

# Perceptions of touristification according to place of residence in the destination: the case of Malaga

Percepciones de la turistificación  
según lugar de residencia en el destino: el caso de Málaga

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## Abstract

A novel research is carried out on the relationships between tourism governance, touristification and the perception of the impacts generated in a consolidated urban destination such as Malaga. It proposes a measure of touristification and its impacts in terms of the spatial distribution of residents. To this end, 450 residents of the municipality were surveyed and 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted. Factor analysis and qualitative content analysis were applied. The

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results show the link between governance and touristification and how this affects perceptions of economic, social and environmental impacts and place identity. In particular, place of residence (centre/periphery) influences perceptions related to touristification.

**Keywords:** urban destination; residents; tourism impacts.

## Resumen

Se realiza una investigación novedosa sobre las relaciones entre la gobernanza turística, la turistificación y la percepción de los impactos que se generan en un destino urbano consolidado como es el caso de Málaga. Se propone una medición de la turistificación y sus impactos en función de la distribución espacial de los residentes. Para ello se ha encuestado a 450 residentes del municipio y se han realizado 15 entrevistas semiestructuradas. Se aplica un análisis factorial y un análisis cualitativo de contenido. Los resultados ponen de manifiesto la relación entre la gobernanza y la turistificación, y cómo ésta condiciona la percepción de los impactos económicos, sociales y ambientales y la identidad de lugar. Es destacable que el lugar de residencia (centro/periferia) influye en las percepciones relacionadas con la turistificación.

**Palabras clave:** destino urbano; residentes; impactos turísticos.

## 1 Introduction

In recent decades, the growth of tourism in urban destinations has been accompanied by the concentration of tourism flows, especially in urban centres (Mihalic, 2020). In this context, terms such as overtourism, tourist saturation (Calle, 2019) or touristification (Díaz-Parra & Jover, 2018) have gained interest among tourism researchers, who have been concerned with understanding the tourism development models that accompany these processes of tourism intensification (Milano et al., 2019; Goodwin, 2021) and the impacts they generate on residents (Koens et al., 2018; Capocchi et al., 2019).

Touristification implies the transformation of a territory into a place for tourism consumption, which leads to changes in the landscape, the environment and social, cultural and economic dynamics (Ojeda & Kieffer, 2020). In this sense, it is essential to know the impacts that tourism can generate in these areas in order to be able to adopt measures to control the processes of touristification (Butler, 2020) and the components of this process.

Recent studies on touristification have mainly focused on city centres (Cocola-Gant, 2018). However, the impact of short tourist rentals and collaborative platforms has transformed

production and consumption patterns in the tourist accommodation sector; at the same time, they have multiplied the possibilities for tourists to visit other areas and access a wide range of experiences, increasing the number of tourists in spaces that have traditionally remained on the margins of significant tourist flows (Parralejo & Díaz-Parra, 2021; Coll-Ramis et al., 2023).

The transformation brought about by tourism has an impact on local communities (Woo et al., 2022). One of the most recognised elements of the touristification of urban destinations is the increase in housing prices and gentrification (Calle, 2019).

Touristification is subject to transformations in the urban space or destination that is experiencing growth at any given time. These changes are driven by urban policies, economic factors or social factors, such that the functions of the urban space are increasingly dependent on tourism activities (Calle, 2019).

The main objective of this study is to learn about the process of touristification in Malaga. This destination has experienced intense tourist growth, and to identify the main impacts of tourism on the local population. To this end, this study distinguishes between the values of the inhabitants of the central and peripheral areas of the city, according to the different areas of residence. Quantitative and qualitative tools support this research and propose new scales for measuring governance, touristification and place identity. It relates touristification to the factors identified in the study. Few studies (Milano et al., 2022) have analysed these constructs using these analytical methods.

## **2 Literature review and hypotheses**

### **2.1 Spread of tourism to the periphery**

To mention the existence of a periphery is to acknowledge that there are central spaces, in the tradition of Christaller. The global dimension that tourism has acquired makes it necessary to identify central spaces and peripheries that play their role. One of the first reflections on the role of tourist peripheries was developed by Gormsen (1981). This approach has been further developed in subsequent studies analysing the dependency situation of global tourist peripheries (Navarro et al., 2015). In contrast, little attention has been paid to urban tourist peripheries.

In recent decades, many European cities have become successful urban destinations, where traditional city centres have become leisure theme parks affected by the impacts of mass tourism (Calle, 2019). However, the intensification of tourism is also affecting the peripheral areas of historic centres, which until recently were untouched by tourist activity. This expansion of the

tourist frontier is driven by several factors, the most important of which is tourist housing (Cocola-Gant, 2023).

Tourism, by its very nature, tends to expand to generate new income. In this sense, tourist capital has found investment opportunities in peripheral neighbourhoods, particularly in working-class neighbourhoods close to tourist sites (Sequera & Nofre, 2018). These peripheral neighbourhoods often offer lower housing prices than central areas. All this has favoured the intensification of the commodification of housing for tourist use through intermediation platforms such as Airbnb (Guttentag, 2019), which has led to the creation of new tourist spaces in cities.

## **2.2 Governance and touristification**

Baggio et al. (2010) argue that governance can be seen as the tool by which the destination adapts to the transformations brought about by tourism. One of the main problems faced by urban destinations is the tourist saturation of their centres, which has led to the dispersion of tourism to peripheral neighbourhoods (Masiero & Hrankai, 2022) through tourism and urban planning policies aimed at enhancing the tourist value of other areas of the city. This transformation of an ordinary area into a tourist area is known as touristification (Díaz-Parra & Jover, 2018; Ojeda & Kieffer, 2020).

Touristification is a process whereby decisions made in a destination are aimed at increasing tourism activity (Beaumont & Dredge, 2010). However, the governance and policies that drive tourism growth rarely consider the negative social, economic and environmental impacts (Joppe, 2019). Against this backdrop, how governance models manage touristification is a topic of broad academic debate (Detotto et al., 2021; Goodwin, 2021). As Cocola-Gant (2023) argues, most research on touristification has focused on analysing the impact of gentrification on residents. The interaction between governance and touristification, and the feedback between the two and their subsequent economic, social and environmental impacts, has yet to be explored.

Although destination governance is one of the most decisive aspects in explaining residents' perceptions of touristification and its impacts (Almeida et al., 2019, 2021), urban destinations are still far from a model that promotes social participation, and a technocratic approach is prioritised (Picó et al., 2022). Few studies have identified the link between governance characteristics and the intensification of tourism flows (Detotto et al., 2021), and no study has measured the impact of governance on tourism impacts from the perspective of residents. Therefore, it is crucial to investigate the influence of contextual factors on touristification, taking into account the governance of the destination and the place of residence of citizens.

## 2.3 Touristification and the impact of tourism

Although the touristification of cities has been widely addressed (Milano & Mansilla, 2018), few studies have focused their analysis on the impact of the extension of the tourism frontier to the suburbs (Maitland, 2019; Gravari & Jacquot, 2019) and how residents perceive it (Milano et al., 2022).

In general, residents have a positive view of tourism, believing that this activity improves the economic situation of the community (Andereck et al., 2005). In this sense, García et al. (2019) point out that tourism and the process of touristification are seen as an opportunity for the young population to find employment and settle in the city. However, there is growing criticism of its negative impacts, which include an increase in the cost of living and the creation of temporary and low-paid jobs.

Tourist accommodation changes the social and economic structure of neighbourhoods and even the urban landscape. It is one of the most powerful elements of touristification in cities with tourist attractions. It affects the property market, especially rentals, trade and public spaces (Yrigoy, 2017), and has a negative impact on the economy of families and small businesses due to the increase in housing prices and rents.

Part of the traditional rental supply has been converted into tourist accommodation. As a result, one of the most obvious effects is the increase in the price of non-tourist rental housing and the reduction in the supply of rental housing (Blanco-Romero et al., 2018). This has led to solid gentrification processes (González-Pérez, 2019; Ardura et al., 2021), spreading from the centre to the periphery (Neuts et al., 2021).

Vanclay (2004) points out that, despite the economic benefits, it is difficult to assess the social impact of tourism. According to numerous studies, income from tourism is the most visible impact that contributes to the well-being and quality of life of the local community (Stylidis et al., 2014; Rivera et al., 2016). On the other hand, some authors highlight positive social impacts such as increased pride and sense of community, cultural exchange with the foreign population, and increased cultural offerings and infrastructure (Ribeiro et al., 2017).

On the other hand, the negative social impacts of touristification refer to congestion and overuse of public services, privatisation of public spaces, loss of purchasing power, disappearance of traditional shops or uncivic behaviour (Koens et al., 2018). This situation leads to conflicts that result in protests and disputes, highlighting the need for new studies on local attitudes towards

tourism to improve the theoretical and methodological analysis of social impacts (Postma & Schmuecker, 2017; Novy & Colomb, 2021).

Rasekhi et al. (2016) note that tourism growth and environmental quality are interdependent. Tourists increasingly value environmental aspects and the sustainable use of natural resources, which contrasts with the strong growth of tourism and the reduced intervention of public administrations (Blanco et al., 2017; Rizal et al., 2020). Faced with the constant growth of tourism, economic and political actors have developed the concept of sustainable tourism as a general measure that can be implemented in any tourism product (Sharpley, 2020) and tourism carrying capacity as one of the tools that can solve the problem (Navarro et al., 2012), but with limited success.

The most common environmental impacts due to the intensification and concentration of supply and demand in suburban areas include waste generation, wastewater and noise, and intensive water consumption (Koens et al., 2018).

## **2.4 Place identity and touristification**

Place identity is a perception determined by personal identity, physical components and experiences, and the relationship that develops between a person and a place (Bott et al., 2003). More attention should be paid to studies of place identity and its relationship to residents' support for tourism development in destinations. For Andereck and Vogt (2000), the place identity developed by a community determines the success of tourism ventures. Place identity influences residents' support for tourism, and this identity is a good determinant of their behaviour (Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012). Studies on place identity are crucial for understanding tourism growth in destinations (Wang et al., 2014). No specific studies have been developed to understand the relationship between place or destination identity and its relationship with the expansion of tourism activity, hence the interest in analysing this aspect.

## **2.5 Hypotheses**

In general, the different impacts of tourism on destinations have been studied, but with the understanding that tourism factors affect the residents of the destination in a similar way. While the differences may not be significant in homogeneous or small destinations, these differences may be substantial in more important destinations and tourist cities. The following general hypothesis is therefore proposed:

H. Place of residence in the destination affects the perception of tourism factors related to touristification.

More specifically, it is of interest to know the following specific hypotheses related to the general hypothesis:

H1. Place of residence influences perceptions of governance.

H2. Place of residence influences perceptions of the economic impact of tourism.

H3. Place of residence influences perceptions of social impacts of tourism

H4. Place of residence influences perceptions of environmental impacts of tourism

H5. Place of residence influences perceptions of place identity

### **3 Methodology**

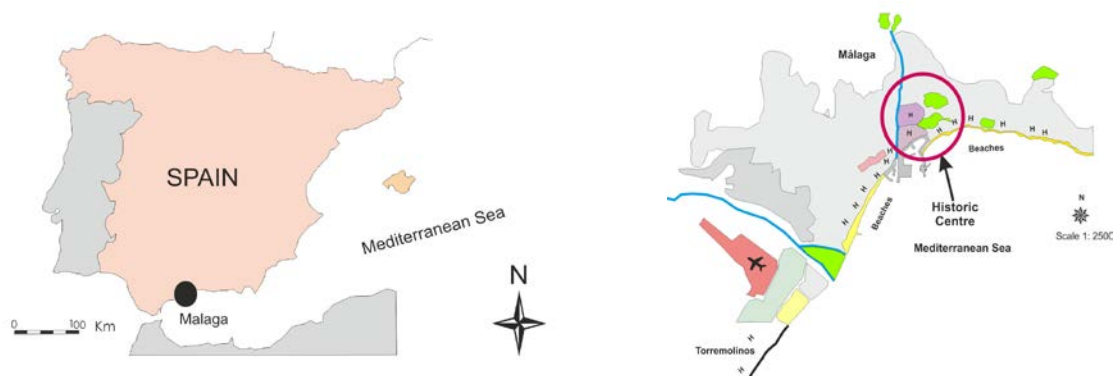
#### **3.1 Study area**

The city of Malaga is a cultural tourism destination that has developed its image in recent years, trying to break away from the idea of a sun and beach destination promoted by the Costa del Sol brand. The city of Malaga has long had a blurred tourist image due to the consolidated tourist brand of the Costa del Sol (Figure 1). For decades, Malaga has sought to become an urban and cultural destination, with Picasso, cinema (Spanish Film Festival) and an extensive network of 37 museums, including the Picasso Museum, the Carmen Thyssen Museum or the Centre Pompidou, as reference points.

Some studies on urban destinations in Spain highlight the vitality of the city, which is based on the diversity of leisure and cultural activities on offer (Exceltur, 2023). The reception of tourists has increased significantly in recent years, reaching 1.3 million travellers staying in hotel establishments in 2022 (Figure 2). Between 2010 and 2019, the number of tourists increased by 63.8%, reaching 1,410,227 (2019). This increase has allowed the destination to move from 13th to 11th place among urban destinations (INE, 2010-2022). Since 2011, international tourists have dominated. In 2022, the city of Malaga had 10,868 hotel beds distributed in 117 hotel establishments (INE, 2022) and 7,390 tourist apartments (Inside Airbnb, 2022) (Figure 3) and around 7,403 apartments according to the Andalusian Tourism Register (RTA, 2023). According to the distribution of the share of tourist dwellings in the total number of dwellings, three main areas can be observed. Firstly, the historic centre of the city shows higher values (between 20 and 40%); in fact, it concentrates more than 50% of the hotel beds and more than 70% of the

tourist dwellings in the city. Secondly, several areas of expansion have been identified, both in the peripheral areas of the centre and in the coastal areas (between 5 and 20%). Finally, there is a third zone of lower intensity, between 0 and 5% (Figure 4). In areas of expansion, the absolute number of dwellings may be high, but in more densely populated areas, such as the west coast, the final percentage of tourist dwellings may be lower than in the east. This tourism boom has had a significant impact on the property market. The purchase price of an apartment in the historic centre reached €2,985/m<sup>2</sup> in August 2022, while the rental price was €12.0/m<sup>2</sup>. By comparison, the average price in Malaga on the same date was €2,319/m<sup>2</sup> for purchase and €11.0/m<sup>2</sup> for rent. These values make the historic centre of Malaga one of the most expensive areas in the city and one of the most expensive historic centres in Andalusia for both purchase and rent (Idealista.com, 2022). This situation makes it difficult for residents to stay in the historic centre, which has led to a change in the composition of the population in this central area of the city (Almeida et al., 2021, García, et al., 2019).

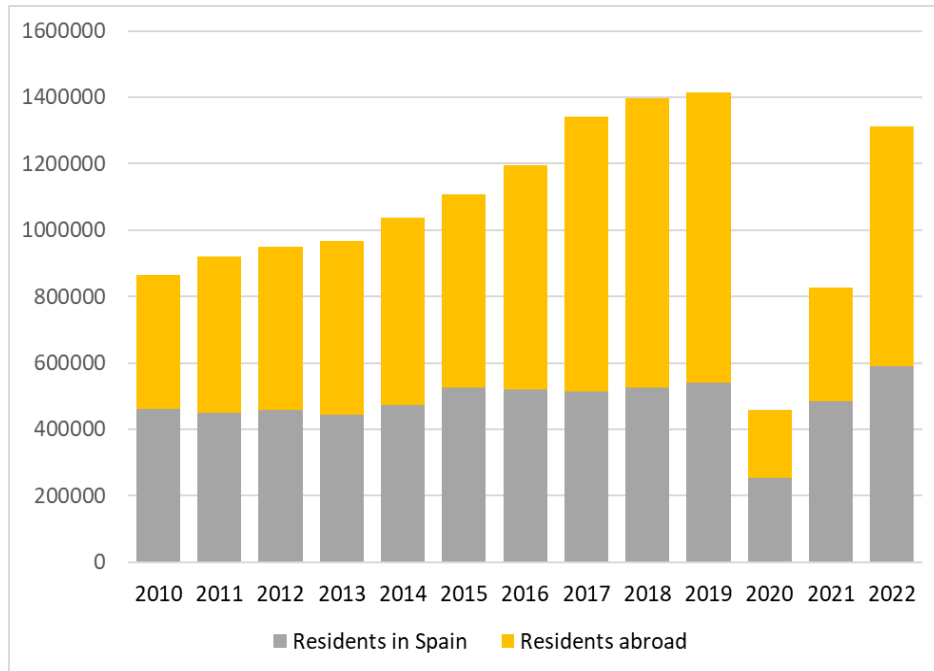
Figure 1. Location of the city of Malaga



Source: own elaboration

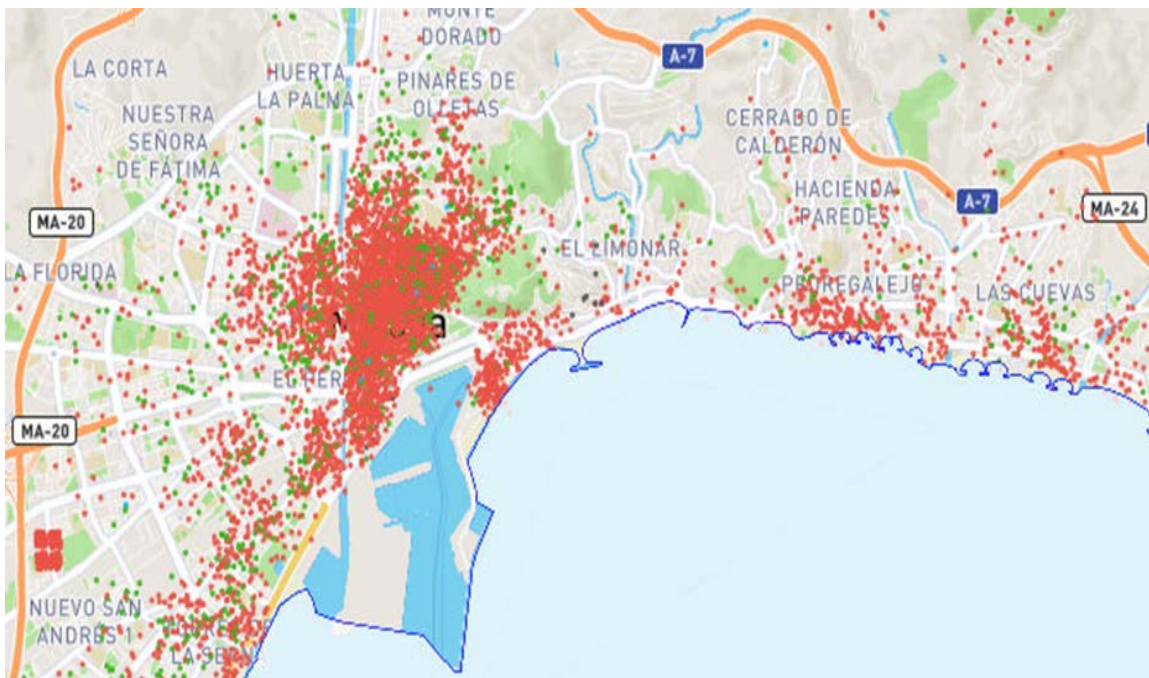


Figure 2. Evolution of tourist arrivals in hotel accommodation



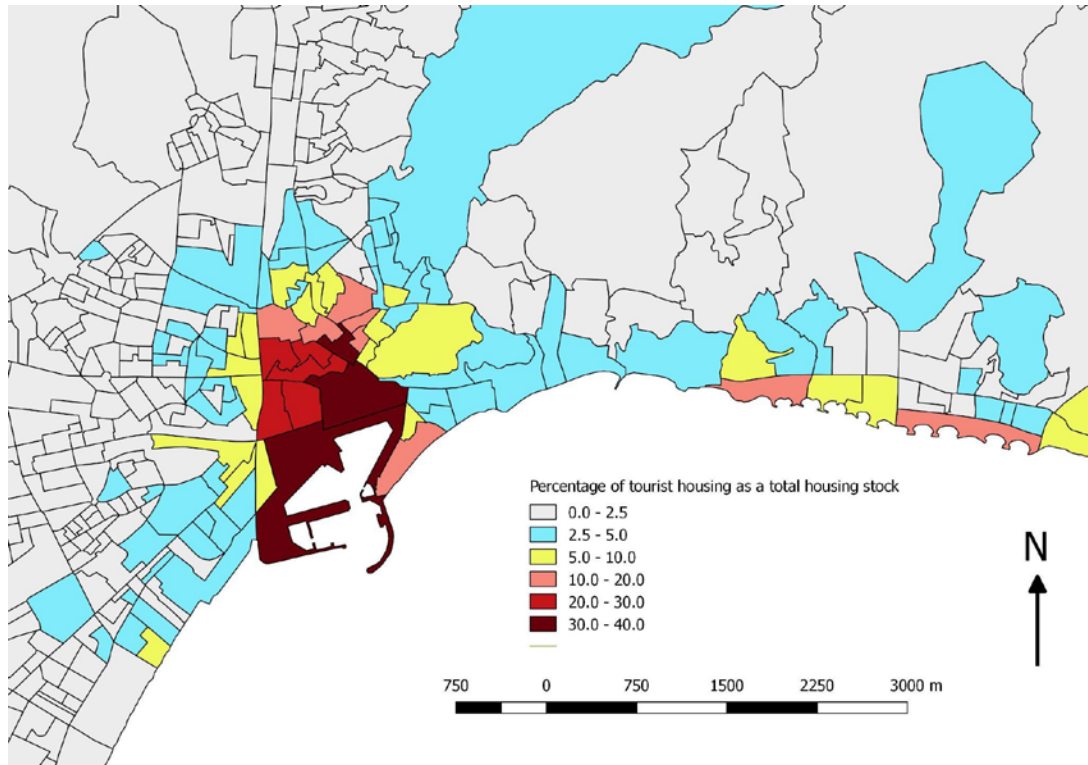
Source: INE (2010-2022)

Figure 3. Location of tourist accommodation in Malaga



Source: Inside Airbnb (2022)

Figure 4. Distribution of tourist housing by section in Malaga (2023)



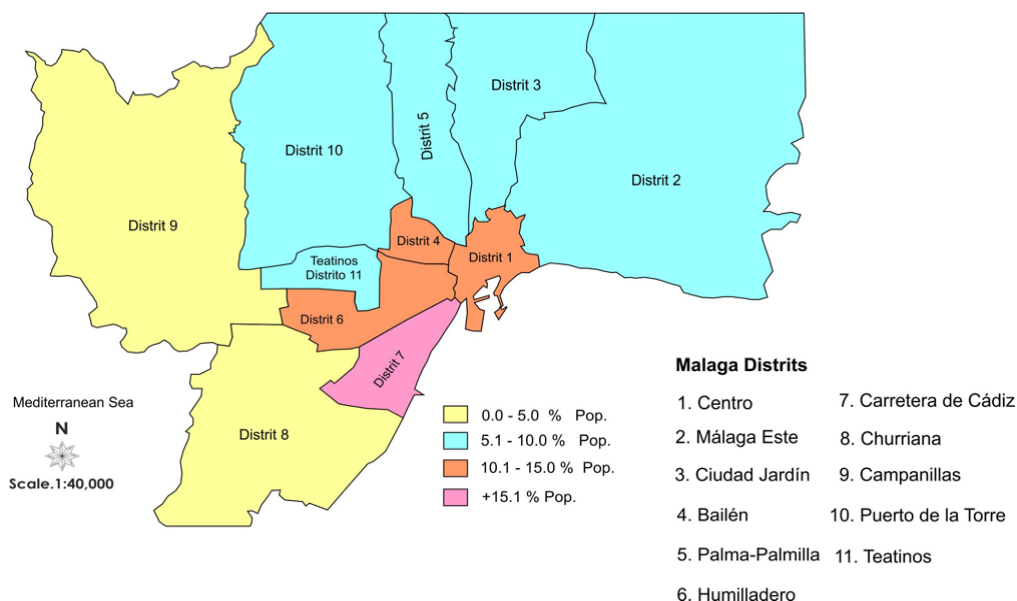
Source: own elaboration based on INE (2023)

### 3.2 Data collection tools

#### a) Data collection

One of the instruments used to collect data was a face-to-face survey, the final sample of which consisted of 450 respondents from the municipality of Málaga. Participants were selected using stratified random sampling. The population of Malaga was stratified proportionally by sex, age and place of residence in the city (district of residence) (Figure 5) based on the 2021 population of 577,405 inhabitants (INE, 2021). For this study, we opted for proportional sampling, in which the distribution of the sample is proportional to the relative weight of the stratum in relation to the total population. The fieldwork was carried out between April and May 2022, and 450 valid questionnaires were obtained (Table 1), with a sampling error of 4.62% and a confidence level of 95%.

Figure 5. Percentage distribution of the sample of respondents by districts of Malaga



Source: own elaboration

Table 1. Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents (n=450)

VARIABLES		
Sex	Male: 48.2% Female: 51.8%	
Average age of the population	48.6 years	
Tourist apartment in the area	40,3%	
Family working in tourism	38,0%	
Marital status	Single: 27.8% As a couple: 23.3%. Married: 36.9%. Separated: 4.3%	Divorced: 2,7%. Widowed: 3,8%. No opinion: 0.2%
Occupation	Self-employment: 11.1%. Employed persons: 37.3%. Retired/Pensioner: 0.7%. Unemployment: 12.0%.	ERTE: 20.9%. Student: 9.8% Homemaker: 4,0% No opinion: 4.2%
Level of education	No education: 2.2% Primary: 19.8%. Secondary: 32.4%.	University students: 34.4%. No opinion: 11.2%

Source: own elaboration

## *b) Tools*

The questionnaire was divided into four blocks. The first was a series of 17 socio-demographic questions. The importance and impact of the tourism sector is highlighted by the high percentage of the population with a tourist dwelling in their environment (40.3%) and the close economic dependence: 38.0% of family members work in the tourism sector (Table 1).

Secondly, there is a series of questions on the economic, social and environmental impact of tourism. This measurement scale was developed based on the literature review of prominent authors who have analysed these impacts (Williams & Lawson, 2001; Ko & Stewart, 2002; Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Dyer et al., 2007; Almeida et al., 2016). Questions are asked about job creation, distribution of benefits, noise and dirt problems, occupation of public spaces, or behaviour of tourists and locals.

Thirdly, a scale for measuring touristification is developed based on a review of the main authors who have analysed this issue and its adaptation to the study setting (Sequera & Nofre, 2018; Katahenggam & Wee, 2020; Barrero & Jover, 2021; Lorenzen, 2021). Aspects related to the intensification of tourism activities are analysed (tourist flows, flows generated by events, development and increase of hotel and tourist accommodation, or disappearance of traditional services). Based on previous studies, a specific scale for analysing touristification has been developed.

Fourthly, a scale for the analysis of local tourism governance is developed, which measures the participation of residents in the transformation of tourism and the management of tourism in the municipality. This issue is supported by the work of Beaumont and Dredge (2010), Bramwell and Lane (2011), Zhang and Zhu (2014) and Nunkoo, 2015.

Finally, it should be noted that there is also no specific scale for the analysis of place identity, for which the main variables identified by the authors (Hernández et al., 2013; Nunkoo & Gursoy, 2012; Stedman et al., 2004) have been used and a measurement scale has been proposed. This scale tries to measure the attachment of the inhabitants to the historic centre and its image, or the feeling generated by the occupation of the traditional places of the centre by tourists.

The scale for analysing the factors of tourism impact, touristification and local governance used 30 questions, all measured on a 5-point Likert scale. The information was processed using SPSS.25 statistical software, and factor analysis and Pearson correlation were carried out.

On the other hand, 15 semi-structured interviews were conducted for this research (Table 2). The authors' network of contacts was used to identify and locate participants. Non-probability purposive sampling was used. Snowball sampling was also used. The number of interviews was not decided a priori, but only after it had been established that the information obtained was sufficient for the type of analysis to be carried out, following the principle of data saturation.

The technique used to interpret the interviews was qualitative content analysis. From the qualitative analysis, five categories were identified, which were linked to the research objectives: Economic Impact, Social Impact, Environmental Impact, Identity and Governance. The Atlas.ti software facilitated the identification of critical issues related to the perception of Malaga residents on the impacts of tourism. In the content analysis, a distinction was made between three zones of residence, based on intensity, especially of tourist housing (Figure 4):

- (i) Historic Centre: This is the most saturated and touristified area.
- (i) (ii) Transition/expansion zone: These are the peripheral historic neighbourhoods (suburbs), together with the neighbourhoods close to the historic centre, which are touristified and extend over part of districts 2, 4, 6 and 7).
- (ii) Periphery: Neighbourhoods with varying degrees of touristification.

Table 2. Socio-demographic characteristics of the interviewees

	DISTRICT	BARRIO	SEX (M/F)	AGE
E1	CENTRE	Historic Centre	H	49
E2	CENTRE	Historic Centre	H	52
E3	CENTRE	Lagunillas	M	54
E4	CENTRE	La Goleta	H	48
E5	CENTRE	La Malagueta	M	54
E6	CENTRE	El Molinillo	M	50
E7	CAMPANILLAS	Barrancas del Ciprés	H	60
E8	CARRETERA DE CÁDIZ	El Torcal	M	23
E9	CIUDAD JARDÍN	Ciudad Jardín	H	29
E10	CHURRIANA	Las Lomas de San Julián	M	58
E11	CRUZ DE HUMILLADERO	Polígono Alameda	M	71
E12	CRUZ DE HUMILLADERO	Camino de Antequera	M	67
E13	ESTE	Pedregalejo	M	54
E14	ESTE	El Palo	H	50
E15	TEATINOS	The Consul	H	40

Source: own elaboration

## 4 Results

### 4.1 Factor analysis

Varimax-type Rotated Principal Components exploratory factor analysis was conducted to create factors for residents' perceptions of tourism impacts. The initial 30 survey questions were grouped into 6 main factors, with only 22 questions being significant (Table 3).

The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic is 0.870, which exceeds the recommended cut-off of 0.06 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2006). The data show that Bartlett's test of sphericity is significant (chi-square = 2201.178, degrees of freedom = 435,  $p < 0.001$ ). In the factor analysis, eight items with a coefficient value below 0.4 were eliminated to improve the results of the analysis and to correctly identify the main factors. The factor variable scores range from 0.504 to 0.803. Cronbach's alpha analysis for all 22 variables showed a significant score.

Table 3. Factor analysis. Rotated component matrix

FACTOR	QUESTION	1	2	3	4	5	6
GOVER	P.20						.711
	P.38						.534
ENV_IMP	P.16		.708				
	P.17		.688				
	P.18		.586				
	P.19		.615				
SOC_IMP	P.21			.587			
	P.40			.576			
	P.41			.608			
	P.44			.546			
ECON_IMP	P.24	.578					
	P.25	.683					
	P.27	.661					
	P.42	.526					
IDENTITY	P.37					.574	
	P.39					.504	
	P.43					.576	
TOURIST.	P.29				.540		
	P.31				.560		
	P.32				.571		
	P.33				.803		
	P.34				.650		

Source: own elaboration

An analysis of the correlations between the factors identified in the factor analysis was also carried out in order to interpret the hypotheses (Table 4). Touristification shows a significant correlation with all the indicators except social impact. It should also be noted that the correlation with the indicators of environmental impact and identity has a negative sign, i.e., there is an inverse correlation.

The scores depend on the intensity of the phenomenon and also on the orientation of the questions. The factors identified in relation to touristification are listed below (Table 4).

Table 4. Correlations between factors

		GOV.	ENV. IMP.	SOC. IMP	ECON. IMP.	IDENT.	TOURIST.
<b>Governance</b> (GOV)	Pearson	1					
	Correlation						
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	378					
<b>Environment</b> <b>al</b> <b>Impact</b> (ENV_IMP)	Pearson	-.415**	1				
	Correlation	.000					
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	365	421				
<b>Social</b> <b>Impact</b> (SOC_IMP)	Pearson	.143**	.120*	1			
	Correlation	.009	.020	383			
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	332	373				
<b>Economic</b> <b>Impact</b> (ECON_IMP)	Pearson	.219**	-.144**	.221**	1		
	Correlation	.000	.006	.000	381		
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	330	365	343			
<b>Identity</b> (IDENT)	Pearson	-.379**	.471**	.001	-.122*	1	
	Correlation	.000	.000	.979	.018	443	
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	373	416	379	376		
<b>Touristificati</b> <b>on</b> (TOURIST)	Pearson	.460**	-.369**	.042	.267**	-.404**	1
	Correlation	.000	.000	.421	.000	.000	427
	Sig. (2-tailed) N	367	407	370	366	421	

**Note:** \*\*Correlation is significant at the 0.01(2-tailed) level. \* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 (2-tailed) level.

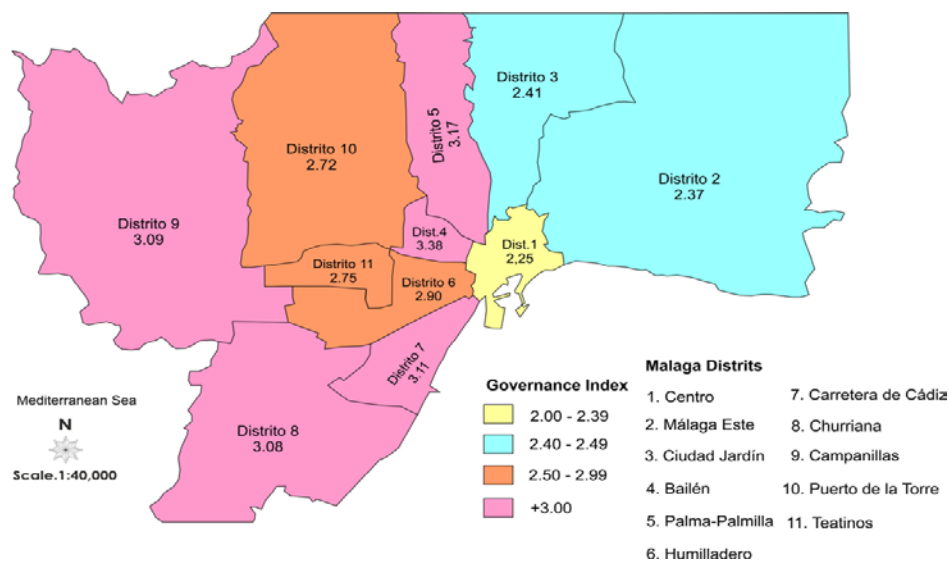
Source: own elaboration

#### 4.2. Touristification and governance

The analysis of the spatial distribution of the governance perception factor in the city (Table 3) shows that there is more significant concern and lower scores on this aspect in the central district (1) than in the rest of Malaga's municipal districts (Figure 6). This concern about governance-related aspects is much lower in the western peripheral districts (4, 7, 8 and 9). The mapping shows that residents value the impact of tourism in relation to its proximity to their environment or economy. As the impact of tourism on the Centre moves further away from its surroundings, the negative rating is diluted.



Figure 6. Distribution of the governance factor by districts in Malaga



Source: own elaboration

Interviewees point to two main aspects of the governance issue: (i) awareness of citizen participation tools and (ii) the widespread perception that these tools do not work properly because they do not take into account the opinions expressed. In this sense, one of the interviewees (E2) stated the following:

When the city council asks for European funds, they put the residents first and say: 'to make the Centre more liveable'. That is the main slogan [...] But that is not the truth. That is not the truth. The truth is that they are going to build a square to put 18,000 bars, to be occupied by tables and chairs.

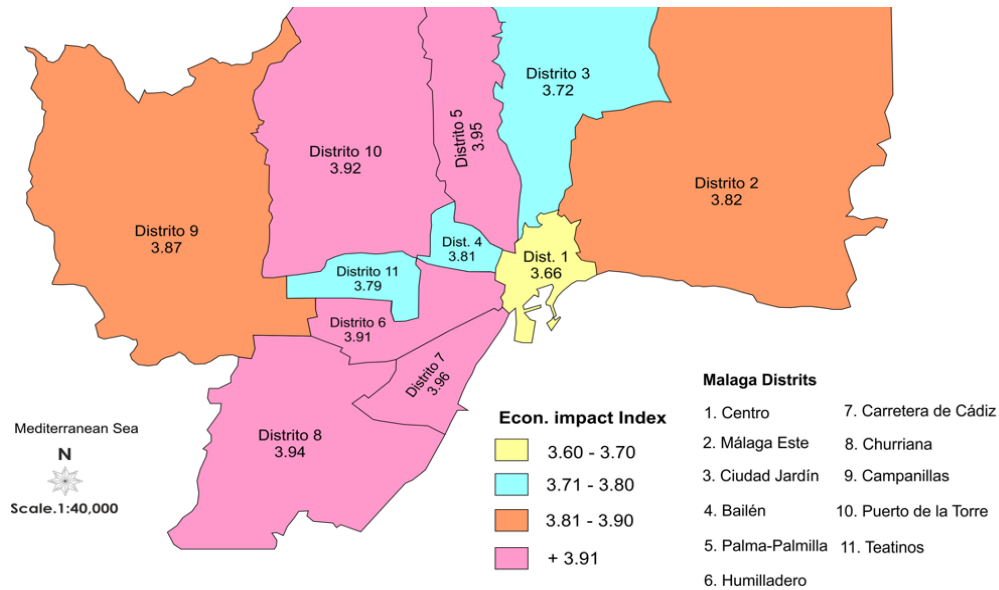
Another participant (E3) added:

We feel that we are a bit tricked, that we are used to making a bit of a show of being taken into account, but when it comes down to it, in reality they do what they want with us because they always have more information than we do.

#### 4.3. Touristification and economic impacts

The valuation of the economic impacts also varies according to the area of residence in the city (Table 3). Figure 7 shows the distribution of the economic impact factor. The economic impact factor is lowest in the city centre (1) and highest in the low-income and working-class peripheral districts in the north and west, especially districts 7 and 5.

Figure 7. Distribution of the economic impact factor by Malaga districts

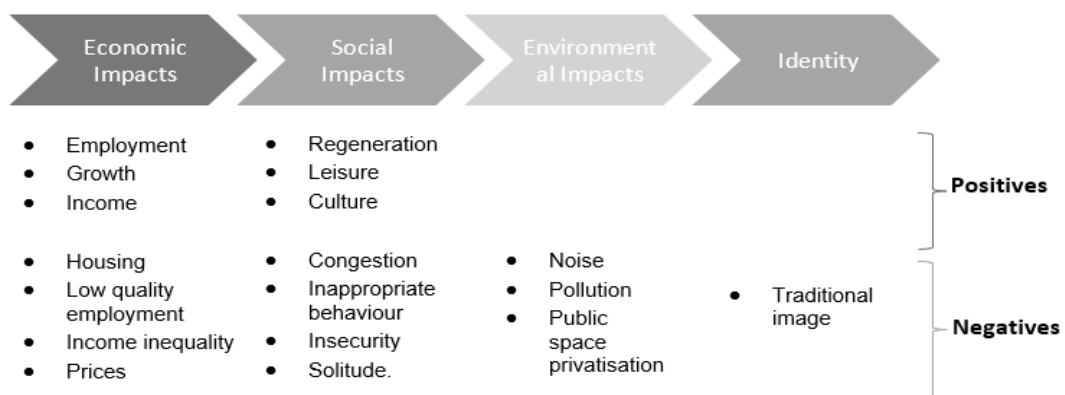


Source: own elaboration

The data show that the positive perception of these impacts is qualified by the residents of the most touristic areas of the city and also by those who are more aware of the problem of tourist overcrowding.

The economic aspect is one of the main reasons why Malaga residents have a positive view of tourism, as identified in the qualitative content analysis. The main positive impacts of tourism reported are related to improving employment, stimulating economic growth and increasing income (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Main impacts perceived by the interviewees



Source: own elaboration

A noteworthy aspect in this sense is that the majority of interviewees from the central district, while recognising the economic benefits of tourism in Malaga in terms of employment and income, also made the following points in relation to these same elements: (i) the poor quality of employment generated by tourism; (ii) the unfair redistribution of income derived from tourism to the rest of the population, with only a minority benefiting from it. One of the people interviewed (E12) expressed this in the following words:

The question is whether it has created jobs. Yes, it has provided employment, but precarious employment, for me, precarious because the bars, the restaurants and so on, I don't know, but the workers don't have an acceptable salary. So yes, it has, but benefits, for whom? Always for the same people. That's how I see it.

In peripheral areas, as Figure 7 shows, residents have a greater appreciation of the economic impact without the possible negative effects of tourism.

On the other hand, the growth of tourism in Malaga has been criticised for its negative impacts, with one issue standing out above all others: housing (Table 5 and Figure 8). Two housing-related elements have been identified as being of concern to residents:

- (i) Rising prices, making it difficult to buy or rent a home, especially in areas most touristified areas.
- (ii) Neighbours displaced by opening tourist accommodation.

In this perception of the impact of tourism on housing, different degrees of appreciation have been established according to whether it affects residents directly or indirectly. The criterion followed for this classification is essentially based on the codes of the subcategory "Housing" (Table 5) within the category "Economic Impact", identified in the content analysis.

- (i) The residents of the historic centre are the most dissatisfied with the housing situation and its conversion into tourist accommodation. Many of them have experienced this problem first hand and have seen how, little by little, many of the inhabitants of this area of Malaga have had to move to other parts of the city.
- (ii) Residents of the transitional areas (historic suburbs and areas close to the historic centre) are more concerned about their future than dissatisfied, especially those living in rented accommodation. Tourist accommodation is expanding rapidly outside the historic centre of Malaga and is becoming increasingly common in these areas.

(iii) Residents of peripheral districts are not directly affected by this negative pressure on housing from tourism. However, even among them there is a relatively widespread perception of a link between rising house prices and the boom in tourism in the city.

Table 5. Economic impact. Codes of the subcategory "Housing"

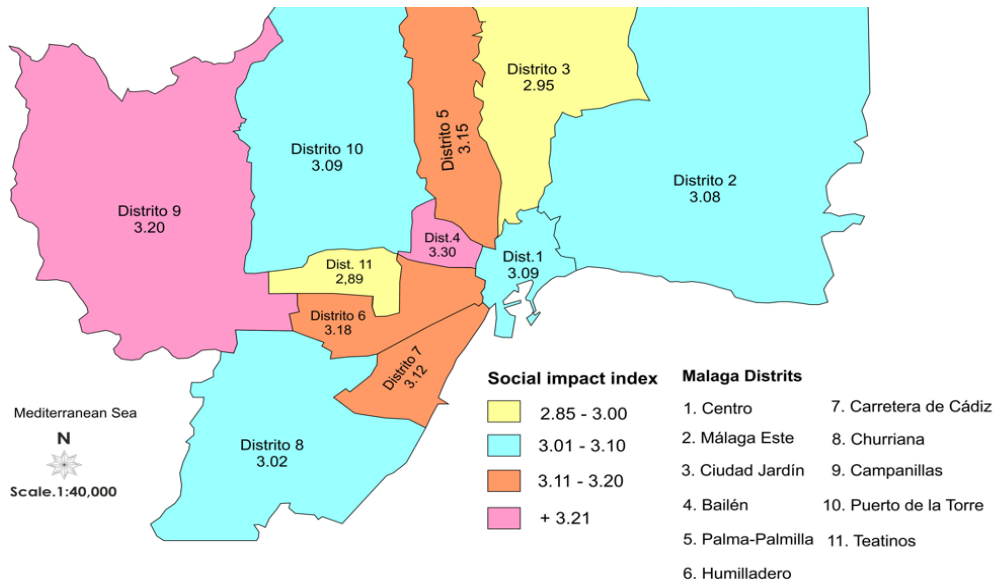
Zones	Interviewees	CODES			
		Acknowledgement	Discomfort	Concern	Indifference
CENTRE	1		X		
	2		X		
TRANSITION/ Suburbs	3			X	
	4			X	
	5		X		
	6			X	
PERIPHERY	7			X	
	8				X
	9			X	
	10				X
	11				X
	12				X
	13				X
	14		X		
	15				X

Source: own elaboration

#### 4.4 Touristification and social impacts

Regarding the spatial distribution of social impacts, it should be noted that the arrangement of the factor among the districts is very random; it does not follow a logical pattern, which is in line with the lack of statistical correlation between the factor of touristification and social impacts. The usual gradation between central and peripheral districts is not observed (Figure 9).

Figure 9. Distribution of the social impact factor by Malaga districts



Source: own elaboration

On the other hand, the interviewees have different positive and negative opinions about the social impacts of tourism activity, so there are different perceptions. The results of the content analysis show that the two positive impacts most highlighted by Malaga residents are (i) the urban regeneration of the historic centre and (ii) the increase in leisure and cultural infrastructure.

The main negative social impacts of touristification perceived by Malaga residents and identified in this research relate to the congestion of public spaces in the historic centre, inappropriate behaviour and insecurity. According to some of those interviewed, mass tourism has a significant impact on their quality of life, although this perception differs according to where they live.

This differentiation was made on the basis of the codes of the sub-category 'quality of life' (Table 6) within the category 'social impact' identified in the content analysis.

Table 6. Social impact. Codes of the subcategory "Quality of life"

Zones	Interviewees	CODES			
		Improve	Chaos	Loneliness	Neutral
CENTRE	1		X	X	
	2		X	X	
TRANSITION/ Suburbs	3	X	X		
	4		X	X	
	5		X		
	6	X	X		
	7	X	X		X
PERIPHERY	8				X
	9		X		X
	10	X			
	11		X		X
	12	X			X
	13	X			X
	14				X
	15				X

Source: own elaboration

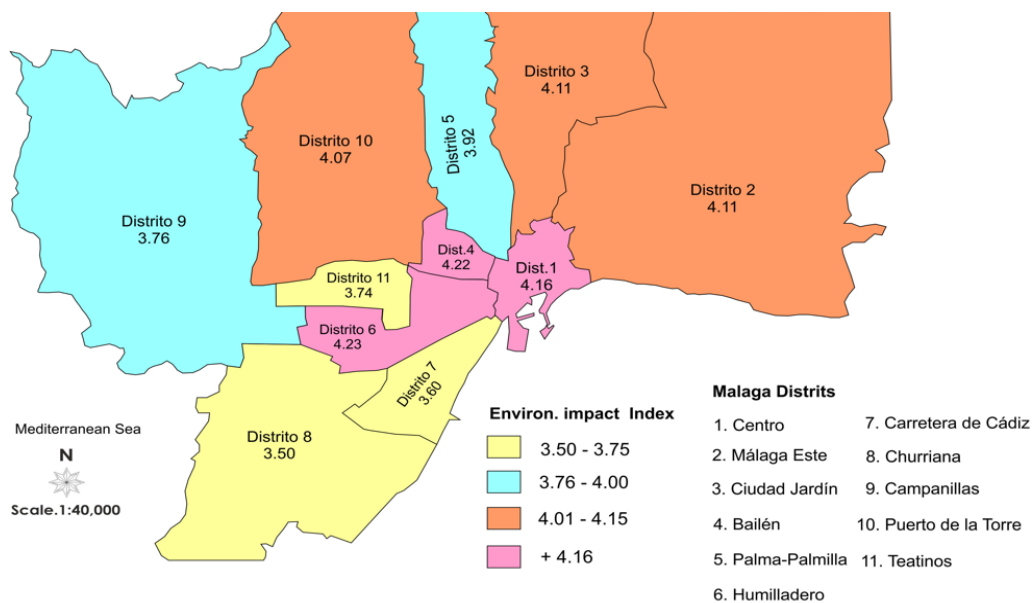
- (i) The inhabitants of the historic centre are the ones who most strongly perceive the negative social impacts directly or indirectly caused by tourism. One of the most frequently cited problems is the sense of loneliness caused by the displacement of many residents, the rupture of the social fabric and the sense of helplessness that many feel when the responsible administrations do not respond to their complaints.
- (ii) As we move away from the more touristic central area of Malaga, these social impacts of tourism on the quality of life are perceived as less negative. However, those who live near the historic centre (transition zones) and who observe the expansion of tourism towards these areas express a sense of unease and threat due to the increase in rental prices or the non-renewal of contracts.

(iii) Residents who live in more remote areas and have less contact with the impacts of tourism do not perceive any negative or positive changes in their quality of life. However, they do report changes in their habits, such as not going to the historic centre for leisure and shopping activities due to overcrowding.

#### 4.5 Touristification and environmental impacts

In the historic centre of Malaga, the environmental impact of touristification can be seen (Figure 10), as it is linked to the intensification and concentration of supply and demand in a minimal space. However, it also extends to neighbouring districts closely related to the centre (4 and 6). The perception of environmental impact is higher in these two districts than in the city centre. On the other hand, the perception of environmental impacts is much lower in some peripheral districts, which are less affected by tourism, less connected to the historic centre and with a notable valuation of economic impacts (districts 7, 8 and 11).

Figure 10. Distribution of the environmental impact factor by Malaga districts



Source: own elaboration

The negative environmental impacts of tourism most highlighted by Malaga residents and identified in the qualitative content analysis are noise, pollution and the occupation and privatisation of public space by hotel and restaurant establishments in the city centre. The municipality of Malaga is large, and the environmental impacts of tourism perceived and highlighted by respondents vary from district to district. In addition to the problems mentioned by residents of the central district, residents of peripheral districts such as Campanillas (9), where

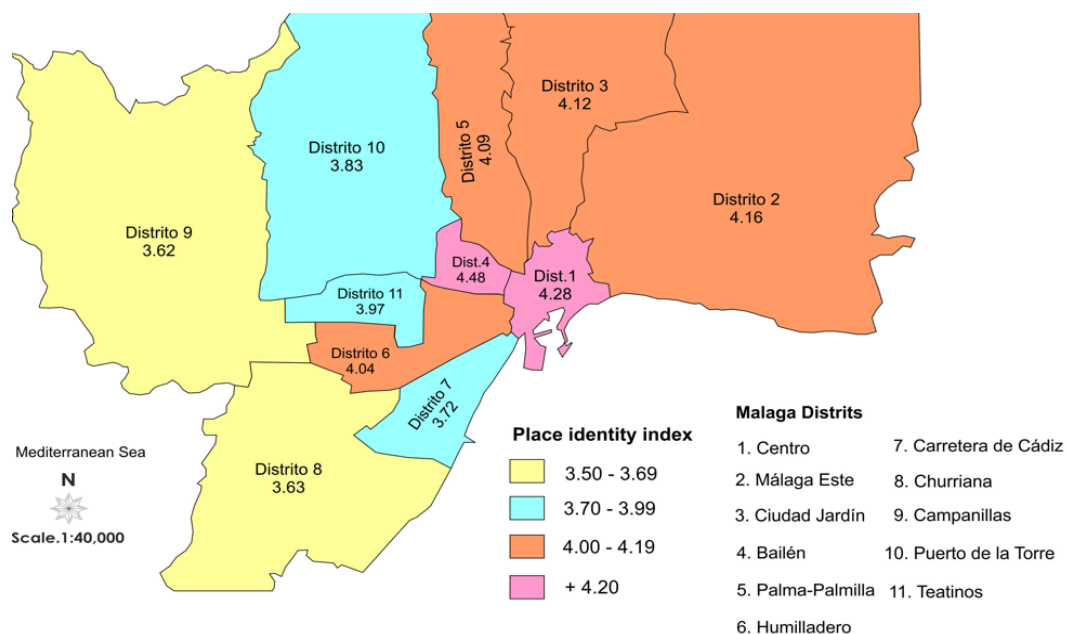
there are still agricultural areas, focus on water problems and the prioritisation of tourism over agriculture. Residents of another peripheral area, Lomas de San Julián, in the Churriana district (8) and near the airport, complain about the proliferation of car hire companies, many of them illegal, as a result of the boom in tourism in Málaga and the Costa del Sol, which occupy public spaces and generate noise and pollution.

#### 4.6 Touristification and place identity

Figure 11 shows the distribution of the identity factor in relation to the valuation of the historic centre as a symbol of the city. This identity is more important in the centre (1) and in district 4, which is quite close to the centre. The districts with a more functional relationship with the central space have higher indicators (districts 2, 3, 5 and 6).

One of the unfavourable aspects mentioned by the interviewees as a result of touristification is the loss of the traditional image of the historic centre, with two main elements identified: the historical and cultural heritage and the traditional shops. Although this perception is more pronounced among the residents of the touristified areas, it is widespread in all districts of the city, as can be seen from the qualitative analysis. The perception of overcrowding in the centre and the almost exclusive dedication of the centre to tourists has meant that this space has lost its centrality and that the peripheries have generated their centralities. Thus, there is a dichotomy between the centre for the tourists and the peripheries for the locals.

Figure 11. Distribution of the place identity factor by Malaga districts



Source: own elaboration



## 5 Discussion

The results indicate that there is a clear relationship between governance and the differentiated perception of touristification in the city of Malaga, which supports H1. Residents in the centre have a worse perception of governance, perceiving it as the cause of saturation and touristification. This more negative perception diminishes as we move away from the centre.

Residents are not very positive about tourism management and lack of participation. Statistical analyses show a link between the perception of governance and activities related to the factor of touristification and its variables (influx into the centre, closure of traditional shops, opening of apartments, bars, restaurants and hotels). The opinions of the respondents also confirm the relationship between governance and touristification.

These results are in line with several studies that highlight the role of governance in the growth of tourism in established destinations (Joppe, 2019; Capocchi et al., 2019; Porfido et al., 2023). On the other hand, several studies have highlighted the close relationship between governance and tourism development (Blanco-Romero et al., 2019; Almeida et al., 2019). In this regard, some works, such as those by Mihalic (2020) and Bichler (2021), highlight the importance of the participation of residents in the governance of tourism development in destinations. As Gajdosik and Valeri (2022) point out, resident participation in governance mitigates the intensity of tourism growth, which is often driven by economic and institutional actors.

Previous studies show that the intensification of tourism activities and touristification affect residents' perceptions of the economic impact of tourism in urban destinations (Andereck et al., 2005; Andereck & Nyaupane, 2011; Almeida et al., 2015; Sequera & Nofre, 2018; Almeida et al., 2019; Porfido et al., 2023).

In the tourism development of destinations, economic benefits are the most sought after and valued factor by residents (Stylidis et al., 2014). In general, the tourism development process is mainly driven by economic benefits, and according to the social exchange theory, human relationships occur in the context of analysis and benefits (Nunkoo, 2015). However, according to H2 of this research, it has been demonstrated through both survey and interview results that there is a link between touristification and the perception of spatially differentiated economic impacts of tourism. In the case of Málaga, it has been observed that residents in the peripheral areas have a more positive perception of the impacts than those in the central area, especially in relation to housing.

Regarding H3, the statistical analysis does not support the link between social impacts and tourism (Table 4). On the other hand, the qualitative analysis suggests such a link, identifying problems such as loneliness as a result of the processes of displacement of neighbours (Díaz-Parra & Jover, 2021). It seems that respondents do not identify tourists and tourism as variables of negative social impact. The interviews show that local and foreign populations are equally involved in the social impacts. There is therefore no clear statistical link.

Most of the studies contradict the findings of the survey, highlighting a direct relationship between social impacts and tourism (Mínguez et al., 2019). Numerous studies point out that residents' perceptions of social and cultural costs depend on their assessment of the economic benefits generated by tourism (Gursoy & Rutherford, 2004; Woo et al., 2022). Although respondents' positive and negative comments on social impacts show a diversity of opinion, which is consistent with the complexity of understanding social impacts, this research has shown the influence of location on this issue, with suburban residents valuing the economic benefits of tourism more highly than the social costs, in contrast to city centre residents.

In relation to H4, it is found that touristification has a negative impact on residents' perceptions of the environmental impacts of tourism (noise, pollution, mass influx of tourists and occupation of public space). These results are in line with previous studies (Almeida et al., 2016; Andereck et al., 2005; Bujosa & Rosselló, 2007; Almeida et al., 2016; Mihalic and Kuscer, (20-22)) and contradict the contributions of other studies, such as that of Liu and Var (1986), which show that residents prefer to encourage tourism, prioritising its benefits over environmental damage.

The case of Malaga, in accordance with the study by Wall (2019), shows that residents' attitudes towards environmental impacts vary according to the intensity of tourism activity. In fact, in this research it was observed that residents of the historic centre, where there is greater tourist saturation, are more sensitive to environmental impacts than residents of peripheral neighbourhoods, where tourist activity is less intense.

Finally, it is worth noting that specific studies have not yet analysed the relationship between place identity and touristification. The closest studies highlight the relationship between place attachment and tourism development (Stylidis, 2018; Dimitrovski et al., 2022). Place identity has sometimes served to protect heritage resources or cultural manifestations of local communities (Liu & Cheng, 2016). However, this research provides new insights into this issue by confirming a relationship between touristification and residents' perceptions of place identity (H5). The results show that the higher the level of touristification, the lower the level of place identity.

Specific studies analysing the relationship between place identity and touristification should be expanded in future research.

## 6 Conclusions

This research highlights the diversity of perceptions of touristification among residents according to their spatial location in Malaga. The place of residence has a direct influence on the perception of aspects related to tourism and the touristification of the city, especially the historic centre, in such a way that the peripheral population values tourist activities and their impacts more positively, assuming that the central tourist space can be sacrificed to tourism in order to obtain benefits for the rest of the city's population. Thus, we can accept the general hypothesis regarding the importance of the place of residence in the perception of the impact of tourism and touristification.

Like other historic centres in Spanish cities, the loss of demographic weight of the historic centre of Malaga over time has affected the growth of tourist activity. The historic centre has undergone different phases of gentrification, with intense gentrification and demographic decline in the last decade. The resident population of the central area has largely been replaced by a floating population, in line with gentrification 2.0. If it is difficult for citizens to intervene in general or tourism governance, the demographic weakness that translates into few voters makes such intervention an almost impossible option.

In general, the local community feels that it has little influence on the governance of tourism in the city and only expresses concern when the problem affects them directly. Thus, the majority of Malaga's population believes that the problems generated by tourism are confined to the city centre and that, as long as they do not affect them, they have nothing to fear. The assessment of most of the impacts is therefore positive.

One of the aspects identified with touristification is that the intensification of this process is detrimental to the perception of the identity of the place, in such a way that the greater the touristification, the less identification. The "sacrifice of the historic centre" increases the distance and lack of emotional attachment to this space. The place of residence also affects this affective link with the historic centre. Although some districts maintain effective relationships, the comments that emphasise that the historic centre is a place for tourists deepen the idea of sacrifice and transformation into a "non-place for the local population".

The extension of some of the central district's problems to the transitional and peripheral districts elicits some similar reactions from residents of these areas to those in the centre. Those interviewed say that tourist accommodation and the hotel industry cause these problems. Some areas have been declared acoustically saturated zones by the city council, which affects closing times and licensing. However, in 2023 the hotel and hospitality industry managed to delay closing times by several days a year. In general, most residents in peripheral areas do not perceive the impact of tourism as negative as residents in the city centre and surrounding areas.

The local community has few real opportunities to influence the city's tourism governance. They tend to express their concerns only when they are directly affected by the negative impacts. In this sense, the population of the centre, which is most affected by touristification, is the one that shows the most significant rejection of the city's current tourism governance. This situation is exacerbated by the decline in the number of residents in the historic centre, which significantly reduces their ability to influence the direction of tourism policy at the political level. In addition, the emotional connection and identification of the city's inhabitants with their surroundings and with the historic centre has diminished as a result of increasing touristification. This space has increasingly become the territory of the tourists, detached from the sentimental imagination of Malaga's inhabitants.

Tourist areas need specific and precise policies that, in addition to the traditional measures related to the control and regulation of tourist accommodation, the hospitality industry and the occupation of space (Wall & Mathieson, 2006; Mihalic, 2020; López et al., 2022; Dimitrovski et al., 2022), guarantee services and facilities that reinforce the value of the community in the neighbourhoods as spaces of real social reproduction (Cocola-Gant, 2023). In particular, it is necessary to rethink and plan specific actions, such as the massive pedestrianisation of the old town, which has favoured the expansion of the hospitality industry and absorbed significant investments to the detriment of the peripheries (Hernández Pezzi, 2018).

The Tourism Observatory of Malaga should monitor the evolution of tourist activity, especially the intensity of tourist flows, the supply of tourist accommodation, the hotel industry and the tourist trade, in order to create saturated tourist areas and propose specific actions to improve the behaviour of travellers.

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