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**Literary Tourism and Destination Branding in**  
**Castilla-La Mancha Region**  
Bachelor thesis

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**Affirmation:**

I hereby declare that the thesis submitted is wholly the work of Veranika Zheshko. Any other contributors or sources have either been referenced in the prescribed manner or are listed in the acknowledgements together with the nature and scope of their contribution.

In Hradec Králové 20.4.2018

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## **Annotation**

This bachelor thesis maps literary tourism in Castilla-La Mancha and analyzes its contribution to the destination branding in the region. Both qualitative and quantitative methods, such as non-participant and participant observation, semi-structured interview and questionnaire survey, were applied in the research. They were aimed at investigating the level of awareness of literary activities in the region among tourists from Spain and abroad and collecting data beneficial for the DMO of the community for raising the attractiveness of the destination for both domestic and foreign visitors. The findings of the research reveal critical contribution of literary tourism to the destination brand and propose a set of marketing tools for further destination promotion. Future research should focus on suggesting the actions for sustainable development of tourism in Castilla-La Mancha in collaboration with local community.

Key words: destination branding, literary tourism, the Don Quijote route, Castilla-La Mancha

## **Anotace**

Tato bakalářská práce se zabývá zmapováním literárního cestovního ruchu ve španělském regionu Kastilie-La Mancha a analýzou jeho přínosu pro branding destinace. V práci byla použita řada kvalitativních a kvantitativních metod, jako jsou přímé a nepřímé pozorování, neřízený rozhovor a dotazníkové šetření. Jejich cílem bylo zjistit úroveň dovednosti španělských a zahraničních turistů o literárních aktivitách v regionu a navrhnout určité marketingové nástroje pro další propagaci destinace. Budoucí výzkumy by se měly zaměřit na předložení projektů podporujících udržitelný rozvoj cestovního ruchu v Kastilii-La Manche ve spolupráci s místní komunitou.

Klíčová slova: branding destinace, literární turismus, stezka Dona Quijota, Kastilie-La Mancha

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# 1 Introduction

*„A national literature is an essential element in the formation of national character. It is not merely the record of a country's mental progress: it is the expression of its intellectual life, the bond of national unity, and the guide of national energy“ (Dewart, 1864, p. 9).*

Some research suggest, that literature reflects not only author's personality and outlook, but often the mentality, traditions, set of values and the way of life of the whole nation. Therefore national literature, formed over the course of time under the influence of the most peculiar features a country possesses, can potentially become a unique tool for understanding local community. This makes literary tourism, generally based on national literature and its connection with certain places, a distinctive type of tourism, giving a visitor an insight to the historical and cultural past of a country.

Speaking of literary tourism in different countries, one can notice, that its most common forms may vary depending on the lifestyle and the view of the world accepted in a single country. For example, in Spain these are literary routes, in Russia – visiting writer's houses or a particular location, mentioned in a literary work. This can be connected to the dynamics and the action speed in literary works in different countries: in the Russian literature, the action usually takes place in one location, it is more static and involves more conversations between characters, whilst roaming and travelling is typical for most well-known Spanish literary works, where a character discovers himself through a journey.

A number of destinations are famous for their connection with great literary works. Examples of such places can include Harry Potter's or Sherlock Holmes's London, Tolkien's New Zealand, Hemingway's Cuba. However, for world-famous destinations like these, literary tourism is just one of the many things to offer to potential visitors, and therefore their destination brands are based on other distinctive features.

At the same time, there are destinations, which have built their destination brands primarily on literary tourism, and the Spanish community of Castilla-La Mancha is



one of them. The question is whether literary tourism is on trend at the present time and can contribute to the development of tourism in a destination.

## **1.1 *Rationale for choosing the topic***

### **1.1.1 Personal**

The author has chosen the given topic for her research on the basis of her personal experience. In the summer semester of the academic year 2016/2017 she spent 5 months in Madrid, Spain as a part of an Erasmus program exchange. The Community of Madrid borders the region of Castilla-La Mancha, which makes it possible for Madrid visitors and dwellers to visit Castilla's sights as well.

### **1.1.2 Academic**

Spain with 75,6 million of tourists was one of the most visited countries in the European Union in 2016, having slightly lost first position to France (UNWTO Tourism Highlights). In terms of nights spent by non-residents at tourist accommodations, Spain even came first (ec.europa.eu). The country possesses a range of "pull" factors, which attract tourists to visit it (climate, geographical position, cultural and historical sights, recreational facilities, infrastructure and others). It also has a good international image and a well-elaborated destination branding. All this makes Spain an interesting object for research regarding rapidly developing forms of tourism, such as literary, film-induced or sustainable ones.

## **2 Research aims and objectives and methodology**

### **2.1 Research aims and objectives**

The aim of the research was to *map literary tourism in Castilla-La Mancha* and to *define, to which extent it contributes to the destination branding*.

In order to achieve the aim of the research, the following set of objectives was defined:

- 1) to evaluate the level of awareness about literary activities in the region among tourists from Spain and abroad,
- 2) to suggest a recommendation with a set of marketing tools for raising the attractiveness of the destination given, which can be applied by its Destination Management Organisation (DMO),
- 3) to collect data beneficial for the DMO's of other places, planning to launch a destination brand, based on literary tourism.

#### **2.1.1 Research questions**

Research question 1: does literary tourism play a significant role in the promotion of Castilla-La Mancha as a tourist destination for both domestic and foreign visitors compared to other touristic activities in the region?

Research question 2: are there any marketing tools that can be used for more efficient promotion of the destination in the countries from where the majority of Castilla-La Mancha and the Don Quijote route visitors come from – Spain, Italy, Portugal and France?

### **2.2 Methodology**

The structure of this thesis includes two parts: theoretical and practical. The first part, or the theoretical one, acquaints the reader with the basic definitions and concepts, used in the research. At the same time, the consecutive practical part deals directly with the research, carried out both in-situ and distantly. A number of methods were applied in order to fulfill the research objectives.

### **2.2.1 Qualitative methods applied in the research**

Among qualitative methods applied in the research, there are a semi-structured interview with the representatives of Toledo information center, non-participant observation in the same place and participant observation in Campo de Criptana, one of the points of the Don Quijote route.

### **2.2.2 Non-participant observation**

How the webpage encyclopedia.com states, a non-participant observation is a research technique involves watching the subjects of the study without actively participating in the situation. This method is sometimes criticized due to the possibility of influence on participants' behavior by the very fact of being observed (encyclopedia.com). In this thesis, a non-participant observation in Toledo and its information center was applied for collecting data necessary for future research, particularly semi-structured interview and questionnaire survey.

### **2.2.3 Semi-structured interview**

A semi-structured interview is known as a qualitative method of inquiry realized in the form of open questions (the ones that may evoke discussion), with the opportunity of improvised developing of the conversation and exploring particular topics or responses later (Sweeney, Pritchard). According to Crabtree and Cohen, a semi-structured interview is usually preceded by observation or informal interviewing to get the vision of the issue and is best used when the researcher knows, that he will probably have no more chance to interview someone. The advantages of this type of an interview include valuable information and uniformity with the possibility to guide the conversation from the side of both stakeholders, while among the disadvantages one can find time-consuming collection and analysis of data and special preparation required before an interview (Sweeney, Pritchard). In this research, a set of open questions for a semi-structured interview was prepared on the basis of a non-participant observation in-situ, conducted beforehand.

#### **2.2.4 Participant observation**

A participant observation may be defined as a research strategy, following the goal of establishment familiarity with the subjects of the research with the help of being involved in their habitat (encyclopedia.com). Such research usually includes a number of techniques applied to either prepare for it or to conduct it successfully: informal interviews, direct observation collective discussions and others (encyclopedia.com). The source also suggests, that the main problem of this research strategy is to be able to balance subjectivity and objectivity, as concerns analyzing the results of the observation. In this research, the participant observation took an observer-as-participant form in Campo de Criptana, Castilla-La Mancha.

#### **2.2.5 Quantitative methods applied in the research**

The only quantitative method applied in the research was a questionnaire survey, based on the data collected from qualitative research conducted before.

A survey research is a quantitative technique used to collect data from a particular target group of interest, and can be conducted either in the form of questionnaires or sampling (researchconnections.org). In this thesis, a questionnaire survey with closed questions (questions with a choice of predetermined answers) was used. As noticed on a webpage researchconnections.org, it is important to consider several issues when designing a questionnaire, such as avoiding the use of double-barreled questions (including two questions in one) and also sensitive questions, or at least placing them at the end of a questionnaire, when the connection with the respondent is already established. The website also mentions that closed questions are the best for being used in a questionnaire survey for easier counting the frequency of the responses.

### **3 Theoretical part**

#### ***3.1 The definition of literary tourism and its forms***

The phenomenon of literary tourism, having been developing over centuries and making a part of cultural tourism, is connected to „places celebrated for associations with books or authors“ (Squire, 1994, p. 104). Squire (1994) also defines literary tourism as a part of heritage tourism landscape, but Hoppen et al. (2014) claim, that those two can not be named the same form of tourism, as they might overlap. According to the authors, heritage tourism is more place-based, including all traditions, people, architecture and stories, that make the place unique, whilst literary tourism is less concerned with the place, even though both offer the same kind of experiences.

Other definitions of literary tourism have been proposed, for example, by Busby and Klug (2001, p. 316), stating that it is a „part of media-related tourism, involving visiting places celebrated for associations with books, authors, television programmes and films“. Generally, literary tourism includes following the route taken by a literary character or visiting a particular place, associated with author's life, such as his home, grave and others.

Butler (1996) offers the division of literary tourism into 4 types. Busby and Klug (2001) expand the categorisation of literary tourism with two more types: „travel writing“ and „film-induced“ ones (see Table 1). Travel writing can be considered to be „a channel, through which both places as well as people have been re-intepreted and communicated to wider audience“ (Hoppen et al., 2014). Film-induced literary tourism, according to Hoppen et al. (2014), is based on film-induced tourism, when a tourist reads literary work after having viewed the film based on the work.

**Table 1 Types of literary tourism**

Type	Description
<b>Homage to an actual location, referring to both <i>fiction-related</i> and <i>author-related</i> tourism</b>	Even though it deals with the location, it is always about author's connection with the place ( <i>Shakespeare's Statford</i> )
<b>Refers to <i>fiction-related</i> literary tourism</b>	Less focused on author and more on the places of significance within the literary work ( <i>Dracula's Bran Castle in Transylvania; Sherlock's house on Baker street</i> )
<b>Relates to the <i>appeal of some particular areas</i> because they were <i>appealing to literary figures</i></b>	<i>El Toboso in Castilla-La Mancha</i>
<b>Area becoming a tourist destination in its own right based on the popularity of the author</b>	<i>Wordsworth's Lake District</i>
<b>Travel writing</b>	Can be considered to be „a channel, through which both places as well as people have been re-interpreted and communicated to wider audience“ (Hoppen et al., 2014)
<b>Film-induced literary tourism</b>	Based on film-induced tourism, when a tourist reads literary work after having viewed the film based on the work

Sources: Butler (1996), Busby and Klug (2001), Hoppen et. Al (2014)

McDonnell (2002) state, that tourists encounter and perceive authors and their works by visiting literary museums or trails, festivals, theme parks, accomodation with literary allusions and a wide range of merchandise.

### **3.2 Defining a tourism destination**

The most common definition of a tourism destination include the collocation „a physical space in which a tourist spends at least one overnight“ (World Tourism Organization, 2007, p.1). Destinations could vary from a larger scale (the whole country) through regions or islands to towns and villiages. Each destination generally has physical and administrative boundaries ought to define its management, and so the image and branding of a destination define its market competitiveness within the region, country or at the international level (WTO, 2007). Pásková and Zelenka (2012) specify, that for the non-residence visitors a destination is either the whole country or its region, often a city (Rome, Barcelona, New York). The authors also add, that some countries are divided into historical, administrative or tourism destinations (regions) in order to create and promote regional tourism product. Besides, the conditional division of a country into regions (destinations) is more convenient for collecting statistics.

### **3.3 The definition of push-pull factors**

Pásková and Zelenka (2012) define push-pull factors as those that motivate residents to leave their permant home (push factors) and to move to another place, which is attractive by the range of features (pull factors). The authors state, that the same approach can be applied to tourism and tourists' decision to visit a certain destination. They put such features as the desire for discovering something new, unfavorable ecological situation or climate, transport congestion in big cities and others among push factors, while favorable climate, natural and cultural attractiveness, rich historical background and more are classified as pull factors.

### **3.4 Destination management**

Regardless its scale, each destination contains a number of elements, which are meant to attract visitors („pull“ factors) and to satisfy their need upon the arrival (WTO, 2007). The presence, combination and quality of these factors have an influence on visitor's decision to make a trip to a certain destination.

**Table 2 The basic elements of a tourist destination**

<b>Attractions</b>	Natural (mountains, beaches), built (Sagrada Familia), cultural (festivals, museums)
<b>Accessibility</b>	Entry points, visa requirements, connection with large transportation hubs, traveling within destination borders
<b>Public and Private Amenities</b>	Basic infrastructure, accommodation and gastronomic facilities, entertainment venues
<b>Image and Character</b>	Visitor's awareness of a destination; could be promoted via branding, e-marketing, travel media
<b>Price</b>	Cost of food, transportation, accommodation, amusements; an effective tool in the competition with other destinations
<b>Human Resources</b>	Tourism workforce, local community, their willingness to receive tourists

Source: World Tourism Organization, 2007, p. 1

The elements presented in the schema are the ones that make up a destination. Their coordinated control, regulation, interaction and promotion are the main purposes of destination management (WTO, 2007). Organisations responsible for the fulfillment of those aims are called Destination Management Organisations, or DMO. Generally, they belong to one of the following categories:

- National Tourism Authorities (NTAs) or Organisations (NTOs). They are responsible for tourism marketing and management at a national scale. For example, Spain is represented by Turespaña internationally at [spain.info](http://spain.info).



- Regional, provincial or state DMOs (RTOs), responsible for the marketing and management of tourism in a certain geographic region, usually (but not necessarily) of an administrative unit (county, state or province). Castilla-La Mancha, the autonomous community of Spain, is represented at a regional level at [turismocastillalamancha.es](http://turismocastillalamancha.es).
- Local DMOs are responsible for the destination management of smaller geographic areas: cities or towns. As for Local DMOs in Spain, its capital, Madrid, is represented at a local level by Madrid City Hall at <https://www.esmadrid.com>.

### ***3.5 Literary destinations and their marketing***

A literary place attracts visitors for being connected with a literary work or a famous literator, which means having unique features, contributing to the genius loci of a place. However, Hoppen et al. (2014) claim, that to the pull factors of literary destinations can be as well included more general qualities, such as:

- scenic environment,
- wide offer of facilities (souvenirs, costume guided tours),
- convenient geographical position, making the destination a stopping point along a more general tourism itinerary.

Hereafter, Hoppen et al. (2014) indicate that as a place marketing tool, such sights of interest can be united into literary heritage trails, providing visitors with an interpreted route to follow by car, on foot, by bike or even on horseback. According to Andersen and Robinson (2002, p. 22), linking several places through literary trail creates „a more potent and penetrative tourist product, not just in promotional terms but in a wider intellectual sense, too“.

### ***3.6 Trends in literary destinations marketing***

#### **3.6.1 From niche to mass tourism**

Probably the most significant trend in literary tourism in past decade was expanding its scale with the help of literary festivals and moving from a special niche product to that of mass tourism (Hoppen et al., 2014). The audience of the

Hay Festival, being annually held in Hay-on-Wye, Wales, has grown from 1,000 visitors to 250,000 and has been dubbed by the former US president Bill Clinton „The Woodstock of the Mind“ (BBC, 2011). San Juan de Gaztelugatxe in Spain can serve as a more local example of becoming a mass tourism place thanks to becoming a prototype of the Dragonstone in the book saga and TV series „Game of Thrones“, with the numbers of visitors skyrocketed in 2017: more than 75,000 visitors in July 2017 compared with 28,000 throughout all the summer 2016, which is also 21.85 % more than in 2015 (Gorospe, 2017).

### **3.6.2 Literary tourism forms development**

As any form of tourism, the literary tourism has undergone the process of development, with the traditional offer of visiting the tombs and houses of famous writers or literary characters diversified with literary routes, connecting natural heritage (mostly rural areas) with the cultural one (Ruiz Scarfuto, 2013). However, author notices, that rural areas require more caution with flora, fauna and the local community; this can be promoted to the visitors through interpretation centers, located in each section of a route.

### **3.6.3 Collaborative product and experiential development**

Some literary places may lack activities necessary to attract a significant amount of tourists, therefore they can be linked through tourist “clusters”, “routes” or “trails”, offering an opportunity for new product and destination development (Hoppen et al., 2014).

Hoppen et al. (2014) notice that the collaboration between attractions with the lower level of attraction contributes to the destination market appeal while attracting new markets and lowering seasonality. The main challenge here is to compound all the divergent components of the destination product in order to make a successful destination brand (Morgan, Pritchard, & Piggot, 2003). If all the stakeholders are agree with the quality of the final product and are ready to meet or exceed visitors’ expectations and the effective collaboration across or between destinations have been achieved, the next step is a literary-driven destination branding (Hoppen et al., 2014).

### **3.7 Destination branding**

*„The brand is not only a trademark (logo, strapline or icon), but an experience and image that signals a value system and positioning. In short, it’s a PROMISE” (WTO, 2007, p. 45).*

Destination marketplace has proven to be highly competitive nowadays. Some destinations count on a popular trend of sustainable tourism (Costa Rica, New Zealand), others offer spiritual diversity (India), one-of-its-kind, luxurious experience (Dubai), history and traditions (Peru) or a “tropical paradise” (Maldives). One of the trends is to offer not only the best ratio of price and quality, but the most unique experience. That’s why it is essential for the destination and its DMO to create a unique, memorable, differentiating brand, as the destination brand communicates with a visitor even before he comes to the destination (WTO, 2007).

WTO (2007, p. 45) defines a brand as a “unique combination of product characteristics and added values, both tangible and non-tangible”. It promises visitor a certain kind of experience, which he expects to encounter during his trip. An effective branding used by DMOs could be an efficient tool for managing the destination’s image and positioning the destination. (WTO, 2007)

In order to develop a successful and popular brand, DMOs need to specify destination’s target market. The destination may have many experiences to offer, but understanding which one is unbeatable, appealing to a high number of potential visitors is the key to success. Therefore DMOs should ascertain the needs and wants of customers, both tangible (accommodation, transportation, gastronomy) and intangible (adventure, expected genius loci, relaxation), and work on their fulfillment. (WTO, 2007)

According to WTO (2007), the five key phases of building the brand are as follows:

- Image investigation,
- Brand identity development,
- Brand design,
- Brand launch and communication,
- Brand management.

### ***3.8 Literary-driven destination branding***

A number of destinations include in their destination brands the connection with some literary figures or famous authors, such as “Dicken’s London”, “Lisbeth Salander’s Stockholm” or “Shakespear’s Stratford” (Watson, 2006). The challenge for any destination branding, including that of literary destinations, is to elaborate an “umbrella” approach in order to appeal to and satisfy different markets and market segments, which are likely to be attracted by different literary figures or authors (Hoppen et al., 2014).

Umbrella branding is the strategy of launching sub-brands united under a single credible brand with the same logos, symbols and brand name for each product (marketingwit.com). This strategy is used for three and more related but different in use, price or shape products with the purpose of its marketability evaluation under one brand name (marketingwit.com).

## 4 Pracial part

### 4.1 *Literary tourism in Spain*

As one of the most visited countries in the world, Spain offers a great variety of activities regarding any form of tourism. With its rich cultural and historical background and a high level of destination management in all regions, the country is able to fulfill the expectations even of visitors belonging to niche markets. What concerns literary tourism, Spain has great potential in attracting more domestic and foreign visitors with more effective promotion and connecting literary tourism with the film-induced one, due to the fact the country has recently gained more popularity as a venue for film-making.

According to the research carried out by the website [listas.20minutos.es](http://listas.20minutos.es), there are 50 most popular activities connected with literary tourism in Spain, mostly literary routes, museums or houses of famous literators. The users of the website ranked them by giving points to each place or route. The house museum of the Valencian writer Blasco Ibáñez occupied first position, followed by the Miguel Hernández route and the house museum of Azorín, the Spanish novelist. The Don Quijote route came fourth, coupled with the house museum of Miguel de Cervantes at the eighth place.

An interesting fact, related to the potential of domestic literary tourism growth, regards the initiative of the Community of Madrid and its local government. Over 20 years ago, they have launched a project called „Libros a la calle“, or „Books to the streets“. The campaign aims at the imminence of literature and community dwellers through public transport, where travellers can see posters with the pieces written by most prominent Spanish writers and poets. Passengers can scan the QR code places in every poster and read the whole piece online. Each year the comitee chooses 20 new pieces to present them to public (Sagaseta de Ilurdoz, 2017).

Other interesting initiative aimed at the raising of citizens' awareness and interest in the Spanish literature is Bibliometro. Bibliometro is the network of library points situated in 12 stations of Madrid metro, where the travellers can borrow up to 3 books for the period of 15 days ([metromadrid.es](http://metromadrid.es)). Both the initiatives

mentioned above are a part of the „Plan of the amplification of reading in the Community of Madrid“ (literaturasm.com).

Among other literary projects worth mentioning are Bibliobus, library service in the form of buses going to remote villages and „The train and the journey“, powered by RENFE (Spanish national railway carrier), which allows travellers to read pieces of the greatest literary works in Spanish during the journey in the train (literaturasm.com).

## **4.2 Literary tourism in Castilla-La Mancha**

### **4.2.1 General characteristics of tourism in Castilla-La Mancha**

Castilla-La Mancha is an autonomous community and region in Spain with the population of approximately 1,977,000 people, consisting of 5 provinces: Toledo (the capital), Ciudad Real, Albacete, Guadalajara and Cuenca (Rodriguez).



**Figure 1 The position of the autonomous community Castilla-La Mancha within Spain.**

Source: [spain-map.blogspot.cz](http://spain-map.blogspot.cz)

Bordering several regions with a high number of visitors and good transportation connection (such as the Community of Madrid or Andalucía) makes Castilla easily

reachable by bus, train or car. For instance, Toledo (the capital of the region) is connected with Madrid by buses and trains leaving 5 times per hour and the duration time is about one hour. Relatively low ticket prices (10-15 € for round trip) and the status of the UNESCO World Heritage Site attract visitors to Toledo and make it a perfect spot for a day trip.

According to the Spanish online newspaper El Diario (2017), Castilla-La Mancha has converted its amazing landscapes and rich historical and cultural background into a large scope of tourism activities and opportunities for both foreign and domestic tourists. The community shows high potential for the development of rural and agro tourism, not least due to the growing number and types of accommodation, including camping sites and rural houses. The growth is especially significant in terms of foreign visitors with 21,1 % more overnight stops than in 2016, while there were 1,6 % more domestic visitors in the region in the first trimester of 2017 (El Diario). The newspaper also states, that during the Easter holidays in 2016, the occupation of hotels in the region was about 94%, with 100 % occupation in several locations, such as Ciudad Real or Cuenca.

The official Castilla-La Mancha tourism website ([turismocastillalamancha.es](http://turismocastillalamancha.es)) is fully available in the Spanish language and partially in English. It offers a wide variety of tourism activities of different types, such as traditional festivals, geosites, birdwatching, hunting and fishing, gastronomical, handicrafts and wine tasting tours, literary and heritage routes and many more. The website is interactive, well arranged and contains a lot of useful information (maps, booklets, accommodation offers) for potential visitors willing to make a trip to the region. As a matter of interest, web pages also have a diary in the form of a calendar with all the important activities in the community and a blog.

For international visitors, Castilla-La Mancha is primarily known for being a location in which the action of „The Ingenious Nobleman Sir Quijote of La Mancha“ by Miguel de Cervantes proceeds and also for having two UNESCO World Heritage Sites, Historic walled town of Cuenca and Toledo old town centre (Turespaña).

#### 4.2.2 Destination branding in Castilla-La Mancha

In 2015, Castilla-La Mancha government announced the launch of a new touristic brand of the region with the slogan „*En un lugar... de tu vida*“ („*In a place... of a lifetime*“), occasioned with the Year of Cervantes, 2016 (Hernández, 2015). The region’s tourism board used the connection of Castilla with world-famous novel about Don Quijote for the creation of a new logo. They converted some Quijote’s features into graphic elements, such as his armet, his beard and the silhouette of a book. As a result, a lapidary, memorable logo in three basic colours (black, red and white) has appeared.



**Figure 2** New brand of Castilla-La Mancha, including a logo and a slogan and positioning the destination as a literary place.

Source: cadenaser.com

As mentioned in the theoretical part of the following work, destination branding can be an efficient tool for managing the destination’s image and positioning the destination. Castilla’s tourism board followed five steps essential for building the brand, starting with *image investigation* (the region is known for its rich heritage and cultural background) and *brand identity development* (connection with the world-famous Spanish literary work). *Brand design* (a new logo and a slogan) and its *launch and communication* through various media were followed by *brand*



*management*, a continuous last step aimed at advertising and maintaining the brand at a regional, national and international levels.

Curiously, the connection with Cervantes' piece of art and the Don Quijote trail, following the journey of an iconic literary character, are not the only remarkable possessions of Castilla-La Mancha. There are more cultural, gastronomical and literary routes in the region, such as the Route of El Cid, the Cuenca Silk Road, the Valdepeñas Wine Trail ([turismocastillalamancha.es](http://turismocastillalamancha.es)). But it was exactly the Don Quixote Trail, which has been chosen as the basis for building the new brand due to its global significance and the contribution to the national Spanish literature and overall image of Spain abroad.

#### **4.2.3 The strategic plan of tourism development in Castilla-La Mancha in 2015-2019**

The development of Castilla-La Mancha in terms of tourism is defined in the strategic plan for the period of 2015-2019. In the plan, 4 strategic goals and 7 objectives have been set. One of the goals is to „stimulate the development of Castilla-La Mancha's internalisation under the auspices of a new international trademark, connected with the most universal envoy which distinguishes the region from others – Cervantes – and his universal piece of art: Don Quijote“ (Plan estratégico de turismo, Castilla-La Mancha, 2015).

Three of the strategic objectives are linked to the destination branding and its new brand: „to renovate Castilla-La Mancha as a tourist destination in the national and international market, generating an image of a long-lasting brand, which delivers unique attributes of the region with its new trademark: Castilla-La Mancha, the place of your lifetime“; „to unify the destination brand with the key touristic products and the products contributing to the destination's differentiation, such as cultural and natural heritage of Castilla-La Mancha“; to make tourist offer not seasonally adjusted through the specialization and differentiation of the offer aimed at niche market“ (Plan estratégico de turismo, Castilla-La Mancha, 2015).

#### 4.2.4 Don Quijote literary route

The Don Quijote literary route makes the core of Castilla-La Mancha brand. The region served as a setting location for the best-selling individual book of all times, with the estimated number of 500 million copies sold – „The Ingenious Nobleman Sir Quijote of La Mancha“ by Miguel de Cervantes (Clear). Nowadays, all Castilla-La Mancha’s visitors can follow in the footsteps of Don Quijote along the 2,443 km long walking route, having various entrance points and numerous parking lots for easier access by car, bicycle or on foot (Ruiz Scarfuto, 2013).



**Figure 3** The Don Quijote route map in the center of Toledo, Castilla-La Mancha.

Source: author

Ruiz Scarfuto (2013) defines the Don Quijote route as a heritage route, strengthening the connection between natural and historical literary sites. The author also mentions that due to the significance of the route and the necessity to protect it, a unique Don Quijote Route Law was introduced in 2006, as well as GPS coordinates for each section of the route.

In the website [rutaquijote.es](http://rutaquijote.es), powered by Castilla-La Mancha’s DMO, one can find the information in Spanish about the landmarks, places of interest and the

gastronomy on the route. Moreover, webpages demonstrate the division of the route into literary and touristic ones. A literary route precisely follows all the 40 sites in Castilla visited by Don Quijote during his three sallies, whereas the touristic version of the route runs across 32 places either mentioned in the novel or situated nearby and being subjects of “landscape, artistic, cultural, gastronomical and patrimonial” interest (rutaquijote.es). Each site is provided with a description and tips for accommodation and gastronomy in the place.

The route was granted the certificate of a “Cultural Route of the Council of Europe” in 2007 for its significance and the effort to combine both massive and ecotourism and became the first cultural route, inspired by a literary character (culture-routes.net). The European Youth Portal mentions the fact that over 2,400 km long route was divided into 10 smaller trips for the convenience of visitors, which are the following:

- Route 1: From Toledo to San Clemente by Toboso and Belmonte. 501Km.
- Route 2: From San Clemente to Villanueva de los Infantes by Ruidera Lagoons. 280 Km
- Route 3: From Villanueva de los Infantes Almagro and Calatrava la Vieja. 278 Km
- Route 4: From The Valley de Alcudia to Campo de Calatrava. 330km.
- Route 5: From Albacete to Alcaraz and Bienservida. 179km.
- Route 6: From Roda to Campo de Montiel. 402km.
- Route: From Campo de Criptana to Tomelloso Argamasilla de Alba and Solana. 126 Km
- Route 8: From Almagro to Toledo, going by Ciudad Real and Consuegra. 392 Km
- Route 9: From Illescas to Carranque and Esquivias. 20 Km
- Route 10: From la Hoz del Rio Dulce to Siguenza and Atienza. 106 Km (europa.eu)

## **5 Research design**

### ***5.1 Non-participant observation (Toledo)***

As mentioned earlier in this work, one of the qualitative research methods applied was a non-participant observation in the capital of Castilla-La Mancha – Toledo, traditionally attracting the highest number of visitors during all the destinations in the region, not least due to the status of a UNESCO World Heritage Site and a good transport connection with Madrid.

On June 21, 2017 the author went on a trip from Madrid to Toledo to collect data about visitors' behavior, their awareness about the Don Quijote route and the way the local information center interacts with tourists and promotes literary activities in the place. The personnel of the Toledo information center had been informed by email beforehand and allowed the author to conduct a non-participant observation before the semi-structured interview as well as agreed to participate in it.

Probably the easiest way to travel from Madrid to Toledo starts at the metro station Plaza Elíptica, from where buses depart to Toledo coach station every 20 minutes. Notably, Madrid transport pass is valid for this line, while those not holding it have to pay about 7 euros for a one-way ticket. Upon arrival to the bus station, the majority of the passengers go up to the hill with the cathedral dominant over the town. There are plenty of maps and advertisements at the station and along the road in English and Spanish. At first sight, the Asian tourists with cameras and pocket guides prevail among 40-50 travellers, having come by a full bus.

After following the road for 10 minutes, the visitors see the modern wooden building of the information center and go inside, except for a couple of people.

Inside the infocenter, visitors can find stands with brochures and leaflets about the activities in the region, but exclusively in the Spanish language. There is no waiting room, so non Spanish-speaking visitors have to wait in a queue until they get an opportunity to approach one of three front-desk managers. All of them have a good command of English and since not being able to offer guiding materials in English, provide visitors with a town map with the main sights marked. They

answer the visitors' questions scrupulously and in details and note down the nationality of each tourist.

What differs that particular infocenter compared to other information centers visited by the author in Europe and Spain is that the receptionists try to elaborate an individual approach to every client. In the conversation with younger visitors, they mention a zipline across the river and the rooftop restaurant with an amazing view over the town. As for families with children, the personnel gives them tips for good and affordable restaurants around the city center, visiting the famous „molines de viento“ (windmills, with which Don Quijote was fighting in the book and which became a symbol of Castilla-La Mancha) and the museum of Cervantes. What concerns couples, they are offered wine tasting tours and romantic mini-trips to El Toboso, the villiage where the beloved one of Don Quijote, Dulcinea, was living.

Interestingly, there is a different approach for the Spanish and foreign visitors. As for the first ones, the receptionists give them a lot of printed material about landmarks on the Don Quijote route and scrupulously explain, where to stay overnight and how to plan the trip for several days. Actually, the route itself and the activities offered along it were the most frequently asked questions by the Spaniards. Obviously, they are aware of the most famous attraction in the region and mostly come for visiting not a single place, as the tourists from Madrid do, but to follow the route going across several places.

The second, English-speaking group of tourists was mostly offered to take part in wine or gastronomical tours, to visit traditional restaurants or only some, the most popular places in the region. In general, conversations with foreigners tended to be more brief and less informative. As for the tourists from Asia, not all of them had at least basic knowledge of English, which, coupled with the absence of any pinte materials in their native language, made their visit to the information center less useful than it could be under different conditions.

## **5.2 Semi-structured interview**

The semi-structured interview with the representatives of the information center in Toledo took place on June 21, 2017 as a part of a non-participant observation. The receptionist interviewed agreed to the conversation being recorded, but wished to remain anonymous. The transcript of the interview is provided below (A stands for the author of the research):

„ A: How many people are interested in the Don Quijote route? Do visitors ask about it in the infocenter frequently?

- Yes, a lot of visitors ask us about it, probably because it is one of the most popular activities in the region. Mostly they are Spaniards, but the level of interest and awareness from foreign tourists is also high.

A: Speaking about foreign visitors, do you gather statistics regarding nationalities of tourists visiting the Don Quijote route here in Toledo and other information centers in Castilla?

- Unfortunately, here in Toledo we don't do that. As far as I know, none of the information centers do that. We only have statistics about foreign tourists in Castilla-La Mancha in general. But from personal experience of me and my colleagues I can say, that after the Spanish, people from Latin region in Europe are the ones who visit the route most of all. Probably, it is because of the proximity of languages and cultures.

A: Latin region in Europe? What does that mean?

- I mean countries, where they also speak Romance languages, same as we do here in Spain: France, Portugal and Italy. They are close to Spain and we share similar culture and traditions. (author's note: According to [globeproject.com](http://globeproject.com), the Latin Europe cluster includes not only Spain, Italy, Portugal and France, but also Israel and the French Switzerland).

A: Is there any interest in the Don Quijote route from the Czech tourists?

- No, there isn't or it's minimal. Probably, this can be explained by the absence of the propagation materials in English or Czech. All the leaflets, booklets and other printed material we offer are in Spanish.

A: What is done to promote the Don Quijote route and literary tourism in Castilla La Mancha?

- In the Toledo infocenter, one can find numerous flyers and leaflets with the description of the route, its main points and places of interest nearby. There are also advertisements and posters promoting the Don Quijote route in Barcelona and Valencia, as both cities were included in the Third Sally of Don Quijote. There is a website about tourism in Castilla-La Mancha in English and Spanish and even a website devoted only to the Don Quijote route with a lot of information about where to stay, which meals to try and what to see in every place located on the route. I think it can be very useful for future visitors, but unfortunately, it's only in Spanish.

A: What other activities for literary amateurs can be found in the region?

- The majority of them are in Madrid, which is even closer to Toledo, than other big towns in the region. That's why literary lovers tend to flock to Madrid or Alcalá de Henares, the birthplace of Cervantes.

A: Can you express your own opinion about the state of literary tourism in Castilla La Mancha? What would you suggest for improving it?

- It is promoted quite well, but only for Spanish speaking visitors. There is also a good connection of region center – Toledo – with Madrid, which makes the route more accesible for foreign visitors, coming by plane or train. Unfortunately, there is no public transport on the route with the exception of 1-2 buses, going to some villiages, included to the route. The best way to discover the Don Quijote route is to go there by car, which makes it possible to visit everything in 1-2 days. Without car, you may only visit the biggest towns among the route. We need to focus on promoting the route abroad more, maybe prepare some materials in Italian or French. And even in Spain, not everyone knows about the route, mostly older people or people in their middle ages. It is necessary to search for new market, make the route more appealing for young generation and foreigners.“

### **5.3 Participant observation (*Campo de Criptana*)**

One of the most iconic places in the community, often depicted in any printed or electronic materials about Castilla-La Mancha and the Don Quijote route, is Campo de Criptana. It is known for ten white windmills, which don Quijote confused with giants in one of the most famous battles in the novel. The windmills can be also found in Consuegra, Alcázar de San Juan and Mota del Cuervo, but Campo de Criptana attracts many visitors as a landmark on the way between two major towns in the region, Cuenca and Ciudad Real.

An observer-as-participant observation took place on June 24, 2017 in Campo de Criptana. The destination has relatively poor transport connection with bigger towns, and the only way to reach it without a car goes across Ciudad Real, with a bus and trains departing towards Campo de Criptana once and three times per day respectively. The most convenient way to arrive to the destination is by car. The signage on the way is not very clear, and that makes visitors wandering around the town until they go up to the hill, where the parking lot is situated. And here there are, ten famous windmills, with a restaurant in one of them and the museum of the Spanish actress Sara Montiel, who was born in Campo de Criptana. In the information center, it is possible to ask for a guided tour inside one of the windmills, dating back to the XVI century. The tours are available in Spanish and English.

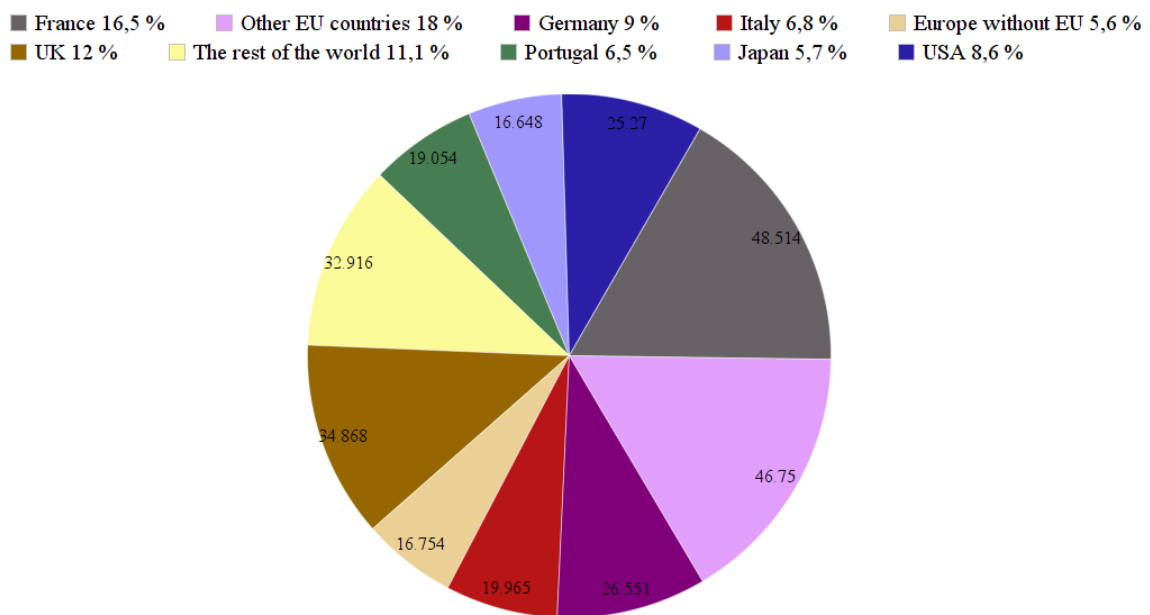
The number of visitors in Campo de Criptana is incomparable with that in Toledo or Cuenca, probably due to the complicated transport situation and not that various offer of other activities in the town and nearby. Most typically, the visitors would come by car, take pictures, go inside the windmill for a tour or to a restaurant and leave. It would barely take 2-3 hours to discover the place. The majority of the visitors observed were Spanish, very often families with children. However, during the guided tour, the author encountered a family from France. Apart from that, there were about 15 tourists from Asia. The staff of the information center confirmed, that Spaniards make approximately 80 % of the visitors' number, while other 10 % mostly come from France and 10 % from Asia.



## 5.4 The questionnaire survey

The non-participant observation in Toledo information center, the semi-structured interview with its representatives and the participant observation in Campo de Criptana served as the basis for the creation of the questionnaire survey and defining the target group. After the research carried out in situ with the help of the methods used above, the following target group was specified: the Spaniards who visit the Don Quijote route most of all, followed by the Latin European clusture (Italians, Portuguese and French). According to the official statistics of foreign visitors' number in Castilla-La Mancha, tourists from Italy, Portugal and France account for a significant percentage of 29,8 % from total number of visitors from abroad.

International tourists in Castilla-La Mancha, 2014



**Figure 4 Visitors from Portugal (6,5 %), Italy (6,8 %) and France (16,5 %) make almost one-third of all foreign tourists in Castilla-La Mancha**

Source: adapted by author from [castillalamancha.es](http://castillalamancha.es)

Being an active member of Erasmus Student Network, the author has decided to question 100 respondents from Spain, Portugal, France and Italy, aged 20-25 and

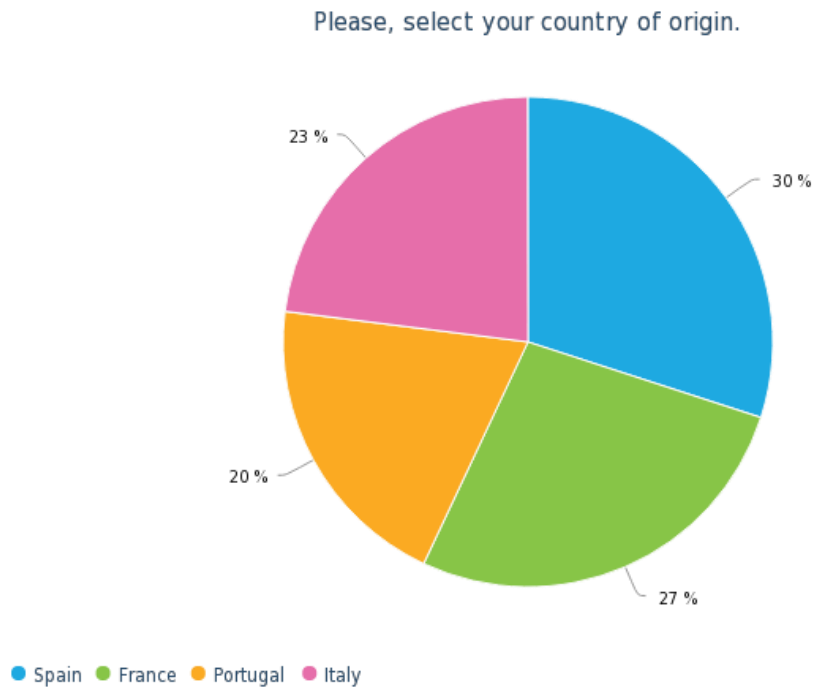
those who either participated or is still participating in the Erasmus exchange program in the city of Hradec Králové, Czechia.

Respondents were offered to answer 10 questions regarding the Don Quijote route and literary tourism in general via the website survio.com, a free platform for creating questionnaire surveys. The questions were designed in order to find out respondents' country of origin, their attitude towards famous brands in tourism, their awareness of Castilla-La Mancha's destination brand and the Don Quijote route and the growth potential of domestic and foreign literary tourism. Apart from that, the respondents were asked to rank the push-pull factors of Castilla-La Mancha in the order of their importance and state, if they would go to Spain exclusively for visiting the Don Quijote route, visit it as a part of a larger trip to Spain on their own or would rather purchase a package tour in a travel agency.

## 6 Findings and their discussion

### 6.1 Data obtained from the questionnaire survey

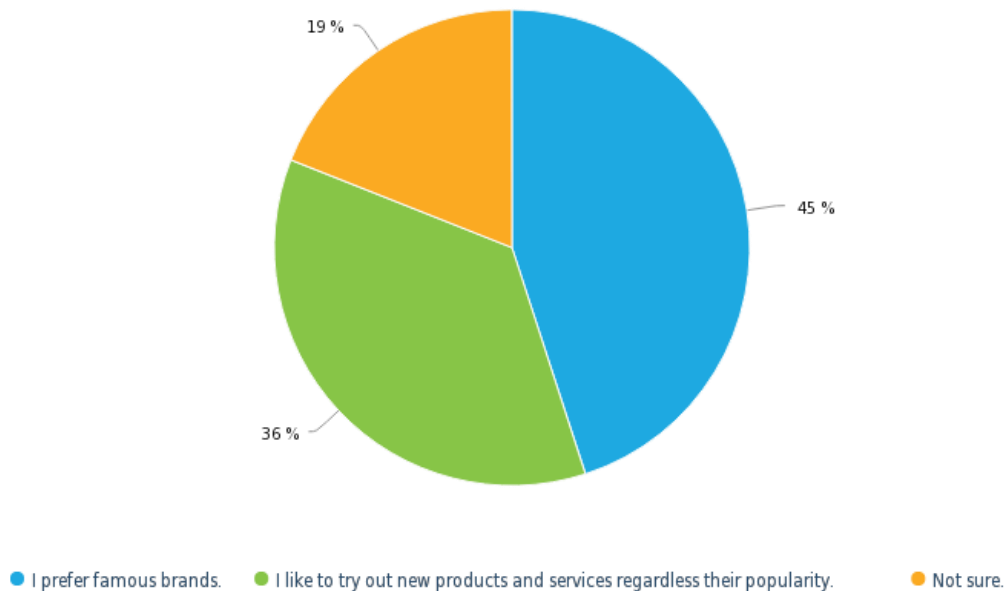
Question 1:



In total, 30 respondents from Spain, 27 from France, 23 from Italy and 20 from Portugal took part in the survey. All of them are aged 20-25 and has studied or are still studying at the University of Hradec Králové within their Erasmus exchange program.

## Question 2:

While travelling, do you rely on famous brands or prefer to try less popular or unknown products and services?

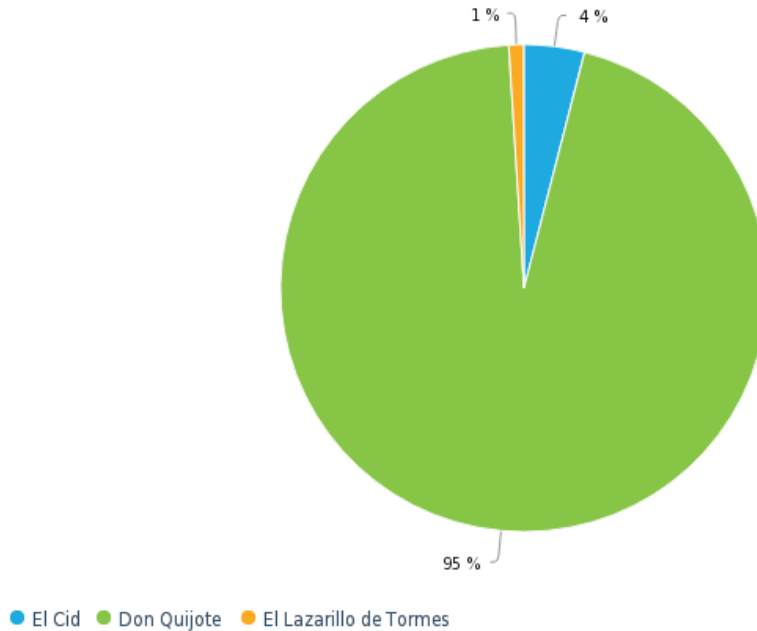


For the second question related to brands in tourism, the most frequent answer was “I prefer famous brands”. In the context of travelling, famous brands may entail well-known hotel (Marriott, Hilton, Ibis) or restaurant (McDonald’s, Domino’s Pizza) chains, air carriers (Lufthansa, KLM), bus companies (Flixbus, Alsa) just as well as destinations. Strong destination brands help destinations to be more successful on the tourism market and contribute to their overall image and visitation. However, a significant number of respondents (36 %) don’t rely on the fame of brands, while 19 were not sure. This can be linked to the trend of seeking for authentic experiences and avoiding too touristy destinations, especially among youngsters, which make the target group of the survey.

Nevertheless, building a destination brand is seen as an important part of the marketing and promotion of a place.

### Question 3:

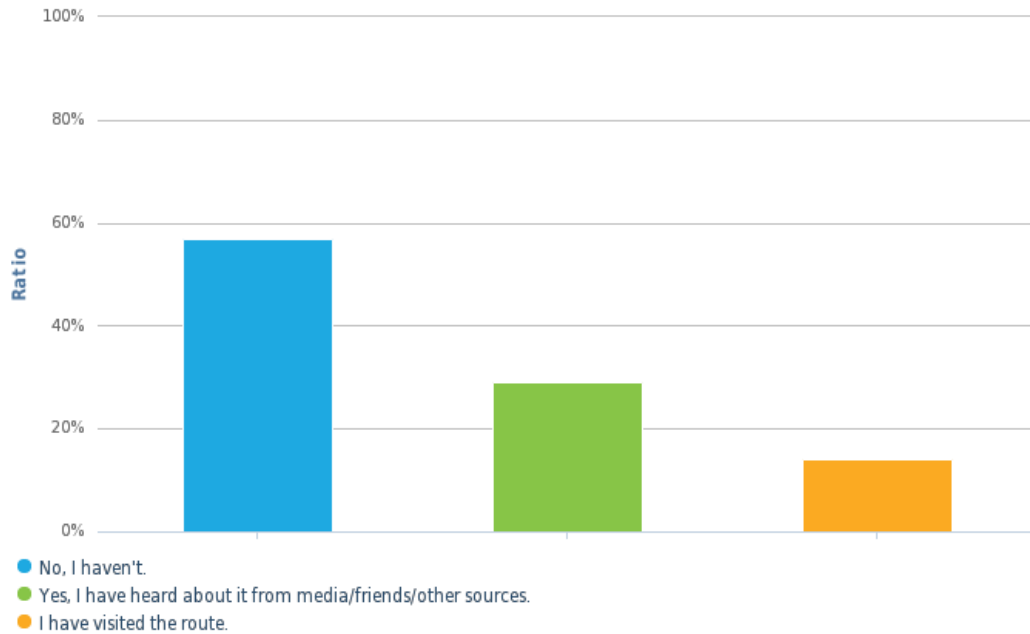
Castilla-La Mancha, the Spanish autonomous community, is famous for its connection with one of the most best-selling books of all times. Can you name the main character of the book?



The majority of the respondents (95 %) are aware either of the connection of Don Quijote with Castilla-La Mancha or of the literary work itself. Logically, the DMO of the region built the destination brand on the name of the Cervantes' book.

#### Question 4:

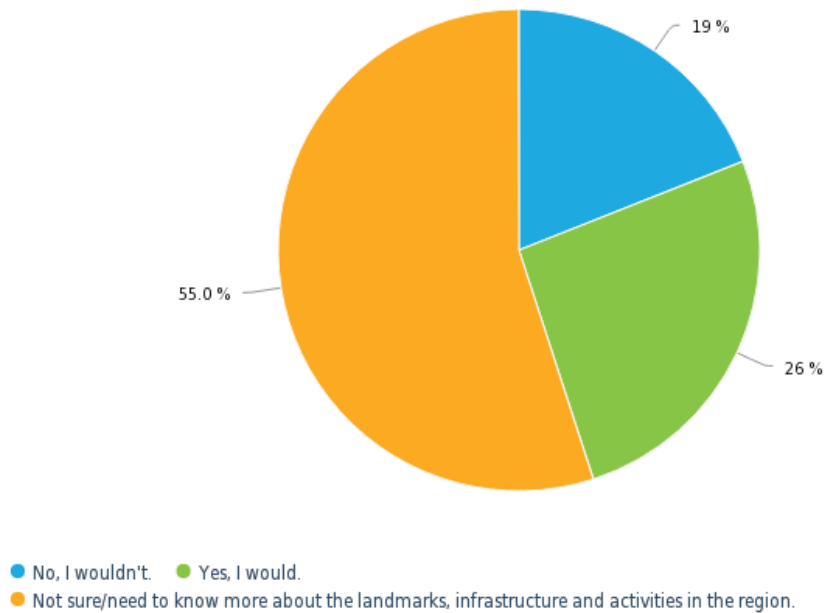
Castilla's DMO (Destination Management Organization) has used the connection of the region with Don Quijote for launching a new destination brand with the slogan "In a place of a lifetime". The 2,700 km long Don Quijote route, running across all the places mentioned in the book, has served as the basis for this destination brand. Have you heard of the route before?



If the name of Don Quijote was familiar to the vast majority of the respondents, the Don Quijote route cannot boast the same level of awareness: 57 % of the respondents have never heard of the route before participating in the questionnaire survey. However, 29 % of those interviewed are aware of the route, while 14 % out of the total number have visited the route or its single points.

### Question 5:

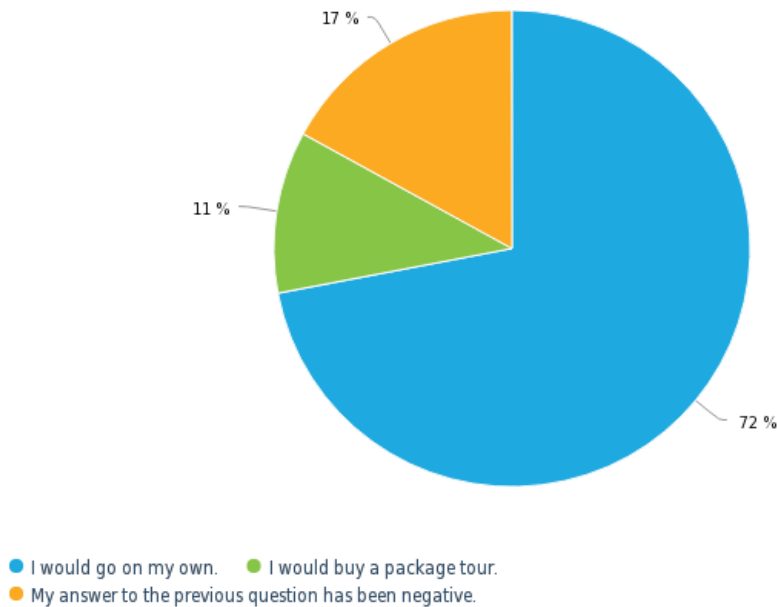
Would you go to Spain exclusively for visiting the Don Quijote route?



As indicated in the graph above, only 19 % of respondents are sure they wouldn't come to Spain for the sake of visiting the route exclusively. 26 % responded positively, while 55 % of those interviewed would like to know more about tourism in the region and the activities it offers. Those 55 % can be linked to 57 % of respondents, who in the previous question stated, that they have never heard of a route before. More sufficient promotion, based on an already world-famous literary work, can improve destination's brand visibility and help to strengthen Castilla's position in the Spanish tourism market, dominated by Barcelona, Madrid, Granada, Seville and the islands.

### Question 6:

If your answer to the previous question has been positive or neutral, would you visit the route on your own or purchase a package tour in a travel agency?

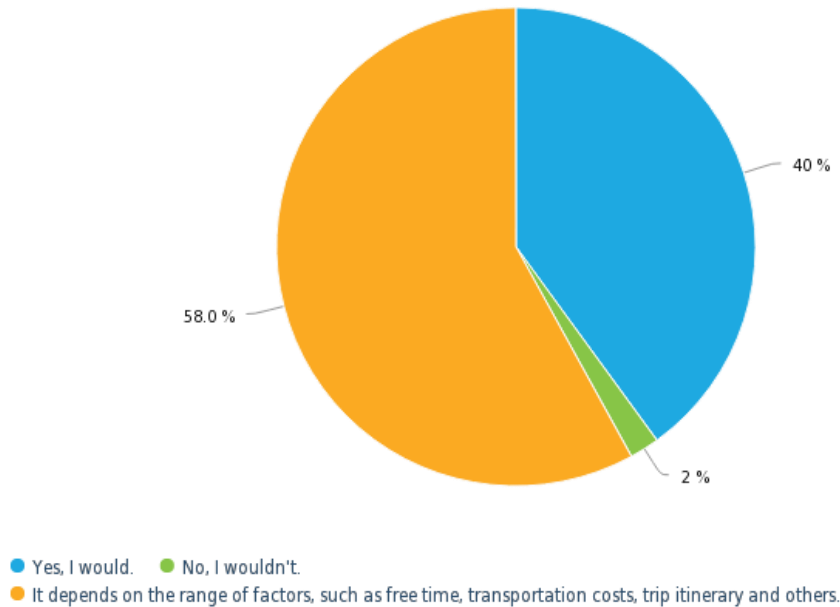


The majority of the respondents would prefer to visit the Don Quijote route on their own, and only 11 % would rather purchase a package tour in a travel agency. Again, it leads to the necessity of more efficient promotion of the region not only in Spanish, but in other languages for visitors abroad. The cooperation with travel agencies could still be fruitful for both sides, but the route might not be that appealing for foreign visitors, overshadowed by popular Spanish destinations with more developed infrastructure, especially international airports and train stations. Package tours focused on visiting the route exclusively may be more successful at the domestic tourism market, and they are already provided by the Spanish travel agencies, as, for example, the 11 hours' tour with civitatis Madrid realized 3 times per week (the tour costs 109 euros and can be purchased online at [disfrutamadrid.com/actividades/tour-don-quiote](http://disfrutamadrid.com/actividades/tour-don-quiote)).



### Question 7:

Would you visit the route as a part of a larger trip to Spain, for example, on the way from one destination to another? (e.g. Madrid-Sevilla, Granada-Madrid)



The diagram above shows, that the impressive number of respondents (58 %) would definitely visit the Don Quijote route as a part of a trip across more popular destinations in Spain. 40 % were not sure, stating that a range of factors may influence their decisions to visit the route. The responds indicate, that cooperation with the DMO's and a private sector (travel agencies, guides, transport companies) of more touristy destinations located relatively nearby (Madrid, Valencia, Córdoba, Granada) can be an effective marketing tool for the destination management of Castilla-La Mancha and the route in particular.

### Question 8:

8 Please, rank the factors that may attract you to visit a certain destination:			
▲	#	Answer Choices	Importance
	●	Rich historical and cultural background	3.3
	●	UNESCO World Heritage Sites	2.3
	●	Good image and the popularity of the destination	2.9
	●	Affordable accomodation, transportation and alimentation costs	2.8
	●	A wide offer of activities in the destination (gastronomic and sightseeing tours, wine tasting, hiking and others)	3.7

As mentioned earlier in the theoretical part of the thesis, the factors that attract visitors to come to a destination are called “pull factors”. During the non-participant and participant observation and the interview a range of pull factors of Castilla-La Mancha were discovered, among them are those listed above and the popularity of the destination within Spain. Each factor could get a score from 1 to 5. Respondents gave the highest scores to the “wide offer of activities in the destination” and “rich historical and cultural background”, while UNESCO World Heritage Sites (2 in Castilla-La Mancha) drew the least attention.

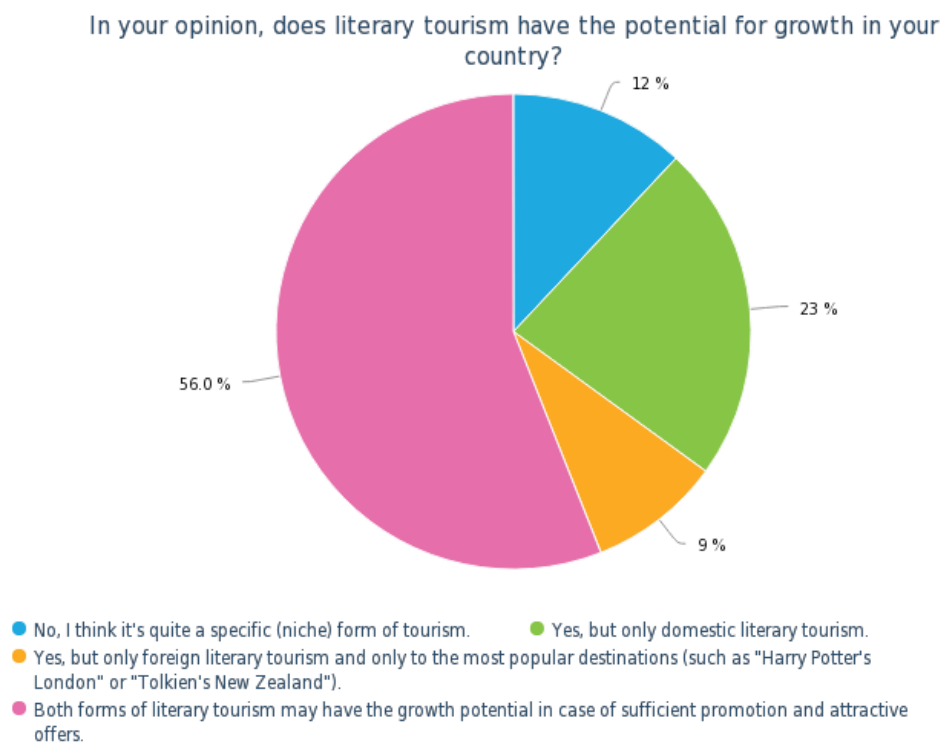
### Question 9:

9 Please, rank the factors that may influence your decision not to visit the destination:			
▲	#	Answer Choices	Importance
	●	Poor public transport connection between landmarks/sites of interest	4.2
	●	Absence of advertising or guiding materials in English or your native language	2.7
	●	Absence of big transport hubs in the destination (no international airports or railway stations)	3.5
	●	Homogenous landscape (no sea and beaches)	1.7
	●	Proximity to other more popular destinations, which you would choose to visit instead	2.8

The aim of this question was to reveal, which of the region’s push factors can discourage potential visitors most of all. Both factors, which got the highest score, are related to the infrastructure in the region. Interestingly, poor public transport connection between landmarks and sites of interest was revealed as a problematic issue in the interview with the representatives of Toledo information center as

well. This factor and absence of advertising or guiding material in other languages, except for Spanish and English (very few information in English is provided), can be seen by Castilla's DMO as opportunities for improvement the management of the destination. Other factors are the weaknesses of the region and can't or can be barely influenced by the DMO.

**Question 10:**



The last question shows, that 12 % of the respondents see literary tourism as a niche form of tourism and don't see its growth potential. 23 people interviewed consider, that only domestic literary tourism could potentially demonstrate the growth in popularity and number of visitors. However, the majority (56 %) believe, that both foreign and domestic literary tourism can gain more popularity in case of effective promotion and interesting offers. The question for DMOs of literary places should be how to make their supply more attractive for different target groups. This means making a literary destination appealing to people regardless of their nationality, age, gender or the level of awareness about the place and its connection with a particular literary work or author.

## **6.2 *Literary tourism and destination branding***

The research showed, that the DMO of Castilla-La Mancha managed to build a succesful and highly competitive destination brand, which may serve as a good example for the destinations willing to connect their brands with literary tourism. The region has a range of pull factors, such as scenic environment, wide offer of attractivities, convenient geographical position close to popular destinations, which it managed to convert into a penetrative tourist product. Moreover, one can notice, that Castilla's DMO is following the trends in literary tourism, such as moving from a special niche product to that of a mass tourism, developing literary tourism forms by creating a collaborative product (the Don Quijote route) with the help of an umbrella approach and connecting natural heritage with the cultural one. Effective collaboration between particular destination led to the creation of a literary-driven destination brand, offering a second to none experience to visitors. The DMO of Castilla-La Mancha managed to find that highlight, something unique that only the destination given posseses, and is working on its improvement and further promotion. In the future, the destination may occupy the vacant segment of the Spanish tourism market, formed after Barcelona, Madrid, Sevilla and Granada, which took leading positions.

## **7 Recommendations**

### ***7.1 A set of marketing tools beneficial for destination management in Castilla-La Mancha***

After having collected necessary data and having analyzed the findings of the research, a following set of marketing tools was proposed:

- More efficient promotion abroad: the Latin European cluster and Germany, Japan, USA and UK

The attention of Castilla's DMO should be paid not only to the Latin European cluster as the region representing 30 % of all visitors coming to Castilla-La Mancha, but also to Germany, Japan, USA and UK with 9 %, 5,7 %, 8,6 %, 12 % respectively out of a total number of visitors (see Figure 4). More languages supported in the website of DMO and printed materials in French, Italian, Portuguese, German, Japanese and English in the information centers might be a good first step.

- Cooperation with popular destinations, situated in a relative proximity to Castilla-La Mancha

This kind of cooperation has been already established between Toledo and Madrid, the capital of Spain with international airport (Madrid-Barajas) and international railway station (Madrid-Atocha). Among other famous destinations nearby, which could potentially collaborate with Castilla-La Mancha are Valencia, Granada, Córdoba and Sevilla. Establishment of regular transport connection between the destinations mentioned above and big towns in Castilla such as Cuenca, Ciudad Real and Toledo can have a positive impact on a number of foreign visitors.

- Private Public Partnership

Collaboration between private sector (hotels, restaurants, guides) and a public one (DMO of Castilla-La Mancha), which can be fruitful for both sides and boost tourism in the region in cooperation with local entrepreneurs.

- Sustainable development

Touristification and the effect of tourist trap may appear in the destinations, where tourism grows too fast and influences an appearance of „touristic ghettos“. The destination becomes too dependant on tourism, the everyday life of a local community may be somehow limited due to large number of visitors, higher prices, enterprises aimed at tourism, too high concentration of souvenir shops, hotels, travel agencies in a place. That is why sustainable tourism development in accordance with natural and cultural heritage is vital, especially in such sensitive rural areas, as Castilla-La Mancha.

- Cooperation with travel agencies

This form of collaboration might be foremost succesful in the domestic tourism market in Spain and might help to look for new customer groups, or new market segments.

- Development of transport connection between landmarks and points of interest

Poor public transport connection between landmarks and sites of interest was revealed as a problematic issue in the interview with the representatives of Toledo information center and got a score of 4.2 (out of 5 possible) based on all the responses in a questionnaire survey. The respondents have chosen poor public transport connection as the main reason, which may influence their decision not to visit the Don Quijote route. Obviously, there is some room for improvement of the infrastructure in the region.

## 8 Conclusion

Building a destination brand is always a complicated and challenging process, when the DMO should take into account a vast range of factors. Apart from that, a proper market investigation and subsequent market segmentation should be carried out, as well as defining the most unique feature of a place for an unbeatable experience to be offered to customers.

Literary tourism, despite its growing significance in world tourism, still remains a blank space in many aspects of research. In the majority of cases, only most popular literary places are analyzed, and almost none of them have built their destination brands exclusively on literary tourism. What is more important, smaller destinations are not paid enough attention to, especially in connection with literary tourism, which is still seen as a niche form of tourism, probably not that effective for visitors' attraction.

Based on findings from literature, the research set out to map literary tourism in Castilla-La Mancha region and to analyze its contribution to the destination branding. Literary tourism may be considered as the foundation of the destination brand, due to being represented in the form of the main activity in the region – the Don Quijote route.

During the research, the level of awareness about literary activities (the Don Quijote route in particular) in Castilla-La Mancha among tourists was evaluated as rather high in Spain, though insufficient in foreign tourism market. Apart from that, the data beneficial for the DMOs of other places, planning to launch a destination brand, based in literary tourism, were collected. In addition, a set of marketing tools suitable for raising the attractiveness of the destination was proposed. Those marketing tools may be used by the DMO of Castilla-La Mancha, aimed primarily at the most potentially successful market segment – visitors from Spain, Portugal, Italy and France. What is more, it is important to pay more attention to other market segments, which stand for a significant number of visitors in Castilla-La Mancha – Japan, the United Kingdom, the United States of America and Germany.

However, the DMO of Castilla-La Mancha should take into account not only the opportunities for tourism development, but also the threats the destination, its natural heritage and the local community may encounter. Future research should engage in sustainable tourism in the region considering cooperation between public and private sectors in order to preserve this unique place untouched for next generations.



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**TÉMA ANGLICKY:**

Literary Tourism and Destination Branding in Castilla-La Mancha Region

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- 2) Teoretická část
- 3) Praktická část
- 4) Závěr
- 5) Reference

Cílem této bakalářské práce je zmapovat literární turismus v Kastilii-La Mancha a stanovit, do jaké míry přispívá branding dané destinace.

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