

The economic impact of bicycle races for promoting and supporting tourism destinations: the case of Nove Colli (Italy)

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Introduction

- Policy-makers are increasingly investing in mega sport events (Li et al. 2013).
- Many mega sport events are periodically hosted in different places → impact one-shot (Fourier and Santana-Gallego, 2011).
- Recurrent medium-size sport events, run regularly in the same places → yearly tourist flows, loyalty, land visibility.
- Gran Fondos are long-distance road bicycle races, with a close liaison with the territory where races are run.
- For a destination, organizing bicycle races allows to:
 - Attracting local residents, day-trippers and tourists
 - Getting known big portion of the territory, seldom visited by tourists
 - Allocating people off-season and exploiting infrastructures underused in low season → more efficient use of resources, compatible with the environment
 - Sustainable actions within the organization of the race.

Introduction

- This study considers the most famous Gran Fondo of Italy, the Nove Colli race, which attracts every year 12,000 domestic and foreign cyclists.
- The assessment of the contribution of the Nove Colli is based on a survey conducted in 2016. We collected information on the perception of cyclists about the race organization, its environment, and on cyclists' behavior and expenditure in the destination.
- The 923 answers allowed to estimate the direct, indirect and total economic contribution of this race from the demand side.
- The cyclists enrolled in the race were distinguished among residents, day-trippers and tourists, since their behavior and economic contribution on the territory are consistently different.

Nove Colli race

Nove Colli is the most famous Gran Fondo (since 1971) race which takes place every year in the Romagna's hills (Cesenatico departure and arrival place).

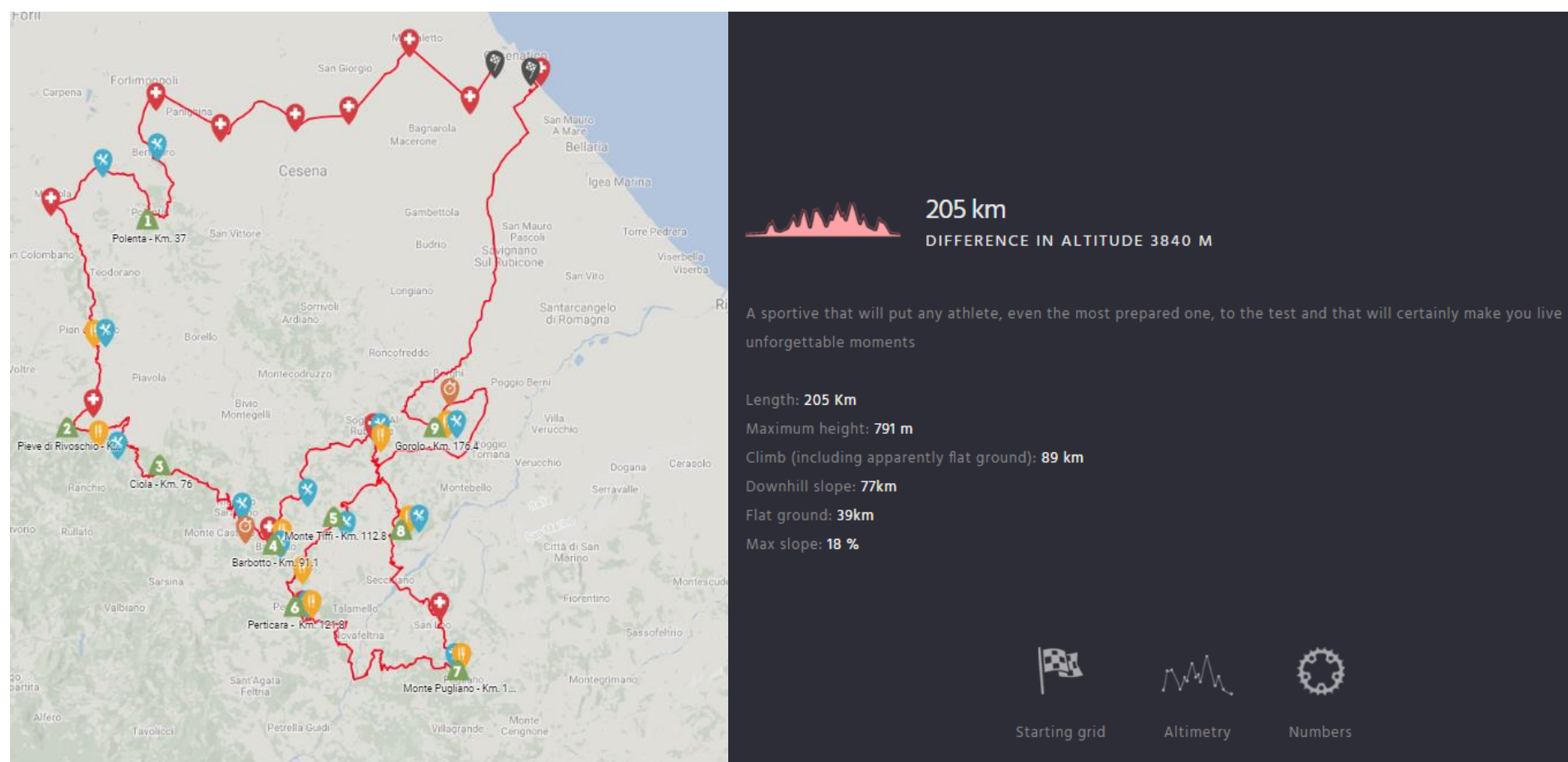
The widely diffused word Gran Fondo was born with Nove Colli race!

It attracts tourists from all over the World.

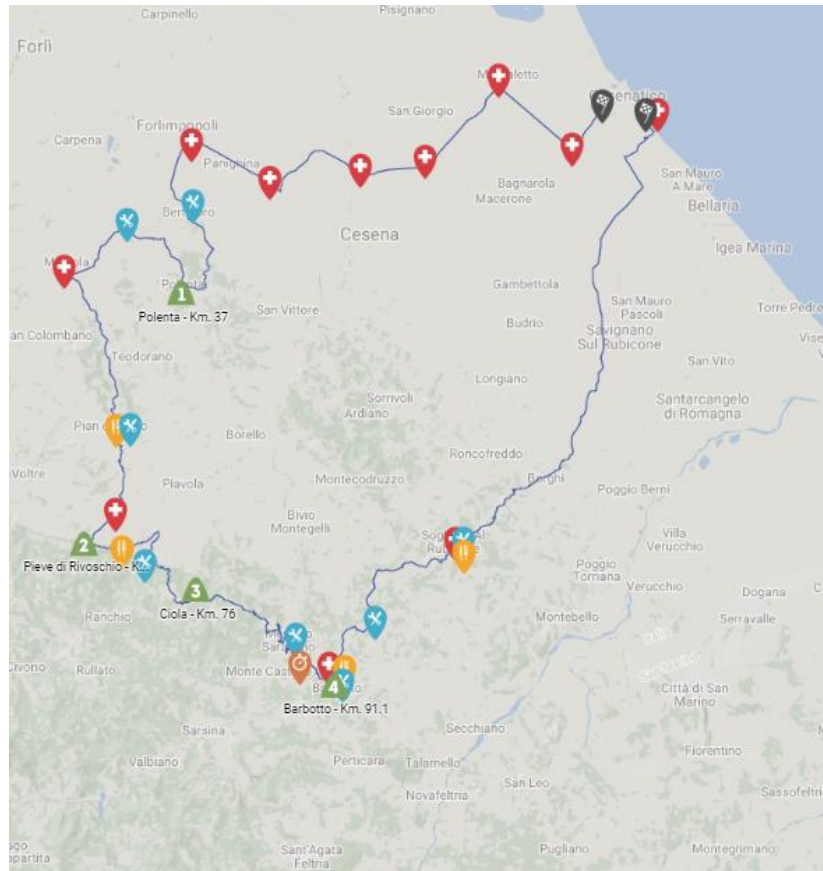
Since 2010, the race accepts a maximum of 12,000 cyclists → it engenders a click race! In 2017, the organization placed all the bib numbers in 3'25''.

Two alternative routes: the medium route (130 km) and the long route (205 km). The two routes differ in terms of mileage, number of climbs and differences in height.

Long route



Medium route



130 km

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A sportive that will put any athlete, even the most prepared one, to the test and that will certainly make you live unforgettable moments

Length: **130 Km**

Maximum height: **791 m**

Climb: **50 km**

Downhill slope: **46km**

Flat ground: **34km**

Max slope: **18 %**



Starting grid



Altimetry



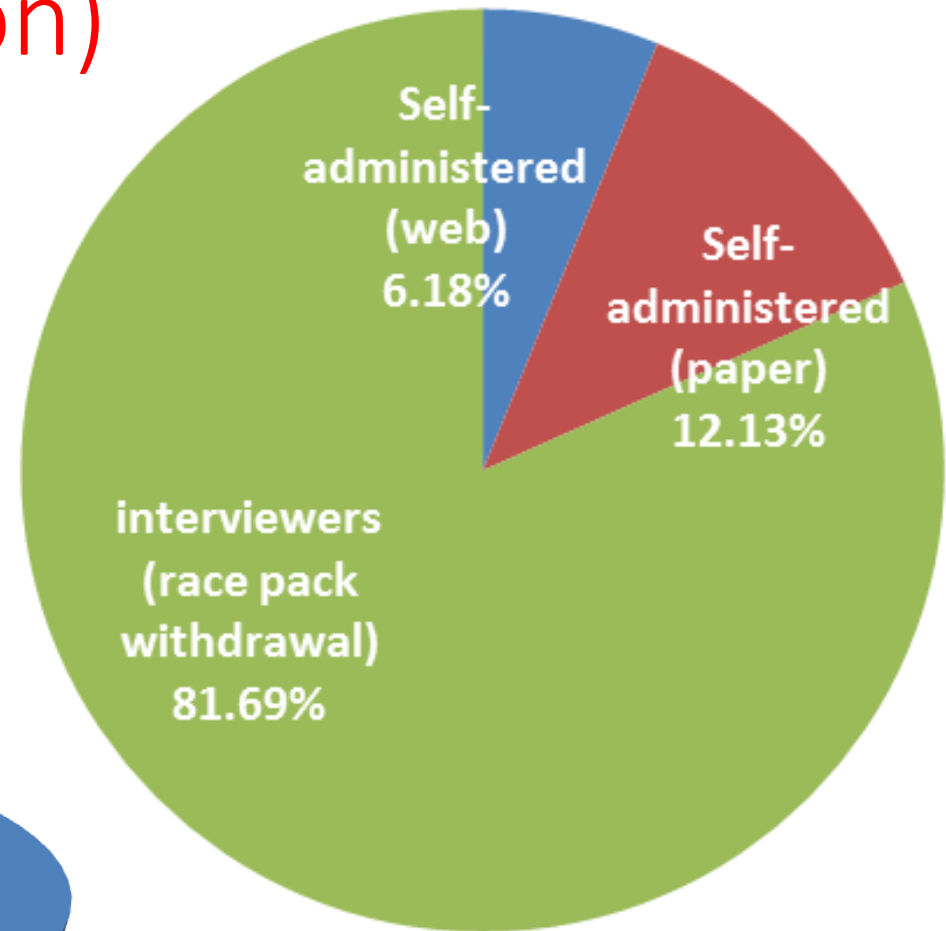
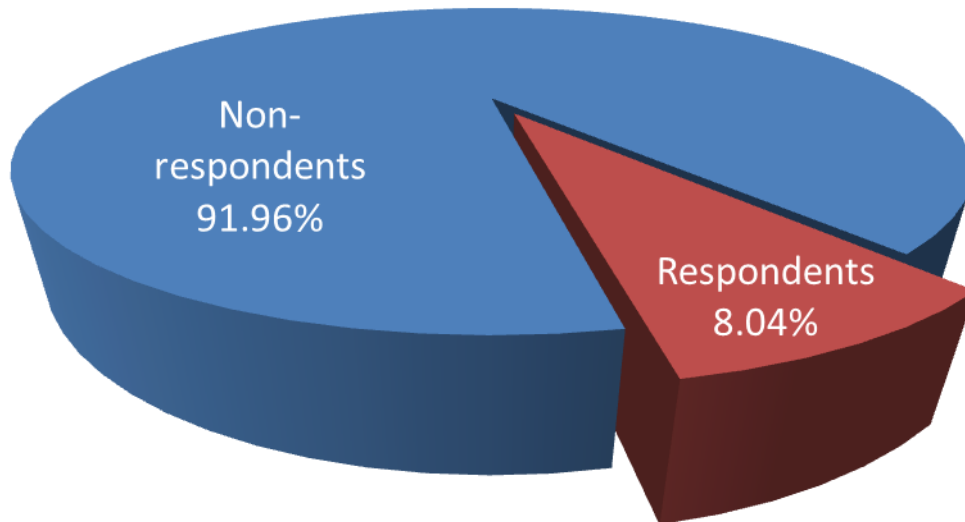
Numbers

Data (46th edition)

923 respondents

11476 cyclists

→ Response rate 8.04%

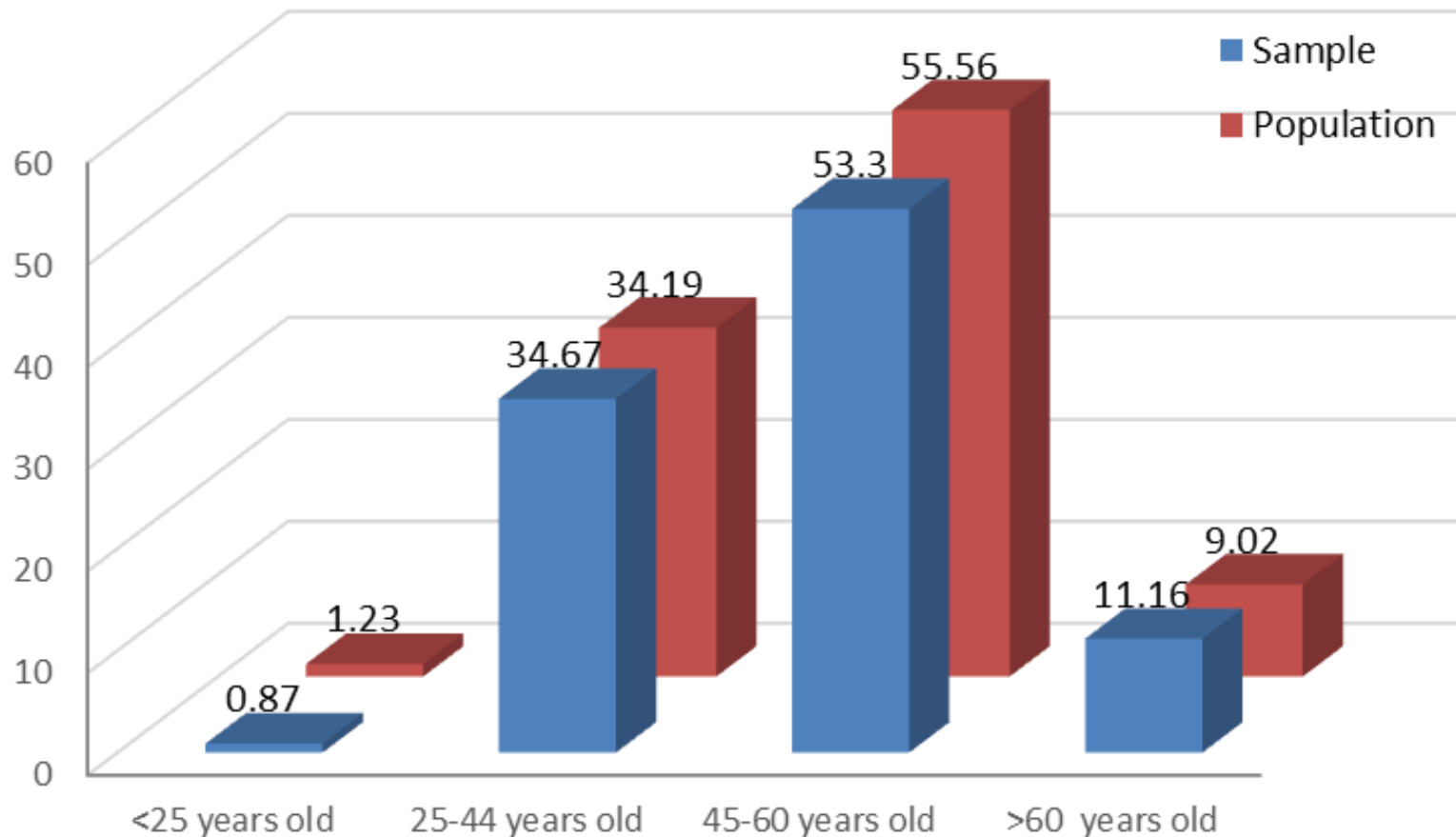


23 interviewers in 3 days (race pack withdrawal)

The cyclists of Nove Colli

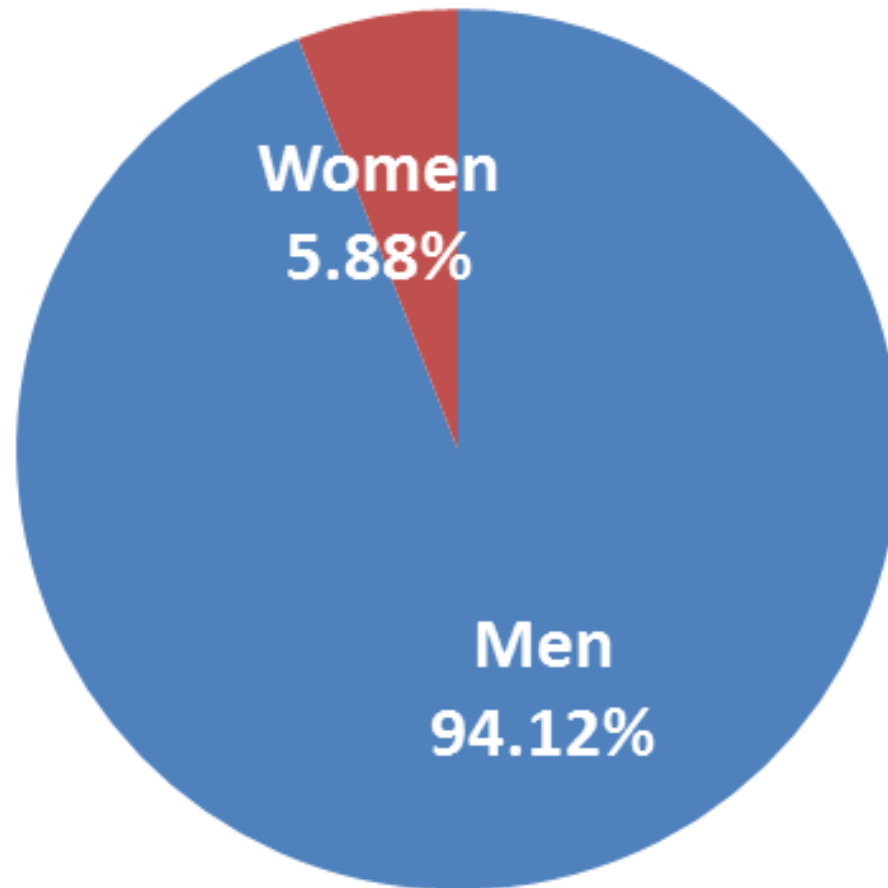
The average cyclist is 48 years old (mean and median).

The oldest cyclist is 81 years old.

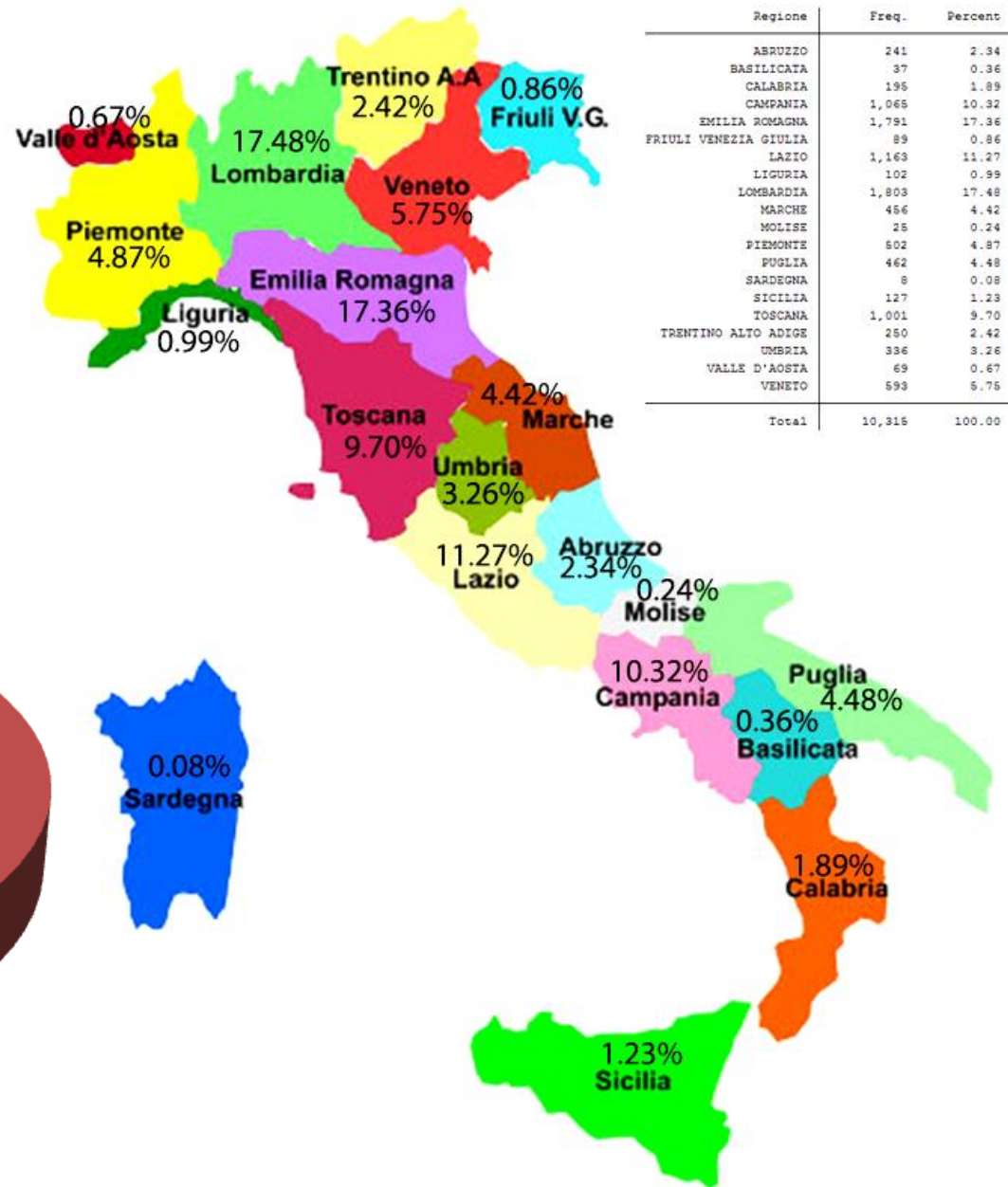
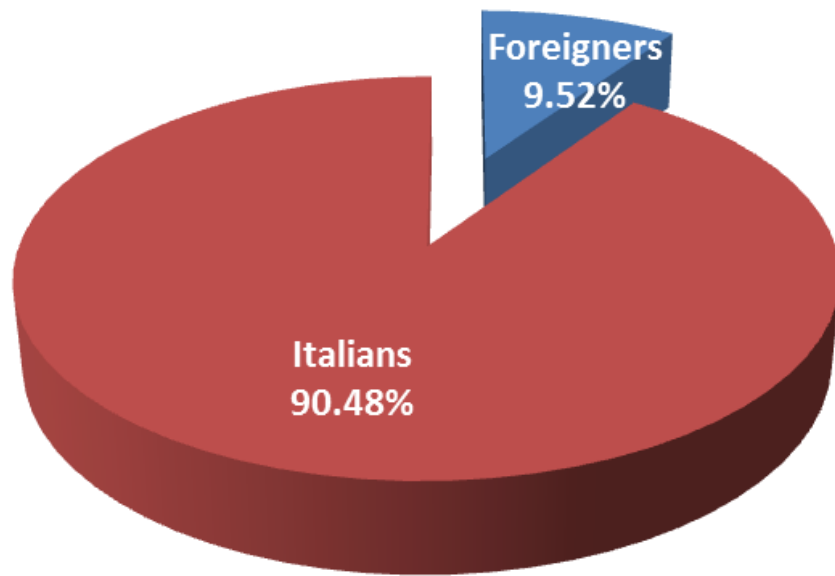


The cyclists of Nove Colli

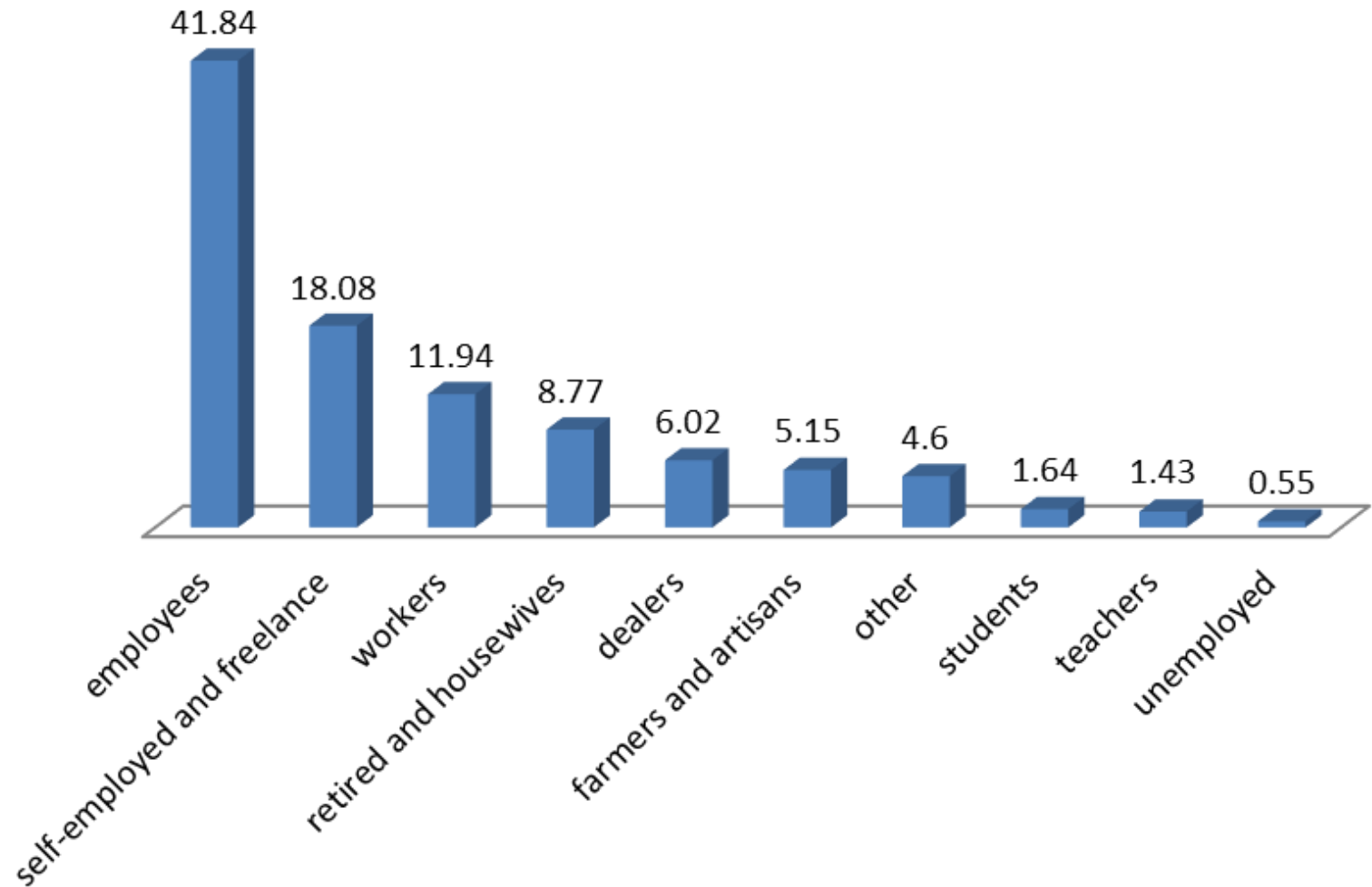
Cyclist women are in rising trend!



Where do cyclists come from?



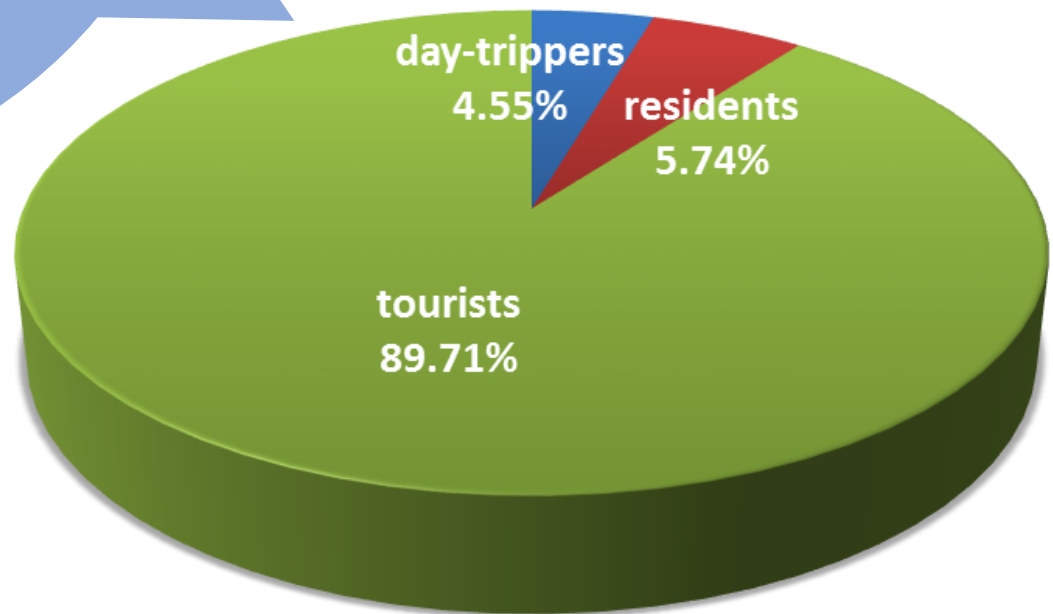
Job position



Type of cyclists

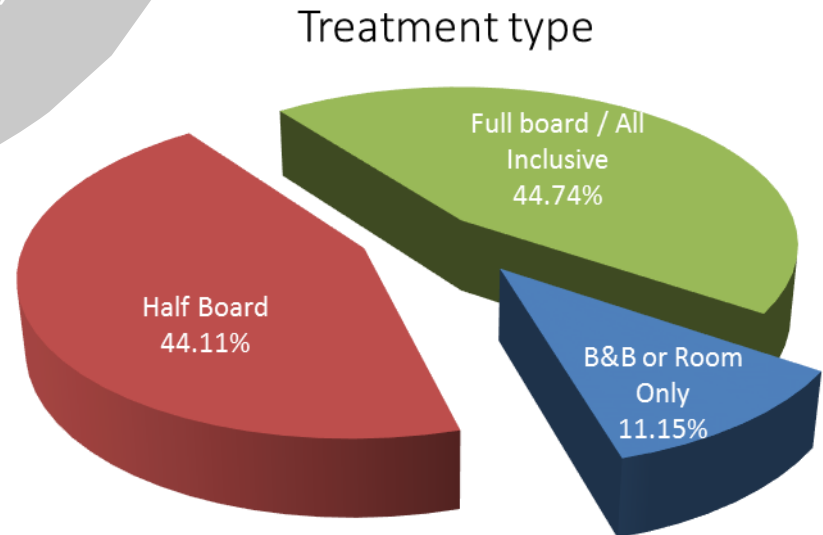
Cyclist-tourists stay, on average,
2.78 nights (min. 1 – max 22
nights).

Tourism destinations:
Cesenatico,
Cervia, Bellaria-Igea Marina,
Forlimpopoli, Gatteo, Ravenna,
Rimini, Riccione, San Mauro
Pascoli...

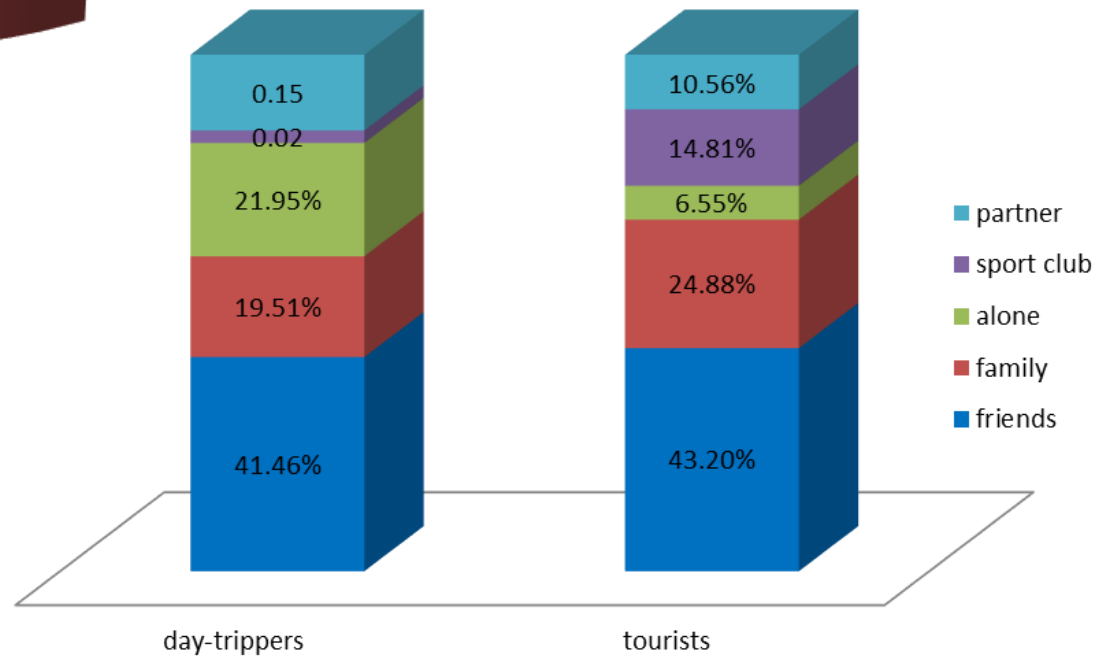
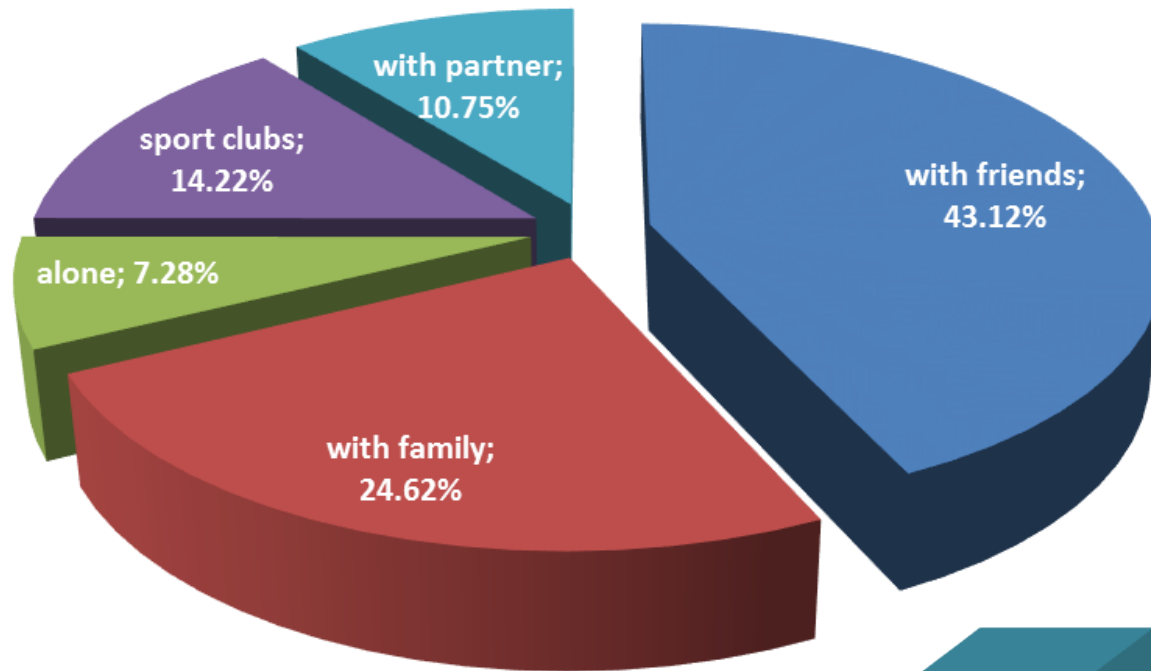


Accommodation and treatment

94.54% tourists stay in hotels (different categories). Almost 90% have lunch &/or dinner in hotel. The remaining 6.46% stay in complementary lodging categories (residences, camp sites, houses, friends/parents, etc.)



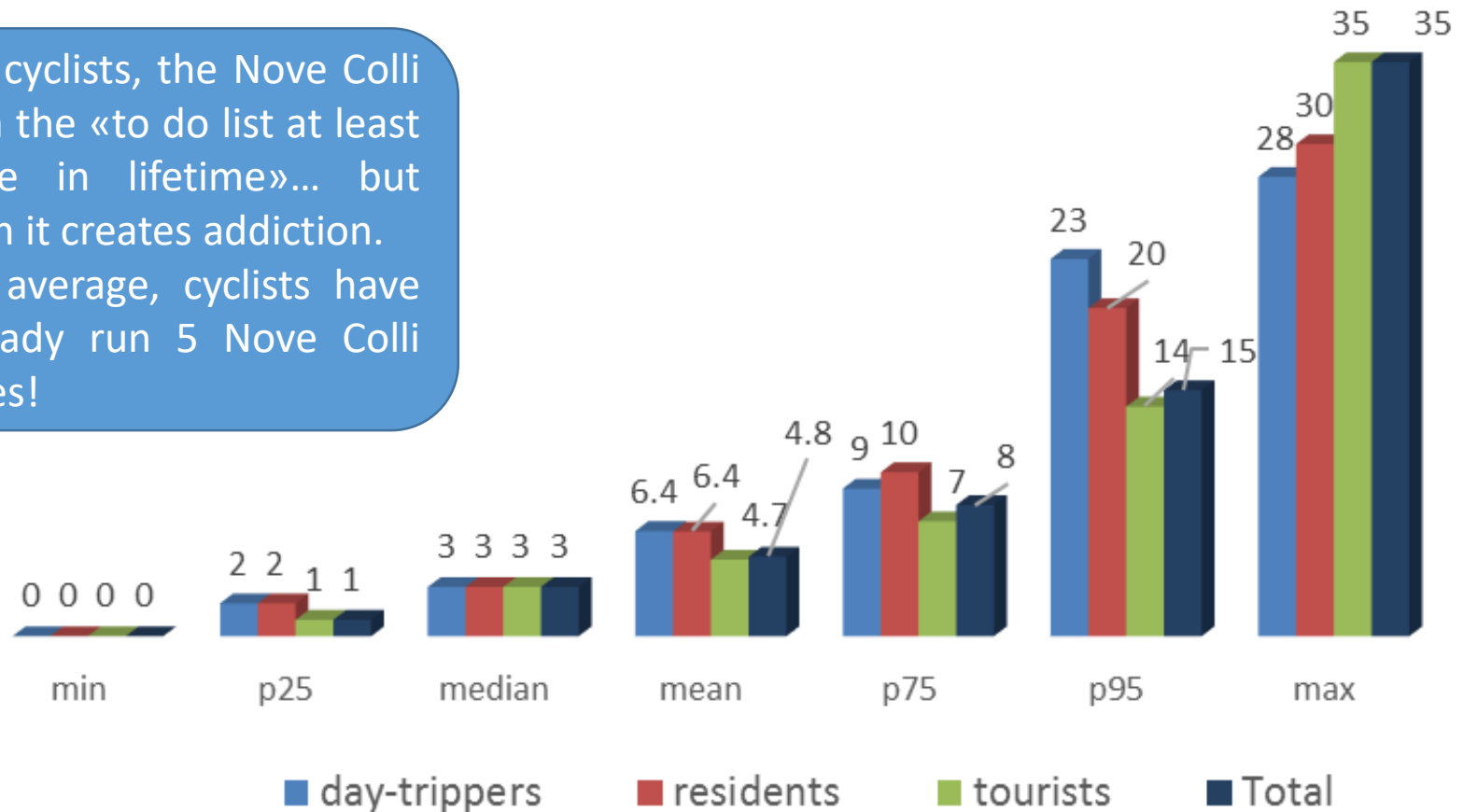
Travel groups



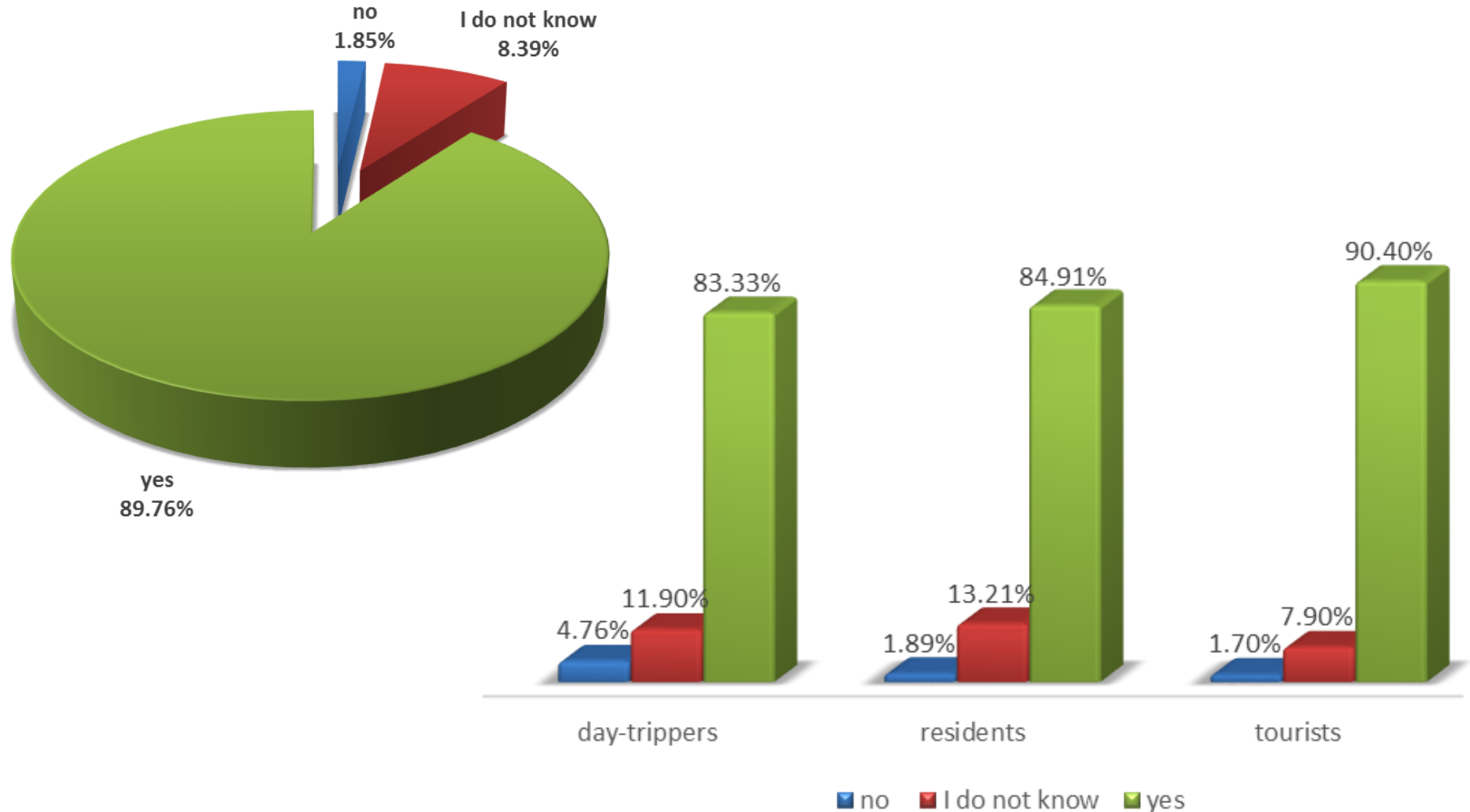
Nove Colli addiction!

Nove Colli races already run

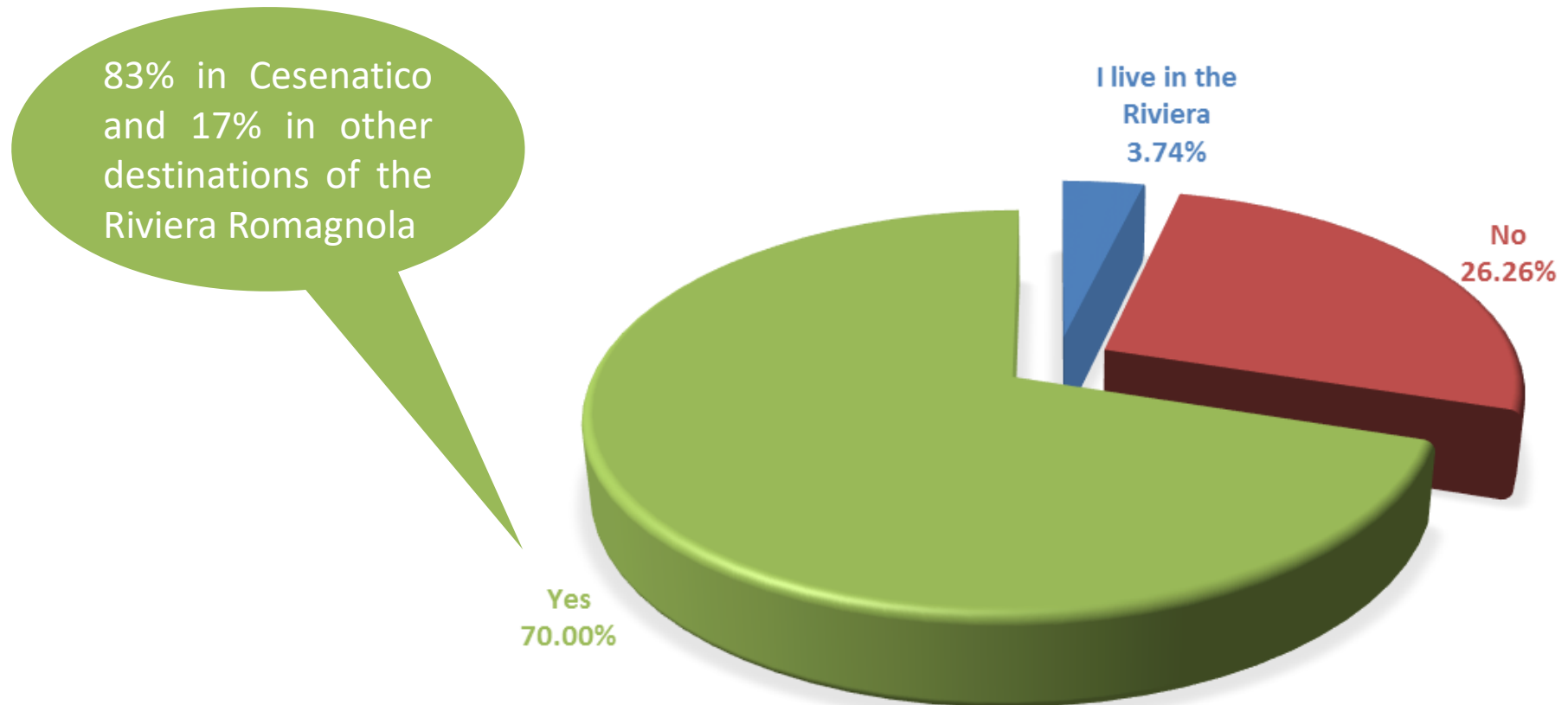
For cyclists, the Nove Colli is in the «to do list at least once in lifetime»... but then it creates addiction. On average, cyclists have already run 5 Nove Colli races!



How many cyclists intend to repeat the Nove Colli race in the future?



How many cyclists intend to spend their holidays in the Riviera Romagnola in the future?



Economic impact of the race (demand side)

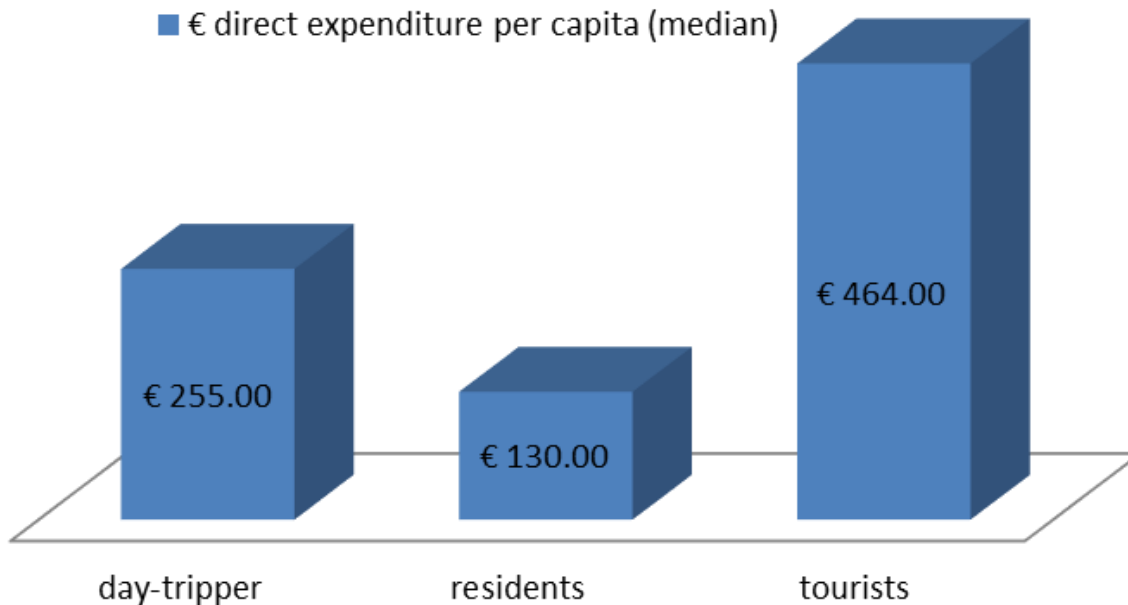
In order to estimate the amount spent by the participants to the Nove Colli, we assumed that the non-interviewed cyclists resident in the province of Forlì-Cesena are residents, while those who live within 100 km from Cesenatico are day-trippers. The remaining share of non-interviewed cyclists are considered tourists.

11,476 cyclists registered to the race:

- **556** day-trippers
- **595** residents
- **10,305** tourists

Economic impact of the race (demand side)

The median expenditure for each category of respondents is:

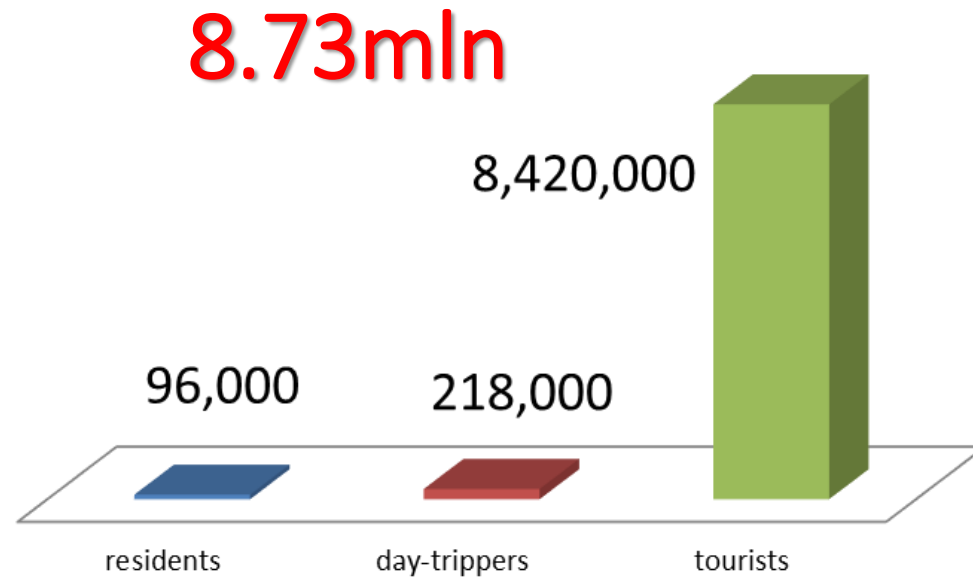


People accompanying the cyclist and in his/her budget (average number of people):

- **1.46** for day-trippers
- **1** for residents (assumption)
- **1.71** for tourists

Direct contribution

The estimate of the direct contribution of Nove Colli (only from the demand side, estimated direct expenditure of 11,476 cyclists), excluding the investment for the organization of the event, is equal to:



The correlation between the number of editions run over time and the individual expenditure is positive even if low and statistically significant.

Total contribution (direct, indirect, induced)

- **Optimistic scenario:** using the multiplier estimated by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2016) for the T&T sector in Italy, the total contribution of the Nove Colli race (**only from the demand side**) is € 21.27 million, of which € 234,000 spent by residents, € 532,000 spent by day-trippers and € 20.50m spent by tourists.
- **Prudential scenario:** at the local level, it is likely that the total contribution of the event is more limited than an event at national scale, implying a smaller multiplier. Using the I/O regional tables (source Nomisma), more cautious estimates of the total impact of the event emerge. At regional level, we can estimate that the total impact of the race amounts to 12.46 million (137,104 for residents, 311,512 for day-trippers and 12,014,002 for tourists).
- Therefore the total contribution falls in a range between 12.46 and 21.27 million euro.

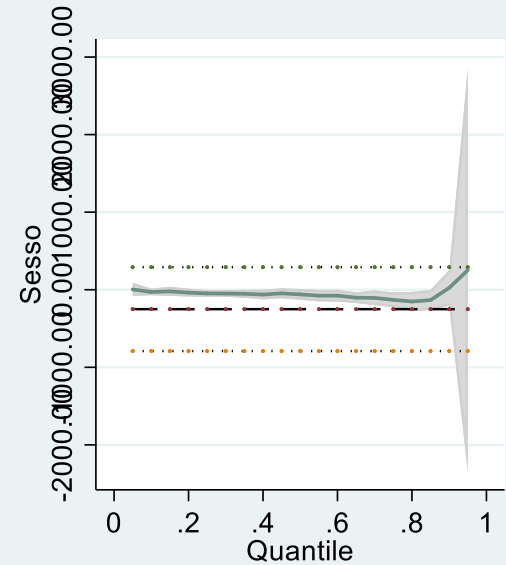
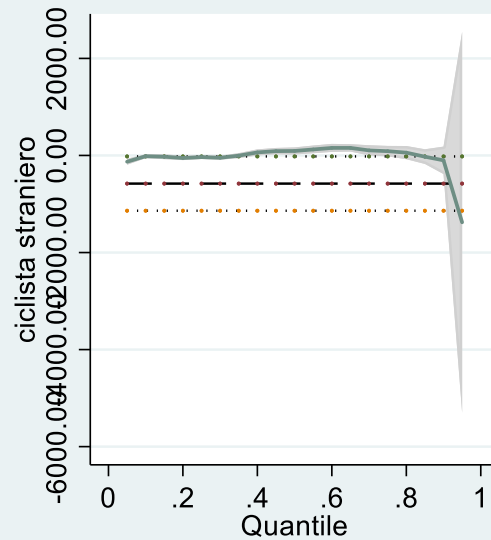
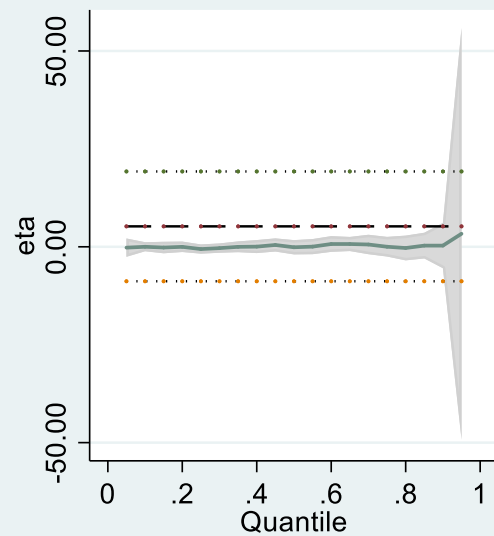
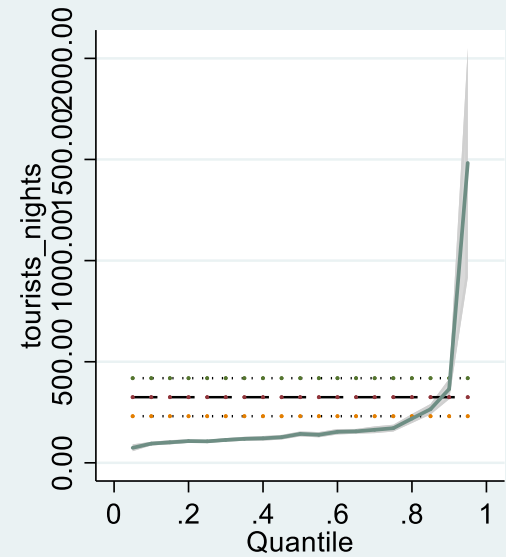
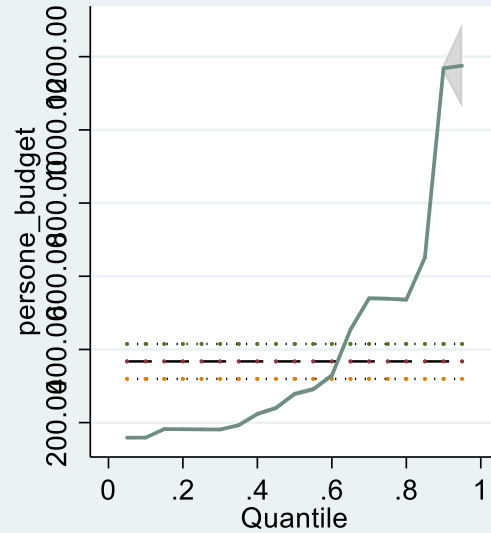
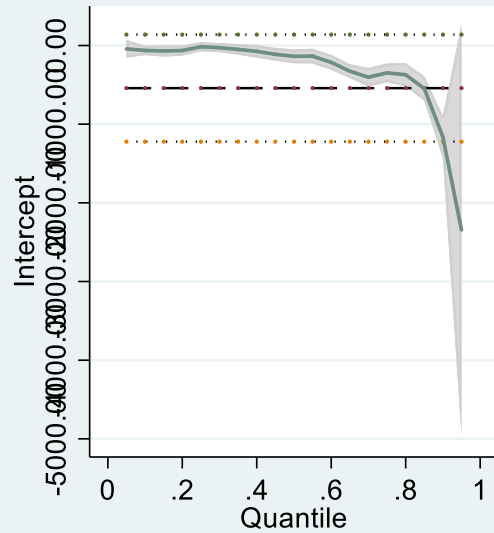
Quantile regression

	OLS	Q(0.25)	Q(0.50)	Q(0.75)	Q(0.90)
persons in budget	367.3**	181.4***	278.4***	538.7***	1168.6*
overnights (tourists only)	324.8***	106.3***	143.0***	171.6***	365.2**
age	5.222	-0.579	-0.118	0.0174	0.312
foreigners	-578.9	-33.68	93.35	88.96	-99.94
gender	-249.6	-47.64	-59.76	-129.7**	24.5
N	644	644	644	644	644

t statistics in parentheses

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001

Quantile regression



Conclusions

- Endurance sport event but each sport events are case specific (Saayman and Saayman, 2012).
- Loyalty (addiction) created by sport events.
- Important economic and social impact for the territory.
- Sustainability implications for policy makers.
- Sustainable actions and policy implications for policy makers.