholders. Specifically, a multi-mixed approach (i.e., Delphi method and Nominal Group Technique) was applied to highlight the strengths and weaknesses of the site and identify the shared priorities improving the local attraction.

The recent UNESCO recognition of ‘Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century’ stimulated the desire to understand how this result can support the enhancement in the entire Canavese area, according to the points of view of local stakeholders, both public and private, involved in the destination development process. In other words, it is a question of understanding how this opportunity can complement the area’s other tourist assets. Therefore, the research focused on the tourism value of the Ivrea UNESCO site and, in particular, aimed at analyzing the level of integration of local stakeholders and their ability to identify guidelines for the development of the site. Understanding this aspect, through the results of the research project, allows one to provide decision makers and destination managers of the destination with some useful information on the state of the art, according to local stakeholders, and on their vision and expectations for the near future.

The paper is structured in six sections. The paper in the Introduction (Section 1) developed a framework of the research. Subsequently, the literature (Section 2) and the methods used (Section 3) were examined in depth. The findings are shown (Section 4) and discussed (Section 5). Finally, the last section provides some considerations that summarize the main research outcomes evidencing the implications and main limitations of the study.

2. Literature

2.1. Industrial Heritage

Industrial heritage is part of cultural heritage. It is made up of tangible assets, such as buildings, machinery, objects and documents, that bear witness to past or ongoing industrial processes and intangible assets, such as technical knowledge and the organization of work and workers. Industrial heritage reflects the profound connection between the natural and cultural environment, as historical or modern industrial processes depend on natural resources, energy and transport networks to produce and distribute products to wider markets.

The development of industrial technology and the change in production methods and working conditions help to understand the industrial history and the development of society in a specific area. Industrial heritage can become a tourist economic asset, which can be an excellent opportunity to preserve and present old production facilities, equipment and the skills to use them [9].

The topic of industrial heritage conservation refers to memories that are not always recognized as a value, since the assumption of an identity of the industrial past has, as a precondition, the sharing of criteria for its recognition. The transition from the conception of industrial archeology to that of heritage is significant of the overcoming of a pioneering approach, towards the development of methodological tools for patrimonialisation,

understood as the attribution of symbolic–cultural and economic–environmental values to assets, in relation to the change in the functional role. Furthermore, the process does not end with recognition but involves a sustainable transformation with an evaluation based on the choices of regeneration and enhancement [10,11].

In countries that have emerged as protagonists of history thanks to the industrialization process (for example, the United Kingdom and Germany), citizens are more likely to recognize industry places as symbols of their own cultural identity [12,13].

The recognition of UNESCO sites can trigger local regeneration processes. It can be even more complex, but if declined with effective decision-making policies, especially with a strong focus on the issue of sustainability, the regeneration process can offer opportunities to the local area, particularly in terms of tourism [14,15].

Šabec [16] said that “the protection of local identities and cultural heritages as a method of maintaining and even strengthening local (and even national) cohesion in the face of the challenges of globalization is sensible and justified only on the condition that cultural heritage is built on the basis of multiculturalism and of the intertwining and interaction between the different worlds of local life”.

Community involvement was recognized as an essential element in heritage management in recent years, such as experts involved in heritage planning and land management should engage more critically with the concerns, needs and values of local communities [17]. Another aspect is the technological choice, e.g., factory design, and the selection of industrial machinery often had little to do with economic or technological efficiency studies [18,19].

One of the frequently asked questions, especially by policy makers, is how the past of industrial historical sites can benefit local communities. The guidelines for reading the territory can be multiple, and the degree of complexity increases with the increase in the area involved. Starting from the type of industrial heritage, it is necessary to evaluate and manage the potential conflicts that could occur in order to be able to make the actors appreciate local programs for the enhancement of industrial heritage in its cultural value [20–25]. At the same time, one of the aspects developed by scholars is the scarcity of research that highlights the perception of tourists and other local actors, such as residents [26–28].

Industrial tourism is a relatively recent phenomenon, which also involves UNESCO historical industrial sites that, in many cases, are linked to industrial culture. The latter is linked to a dynamic socio-cultural concept, which evolves in harmony with an economic environment in transformation and is connected through past, present and future [29,30]. There are many tools to promote these sites, which are increasingly trying to explore the new frontiers of infotainment, also using new technologies and the experiential aspects of the visit [31–37].

2.2. UNESCO World Heritage Sites

One of the main objectives of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) is to protect and preserve the outstanding value of cultural and natural world heritage identified by countries. As stated by the Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage and recalled in the World Heritage Information Kit, countries recognize that the sites located in their national territory and inscribed on the World Heritage List constitute a world heritage “for whose protection it is the duty of the international community as a whole to cooperate” [38]. The same kit states that the inscription of a site on the World Heritage List brings awareness and curiosity, with an increase in the number of activities proposed onsite and in the number of tourists. However, at the same time, it is underlined how the inability to manage tourism as a benefit to the long-term preservation is attributable to a shortage in resources, experience and trained personnel at the site. Such a theme was underlined also by Lekaota [39], who stated that an effective management of heritage sites was affected by a lack of funds, trained employees and capacity building. Even if research carried out

by UNESCO and commissioned studies has shown that World Heritage status can have a major socio-economic impact, UNESCO itself stated that a direct attribution of such an impact to the designation is complex and that actions and investments of local stakeholders play a vital role in the achievement of socio-economic impacts [40].

Even if protection and preservation are key elements at the base of the designation process, more frequently, tourism sites also seek to increase tourist flows and revenues, as recalled by Kayahan and VanBlarcom [41]. As far as our literature review is concerned, it is not possible to identify a common and shared point of view about a strict relation between UNESCO designation and direct positive impacts at the destination with reference to tourism matters and development. Tourism represents an opportunity, a challenge and a threat for UNESCO World heritage sites. As stated by Cravidao et al. [42], opportunities of the recognition for the destination are the chance to reinvent itself, innovate, improve resources and product allocation for tourism; moreover, the authors underlined an increase in the fame of the site and a chance to attract funds. Poria [43] conducted research at two UNESCO sites in Israel and found that even if tourists were slightly more motivated to visit the place, to pay a higher entry fee and to queue, the author also found that a lot of visitors did not consider world heritage a brand name. Wuepper and Patry [44] underlined that World Heritage brand is more popular in Asia, Europe and North America than in the Middle East and Africa; moreover, they found that the World Heritage label helped more remote sites than those located inside or close to a city. With reference to the former, World Heritage creates awareness for less-known areas, and it is considered as a quality mark certifying that the location is worth a visit. A major benefit of the World Heritage label for less-known sites is also recalled by Kayahan and VanBlarcom [41].

The UNESCO designation could play an important role in the description of the location by regional, national and international media, as stated by Halpenny et al. [45] with reference to five recently designed Canadian World Heritage sites. A similar theme was underlined by Kayahan and VanBlarcom [41], who conducted research at three World Heritage sites in Nova Scotia and found that the designation was important for the promotion of the site areas and acted as a base for advertising.

As cited before, UNESCO designation should bring negative impacts at the destination level as well. Cravidao et al. [42] recalled, for example, tensions related to abuse of spaces, commodification and increases in waste and resource exploitation. Du Cros [46], instead, concentrated her research on congestion, with reference, in particular, to popular natural and cultural World Heritage attractions and those without active management plans; the author stated that negative impacts related to congestion could lead to a poor visitor experience (such as less time spent at museums) and degradation of the site itself.

A crucial role is played by the management plans of the heritage sites, the involvement of stakeholders and the ability to manage tourism flows according to sustainable tourism principles. It is valuable both to take advantage of the World Heritage designation and to limit negative impacts. With reference to local communities' participation, Lekaota [39] conducted research at the Indian Ocean Region and found that a limited involvement was related to limited socio-cultural, economic and environmental impacts of World Heritage Sites. In fact, UNESCO should not be intended as a brand that, alone, should generate positive impacts for the destination. Similar conclusions were stated by Oya J.V. et al. [47] who conducted research on twelve World Heritage cities in Spain and found the necessity to support the UNESCO award with further tourist incentives to increase international arrivals. As stated by Poria [43], it is important not only to tell tourists about the designation but also to clarify the outstanding value related to the UNESCO recognition, in order to positively influence the tourists' subjective perception of these values and improve their experience onsite.

The awareness that UNESCO heritage sites are not isolated led to a consideration of the surrounding environment, both as a physical environment and as a source of a series

of environmental, social and economic threats and opportunities. What happens around the heritage site can influence the site and its significance; therefore, the heritage management system and all actors involved in it must be able to influence decisions on what happens on that site. Changes in the areas surrounding a site are likely inevitable but should not harm the heritage site values [48]. Changes could, in fact, act as catalysts by unlocking new forms of support, which, in turn, influence meaning [49,50]. Therefore, it is necessary to develop solid relationships among territorial actors in order to search for the best practices for the development of the site [51–53].

As stated before, UNESCO sites can represent a driving force for the development of local activities and industrial tourism [54,55]. Such tourism is a phenomenon that is developed today in an unequal way among nations and within them [56].

Nakano [57] highlighted that East Asian actors are increasingly recognizing the usefulness of UNESCO heritage as a soft-power resource for imposing one-sided historical narratives on an international audience. Some scholars investigated the complex relationships between heritage and memory, highlighting strong dissonances between the official narrative of World Heritage and some memories of those who worked on it [58–61].

Some scholars have focused their research activities on UNESCO heritage mining sites, such as coal, iron, gold and slate [62,63], and some recovery projects have been developed on various sites to allow visitors to use them [64–66]. In addition to asset recovery activities, strategies have also been implemented to make these sites become tourist destinations, with the creation of geo-parks, in which natural ecosystems are valued in addition to mineral assets [67,68]. In this sense, the recovery activities are a good example to transform a depressed area and/or an abandoned land into a productive and useful area for leisure activities and tourism.

The enhancement of industrial heritage is not without paradoxes. Although the industrial past of some mining areas is narrated on the positive aspects, there are also elements that can be perceived negatively by the local actors, such as the under-qualification of workers, low incomes and social tensions [69].

There are several experiments in UNESCO sites in which new technologies are used, such as QR, augmented reality and virtual reality. New technologies can help in the storytelling about a site, involving more young visitors into the visit experience [70–75] by using, for example, smart-glass AR; an increasingly important part of tourists use new technologies for greater enjoyment from the visit. Film and TV productions have increasingly introduced ways to promote destinations, leading to an increase in the number of visitors to UNESCO sites as well [76,77].

2.3. Ivrea and Adriano Olivetti

Industrial tourism and the enhancement of historical industrial sites are also gradually spreading in Italy. The workers' village of Crespi d'Adda (Italy), registered in the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1995 through the Management Plan, seeks redevelopment of residential buildings, whilst there is the candidacy of Sesto San Giovanni (Milan) as a working-class city [78–80].

"Ivrea, an industrial city of the 20th century" was registered in the list of World Heritage by UNESCO in 2018. The site is strictly related to the figure of Adriano Olivetti, his culture and vision. Adriano was born in Ivrea on 11 April 1901. His father, Camillo Olivetti, an electrical engineer, founded the "Ing C. Olivetti & C" company in Ivrea (a city in the Piedmont Region in North-West Italy) in 1908: it was the first Italian typewriter factory. He graduated in Industrial Chemistry from the Polytechnic of Turin and, in 1924, joined his father's company as a worker. The next year, he went to the US to visit many factories.

Back in Italy, he started a profound modernization program of the company, helping to significantly increase factory productivity and product sales [81]. In 1932, Adriano Olivetti also started the project of the first portable typewriter, which came out with the

name “MP1”. He became President of the “Ing C. Olivetti & C” company in 1938, taking over from his father Camillo [82].

Between the end of the 1940s and the end of the 1950s, Olivetti produced and marketed some iconic products, which became world famous for their design and technical quality, such as the “Lexikon 80” (1948) and “Lettera 22” (1950) typewriters and the “Divisumma 24” calculator (1956). Olivetti’s management style and attention to improving the employees’ living conditions rose to particular importance [83]. A Management Board was set up in the Olivetti factories: for many years, this was the only example in Italy of a joint body with the participation of workers with an important consultative role, their opinion being binding for social and welfare issues [84].

According to Adriano Olivetti, the factory is not just a place of production, but it is the main engine of economic and social development of an area to be made available to the community. Furthermore, Olivetti said “Often the term utopia is the most convenient way to liquidate what one does not have the desire, capacity, or courage to do. A dream feels like a dream until you start working on it. And then it can become something infinitely bigger”.

His vision of the role of the company and his multifaceted personality led him to deal, in a highly innovative way, also with social and political problems, urban planning, architecture, culture and publishing [85–87]. Adriano Olivetti died suddenly in 1960, leaving a company with over 36,000 employees, in Italy as well as many foreign countries.

The industrial city of Ivrea developed, as the testing ground for Olivetti, the manufacturer of typewriters, mechanical calculators and office computers; the Ivrea UNESCO site is now characterized by a large factory and buildings designed to serve administration and social services, as well as residential units. Designed by leading Italian urban planners and architects, mostly between the 1930s and the 1960s, this architectural ensemble reflects the ideas of the Community Movement [88].

A social project model, Ivrea expresses a modern vision of the relationship between industrial production and architecture. This site is a challenge not only for recovery and enhancement of the Olivetti heritage but also for the dynamics of the city’s real estate assets [89,90]. Therefore, it is necessary to develop innovative land management plans [91].

Ivrea is an Italian municipality of *Città Metropolitana di Torino* (Metropolitan City of Turin), located in the northern plain in Piemonte. Ivrea is the main city of the Canavese area and its historical capital.

The ancient Eporodia was founded by the Romans in the I century B.C. In the Middle Age, the area was under the control of the Lombardic duchy. Ivrea became a municipality in the XII century. At the beginning of the XIV century, the town became part of the Savoy state, with the increase in its military importance [92].

Ivrea became an important industrial centre in the XX century, especially in the electronic industry, thanks to the foundation, in 1908, of the Olivetti company, which specialised in typewriters and, later, in electronic calculators and machines for offices. The closure of the company in the 1980s resulted in relevant negative consequences in the area, just partially softened in the following decades. Even considering the population trend, the positive effect of the Olivetti company is clear. Population has been stable in recent years, but it is useful to underline that the main concentration in the area was registered in correspondence with the expansion phases of the Olivetti company, in the 1930s and 1960s.

Such a trend happened in other small towns with an industrial past, as highlighted by Lazzeroni [93], who took into consideration, as case studies, the towns of Ivrea (Olivetti), Sochaux (Peugeot) and Pontedera (Vespa). With reference to Ivrea, the author underlined that the demographic growth particularly evident from the 1950s should be correlated to the expansion of the Olivetti industry and the increasing living standards; moreover, the researcher pointed out the importance of Adriano Olivetti’s political vision that strengthened the connection between the factory and the town.

The company, in fact, was considered as the coordinator of the local industry and, for its importance, the company was able to influence local economic and social policies (first with reference to the level of welfare). The crises of the Olivetti company have generated a limited (or absent) strategic alliance between companies; the area is nowadays characterised by the presence of small-sized firms, with a high rarefication of the productive fabric, which is, for this reason, more exposed to market risks [94].

The Olivetti company, for its history and Adriano Olivetti's vision, has left, in the area, important cultural heritage; however, the Canavese area has been the location of numerous industries, starting from the XIX century. When an area has lived such an industrial past, it is weaker after the declination of the industry sector and, for this reason, a radical reconversion is necessary, not only for abandoned factories but also in relation to the attitudes and behaviours of people [95]. Tourism could play an important role in the reconversion of the industry sector but, of course, results are not immediate, as they need a medium interval and, above all, a favourable destination management system and the active participation of both the public and private sector.

The geographical position of the city, crossing point to reach Valle d'Aosta through Piemonte and not far from Torino, has favoured the development of the trade and tourism industries. Ivrea and its surrounding area are crossed by the A5 Torino–Aosta–Monte Bianco and A4 Torino–Milano motorways, and by the Torino–Aosta railway.

The strategic location, the need to develop new industries and the recent UNESCO World Heritage recognition of "Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century" have increased the attention and awareness about the tourism sector, which could be an important element in the economic development of Ivrea and Canavese. The area, in fact, is rich in historical, cultural and natural sites of interest, outdoor and sports activities, high-quality food and wine products, and is nationally and internationally well known thanks to events, such as the Ivrea Historic Carnival. Among the main tourist attractions in the Canavese area, in addition to Ivrea, there are the *Anfiteatro Morenico* (Morainic Amphitheatre), five lakes, alpine valleys, the Agliè castle (part of the UNESCO World Heritage site "Residences of the Royal House of Savoy" since 1997), the Masino castle, the Gran Paradiso National Park (located between Piemonte and Valle d'Aosta), the Via Francigena and the Sacred Mount of Belmonte (part of the UNESCO World Heritage site "*Sacri Monti* of Piedmont and Lombardy" since 2003). With reference to tourist origin [96], considering the pre-pandemic data, Piemonte and Lombardia were the principal Italian markets, while France, Switzerland and Germany were the main European markets.

The UNESCO recognition of "Ivrea, industrial city of the 20th century" as a World Heritage site represented, for the city and related area, a relevant step in the processes involving enhancement and planning of tourism development.

The candidacy path [97,98] started in 2008, as an initiative of the Municipality of Ivrea and the Adriano Olivetti Foundation, for the celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the Olivetti company establishment. The so-called nominated property (Figure 1) or core zone of the UNESCO site includes the area hosting the spaces dedicated to company services, the company itself and its residences; they are buildings of relevant architectural value, related to the expansion of the Olivetti company. The so-called buffer zone (Figure 1), on the other hand, was defined in consideration of its relationship with the territorial, landscape and social context; it includes the residential neighbourhoods of Canton Vesco, Canton Vigna and Bellavista, built in the 1940s to satisfy the growing housing demand. This interesting area was enhanced, from an architectonic point of view, thanks to projects by famous Italian architects of the time.

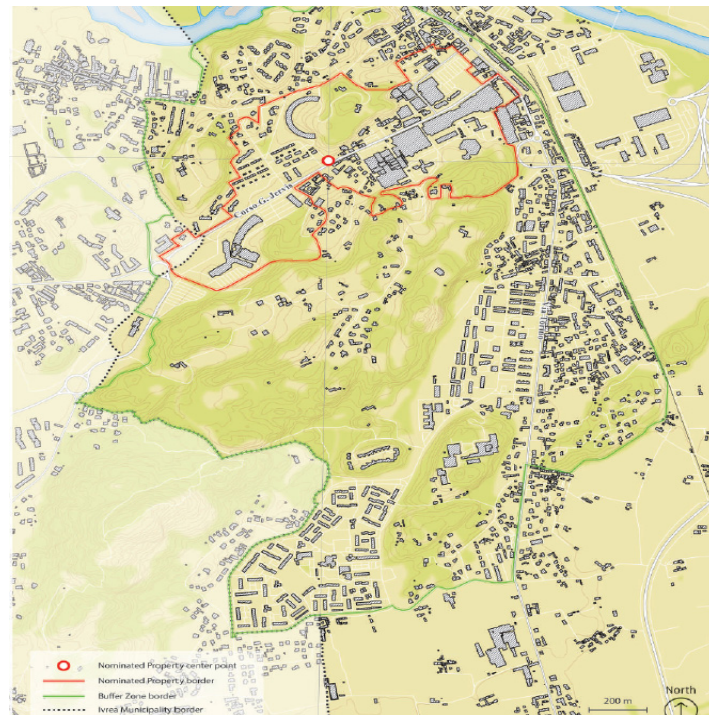


Figure 1. Delimitation of the nominated property and buffer zone (source: Nomination File, p. 26).

The Outstanding Universal Value recognized by UNESCO is reported as follows [99]: “the Industrial City of Ivrea is an industrial and socio-cultural project of the 20th century.” Moreover, “Ivrea represents a model of the modern industrial city and a response to the challenges posed by rapid industrial change. It is therefore able to exhibit a response and a contribution to 20th century theories of urbanism and industrialisation”. Lastly, “The industrial city of Ivrea therefore represents a significant example of 20th century theories of urban development and architecture in response to industrial and social transformations, including the transition from mechanical to digital industries”.

3. Materials and Methods

3.1. Sample Definition

Stakeholders are numerous in a tourism destination, both in the public and private fields. Each tourism destination is a network made of a variety of stakeholders, more or less directly involved in the tourism offer market, in the welcoming services and in destination management [100]. To define the sample, The Stakeholder Theory [101] was selected as a versatile model to apply at a tourism destination level [102]. In this case, the tourism destination may be considered as “the enterprise” around which the stakeholders of interest are identified. As suggested by Presenza [103], these stakeholders can be divided into primary and secondary, internal or external, in the destination under study [104]. The Stakeholder Theory is a starting point for mapping the categories of stakeholders interested in the tourism destination, but it hardly allows one to identify the most relevant ones.

Based on the stated bibliography and related criteria, a desk analysis was conducted. The first step consisted of the identification of the primary and secondary stakeholder categories of interest for the specific research study. The team subsequently identified individual stakeholders (private and public operators and entities) to be involved in the interviews. Among primary stakeholders, there were five trade associations (accommodation facilities and HORECA, tourism companies and operators), five tourist associations (four operating exclusively in the area, one throughout the Città Metropolitana di Torino—Metropolitan City of Torino), one tour operator providing

services in the area and the manager of the main tourist attraction in the area. Individual stakeholders were identified based on a desk analysis of the main association and companies operating in the area, those that have carried out or promoted projects for the development of tourism in the area and/or that are mainly involved in this field. As secondary stakeholders, three municipalities were chosen, based on their importance in the promotion of tourist activities and events. Lastly, a total number of fifteen stakeholders was defined as a sample of survey participants; all of them accepted the proposal to take part in the research activity (Figure 2).

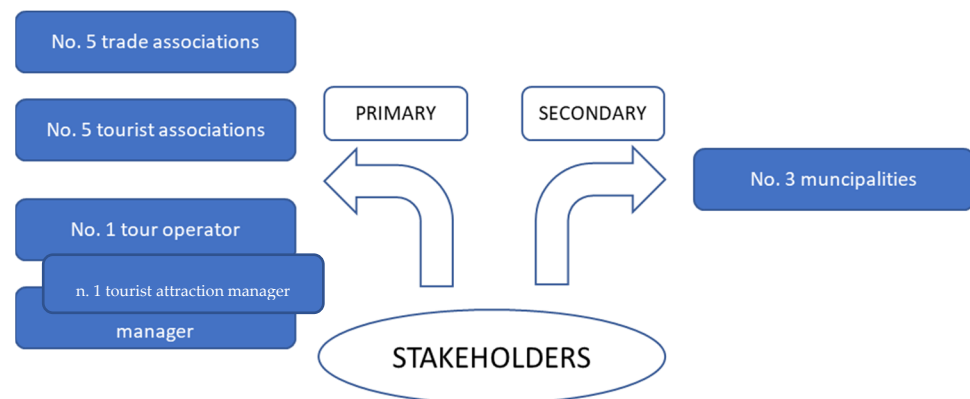


Figure 2. Primary and secondary stakeholders involved in the research activities.

When talking about tourism planning and development, another important stakeholder is the community. It is difficult to reach destination management objectives, in the medium and long term, without the commitment of residents. It is also important to underline that, if the community does not support the development projects, it is quite difficult to welcome tourists in a proper way, to increase tourism and to satisfy tourists needs. That stated, the research team decided not to involve the community in the first steps of the project because it was necessary to start gathering information from private and public institutions, also considering the focus on Olivetti heritage, the recent UNESCO recognition and its enhancement. It was required to carry out the same questionnaire for stakeholders, while different questions and a different approach should be taken for the participation of private residents. Moreover, the available time for the project was not in line with the involvement of the community. Finally, before involving the community, it was important to understand the state of the art by interviewing stakeholders that were actively and directly involved in the tourism destination planning.

3.2. Methodology

Tourism enhancement for the city of Ivrea and its area, Canavese, by defining a common strategy has been the aim of the stakeholders' involvement. Research activities have been structured into three steps (Figure 3): the creation of the questionnaire, the individual interviews with stakeholders and an onsite meeting with participants.

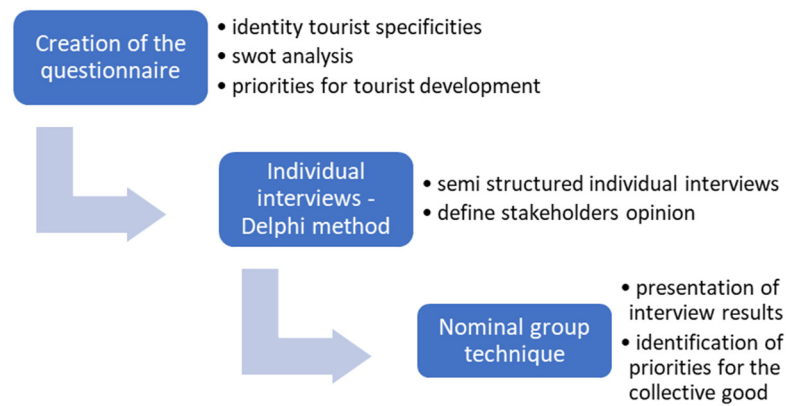


Figure 3. Identification of the three steps related to research activities.

First, the questionnaire handed out to stakeholders was designed by a group of experts, i.e., three University researchers with expertise in regional development, ecosystem management and tourism, plus two tour operators with experience in regional tourism enhancement. The questionnaire was divided into three parts, to study different aspects, such as strengths and weaknesses of Ivrea and its area, opportunities and threats in the tourism sector, state of the art in relation to tourism demand and priorities for development. Among other issues, the team analysed the following themes: importance of the UNESCO recognition and role of the city of Ivrea in the strategic view of tourism development. The questionnaire comprised both open questions and multiple-choice questions and Likert scale answers. The research team handed out the same questionnaire for each stakeholder interviewed. The questionnaire validation process was carried by a panel of experts composed of scholars, tourism managers and policy makers.

Secondly, stakeholders were interviewed using the Delphi method, it being more efficient than others in the identification of possible solutions [105–107], even in the tourism sector, as demonstrated by other studies [108–112]. The Delphi method consists of a structured approach to collect information by experts/stakeholders individually, avoiding the influence of each other that is likely during a group discussion. Interviews were carried out in Summer 2019 and they lasted 45–75 minutes each. Researchers contacted the stakeholders by email, to illustrate the research project, the main objectives and the importance of their participation to obtain a useful representation of the state of the art. At the same time, a copy of the questionnaire was sent in advance, to allow them to be prepared during the interview and ask for more information or clarification if needed. Then, stakeholders were contacted by telephone to arrange the meeting for the interview.

The nominal group technique was adopted in the third step, in line with other studies [95,113–115]. It consists of a general discussion among participants, carried out by a moderator, in order to select the main ideas and then prioritise them, according to the objective of the research project. In other words, the aim was to reach a shared summary point of view among participants. In the working timeline of the meeting, a general presentation of the individual interview results—developed after step two—predated the identification of common priorities. All stakeholders took part in the meeting, in February 2020, that lasted for 2.5 h.

For each private or public organisation, the second and third phases saw the participation of people in charge of tourism activities and projects for the development of the local area.

4. Results

4.1. Delphi Findings

Respondents were initially asked to highlight whether Ivrea and its surrounding area, Canavese, might be considered a tourist destination. This item is relevant even with a view to the enhancement and promotional projects and strategies of the UNESCO heritage under study. The area positively reacted to the challenge of decline, showing, in the latest years, a trend inversion working towards tourism. Even though the Canavese area is rich in tourism heritage (as briefly stated before), there are some weaknesses in the tourism supply chain. The road and train accessibility are considered the main weakness by the stakeholders (8 stakeholders out of 15). In this sense, Ivrea and its Canavese area have a good motorway accessibility, but there are structural problems in relation to other means of transport. Another sensitive aspect is hospitality: facilities are considered insufficient (5 out of 15), especially when looking at the needs of medium and large groups of tourists. This lack of opportunities was discussed in depth with the tour operator and the trade associations. Accommodation in the Canavese area is generally supplied by small operators with limited bed capacity. Moreover, inadequate cooperation among stakeholders in terms of accommodation, food service and handicraft is identified as a weak point (4 out of 15).

As regards the city of Ivrea, stakeholders believed that it should become the starting point for the promotion of the entire area. Both private and public stakeholders understood the necessity to take advantage of the reputation of Ivrea, which is the main city in the area and, for this reason, the one with most services.

Individual interviews allow one to draw an overview about the perception of the state of the art related to the site "Ivrea, industrial capital of the XX century". The whole sample highlighted that the Olivetti architectural heritage shows the distinctiveness of an entrepreneurial model in the Italian economic history as well as internationally in the second half of the XX century: a model that was able to enclose industrial production, human and social dimensions of the community, architecture, design and innovation. On the other hand, some of the interviewees (7 out of 15) underlined that it is necessary to develop a systematic project of regeneration for the assets related to the Olivetti company, such as "factory built in red bricks", or the enlargements of workshops and façades of the "Offices Palace", putting together the historical conservation of these assets and a smart vision about energy and digital matters, for example, this item was underlined by private stakeholders, in particular. Another problem brought up by stakeholders (3 out of 15) is the fragmentation of the building properties, since only public ones are available. For this reason, it seems necessary to restore the real estate property and review the purpose of these areas, devoting attention to the development of business activities.

Stakeholders also mention that a renewal of the assets in the core zone should activate a regeneration process of the entire urban area in Ivrea. Such a process should be related to material matters of the public and private real estate properties and, in addition, non-material matters in relation to the social inclusion of the community in Ivrea and its area, Canavese. Some interviewees (6 out of 15) emphasised that immobility of public stakeholders in planning real urban regeneration policies might be a potential risk.

The narration of Olivetti's history is another question to take into consideration in the enhancing strategies. Adriano Olivetti's business and project were concrete and not utopic, with positive economic consequences in Ivrea and the surrounding area. The slow decline of the Olivetti factory, beginning from the 1970s, had negative repercussions in the entire Canavese area, which led to deep economic and social transformation. The whole sample underlined the need to make an authentic narration to value the assets in a strategic key. This narration should disclose Olivetti's material and non-material heritage in an effective way, by adopting new technologies. Digitalisation has also been addressed by stakeholders. A significant number of them (12 out of 15) consider the digitalisation level inadequate. Indeed, the implementation of innovative technologies with

participatory governance models is needed; additionally, innovative services for the tourism industry should be envisaged. The importance of digitalisation was underlined both by private and public stakeholders.

4.2. Nominal Group Technique Findings

Three priorities were selected after discussing the results in the third step of the research. The first priority is the protection and enhancement of the Olivetti heritage. The conservation path began with some projects before the inclusion on the UNESCO list. Among them, between 1996 and 2000, the project “Officine Culturali ICO” (Cultural Workshops ICO) allowed for a first cataloguing of the assets, recorded and analysed according to their architectural category. Other initiatives were the creation of the Open-air Museum of Modern Architecture in Ivrea (2001), the National Industrial Cinema Archive (2005) and the *Tecnologic@mente* Museum (2010). Numerous initiatives have been conducted to protect the Olivetti heritage, but the creation of a site management board is necessary: it should include not only the Olivetti Foundation—the mission of which is to promote the Olivetti heritage—but also public and private stakeholders in the area. Specifically, respondents shared the idea that, to manage the UNESCO site, the involvement of collaborators with experience in fundraising (private and public funding) is needed, since it is essential in order to start and support development plans aimed at protecting, enhancing and promoting the area. Moreover, an enhancement project for this precious cultural heritage should engage the local community, with particular attention to new generations.

The second priority is that the enhancing process for the UNESCO site should be supported by an urban regeneration process, with the involvement of the entire area. Such harmony is essential to let the Ivrea and Canavese area become a tourist destination. At this point in the debate, stakeholders discussed the existing problems of the tourism supply chain. As previously underlined, thanks to individual questionnaires, there are difficulties in reaching and visiting the area without a private car and in the accommodation services. These themes could not be faced or solved by a single stakeholder, of course. However, they pointed out, for example, the evaluation of public financing of means of transport alternative to private cars, such as private coach lines or shuttles from Torino to Ivrea and/or between Ivrea and villages of the area, especially when relevant events or special openings of sights occur (related to Olivetti’s heritage, at first). With reference to the problem of accommodation, the audience agreed that there is no sudden solution and that the public sector has limited actions to encourage such private ventures.

The third priority regards the fact that the UNESCO inclusion should become a tourist asset itself. After the deindustrialization period in Ivrea and Canavese, the area has been working on the development of the tourism industry, in the last few years. The tourism assets in the area, as stated before, are rich in natural, historical and cultural offers. “Ivrea, industrial city of the XX century” represents a great opportunity to promote Olivetti’s heritage, but the adoption of new technologies is needed to improve the availability of Olivetti’s heritage concepts. The implementation of the most adequate narration should enable one to reach different tourist targets, such as those who are interested in industrial tourism and/or educational and cultural tourism. This tourist asset should, therefore, interact with the other assets of the area and be commercialized by tour operators’ proposals.

Furthermore, the general debate among local stakeholders underlined that a greater involvement of young people in the process of enhancing this destination is necessary. It is essential in order not to lose the knowledge of industrial history and guide the transition towards new models of territorial development.

In addition, stakeholders agreed with the need for a higher level of cooperation and coordination. The ability of the onsite destination managers to involve private and public stakeholders in the management planning process, enhancement and advertising

activities was considered by the majority of the audience a vital point to let Ivrea and the Canavese area become a tourist destination. On the other hand, they agreed that it is necessary to convince single private and public stakeholders about the importance of sharing information with destination managers and stakeholders that have the task to promote and sell the destination.

5. Discussion

Thanks to its geographical location, Ivrea may be considered a natural touristic hub to enhance tourism assets, including the Olivetti site. The role of Ivrea as a “showcase” for the whole Canavese area was confirmed by stakeholders, as underlined before. In the course of the last few years, public and private stakeholders have adopted strategies to turn the Canavese area into a tourist destination; this aspect was considered for the selection of stakeholders to involve in the research project. In-depth studies about the tourism sector in Ivrea and the Canavese area were carried out before the COVID-19 crisis [95]; they involved public and private local stakeholders and visitors. Both kinds of studies underline that Canavese, as a whole, is, at present, scarcely known and scarcely perceived as a “tourist destination”, even though it has many tourism assets.

In this context, the recognition of UNESCO sites might be an opportunity to develop regeneration activities in the area; this is even more true where deindustrialization processes have occurred. In this way, other economic assets, such as tourism, could be developed [11,12]. The importance and need of regeneration about the Olivetti heritage site were underlined by stakeholders in the second and third steps of the research, as underlined before.

The relationship between UNESCO site and local stakeholders is another important topic of discussion. The management of World Heritage sites is a sort of laboratory in which effective management methods should be designed, in order to work out good practices suitable to be studied and replicated in other UNESCO contexts. A solid relationship should be built, firstly involving local public and private actors and then expanding to other components of the community, such as residents and the younger generation, so as to convey the identity value of the UNESCO site [51–53]. As stated before, this is the reason why, for this first step of the research projects, the local community was not involved among the stakeholders.

Due to its characteristics, Ivrea has the potential to develop into one of the main destinations in the sector of industrial and cultural tourism. The history of the Olivetti and its reputation is a strong opportunity itself, but a collaboration between public and private stakeholders and the ability to develop a proper and coordinated method for the presentation of the innovative element of Olivetti’s culture are necessary. To support this kind of phenomenon, a new tourism strategy should be designed, in which traditional storytelling techniques are flanked by new technologies to improve the tourist experience [31,32,68].

However, the UNESCO site might create a dilemma for the local community, meaning community in general (public and private stakeholders) and not (only) residents (that were not involved in this step of the research project). In the past, some local chronicles have highlighted different approaches to the Olivetti heritage by the local population. On the one hand, the Ivrea community traditionally has a positive perception of Olivetti, especially with regard to the company’s former employees and the entire Ivrea area drew significant economic benefits from it. On the other hand, the community, especially when looking at the younger generations, seems to have a negative perception of the post-Olivetti period, which saw a deep economic crisis in the area.

In order to solve this dilemma, as claimed by some scholars, the transformation of any critical issues into strengths is needed, so that the UNESCO site may be an asset for the economy of the area [10,69]. In other words, with reference to younger generation, it is important to underline the importance of the Olivetti heritage (despite the negative economic and social consequences of the crisis of the firm) for the development of tourism,

explaining how it should be an opportunity and a strength for the area and why it is crucial to take advantage of the recent UNESCO recognition. Younger generations are familiar with new technologies, crucial for the storytelling of the heritage site and are those who could decide to stay in the Canavese area for work (as employees or entrepreneurs) and to participate in the tourism development process of the area itself. The importance of the involvement of the younger generation, who did not live the Olivetti positive economic benefits, is vital for the enhancement of Olivetti heritage (in particular and the destination in general), as stated by several stakeholders in their questionnaires. It is useful here to recall the item of “areas of innovation” defined by the International Association of Science Parks and Areas of Innovation (IASP) as “places designed and curated to attract entrepreneurial-minded people, skilled talent, knowledge-intensive businesses and investments, by developing and combining a set of infrastructural, institutional, scientific, technological, educational and social assets, together with value-added services, thus enhancing sustainable economic development and prosperity with and for the community” [116]. As stated by Mieg, Oevermann and Noll [5], both heritage sites and areas of innovation require good management, including the involvement in international networking and exchanging of experiences with other (industrial heritage) sites; from the research team point of view, considering the discussions with local stakeholders, a proper education for the local younger generation, to let them acquire competences to become professional managers, could play a vital role with reference to the items of innovation, enhancement and development of the tourism in the area. The conclusion stated by Calvin and Munday [117] in their study about Blaenavon Industrial Landscape (Unesco World Heritage Site listed in 2000 and located in South Wales) pointed out the lack in the community of skills or financial resources (the latter in relation to an apparent absence of local entrepreneurship experiences) to fully contribute to a regeneration process based on tourism. The proposed involvement of the local younger generation has the objective to limit such a risk. In addition to the previous points, younger generations should play a vital role in the future administration of the destination.

The relationship between conservation of Olivetti’s cultural heritage and local development can be understood in two ways. The first perspective is of a conservative type: here, the interest in supporting heritage is considered an end in itself, and part of the resources are meant to be protected and transmitted to future generations. The second is a proactive perspective, with the awareness that the UNESCO site is an attractor for the area and needs to interact with the other components to participate in local development. Some scholars have focused their research on the relationship between heritage sites and the surrounding environment. Such places cannot be isolated from local development activities, social change and community relations. Therefore, it is necessary for effective management to develop a participatory approach between all the actors involved [20,24,25].

Furthermore, the UNESCO heritage helps to strengthen the identity of the local area [9,10,14].

6. Conclusions

In this research, the interviewees demonstrated, with a participatory and collaborative approach, a strong interest in turning the UNESCO site into a tourist asset for Ivrea, in order to increase the attractiveness of the area at the national and international levels.

The results show the importance of the active involvement of local stakeholders. The study allows for the sharing of ideas and the identification of priorities that could be useful for the construction of future management plans of the UNESCO site for the enhancement of the Olivetti heritage.

The research provides theoretical implications, underlining the effectiveness of a mixed method of qualitative investigation in stimulating collaboration between local

public and private actors, and also highlights practical implications, enabling local actors to develop future strategies aimed at exploiting the UNESCO site as a tourist asset.

Although the results of this research show a positive indication, the enhancement process of the UNESCO cultural heritage, such as the Ivrea UNESCO site, is long and complex, requiring time and also financial support. The recognition of the UNESCO site of Ivrea, which took place a few years ago, is only the first stage of a process for the development of Ivrea as a tourist destination. Future research should increasingly involve local stakeholders, such as residents and tourists. Moreover, as underlined on more than one occasion, the necessity to develop and supervise not only the UNESCO site but the whole tourism supply chain, with a proper destination management plan, would be a critical point for tourism growth.

The organization and development of the UNESCO site for tourism purposes should represent the availability of new relevant assets in the cultural and industrial heritage fields. In the medium term, this could mean an increase in the average stay of tourists, in the appeal for cultural tourists interested in industrial heritage, the chance to organize events and visits for experts, such as architects, engineers and so on, and the chance to organize business meetings inside factories rich in industrial and cultural meanings. Moreover, the possibility to create a network between the Ivrea UNESCO site and the UNESCO sites in Piemonte should be examined. The same creation of a network should be examined with reference to other industrial UNESCO sites, both in Italy and abroad: some international examples and potential links are the trials of industry heritage developed in the Midlands (UK) or the Industrial Culture Route in the Ruhr (Germany), that should be extended into a European Route of Industrial Heritage [118,119]. The “Ivrea, an industrial city of the XX century” site has all the requirements to become one of the most recognizable assets in the whole Canavese area, equal to other areas of excellence, such as Erbaluce typical wine, the Anfiteatro Morenico (Morainic Amphitheatre), the Gran Paradiso National Park and the Via Francigena. About natural assets located near to Ivrea, it is interesting to recall that Wuepper and Patry [44] stated that World Heritage branding is boosted by natural attractions located near the site itself; they consider a match between natural and cultural assets with positive repercussions in terms of promotion of the World Heritage site together with the environmental background.

If the UNESCO recognition is important in the attraction of the area, maximizing the result quality management and promotion is necessary: as recalled by Ivanunik et al. [120], a group of researchers stated that tourists, when choosing a destination, are influenced not only by the presence of relevant attractions but also by the quality of services and its level of satisfaction. The need for the development of a valuable tourism supply chain was highlighted by the local stakeholders interviewed.

In the literature review, we recalled that World Heritage designations could bring positive and negative impacts. According to the research team, it is not possible, at the moment, to suppose what should happen about (possible) negative impacts, because the designation as a World Heritage site was decided only four years ago and, in the meantime, there was the shock of the pandemic, with strong limitations on the movement of tourists (local, national and international). Moreover, none of the stakeholders interviewed expressed concerns about these kinds of matters.

With reference to the theme of the UNESCO brand and its implication, considering the fact that Ivrea and the Canavese area are not a traditional destination for tourists at the moment, they are out of the beaten touristic tracks. It is undoubtedly the positive repercussion of the designation in terms of potential visibility on national and international magazines and on the net. This consideration is in line with the conclusions stated before by some authors [41,44], according to whom the World Heritage label helps more remote and less known sites.

The main limitation of the research study, in this first step, is the limited number of local stakeholders involved and the absence of the participation of the local community and residents. Even though the stakeholders involved represent relevant ones, future

development should include a huge number of private and public operators, in order to increase their contribution and have a more detailed state of the art. Moreover, another step should be the distribution of a questionnaire among residents in order to understand their point of view about the importance of the UNESCO site and the repercussion that it could have in relation to the development of the tourism industry; in addition, the involvement of residents is needed to understand their behaviors about tourism and its increase.

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