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# SCIENTIFIC PAPERS

**Lucia Hrubalová, Zuzana Palenčíková**

## INTEREST OF SLOVAK TOURISTS IN CREATIVE TOURISM ACTIVITIES ON THEIR HOLIDAY ABROAD

***Abstract:** Creative tourism as a new type of tourism attracts more and more tourists worldwide. This study explores the contemporary interest and experience of Slovak tourists (inhabitants) with creative tourism activities during their holiday abroad. The results revealed that the most popular creative tourism activities of Slovak tourists on holiday abroad were cultural exhibitions and events (traditional fairs, festivals, feasts etc.) aimed at promoting the traditional culture of the destination. Based on the findings key creative tourism activities done by Slovak tourists during their holiday abroad can be identified and can be incorporated into future representative field research of creative tourism demand in Slovak tourist regions.*

***Key words:** creativity, event, exhibition, holiday, tourist, visitor*

***JEL Classification:** L<sub>83</sub>, M<sub>31</sub>, L<sub>10</sub>, L<sub>38</sub>, L<sub>83</sub>, O<sub>17</sub>, R<sub>58</sub>, Z<sub>32</sub>, Z<sub>38</sub>*

### Introduction

The global tourism market has changed significantly in the last decade. Destinations are permanently competing to succeed and attract more and more tourists. On the one hand, as a consequence of this process, a worldwide demand for unified global tourism products is rising; on the other hand, in the age of the experience economy a lot of postmodern visitors are trying to “taste” authentic destinations and they are looking for new creative experiences. Authenticity has become the key attraction of many tourism destinations, associated with creativity of the place, the everyday life of local people, their culture, traditions and habits. The demand for original and authentic destinations and their tourism products is globally growing, connected with the growth of the “wanderlust” type of tourists that are characterized by a desire to explore and experience people and culture (Heitmann, 2011). This phenomenon requires to apply new patterns in tourism product development, allowing visitors to co-create their travel experience in touch with contemporary local culture and art.

To understand the concept of creative tourism means to understand creativity, which can be interpreted from various points of view. From an economic point of view creativity has become an important production input (Jarábková, Hamada, 2013), which is unlimited in

the production of new useful ideas (Luka & Luka, 2014). From regional development point of view it is understood as a decisive source of competitive advantage (Florida, 2002) arising from the group of economic, cultural and social changes (Catalani, 2013). Creativity has become a strategy in the search for growth, innovation and individual skill development (Richards, 2014) in many countries, nowadays known as creative economics (for example in Finland, Estonia). The most important for understanding the demand for creative tourism are the psychological and learning aspects of creativity. Psychologists understand creativity as a mental phenomenon that results from the application of ordinary cognitive processes (Ward, Smith, & Vaid, 1997, In Tan et al, 2013). Creative abilities of people are developed from childhood to adulthood and can be learned from formal educational institutions, as well as through informal learning systems, such as playing games and craft-making (Tan et al., 2013).

Initial scientific discussion on the use of creativity as a potential development trigger in destinations can be found in the work of Richards and Raymond (2000) and throughout the last decade it has been studied by several other authors, as well (Wurzburger et al., 2009; Richards and Wilson 2006, 2007; Ohridska-Olson and Ivanov, 2010; Jelinčić & Žuvela, 2012; Stipanović & Rudan, 2014, 2015; Luka & Luka, 2015; Korez-Vide, 2013; etc). The emergence of creativity in tourism destinations can be elucidated in correspondence with the rise of experience economy: (1) as a consequence of the stimulation of economic development through strategies of “creative economy” and “creative industries” (Chang, Backman, Huang, 2014) and (2) as an everyday life of places, in the daily rhythms of work and play (Richards, 2017). Creative tourism is actually a fashionable, more sustainable and postmodern form of cultural tourism (Ohridska-Olson and Ivanov 2010, Stipanović and Rudan, 2014, Korez-Vide, 2015), offering more interactivity between the visitors and the locals (Chang, Backman, Huang, 2014).

The first definition of "creative tourism" appeared in 2000 (Richards and Raymond, p. 18), explaining creative tourism as the type of “tourism which offers visitors the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are characteristic of the holiday destination where they are undertaken”. This perception puts emphasis on active creative learning of tourists by attending courses and workshops while on holiday. The current understanding of creative tourism has shifted from creative learning and workshops to creating relationship between the visitors and the locals in the destinations (Richards, 2017; Richards & Russo, 2014; Carvalho, Ferreira, Figueira, 2016). It is also reflected in the definition of the Creative Tourism Network ([www.creativetourismnetwork.com](http://www.creativetourismnetwork.com), 2014), which defines creative tourism as “a new generation of tourism by involving the tourists themselves and the locals in the creation of the tourist products (co-creation)”.

While the concept of creative tourism is well-known among tourism and hospitality scholars, in practice, in a lot of countries creative tourism has only begun to be recognized and is at an initial stage of development. Politicians and destination managers have started to understand its contribution to local economies and now are developing different strategies to attract creative tourism markets. For the development of new creative tourism

products in destinations, it is crucial to understand the needs and motivation of the visitors and gain insight into their travel experiences in the context of creative tourism.

In Slovakia, all the tourist regions have the potential for the development of creative tourism; yet, they are not fully exploited by tourism stakeholders. To develop the creative tourism supply in Slovakia, there is a need to examine the potential of the domestic demand for this type of “niche” tourism and to identify the interest and current experience of Slovak people when traveling in order to gain cultural experiences abroad. Motivation, experiences and perceived value are the basic variables influencing the decision process of tourists (Chang, Backman, Huang, 2014) and the driving force that leads people to take a vacation or revisit destinations (Gúčík, 2010). This study examines the current experiences with creative tourism activities of Slovak tourists abroad, in order to estimate their future potential interest in these activities in the Slovak republic.

## **Materials and Methods**

### **Research objectives and questions**

The recent research focused on the demand and supply of creative tourism in Slovakia (Palenčíková, Hrubalová, Repáňová, 2016; Hrubalová, Palenčíková, 2017; Palenčíková, Hrubalová, 2017) revealed that its development is at an initial stage without consistent supply and real demand for creative tourism activities. Research carried out by Tan et al. (2014) confirmed that tourists’ awareness of creative activities while on holiday differentiates creative tourists from other types of tourists. Similarly, it can be assumed that, Slovak tourists with the experience of creative activities on holiday abroad will seek out this type of leisure activity also in Slovakia. Thus, the paper focuses on the experiences of Slovak tourists with creative tourism activities during their holiday abroad and identifying the most popular activities.

In order to achieve the mentioned goal, we specified two research questions, as follows: (1) What forms of creative tourism activities do the Slovak tourists prefer most on their holiday abroad? (2) What are the main barriers of Slovak tourists to perform the creative tourism activities on their holiday abroad?

### **The method**

With regard to the objectives of the research the quantitative method of questionnaire survey was chosen. An online questionnaire has been adopted as the data collection technique. As it is only an initial attempt to explore the creative tourism in Slovakia, we used this method due to its advantage of quick and easy design and delivery of reliable results, amenable to statistical manipulation (Brotherton, 2015). Prior to data collection, survey was pretested with a convenience sample of 44 participants who travelled abroad in last two years. The major objective of this test was to identify possible weaknesses, ambiguities, missing questions, and poor reliability (DeVellis, 2003). After this process, the questionnaire was modified and the final version was used for the research study. Random sampling was used to select respondents. Data from respondents were collected

electronically by internet from May to June 2017 and a total of 404 valid surveys were collected during this process (95% confidence level) for data analysis. The survey questions covered the following aspects of demand for creative tourism: creative tourism activities performed by Slovak tourists on holiday abroad, reasons for not performing such activities, frequency and locality of creative tourism activities performed on holiday abroad, activities with the greatest potential for future development of creative tourism. The data were analysed using SPSS. The statistical methods applied in the paper include descriptive statistics and Spearman's correlation coefficient, which measures statistical dependence between the rankings of two variables. In purpose to identify the creative tourism activities with the greatest potential for future development in Slovakia, we measured dependence between creative tourism activities which Slovak tourists would like to perform on holiday and factor of frequency.

### **Research instrument**

We designed a tourist survey to examine the experience, preferences and interest of Slovak tourists in typical creative tourism activities during their holiday abroad, which can contribute to the identification of the creative tourism activities with the greatest potential for future development of creative tourism supply in the Slovak republic. The set of creative activities was built on the wide range of creative tourism activities, listed in the works of Adriani (In: Lemy, 2016), Richards (2010) and Stipanovič & Rudan (2014). The set included activities that could be offered to tourists in Slovakia and have interactive and educational content, such as various creative courses, workshops and events (with topic of music, visual arts, folk arts, gastronomy, crafts, etc.). While some of them are a "DIY" (do it yourself) activities (cooking or art classes), other are less "participative" ones, for example creative events, tasting gastronomy, sightseeing authentic cultural heritage sites etc.

## **Results**

Characteristics of the research sample are provided in the Table 1. As far as the sex of the participants are concerned, 77.7% of them were women and 22.3% were men. With regard to their age, 44.1% of the respondents were aged between 18 and 24, 31.2% between 25 and 35. In addition, more than the half of them, (53.5%), were employed at the time of the survey. As to the financial situation of the participants, 26.2% of the respondents had a regular income between 601 and 1000 Euros per month; while 29.2% of them had an irregular income. In terms of the residence, 31.7% of the respondents were from the Nitra region, whilst the rest was from other Slovak regions. As this survey was an initial attempt to explore the interest of Slovak tourists in creative tourism activities, the research sample cannot be considered representative. The lower participation of the older generation in the survey may be the consequence of collecting data via Internet. Even though 81% of the households in the Slovak republic has Internet access, only a third of them belongs to the age group of 60 + (Eurostat, 2017).

**Table 1: Characteristics of the research sample**

Gender	Female				Male			
	77,7%				22,3%			
Age	≤ 18	18 - 24	25 – 35	36 – 50	51 – 65		≥ 66	
	0.0%	44.1%	31.2%	13.9%	10.4%		0.5%	
Residence*	BA	TT	TN	ZA	NR	BB	PO	KE
	8.4%	16.8%	7.9%	3.5%	31.7%	19.3%	7.4%	5.0%
Economic activity	Student	Senior	Employed	Unemployed		Maternity leave		
	40.6%	1.0%	53.5%	0.0%		5.0%		
Income (€)	Irregular	≤ 350	351 – 450		451 – 600	601 – 1000	≥ 1000	
	29.2%	13.4%	5.4%		9.4%	26.2%	16.3%	

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

\*BA – Bratislava region, TT – Trnava region, TN – Trenčín region, ZA – Žilina region, NR – Nitra region, BB – Banská Bystrica region, PO – Prešov region, KE – Košice region

The first part of the survey examined the current experience of Slovak tourists with creative activities during their holiday abroad (see Table 2). We offered them a set of passive forms (e.g. exhibitions, events, etc.), as well as active forms (e.g. classes and workshops, etc.) of creative tourism activities. Most of the respondents (33.2%) took part in traditional and local food cooking exhibitions (e.g. bread baking, cheese manufacture, jam manufacture, goulash, etc.) and traditional folk exhibitions with active participation of visitors (e.g. folk dance, singing and traditions, etc.) (29.2%). Traditional handicrafts and folk-art exhibitions with active participation of the visitors (e.g. pottery, woodcarving, jewel-making, tinsmith, lace, etc.) were also popular (21.3%). Exhibitions as a passive form of creative tourism activities were popular amongst the majority of the respondents (83.7%) and thus can have the greatest potential for future development of creative tourism also in the Slovak republic.

**Table 2: Creative tourism activities performed by Slovak tourists on holiday abroad**

Creative tourism activity	Number	% of cases
Traditional handicrafts and folk-art exhibitions	86	21.3%
Traditional handicrafts and folk-art classes	30	7.4%
Traditional and local food cooking exhibitions	134	33.2%
Traditional and local food cooking classes and workshops	16	4.0%
Traditional folk exhibitions with active participation of visitors	118	29.2%
Folk dance, singing and musical instrument classes	40	9.9%
Outdoor art activities in nature	20	5.0%
Photography classes	2	0.5%
Filmmaking classes	2	0.5%
Classes of musical instruments production	12	3.0%
Classes of interior design and household furnishing	10	2.5%
Classes of clothing and fashion design	2	0.5%
Classes of jewellery and leather articles making	14	3.5%
I did not participate in any activities	174	43.1%
Respondents total	404	100.0%

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

On the other hand, as shown in Table 3, almost one half of the respondents (43.1%) have not yet participated in any creative tourism activity on holiday abroad. The reason is that they did not know such activities were offered in the destination (43.7%) or they did not even know it was possible to participate in such activities on holiday (31.0%). These results can indicate the lack of the respondents' awareness of "creative experiences" and might be considered as the main barrier to perform creative tourism activities for the Slovak tourists on their holiday. Other reasons for not performing creative tourism activities on holiday abroad are, as follows: lack of time (25.3%), lack of courage to actively participate in such activities (13.8%) and lack of money (12.6%). Finally, only 5.7% of the respondents is not interested in creative activities; it means that they even do not look for them on holiday at all (see Table 3).

**Table 3: Reasons for not performing creative tourism activities on holiday abroad**

Variable	Number	% of cases
I did not know, it is possible to participate in such activities on holiday	54	31.0%
I did not know, such activities are held/offered in the destination	76	43.7%
I did not have enough money	22	12.6%
I did not have enough time	44	25.3%
I did not have enough courage	24	13.8%
The destination did not offer such activities	4	2.3%
I do not look for such activities on my holiday	10	5.7%
Respondents total	174	100.0%

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

As to the frequency of the participation, the survey revealed that 230 Slovak tourists (67.8%), took part in creative activities on their holiday abroad only one or two times, which is not a very high frequency. In addition, almost one third of the respondents (26.1%) participated in such activities from three to five times (see Table 4).

**Table 4: The frequency of the participation in creative tourism activities while on holiday abroad**

Variable	Number	% of cases
1 - 2 times	156	67.8%
3 - 5 times	60	26.1%
6 - 10 times	10	4.3%
More than 10 times	4	1.7%
Respondents total	230	100.0%

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

According to the responses of the Slovak respondents displayed in Table 5, the easiest way to participate in creative activities on holiday abroad (67.0%) was attending events aimed at promoting the traditional culture of the given destination (e.g. traditional fairs, festivals,



feasts, etc.). In addition, 36.5% of the participants took part in creative activities in accommodation facilities, another 27.5% in folk architecture conservation areas (i.e. distinctive traditional villages with unique preserved material folk culture), 23.5% in open-air museums and 20.9% in workshops of local traditional craftsmen and artists. However, farms (13.0%) and creative centres (12.2%) were the least frequent locations of creative tourism activities abroad (see Table 5).

**Table 5: The location of creative tourism activities performed on holiday abroad**

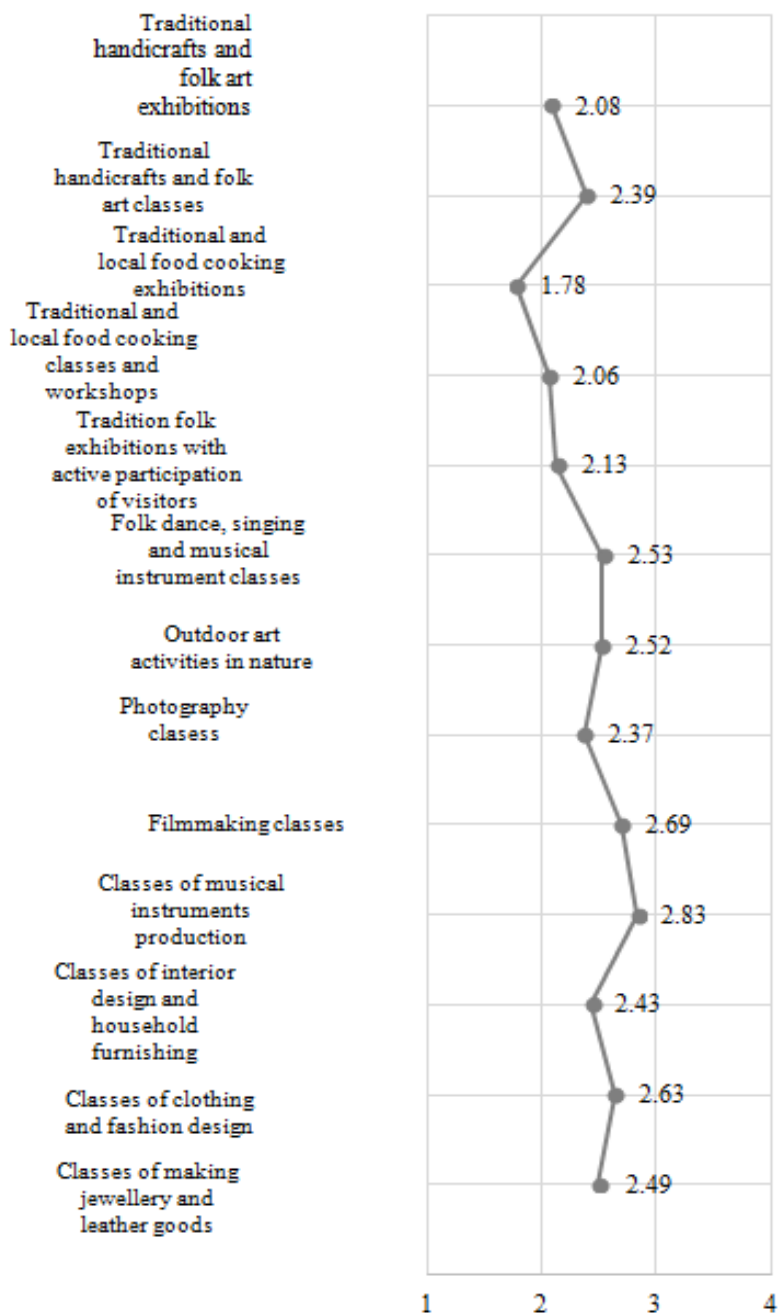
Variable	Number	% of cases
Folk architecture conservation areas	62	27.0%
Open-air museums	54	23.5%
Farms	30	13.0%
Workshops of local traditional craftsmen and artists	48	20.9%
Events aimed at promotion of traditional culture	154	67.0%
Accommodation facilities	84	36.5%
Creative centres	28	12.2%
Other	8	3.5%
Respondents total	230	100.0%

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

As to the willingness of the respondents to participate in creative tourism activities during their future holiday, as an important factor for the future development of creative tourism in the Slovak republic, (see Graph 1), the most preferred creative tourism activities would be, as follows: traditional and local food cooking exhibitions (mean value 1.78), traditional and local food cooking classes and workshops (mean value 2.06), as well as traditional handicrafts and folk-art exhibitions with active participation of visitors (mean value 2.08). On the other hand, the least interesting activity for the Slovak tourists would be the classes of musical instrument production (mean value 2.83), filmmaking classes (mean value 2.69) and classes of clothing and fashion design (mean value 2.63). It can be assumed, that in general, Slovak visitors would mostly prefer the passive forms of creative tourism activities such as exhibitions.

In terms of the relation between Slovak tourists' willingness to participate in creative tourism activities during their future holiday abroad and the frequency of their participation so far (see Table 6), Spearman's correlation coefficient confirmed moderate indirect correlation between the frequency and traditional folk exhibitions with active participation of the visitor, and weak indirect correlation in case of traditional handicrafts and folk art exhibitions, traditional handicrafts and folk art classes, traditional and local food cooking exhibitions, folk dance, singing and musical instrument classes, as well as outdoor art activities in nature and photography classes.

**Graph 1: Slovak tourists' willingness to participate in creative tourism activities during their future holiday abroad**



Source: own elaboration, 2017.

Note: 1 = "extremely yes", 4 = "not at all"

**Table 6: The relation between Slovak tourists' willingness to participate in creative tourism activities during their future holiday abroad and the frequency of their participation so far**

<i>Indicator</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	
	<i>Correl. Coeff.</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
<i>Spearman's correlation coeff.</i>		
Traditional handicrafts and folk-art exhibitions with active participation of visitors	-.234	.000
Traditional handicrafts and folk-art classes	-.171	.001
Traditional and local food cooking exhibitions	-.167	.001
Traditional and local food cooking classes and workshops	-.053	.283
Traditional folk exhibitions with active participation of visitors	-.313	.000
Folk dance, singing and musical instrument classes	-.160	.001
Outdoor art activities in nature	-.137	.006
Photography classes	.036	.474
Filmmaking classes	-.003	.945
Classes of musical instruments production	-.075	.133
Classes of interior design and household furnishing	-.013	.797
Classes of clothing and graphic design	-.019	.710
Classes of making jewellery and leather goods	-.046	.355

Source: own elaboration, 2017.

Based on the data, the more frequently respondents performed creative tourism activities on their holiday abroad, the more interested they were in the mentioned activities also in the future. These findings indicate that once their awareness of creative experience is evoked, they will more likely become tourists searching for new creative experiences. Furthermore, the creative tourism activities with the greatest potential for the future development of creative tourism in Slovakia seem to be, as follows: traditional folk, handicrafts and folk-art exhibitions with active participation of the visitors.

## Discussion

Research questions focused on the identification of forms of creative tourism activities, which Slovak tourists prefer mostly on their holiday abroad and revealing of the main barriers of their performance.

To summarize the above discussed data, the majority of the respondents performed creative activities on holiday abroad mostly passively, i.e. in form of traditional and local food cooking exhibitions, traditional folk exhibitions and traditional handicrafts, as well as folk-art exhibitions with the possibility of visitors' active participation. Although the research sample is not representative, the results correspond with Raymond's findings (In Richards, Wilson, 2007) that 'creative tourism in its purest form' like classes and courses is likely to remain a minority market, since the number of people willing to invest time and money in taking such courses to develop their skills is relatively small.

On the other hand, almost one half of the respondents (43.1%) has not yet participated in any creative tourism activity on holiday abroad, mostly because they did not know such activities were offered in the destination (43.7%) or they did not even know it was possible to participate in such activities (31.0%). The main barrier could be the respondents' low consciousness/awareness of creative tourism activities on their holiday abroad. Hence, the awareness of active participation in creative tourism activities will also be the focus of the future research.

As Prentice, Andersen, Binkhorst and Raymond (In Richards, Wilson, 2007) suggest, creative tourism is more supply-led than demand-led. Although this may not be ideal from a business perspective, it is not so unusual in tourism development, where many sectors tend to be supply-led (including beach tourism, cultural tourism, theme parks, skiing and the cruise market) (Richards, Wilson, 2007). To gain a competitive edge, regions and cities are trying to develop unique facilities or events. In correspondence with these trends, the research proved that, indeed, the most popular way of respondents' participation in creative tourism activities were events, especially exhibitions. Folk architecture conservation areas and open-air museums are also among popular places for creative tourism activities of Slovak tourists abroad, therefore the same locations in Slovakia could have potential for creative tourism supply and become the focal point of creative tourism offer in Slovak tourist regions.

The present survey is not without limitations. It was an initial attempt to explore the experience of Slovak tourists with creative tourism activities abroad for the purposes of further research of creative tourism demand in Slovakia. Since, the questionnaires were only collected through the Internet, the results cannot be regarded as entirely representative for the overall population of Slovakia. However, the findings of the present survey are going to be verified and compared in a representative field research of creative tourism demand in Slovakia, during the summer season in 2019 in all the tourist regions of Slovakia. It will be interesting to verify the complexity of creative activities and the experiences of Slovak tourists with creative activities in Slovak tourist regions within the following research.

## **Conclusion**

The goal of the study was to examine the experience of Slovak tourists with the creative tourism activities during their holiday abroad and to identify the most popular activities. The results of the survey revealed, that respondents who enjoyed creative activities on their foreign holiday, mostly participated in local food cooking, traditional folk, handicrafts and folk events exhibitions, (organized as part of a particular event in the given destination). The reasons that lie behind this fact are that exhibitions are less demanding, time and money consuming than classes and workshops.

On the other hand, in the future tourists would like to take part not only in these exhibitions, but also in local food cooking classes and workshops. This finding corresponds with the

results of the “creative experience” research carried out by Tan et al. (2014). According to their results, creative experience could not exist without tourists’ active participation in creative activities. In addition, ‘consciousness/awareness’ is a prerequisite of creative experience; hence, tourists must have a sense of it to gain creative experience. Once the awareness has been evoked during the experience, tourist will become creative and have also creative experiences.

Creative learning activities with active participation of tourists may have the greatest potential for future development of creative tourism also in Slovakia; therefore, further research may focus on these activities. Events aimed at promoting traditional culture and handicrafts might be considered as the most appropriate places where tourists can participate in creative tourism activities in Slovakia.

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**Michal Motyčka**

## **INCREASING WORKING PERFORMANCE IN HOTEL INDUSTRY**

***Abstract:** Work performance management is a continuous process comprising goal setting, feedback and evaluation with consequent rewarding based on performance. Therefore, it can be perceived as a system of mutually interconnected activities and processes that are approached as a single whole. A questionnaire survey was carried out in 2013 to find out whether and to what extent the process of work performance management is used in the hotel industry in the Czech Republic, how the employees view the process and what possible modifications they would welcome. The results revealed that most employees would appreciate revenue participation, sales-motivation competitions and up-selling opportunities as a part of reward. Based on the mix design method, it was concluded that to maintain a 23 per cent performance growth, the factors should be implemented in a ratio of 35 per cent revenue participation to 65 per cent sales-motivation competition. When implementing the process of work performance management, it is necessary to proceed in steps, continuously and with respect to particular objectives as well as to keep in mind the environment specification factor.*

***Key words:** work performance management, reward, motivation, up-selling, revenue participation*

***JEL Classification:** E24, J31*

### **Introduction**

Work Performance Management is a modern approach to personnel management, whose primary objective is to ensure the loyalty of employees and, above all, their permanently and steadily increasing performance. According to Kleibl (2001), this comprehensive and continuous process includes many elements such as reward, evaluation, education, coaching, teamwork, motivation, and others. It is not possible to determine their mutual position at an imaginary scale of importance clearly, therefore, there are many approaches to the theory of work performance management. Each author has a different attitude to the importance of individual elements – some of them may be even omitted in some cases.

For a broader overview and especially for logical connection, division into the elements of evaluation, training, leadership and motivation of the employees was chosen (according to managerial functions related to human resource management). Particular emphasis has been placed on evaluation, personal development and remuneration. Researches that investigated contemporary work performance management are presented within the literary research at the end of the paper.

Brown, Warren, Loi, and Anderson (2011) report that, since 1972 when Malcolm Warren wrote the first article on work performance, a whole range of scientists and economists have dealt with this topic. They have made efforts to describe – more or less successfully – the issue of the whole process with the aim to provide a practical guide describing how to implement results achieved from various surveys regarding the given issue into practice. Armstrong (2011) mentions for example a survey of British Work Foundation conducted by Kathy Armstrong and Adrian Ward in 2008 that came to the conclusions that: “Work performance management has the potential to improve business performance and act as a tool for achieving change in culture. Focus on performance can really pay the organisations off. What is in the focus of work performance management can partly determine the future of an organisation and undoubtedly shape its culture.”

Personnel management has already been described many times but it is difficult to transfer it into practice since there is no “one best way” to take. This was confirmed for example by Elaine Pulakos, Rose Mueller-Hanson and Ryan O’Leary. According to them, work performance management is often the “Achilles heel” of the entire process of human resource management. Most businesses around the world strive to introduce the most effective ways of planning and goal setting, work evaluation and reward distribution that would lead to ever-improving outcomes (Armstrong, 2010). Although they then face the same issues and “complications” in practice, the solutions are always different and depend on the location of a firm, the conditions of its operation, and other circumstances, as stated by Cokins (2009).

## **Theoretical basis and methods**

The first well-known example of work performance evaluation appeared in China during the Wei dynasty (221-265 AD) when the emperor employed an “imperial evaluator” of the performance of officers. However, the first formal evaluation system based on the work of Frederick Winslow Taylor originated before the First World War, as mentioned by Armstrong (2009). It concerned US Armed Forces officers. It expanded to the United Kingdom in the form of American factory systems. Nevertheless, the classification of merits appeared in these countries in the 1950s and 1960s only. Later, the term “work performance appraisal” settled. It was understood to be a process of viewing individuals based on their personality traits such as deliberation, judgment or honesty, ability to lead a group or cooperate with the others. Based on such an evaluation, employees were rewarded. A scale similar to that of a school one was used. However, the classifiers did not like it since they felt as “those who write records at the end of the school year”. They also admitted a kind of hesitation during the evaluation since their report could have a fatal impact on the professional future of the employee. Therefore, the results were inaccurate and further examination, review or additions insufficient (Kubeš, 2004). As stated by Armstrong (2009), Douglas McGregor was critical to this system and argued that the emphasis should move from the evaluation to the analysis, and attention from the past to the future.

Based on these findings, experiments with assessment methods, such as for example classification scales for assessment of work behaviour, so called BARS, were conducted in the 1960s and 1970s. Already before that, in 1955, Peter Drucker was the first to use Management by Objectives. He claimed that what businesses needed was a management concept that would provide scope for exercising individual strengths and responsibilities. At the same time, it should provide an idea of the overall heading of the vision and efforts to achieve it. It should carry through teamwork and harmonise the goals of an individual with common benefit. Management by Objectives (and self-control) is, according to Drucker, the only principle that can secure all of that (Koubek, 2004). According to Armstrong (2005), it is a dynamic system, which seeks to integrate the company need to clarify its goals in the area of profit and growth and strives for demanding and beneficial style of its management. It is practiced even today – focusing on tasks and goals is still a basic characteristic of work performance management. Over time, however, the system described above has received much criticism due to the absence of unmeasurable elements of tasks, too much emphasis on quantification of objectives, and especially due to the process that has become over-systematised. For these reasons, Management by Objectives faded out (Boxall et al., 2012).

Concurrently with the establishment of Management by Objectives, other evaluation methods developed that focused on behaviour observation, especially the BARS method. During 1970s, this method influenced the development of work performance assessment, also referred to as results-oriented evaluation. Its systems often included classification of performance factors such as quality of work and its quantity, reliability, ability, punctuality, communication, initiative, and a certain overall classification. Naturally, also this method did not avoid some criticism, namely for the following reasons (Hartz, 2003):

- assessment of work performance is usually subjective, influenced by impressions rather than facts;
- classifications by different managers are not comparable;
- if good performance is not quickly recognized and commended when providing feedback, frustration arises;
- managers do not like evaluations and feel guilty about having to “play God”, hence they keep evaluations postponed.

The effort to overcome the above-mentioned shortcomings has led to the development of work performance management that includes some of the Management by Objectives approaches and some of the results-oriented evaluation approaches in its core, but it also includes several distinct features.

## ***Definitions, objectives and characteristics of work performance management***

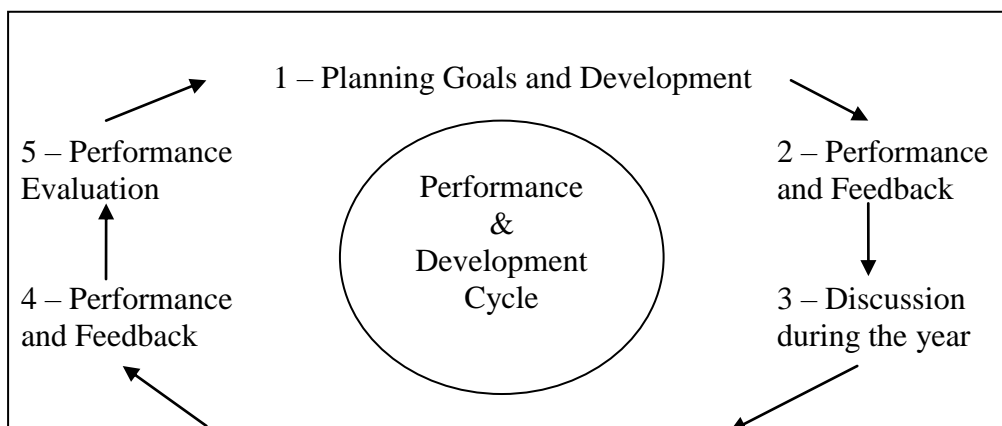
Work performance management is a process that seeks to achieve agreement and common understanding in issues related to the definition of basic objectives, i.e. “what is to be achieved and how to achieve it”. At the same time, it is about the attitude towards the development of individuals and their performance increase. It touches the following areas (Armstrong, 2011, Brown et al., 2011):

- linking individual goals, i.e. goals of individuals, with the organisational goals in a way enabling employees to understand and respect the core values of the organisation;
- defining expectations in the area of skills and behaviour and tendency to find agreement in this area in terms of duty and responsibility;
- providing opportunities for employees to define their goals and wishes related to further process and development;
- motivating people through recognition and creating opportunities for further development of their skills and abilities.

Thus, the system of work performance management can be understood as a complex of interrelated activities and processes that are conceived as a whole and as an integrated and key component of a company approach to the management of work performance of individuals and to the development of skills and abilities of their human potential. This increases the power of a company and leads to the achievement of a lasting competitive advantage.

### **CYCLE OF WORK PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT**

**Picture 1. Cycle of Work Performance management (Own processing).**



The following activities can be considered to be the key ones within this cycle (Horáková, 2011):

- **Role definition.** An agreement is made regarding the main areas of results and the requirements for the skills of employees – so-called competency model is being developed. It focuses on defining a specific combination of knowledge, experience and other personality characteristics (that is competencies) that are needed for effective task performance.
- **Agreement or contract regarding work performance.** It defines the expectations, i.e. what an individual or the team should achieve in the area of goals, and the way of his/her performance measurement. Particular objectives should be specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and limited in time.
- **Personal development plan.** It sets out the steps that need to be taken within the employee development to expand his/her knowledge and skills, increase the level of his/her capabilities, and improve his/her performance in specific areas.
- **Work performance management throughout the year.** It represents the phase during which people performing their day-to-day tasks and involved in their planned educational activities take steps aiming to implementation of the agreement about work performance and personal development plan. It includes a continuous process of providing feedback on employee performance, informal monitoring of progress, updating of goals, and, if necessary, solving any problems with work performance and consultation. Managing work performance should not be assigned to the managers; it should be a natural part of their work.

## **Managing work performance in the hotel industry**

In recent years, the majority of hotel managers has started to realize that the quality of the establishment is recognised especially according to services offered. Their range and, above all, their quality are crucial nowadays as well as the quality of human resources. Therefore, they consider it necessary to focus on managing the work performance of those who have the potential to develop and improve within their team, to increase their natural performance, or just move “forward” in their careers (Lener, 2011, and Ham, 2012).

However, until 2013, no research was carried out that would deal with the management of work performance in the hotel sector in a comprehensive way and with generalisation across the whole country. This was the main stimulus to address this issue in a wider context. The research included semi-standardised interviews with leading personnel officers of large hotels and direct observations in some of these hotels.

However, the main part was quantitative research in the form of questionnaire survey. The aim of the survey was to find out whether and in what extent the process of work performance management is applied within the hotel industry in the Czech Republic; how this process is viewed by the employees themselves and what changes would be welcomed, or more precisely, what incentive tools would be appreciated.

## ***Research file***

The basic set consisted of 4612 hotels, i.e. the total number of all the hotels in the Czech Republic in 2012 (according to the CSO data). A sample set consisted of 776 hotels that were selected randomly, so that their number corresponded to their position within the classification composition in the base file. (It means that the number of e.g. three-star hotels within the sample corresponds to their percentage in the base file, etc.) The final number of filled in questionnaires was 253. The research was carried out between 1 May and 30 November 2012.

## **Results**

The results of questionnaire surveys and structured interviews revealed some opinions of hotel employees. The most important finding was that although the hotel employees are being evaluated and often with subsequent personal development planning with feedback, the process of managing work performance is not applied in all its complexity.

The research has also shown that those who are especially dissatisfied are salespeople. This homogeneous group creates the majority of employees not only according to the questionnaire survey results but also according to statistical data, and they create approximately 60 to 70 per cent of the total number of employees in each hotel. The salespeople are the only hotel employees who have the direct possibility to influence the final spending of each individual guest and hereby the total achieved company performance. Therefore, it is desirable, and at the same time purposeful, to use all the available and effective means to support achievement of the highest possible work and so sale performance of salespeople.

The main result of the research was that sales staff would definitely welcome the implementation of tools such as revenue participation, up-selling or sales-motivation competitions. They would also prefer implementation of a 13th salary, loyalty bonuses, bonuses, or anniversary gratifications.

The first mentioned tools are not only expected by the employees, but they are also the most effective tools ensuring performance growth. Therefore, they were chosen as possible factors for calculating the most efficient combination ensuring a stable performance growth of employees.

## **Practical integration of motivation instrument**

To interconnect (integrate) the scientific and practical contributions resulting from the above-mentioned research a mix design proposal was used. The so-called mix design proposal of the optimum combination of staff rewarding tools in hotel restaurants was based on data obtained from the questionnaire survey. Mix designs are currently applied in the manufacturing and chemical industries; this method is not in use in the area of human resource management, yet. The specific of mix design ("mix experiment") is the possibility to set different levels of factors that give a final value of 100 per cent (or one). The given factors were selected from the followings set of employee remuneration tools: revenue

participation, up-selling, sales-motivation competitions, quarterly bonuses, annual bonuses, loyalty bonuses, and employee benefits.

Since the aim was to cause an increase in work performance without a long delay, the factor of loyalty benefits and annual bonuses was excluded in the initial screening. The statistical evaluation has revealed that the following factors have a significant influence on the immediate increase in performance: A) revenue participation, B) up-selling and C) sales-motivation competitions. These were also included in the optimization mix design. A linear model was used because the p value was 0.017, whereas the quadratic regression model had a p value equal to 0.057. Based on this finding, a contour simplex Lattice design was used. Subsequently, a total of ten simulation designs were made, which were repeated three times (arranged into three blocks).

Consequently, the response resulting from the application of the above-mentioned factors was measured with the aim to identify those providing the best response. The benchmarks that would characterise the response to the set factors were the following staff assessment tools: an assessment interview for hotel industry, a 90-day performance rating, 360°feedback and 540°feedback.

Since the aim was to optimise the cash flow from guests over time, the tool of 90-day performance rating was best to use with regard to revenue growth in view of the long-term average. This was further corrected with random and cyclical influences such as seasonality removed. Corrected data were then reported as a percentage increase in revenue due to a better motivation of employees when dealing with guests.

Design parameters are shown in Table 1, results in Table 2 results and optimum parameter settings in Table 3.

**Table 1. Simplex Lattice Design (own processing).**

Components:	3	Design points:	10			
Process variables:	0					
Mixture total:	1,00000					
Number of Boundaries for Each Dimension						
Point Type	1	2	0			
Dimension	0	1	2			
Number	3	3	1			
Number of Design Points for Each Type						
Point Type	1	2	3	0	-1	
Distinct	3	3	0	1	3	
Replicates	1	1	0	1	1	
Total number	3	3	0	1	3	
Bounds of Mixture Components						
	Amount		Proportion		Pseudocomponent	
Comp	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper	Lower	Upper
A	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000
B	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000
C	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000	0,0000	1,0000



**Table 2. Simplex Lattice simulation results to determine the force of factors and interaction forces (own processing).**

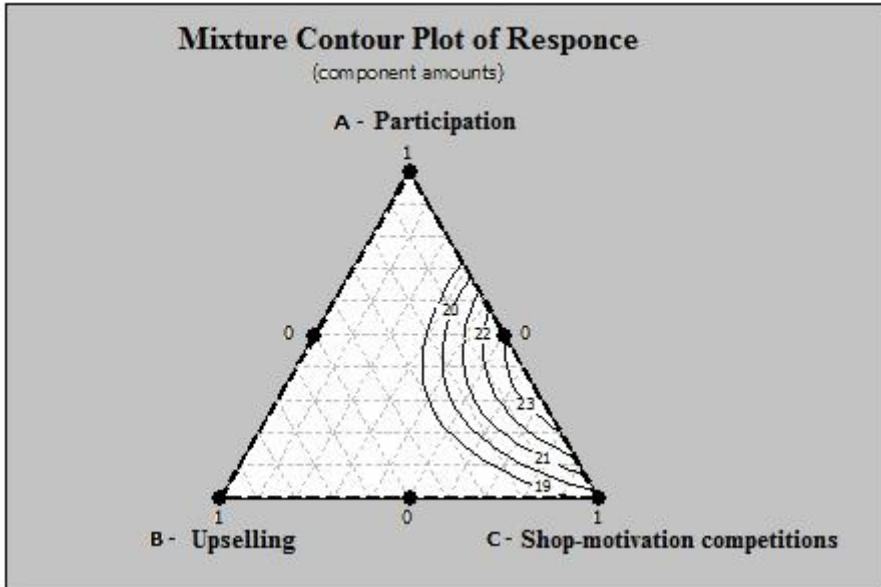
Regression for Mixtures: Response (A - Participation; B - Upselling; C - Shop-motivation competitions)						
Estimated Regression Coefficients for Response (revenue growth %) (component proportions)						
Term	Coef	Se Coef	T	P	VIF	
A - Participation	9,000	2,602	*	*	1,750	
B - Upselling	7,000	2,602	*	*	1,750	
C - Shop-motivation comp.	19,500	2,602	*	*	1,750	
A - Participation* B - Upselling	18,667	11,240	1,660	0,131	1,750	
A - Participation*	35,000	11,240	3,110	0,012	1,750	
C - Shop-motivation comp.						
B - Upselling*	4,333	11,240	0,390	0,709	1,750	
C - Shop-motivation comp.						
S = 3,67927 PRESS = 285,5						
R - Sq = 78,66% R - Sq (před) = 49,99% R - Sq (adj) = 66,81%						
Analysis of Variance for Response (component proportions)						
Source	DF	Seq SS	Adj SS	Adj MS	F	P
Regression	5	449,100	449,100	89,820	6,640	0,007
Linear	2	300,788	180,333	90,167	6,660	0,017
Quadratic	3	148,312	148,312	49,437	3,650	0,057
A - Part.* B - Upselling	1	15,936	37,333	37,333	2,760	0,131
A - Part.* C - Shop-mot. comp.	1	130,364	131,250	131,250	9,700	0,012
B - Upsell.* C - Shop-mot. comp.	1	2,012	2,120	2,012	0,150	0,709
Residual Error	9	121,833	121,833	13,537		
Total	14	570,933				
Unusual Observations for Response (revenue growth %)						
Order	StdOrder	Response	Fit	SE Fit	Residual	St Resid
6	3	16,000	23,000	2,124	-7,000	-23R

**Table 3. Simplex Lattice for optimum parameter setting (own processing).**

Mixture Contour Plot of Responce (revenue growth %)							
Cox Response Trace Plot							
Response Optimization							
Parameters							
	Goal	Lower	Target	Upper	Weight	Import	
Responce	Maximum		20	28	28	1	1
Global Solution							
Components							
A - Participation	=		0,353535				
B - Upselling	=		0				
C - Shop-motivation c.	=		0,646465				
Predicted Responses							
Responce	=		23,7871	,	desirability	=	0,473383
Composite Desirability	=		0,473383				

The results were further visualised through the following three pictures/ graphs.

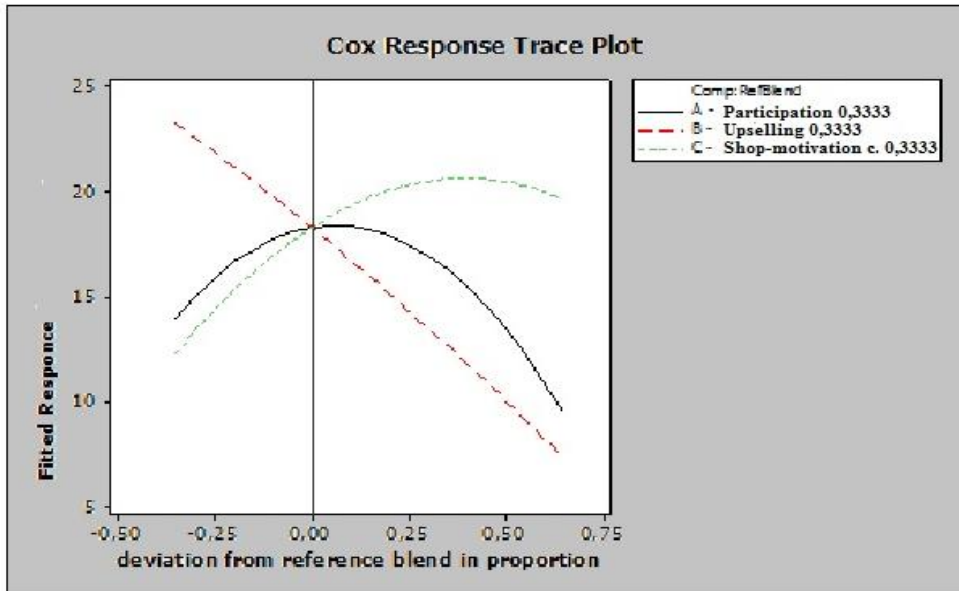
Picture 2. Contour diagram (own processing).



The contour chart shows that the long-term stable response can be maintained with an optimum composition of motivation tools at pacing rate of 23 per cent increase in response (revenues), very low value of factor B (up-selling), low value of A (participation) and high value of C (sales-motivation competition).

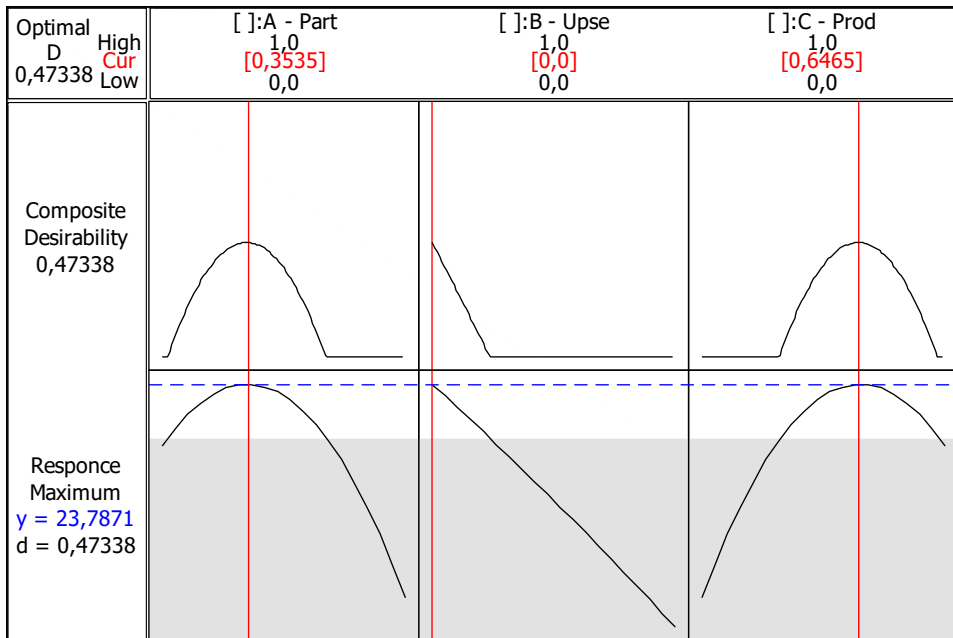
The following two diagrams present further refined results. The Cox response trace demonstrates the fact that with factors A, B and C set to the same degree, only a steady increase in performance (revenue growth) could be expected around 17 per cent.

Picture 3. Cox response trace (own processing).



The most accurate result is presented by the following diagram – Response Optimizer. It shows that to maintain a 23 per cent increase in performance the factors should be set as follows: A = 35 %, B = 0 %, C = 65 %. The following example can be given to express this in financial terms: if employees receive 10 per cent of the increased revenue flow in the form of a reward, they will be paid 3.5 per cent for factor A and 6.5 per cent for factor C for their 10 per cent performance increase. Factor B was not taken into consideration in the evaluation system at all.

Picture 4. Response Optimizer (own processing).



## Conclusion

It follows from the available theoretical information as well as from the research results that the expectations regarding implementation of the process of work performance management are high (Armstrong, 1998). When implementing it, it is necessary to proceed in steps, continuously and with respect to specific goals. It is also necessary to keep in mind the factor of environment specification (Koubek, 2004). It also requires that the personnel officers and top management focus on the support and training of line managers who should be given for flexibility, self-invention and modification of particular processes of work performance management (Lawler and McDermott, 2003). Emphasis is placed mainly on the evaluation of employees. However, it is essential to develop the other phases of the process constantly, to achieve stable agreement and balance of all its elements.

Most managers are aware of the importance of looking to the future. Consequently, they focus on further development of staff on the basis of evaluation results. Nevertheless, the significant impact of remuneration on performance management is often neglected. As Armstrong (2005) states, as a rule, employees are usually not rewarded based on the results achieved. There is also no continuous feedback during the evaluation period that would provide the opportunity to correct or change the established goals or plans of the personal development of an employee (Strebler, 2001).

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## **ISLAMIC TERRORISM BETWEEN 2014–2017: IMPACT ON EUROPEAN TOURISM IN PROXIMATE AREAS**

### **Abstract:**

*The paper explores the impact of terrorist attacks on tourism within the borders of the European Union in the era of the so-called Islamic State of Syria and Levant. Specific incidents shall be chosen according to vicinity of tourist sites and number of casualties. The post-terror behaviour is researched through a Year over Year analysis of advanced flight bookings, fullness of flights, daily bookings, bookings cancellations, occupancy rates and where available, share price of major hotel companies.*

**Key words:** *bookings cancellations, EITA-model, Islamic State of Syria and Levant, occupancy bookings, terrorism, Year over Year analysis*

**JEL Classification:** *D62, D74, Z39*

### **Introduction**

It has been proven that the impact of a carried-out terrorist attack spans beyond the immediate costs – the perished, the wounded and infrastructure – and affects the behaviour of international community towards the afflicted location, having thus a sharp, sudden, even though sometimes arguably short-term, effect on the services sector (inter alia: Enders and Sandler, 2006; Kollias, C., Manou, E., Papadamou, S. and Stagiannis, A., 2011; Eckstein and Tsiddon, 2004). The European Union has been a witness to a gradual decrease in number of failed, foiled and completed attacks since 2007. However, with the upswing and downfall of the Islamic State of Syria and Levant (ISIL), the number of fatalities levelled with the 2004 Madrid train attack and the 2015 balance of casualties was comparable with some years of the dire 1970's – 1990's which saw the pinnacle of European separatism-motivated terrorism (Brockhoff, Krieger and Meierrieks., 2012; LaFree et al., 2012; Jongman, 1992).

Effects of ISIL-related European attacks on tourism and economy shall be the subject of this study. Impact of this comparably high number of fatalities, growing despite the decrease of acts of terrorism in the European Union in general, is to be analysed within the framework of major terrorist attacks chosen with forthmentioned criteria. Namely shall be discussed the co-ordinated Paris attacks carried out on November 13, 2015, Brussels subway and airport assaults on March 22, 2016, terrorist act in Nice on July 14, 2016, Westminster event from March 22, 2017, Manchester suicide bomber from May 22, 2017 and co-ordinated incidents in London on June 3, 2017. After settling on why these



particular events should be part of this study, data relevant to this study shall be analysed; it is by no means only tourist demand variability within the affected perimeter in weeks after the attack what is to be compared with similar years within kindred part of economic cycle.

## Materials and Methods

Data for measuring what could be defined as the impact of a terrorist attack on tourism can be obtained by several methods and economic models. However, before any of them is introduced or applied, the rudiments on which the research draws further conclusions shall be introduced. If it is claimed that the trend of terrorism, which received serious support by the ISIL, statically remains on the decrease, it is not only a statement supported by a growing body of literature (Nesser, P., Stenersen, A., and Oftedal, E., 2016; Brady, E., 2017), but a figure derived from The European Police Office (Europol) statistics. The office in question annually issues a report concerning the number of foiled, failed and completed terrorist attacks within the EU borders (cf. Table 1, line 2). Individual values of this set represent number of casualties for each year. However, this balance has sometimes been ex post modified by another report and, therefore, a certain disproportion must be accounted for. Analysing why some years are subject to greater changes than others is beyond the scope of this paper, as the course of investigation of every singular event within the given time span would have to be undergone. The uneven variation amidst data can be taken as that each such of, which was measured differently during various years, takes random values from a finite set. The standard deviation of these individual -values, when they are present, shall be calculated:

**Table 1: Terrorist Attacks in the EU between 2006–2017**

Year	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017
Set	498 472	583 581	515 441	294 316	249	174	219	152	199 201 226	211 193	142	205
	13	1	37	11	0	0	0	0	12,3	9	0	0
	478	575	471	298	242	167	212	145	202	195	135	198
	492,	589	485	312	256	181	226	159	216	209	149	212

Source: Europol, 2018. EU Terrorism Situation & Trend Report (Te-Sat). [online]

Available at: <https://www.europol.europa.eu/activities-services/main-reports/eu-terrorism-situation-and-trend-report#fndtn-tabs-0-bottom-2> [Accessed 26 Sep. 2018] and Authors'

### Processing of the Data.

A long-run average value of all standard variations is the value of  $\bar{\sigma}$ , where  $\sigma$  applies for sets available for years with several values and  $\sigma$  applies for years with singular  $\sigma$ , the variation is reflected into each year respectively:

## **Figure 1: Terrorism Statistics with Respect to Long-Run Average Value of**

Source: Authors' Processing of the Results of

Global Terrorism Database (GTD), run by University of Maryland, publishes detailed information about every registered terrorist attack; the following balance of fatalities and failed, foiled or successful events is based on all GTD entries in years 1970–2017 for all member states of the European Union to September 1, 2018. In cases as the Czech Republic and Germany, which undergone change in its size within the given time span, are also used the data available for their precedent constitutional bodies, i.e. Czechoslovakia, Deutsche Demokratische Republik and Bundesrepublik Deutschland.

## **Figure 2: Terrorist Attacks and Casualties in Europe in 1970–2017**

Source: Authors' Processing

The major peaks in attacks present the heightened activity of:

- ETA, IRA and RAF in 1978–1981;
- Neo-Nazi movements, IRA and ETA in 1990–1994;
- Islamic, ISIL-related terrorism in 2014–2017

Some of the local maximums on the loss of life can be attributed to particular events, i.e.:

- 1988 Lockerbie
- 1991 Yugoslavian incidents in Glina, Temirgoye and Vukovar
- 2004 Madrid
- 2016 Nice, Brussels, Berlin.

The gradual decrease of number of attacks is apparent from the graph. However, as already mentioned, the numbers are not similarly optimistic when discussing casualties:

## **Figure 3: Number of Casualties in Western Europe**

Source: Authors' Processing

The case-study events for this paper were chosen from the abovementioned DTB database, namely for years 2014–2017, as it was 2014 when ISIL was officially proclaimed by Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi. From this set were removed failed and foiled incidents, and also successful attacks that did not take place within the vicinity of tourist sites, or did, but bore the loss of less than 10 human lives. Into this category fall the following incidents:

- co-ordinated terrorist attacks in Paris, France; November 13, 2015 (127 fatalities, 269 wounded)
- Nice, France; July 14, 2016 (87 fatalities, 433 wounded)
- Manchester, United Kingdom; May 22, 2017 (23 fatalities, 119 wounded)
- co-ordinated terrorist attacks in Brussels and Zaventem, Belgium; (35 fatalities, 270 wounded); March 22, 2017

- co-ordinated terrorist attacks in London, United Kingdom; June 3, 2017 (11 fatalities, 48 wounded)
- Paris, France; January 7, 2015 (12 fatalities, 12 wounded)
- EgyptAir flight that crashed in Greece; May 19, 2016 (66 fatalities, 0 wounded)
- Barcelona, Spain; August 17, 2017 (14 fatalities, 101 wounded)
- Berlin, Germany; November 19, 2016 (12 fatalities, 48 wounded)

It is beyond the extent of this study to thoroughly analyse all of them; therefore, only the first five are discussed and the influence of the sixth on the situation is mentioned. The rest is not subject to this research and shall be discussed in another study.

A preliminary analysis of the post-terror economic behaviour shall be done through a Year over Year analysis (YoY) of advanced flight bookings and fullness of flights, i.e. data from days following the event shall be compared with the same days from preceding years within the kindred part of economic cycle. It is, surely, by no means possible to determine the exact impact by this method, as consumers' behaviour is a multidimensional phenomenon, which is in this particular case influenced by the fact that a certain, non-negligible entity of visitors does not arrive into the given place based on individual desires, but occupational needs.

The same erratum applies partially for the next means of analysing impact of tourism, i.e. daily bookings. In this case, however, not only shall be done the YoY analysis of new bookings and cancellations, but also of the occupancy rates, and where available, shall also be discussed share prices of major hotel companies.

EITA-model presents a convenient method how to measure impact on local economy but is accurate only when enough data are available and thus its mechanics shall be demonstrated only on two cases in the conclusion. In accordance with Bayes' Theorem, it explores probability of a given incident and decision making of interested antagonistic parties, i.e. the local owner and the terrorist group. The model is usually divided into three phases based on terrorist operations:

- the perpetrators prepare the attack
- performance of the intrusion
- impact of the attack.

Both groups with diverging interests take actions with a predefined set of outcomes and payoffs, being for the case perfectly informed and fully rational.

The importance of EITA-based analysis lies in that the EITA-model average can through economic desgrowth detect impacts on the Real Gross City Product (G), which is usually defined as "monetary measure of the value of all final goods and services produced in a period (quarterly or yearly) in a specific geographical space that keeps its landmark and autonomy (jurisprudence and law)".

## Results

### Nice: July 14, 2016

Shortly following the night of July 14, 2016 when Mohamed Lahouaiej-Bouhlel drove a truck into crowds on Promenade des Anglais and killed 87 people, while 433 more required medical assistance, the occupancy of aircrafts decreased by 57% compared to the same period of 2015. The will to advance flight booking fell by 20%. In the next week, i.e. July 15–23, international arrivals into the city declined by 9,4%. This was reflected in analogous situation across France by 8,8% arrival decrease.

A similar trend affected accommodation, where can be seen a 16% higher accidence of international full trip cancellations and 21% fewer international daily booking additions:

#### **Figure 4: Booking Situation in Nice; July 15–23, 2018**

Source: Forwardkeys.com. (2018). *Latest data reveals size of collapse in flight bookings to Nice*. [online] Available at: <https://forwardkeys.com/publication-single/Nice-attack-2016-PR.html> [Accessed 24 Sep. 2018].

The decrease in demand can be linked with share price falls of large hospitality facilities. As the confidence into the industry declined, French largest hotel chain The Accor Hotel Group witnessed a 4% fall of on July 15, 2016.

### Brussels: March 22, 2016

Another event under consideration are co-ordinated terrorist attacks in Brussels subway station Molenbeek-Saint-Jean and the international Zaventem Airport, Belgium. It cost 35 people their lives and 270 were wounded, according to Global Terrorism Database. A sharp fall can be witnessed in number of arriving passengers in the following 2 months:

#### **Figure 5: Arriving Passengers into Brussels National Airport**

Source: Vanneste, D., Tudorache, P., Teodoroiu, F. and Steenberghen, T. (2017). The impact of the 2016 terrorist attacks in Brussels on tourism. *Belgeo*, [online] (4). Available at: <https://journals.openedition.org/belgeo/20688> [Accessed 4 Sep. 2018].

Another decrease can be witnessed in people's interest to spend leisure time in Belgium, i.e. the number of nights spent is reduced. By this method is partly eradicated the deflection resulting from business visits, which need to take place notwithstanding the incidents; they can be at the very least shortened to minimum number of days. The following table explores YoY variation between first 6 months of 2015 and 2016, 9 months respectively. It also takes into consideration that visitors are not a homogenous group; behaviour is different for Belgian citizens and foreign visitors.

**Figure 6: Number of Nights Spent in Belgium, 2015–2016**

	6 months	Belgium	Foreign	9 months	Belgium	Foreign
Belgium	-6,4	-1,0	-11,5	-5,2	+1,3	-12,1
Brussels (region)	-22,4	-16,1	-23,9	-24,3	-15,7	-26,3
Flanders (region)	-3,5	-0,9	-6,7	-2,9	+0,9	-8,3
Wallonia (region)	-0,4	+4,2	-4,4	+2,8	+7,9	-3,0

Source: Vanneste, D., Tudorache, P., Teodoroiu, F. and Steenberghen, T. (2017). The impact of the 2016 terrorist attacks in Brussels on tourism. *Belgeo*, [online] (4). Available at: <https://journals.openedition.org/belgeo/20688> [Accessed 4 Sep. 2018]

Occupancy rates also undergone change after the terrorist attacks, as the following graph, incorporating data for January to November of 2014 to 2016, demonstrates:

**Figure 7: Brussels Occupancy Rates Jan–Nov 2014–2016**

Source: Observatorium voor Toerisme te Brussel, (2017). *Hotelbarometer*. [online] Available at: [https://visit.brussels/binaries/content/assets/pdf/baro\\_hotel\\_11\\_2016\\_nl\\_extr.pdf](https://visit.brussels/binaries/content/assets/pdf/baro_hotel_11_2016_nl_extr.pdf) [Accessed 9 Sep. 2018].

The decrease, comparably severe to other locations, can be explained by Brussels airport being one of the sites of the terrorist attacks and therefore closed several days following the event. The number of international bookings, which decreased in Paris immediately by –101%, reached –136% for Brussels during March 23–31. Conversely, however, it was estimated that Brussels’ economy shall recover swiftly compared to that of Paris due to more favourable international trade country indicators.

## **Paris: November 13, 2015**

Series of 3 co-ordinated terrorist attacks affected the pre-Christmas Paris atmosphere when the religiously motivated event resulted into murder of 127 people and 269 wounded. As this event occurred within the same year as the Charlie Hebdo massacre which cost 12 lives and put at question Western perception of authorial liberty, the effect on economy was profound. The tourism sector has recovered, according to The French National Institute of Statistics and Economic Studies, virtually no sooner than at the end of 2016, when the number of inbound visitors levelled with the end of 2014.

Renown restaurants and hotels bear testimony to the sharp decrease in weeks after the attack. 24-hour restaurant *Au Pied de Cochon*, known by the tourists as the location where specialties are served even late in the night, witnessed with its 50% international customers a 70% YoY fall after the co-ordinated attacks. According to the manager, the streets and facility both were deserted by night, as it was no sooner that at quarter past 9 p.m. when the incidents took place. *Best Western Opera Diamond* surpassed 50% cancellation of bookings and *Mama Shelter Hotel* felt a YoY decrease from 80% occupancy rates to 60% in

December and January. Similarly, *Four Seasons Hotel George V* reached a 30% YoY decrease in occupancy rates.

It are not only individual facilities which were influenced by the events – monthly international arrivals slumped even several months after the attack:

**Figure 8: Monthly International Arrivals on the Book, Mar–Aug 2017**

*Source:* Forwardkeys.com. (2018). *Impact of Paris Attack*. [online] Available at: <https://forwardkeys.com/publication-single/impacts-paris-attack.html> [Accessed 4 Sep. 2018].

**London: July 3, 2016 & Manchester: May 22, 2016**

If the dynamics of 2016 terrorist threats in the UK are to be fully understood, the scope of evaluated incidents should be extended so as to include the Westminster incident. The 2016 year started very promisingly for the UK services, as London bookings reached +16,5% compared to last year. This steady rise was disturbed at March 22, 2016 when Khalid Masood drove a car into the crowd at Westminster, London, killed 6 people and injured 50. However, a +7,3% balance still prevailed.

The end to this was seen with the murder of 23 mostly teenage citizen during a suicide-bomb attack at the Manchester Arena shortly after a concert on May 22, 2016. It was not only Manchester that was influenced; the impact on London tourism was tangible, as bookings reached –3,5%.

The co-ordinated terrorist attacks in London on June 3, 2017, with their 11 fatalities and 48 wounded, saw a further fall to –12% the first week after the incident and –5% the week after. After that, the bookings turned positive.

**Appendix 1**

Year		
2006	491,940307	478,059693
2007	588,940307	575,059693
2008	484,940307	471,059693
2009	311,940307	298,059693
2010	255,940307	242,059693
2011	180,940307	167,059693
2012	225,940307	212,059693
2013	158,940307	145,059693
2014	215,606974	201,726360
2015	208,940307	195,059693
2016	148,940307	135,059693
2017	211,940307	198,059693

## **Appendix 2**

Austria  
Belgium  
Bulgaria  
Croatia  
Cyprus  
Czechoslovakia  
Czech Republic  
Germany  
East Germany  
Denmark  
Estonia  
Finland  
France  
Greece  
Hungary  
Ireland  
Italy  
Latvia  
Lithuania  
Luxembourg  
Malta  
Netherlands  
Portugal  
Poland  
Romania  
Slovak Republic  
Slovenia  
Sweden  
United Kingdom  
Yugoslavia  
West Germany

## **Discussion**

The abovementioned analysis should always be understood within the framework of economy as a globalised and multidimensional phenomenon. By utilising the method of YoY analysis may not be included every singular deviation of the economic cycle, but events that are annual, i.e. decline in demand following the Bastille Day and Whit Day, is

reflected. However, the paper does not cover either the scope of Qatar travel blockade which resulted into extensive cancellations by visitors inbound into the UK through Doha or the impact of rise of dollar and fall of euro in relation to the attacks.

The regained balance should not by any means taken as comprising the same homogenous entity of inbound visitors. As mentioned, euro lost to dollar during the course of given events; therefore, some groups of citizen visit the eurozone more often, i.e. the Americans. Furthermore, not all visitors react in the same way, as is the case of Brussels incident when tourists from several countries appeared keener on visiting the city than others by a non-negligible span of several percent.

The flights statistics should always be treated with care, as decrease in advanced flight bookings can thoroughly reflect only leisure visits; markedly fewer business appointments can be re-scheduled. Fewer bookings can also be understood partially as the reaction of people who still want to buy tickets; the demand is suddenly not as constraining and no need to book in advance is present, lest no place would remain on the latecomers. However, with airlines expecting a fall as the result of terrorism in Europe, it is certainly a phenomenon worth attention and further research.

Peculiarly, not all nationalities react the same to a terrorist threat, as mentioned in relation to the Brussels attack. It should not be ignored that event in one country can have a profound effect on other tourist sites within the eurozone, as was the case when Brussels faced sudden cancellations after the Paris attack and was on 12% fall already between March 1–22, 2017. Respectable rules apply for the London incident which influenced the number of Chinese visitors.

## Conclusion

Major terrorist attacks on Europe's prominent tourist sites prove to have a sharp short-term impact on bookings and hotel occupancy. The short-term deflection should not be taken lightly only because of the currently favourable injection of tourists based on the dollar-euro situation. The event, can, as discussed, influence the situation in other cities, i.e. the abovementioned March balance –12% in Brussels which appeared as a mere reflection of events in Paris. Despite having a limited effect on economy as in the case of the UK attacks, Paris international arrivals were slumping long after the incidents (cf. Fig. 7) and thus if Lufthansa expected to lose 9% on profits in 2016 as a result of the situation, further and thorough analyses of consumer behaviour after the attacks are in place rather than considering the effect non-negligible.

EITA-model would present a very reliable source of information should all the required data be accessible. It would explore not only impact on bookings or occupancy rates, but on the state's economics. Such study was done on Paris and Brussels and their Real Gross City Products, which were for the given years estimated 5% and 3% respectively and substantial average economic leaking was found. By calculating initial damages for each attack, where



is the number of attack targets and destruction, economic desgrowth and war economic terrorist wear, an average economic leaking can be estimated with a sound eradication of alternate causes and hence also the loss in Real Gross City Product. Similarly would be of a great utility if accurate terror indices were established for given events based on the methodology of Eckstein and Tsiddon (2004).

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# INFORMATION PAPERS

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## **ANALYTICAL VIEW ON THE USING THE EUROPEAN TOURISM BRANDS IN THE DESTINATION - SLOVAKIA**

### ***Abstract***

*The contribution focuses on the area of marketing brands in the field of tourism with the emphasis on the use of common European brands in the marketing of Slovakia as a destination. The aim of the research was to find out the extent of awareness and real cooperation of major stakeholders of Slovak tourism and their interest in engaging in current and upcoming marketing projects. The results showed that Slovakia doesn't use joint European projects and marketing tools sufficiently to make the tourism market more visible. Effective use of European brands (within the brand Slovakia) can help to develop the marketing activities of Slovak tourism, increase the competitiveness of Slovakia and thus increase the visitor rate of foreign tourists in Slovakia.*

**Key words:** *Brand, Competitiveness, European Brands, Tourism Destination, Tourism Market, Tourism Potential.*

**JEL Classification:** *L83, M31*

### ***Introduction***

Tourism is one of the economic activities that have the highest potential to create employment growth in the European Union in terms of GDP and employment. With its socio-economic efficiency, it is one of the largest and most extensive sectors within the EU. Europe is still the world's first tourism destination. According to the UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (UNWTO 2016), 609.1 million foreign visitors came to Europe in 2015, which is a 51.4% share of this market. The share of 28 EU Member States in this market was 478.3 million visitors, what represents 40.4% of market share. Central and Eastern European countries contributed 10.8% to this result. Compared to 2014, the increase in foreign visitors' arrivals was 5% on average for all European regions. This increase represents an increase in arrivals of foreign visitors by 29 million in specific figures. The increase was affected (up to UNWTO 2015), in particular by the weaker Euro against the dollar and other major currencies. The impact on the visiting of some countries within Europe caused in our view also, a relative security for visitors, which, in terms of immigration and the danger of terrorism, is a major decision-maker in the most advanced countries of Europe, for example. The countries of Central and Eastern Europe have grown

by 6% compared to 2014. Other regions of Europe have also grown - North Europe (6%), Southern Mediterranean (5%), and Western Europe (4%). According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO 2011), the global growth in tourist arrivals in international tourism will continue at a moderate pace. It is estimated that the number of visitors arriving in international tourism will grow by an average of 3.3% per year, with the pace of growth slowing gradually to 2.5% in 2030. Visitors' arrivals in international tourism will increase by a year 2030 on average by 43 million visitors a year. Visitors' arrivals in international tourism will reach 1.8 billion in 2030. In the year 2030, 58% of international tourist arrivals arrive to the destinations of the emerging economies of Asia, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe, the Eastern Mediterranean of Europe, the Middle East and Africa. It is compared with 70% of tourists arriving in international tourism in the traditional destinations of the advanced economies of North America, Europe, Asia and the Pacific as it was in 1980. The image and perception of Europe as a place of many tourist destinations is closely linked to its competitiveness from the point of view of the intensity of competition on the world market, but also with regard to the potentials of third countries as source markets for Europe. It is essential to implement successfully actions to stimulate demand for Europe. According to the report of the European Commission (EC 2010), it is mainly about:

- (1) *creation of the "Europe" brand*, which could complement promotional activities at national and regional level, making it easier for European destinations to be distinguished from other destinations;
- (2) *promoting the "visiteurope.com" portal* to increase Europe's attractiveness as a place of many sustainable and quality tourism destinations, especially in emerging economies;
- (3) *promotion of joint promotional events* at major international events or at major trade fairs or tourism exhibitions.

The measures concerning tourism (EC 2010) to achieve these objectives can be summarized into four main groups, namely:

- (1) *stimulate the competitiveness* of the tourism industry in Europe;
- (2) *support the development* of sustainable, responsible and quality tourism;
- (3) *improve the image and visibility of Europe* as a place for sustainable and high quality tourism destinations;
- (4) *maximize the potential* of the European Union's *policies and financial instruments* of the development of tourism.

These four priorities form the framework for a new tourism action, which the European Commission introduces in close cooperation with the Member States and key stakeholders in the tourism industry. Implementation of these objectives is crucial for mutual cooperation and partnership between the countries of the European Union. Marketing Slovakia makes proposals to strengthen the national brand on the international tourism market utilizing of joint European Brands in Destination. The involvement of Slovakia in these European brands is a challenge for the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the

Slovak Republic in order to make Slovakia's tourism market more visible and other organizations active in this field.

## ***Theoretical Background***

Being competitive on current tourism market means that destinations and organizations in the public and private sectors need to know their customers and what they ask for. They must also be able to communicate about the availability of tourism products and services for potential visitors and persuade them to become their customers within a destination visit. The marketing communication tool is a destination brand that acts as the cover brand for a wide range of these tourism products. Its primary mission is to help identify or revive the key factors of the destination from the point of view of its attractiveness, to differentiate itself from competition and to facilitate the recommendation of the destination. Brand is not just a logo, but it is also the experience and the image that expresses the value system and the position. Therefore, it is a certain quality of the destination promise. It sets the level of experience that visitors can expect. The creation of European brands has great importance in the European Union's tourism policy. The application of the branding theory in relation to places and destinations of tourism is a relatively new phenomenon. Branding theory began to penetrate into tourism sector only recently - at the end of the 1990s. Many authors consider the process of coordinating activities within the destination as one of the major success factors of the destination (Hankinsom 2004, Ooi 2004). Scott, Parfit and Laws (Wagner and Peters 2009) highlight the importance of the relationship between coordination and effective branding of a destination. They point out that potential problems with coordinating and controlling processes in the destination have the potential to disrupt the destination brand strategy. Although the importance of this coordination and its role for the successful creation and implementation of the destination brand has been recognized by many experts (eg Del Chiappa and Bregoli 2012, Balakrishnan 2009), there is still a lack of relevant literature. Exactly we point to the relationship between stakeholder coordination and destination branding and forms of cooperation between destinations in creating common brands, particularly across the borders of one country. The issue of branding in tourism and related cooperation within Europe is also solved by Houška (2010, 2011, 2016). One of the most widely used definitions of a brand is the definition of Grönroos (2007, p. 330), which defines a brand as: "name, brand, symbol or any other characteristic that designates the seller's product or service unlike other vendors". This definition was based on the definition of the American Marketing Association, has often been criticized by the professional public for its over-orientation of the product, rather than the customer. In this respect, the definition of Amber (1992), as quoted by Wood (2000), is more acceptable and according to which the brand is: *"the promise of a whole range of characteristics that someone purchases and which brings him satisfaction ... The characteristics of the brand can be real or unreal, rational or emotional, material or imaginative."* The boundaries between these definitions are not clear, each of them only focuses on the various aspects

that Amber calls the characteristic features. According to Holloway and Robinson (1998, p. 73-74), it is a "name, brand, symbol or design, or a combination thereof, designed to identify the products of the organization in order to distinguish them from other competitors". According to Healey (2008), the concept of brand originates in the old Norwegian or Germanic expression "burn" and defines it as "a material symbolic system created by the manufacturer to induce intangible ideas in the mind of the customer" (2008, p.249). The process of brand creation is called branding and is defined "(Healey, 2008, p. 248) as: *"Branding is the process of systematically linking the intentionally created symbolic identity with the essence of the brand that is to evoke and meet expectations later. It may contain a definition or a delimitation of that substance. Identity creation is almost always part of it."*

According to Kotler and Keller (2007) the branding process equips the destination with a strong brand. The essence of branding is creating differences. Branding involves the creation of mental structures and helps visitors to collate their knowledge of destinations to facilitate their decision-making. In order for branding strategies to be successful and brand value to be created, visitors must be convinced that there are meaningful differences between brands. The intent of branding is to make sure that visitors do not think that all destinations are the same.

Branding joins generally 5 components (Healey 2008, p. 8-9):

- *Positioning*- means the definition the content of the brand as well as its comparison to the competitive brands in the mind of the visitor. It is important for product designers to concentrate on and respond to customer ideas. Thanks to this, branding is a two-sided process,
- *Story* - everyone is attracted by a good, emotional story. When we buy a brand, we get into the story: big brandy persistently assures us of the great role we play in their story,
- *Design* - covers all aspects of the product, not just its visual side,
- *Price* - is an important, although less obvious aspect of the brand. Price policy is important in brand competition. Short-term price cuts may have long-term negative consequences for the brand image,
- *Customer relationship* - represents an effort to prove to customers that we care about them; every branding activity in itself must have at least a grain of truth, because branding is based on the ability to identify this truth, to incorporate it into the story.

Up to our opinion, we can define the relationship between branding components as follows:

- *Vision* is the basis for developing a destination branding strategy. Administrative authorities must take into account the relationships and links they plan to develop, both with internal and external visitors in the tourism industry, networks with which they are collaborating. This collaboration strengthens not only the branding strategy but also clearly defines the basket of products that it wants and can offer destinations. The authorities must also identify the key target segments of visitors



in tourism as: where they come from, their potential to spend a certain amount of time in the destination for tourism purpose and what is their way of thinking. The vision must include the current level of culture and address the potential negative impacts associated with the countries of origin of visitors to tourism;

- *Differentiation strategy* must be designed to leave a clear and unique picture in the mind of the potential target segment of tourism visitors. This destination image should be consistently applied in the communication strategy in all selected media. Destination must choose a combination of branding components that are best suited to attract potential visitors in tourism and which help tourists make a decision to visit the destination and create loyalty to the destination. This process begins with the country of origin of the tourism participant and is further strengthened upon his arrival and stay in the destination. It continues by his departure and later on after his visit;
- *Destination brand image* must induce in the visitor's mind some specific experience and emotion associated with the destination. The quality of experience and service during a visit to a destination must be carried out at a promised and declared level, otherwise it will lead to dissatisfaction of visitors to tourism with an impact on the destination's image and its brand. A good brand name for a destination is an intangible property with unique properties that must be protected and strategically managed to maximize its value.

An important document dealing with the issue of tourism from the point of view of Europe is the Lisbon Treaty (EU 2007). This „Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union” established the promotion of cooperation among Member States through the exchange of best practices and the development of an integrated approach to tourism within the EU, including the creation of common European brands to promote the competitiveness of Europe's destination at the international tourism market. In order to support individual Member States, including Slovakia, the EU is particularly involved in creating the umbrella brand "Destination Europe". The goal is to create a joint, long-term strategy to support this brand in four key European markets (USA, Canada, Brazil and China). Within it, there is included also the promotion of the development of current and new European brands, with an emphasis on improving the image, visibility and quality of Europe as a destination for tourism. For Destination Europe (EC 2010) and its collaborating destinations within it there are important activities such as:

- stimulation of the competitiveness of the tourism sector in Europe, promoting the development of sustainable, responsible and quality tourism,
- Improving the image and visibility of Europe as a place of sustainable and quality tourism destinations.

European brands focused to natural and cultural heritage value of Europe are linked to these activities by form of brand „European heritage“. Furthermore, there is the aim to develop a system of indicators for sustainable management of destinations (ETIS), which will

promote tourism destinations that have applied the system to its management practice. Other activities include the creation of the European brand "Quality Tourism", the organization of awareness campaigns for destination visitors with a view to selecting destinations and modes of transport, visitor relations with the local population of visited destinations, and combating the abuse of children and women. We also include here finding the best ways to jointly promote and present a European tourism offer on world markets and in third countries through joint initiatives with Member States.

Up to ETC and UNWTO (2009) there exist 5 major issues that need to be addressed when considering whether to use geographically or thematically oriented brands:

- *distance versus proximity* - generally can be mentioned that, the more distant the destination is or the less known for its target market, the more important it is the geographically defined brand. This is especially true where visitors do not travel for a particular purpose or a particular activity, and whose holiday motivations are of a more general nature (for example, under the phrase "run away from everything and rest");
- *precise targeting* - thematic branding allows for more precise targeting of individual customer segments depending on their travel motivation. This flexibility can be particularly useful for destinations that are characterized by a wide variety of different products and experiences available to their visitors;
- *complementarity* - geographical and thematic brands are not mutually exclusive. Thematic brands can be presented as sub-brands of a geographical brand. They can even define the destination to such an extent that, as for example, extreme sports, adrenaline and outdoor activities are an integral part of the geographical brand, as is the case in New Zealand (ETC and UNWTO 2009);
- *geographical locations and themes are mutually reinforcing* - even with the use of a thematic brand, the intention is to define it as a geographical entity that underlines its impact on competitiveness in the area. It should not be irrelevant that a certain experience is available in this particular destination. E.g. good food can be consumed around the world, in condition that the gastronomy has its national or regional specifics that can be presented;
- *crossing borders* - thematic branding and marketing can cross-geographical borders, within the country and among the countries. The most effective approach for the regions the share joint characteristics such as culture, history, traditions, landscape, architectural heritage, (and are small to provide a comprehensive route for visitors in several countries especially for visitors from Overseas and New Source Markets in Asia) have worked together to create and implement a joint thematic brand and joint marketing. This can bring an increase in the effectiveness of joint marketing campaigns to the relevant source markets, as a result of the larger offer of the thematic brand and the larger available marketing resources.

## ***Materials and Methods***

Presented contribution addresses the issue of using joint European brands and their use in destination marketing of Slovakia for its visibility at the tourism market in accordance with the global trends of development. The aim of the research was to find out the extent of awareness and real cooperation of major stakeholders of Slovak tourism in joint European marketing projects within the activities of Slovak tourism, their interest in participating in these current and prepared marketing projects. Their point of view on this way of cooperation is also essential. The basic working hypothesis was the assumption that the Slovak Republic with its potential has the opportunity to become a significant European destination for tourism. On the basis of carried out analyses, we further assume that Slovakia does not sufficiently use joint European marketing projects and tools to make the tourism market more visible, the responsible authorities of the Slovak tourism sphere insufficiently inform the professional and entrepreneurial public about joint marketing projects and tools. On the contrary, the professional public in Slovakia supports the use of joint European marketing projects and initiatives. Primary data were obtained through a questionnaire survey, conducted in the first half of 2016, where the basic set of respondents were Slovak tourism professionals operating in Slovakia. The file was internally divided by the areas of their occupational activity in tourism (science, research, education, travel agencies and agencies, hotel and catering services, etc.). Due to the fact that the number of respondents with the required knowledge about the mentioned issue was objectively limited due to its specificity, a survey sample consisted of 75 respondents. The gathering of information was anonymous and the targeted selection of respondents was based on the following criteria: age over 18, university education, active employment and experience in tourism. For reasons of possible influence, the employees of the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic were not included in the research. Of the 75 questionnaires distributed, 25 returned and were filled in correctly and completely. From the point of view of the professional orientation, there were 5 respondents from the field of science and research, 7 from the field of education, 6 from the sphere of business, 6 from hotel and hospitality and 1 from the area of destination management. In such focused and realized research, we tried to find an analogy in so-called „Delphic method“ that uses a small sample of highly-informed experts. The results were processed by basic mathematical and statistical methods.

## **Results**

About the EU's activities in the field of creating joint marketing and unified promotion of European tourism products out of 25 respondents were informed only 6. Those 6 respondents gained the information from internet portals (in particular Trip Advisor, Ministry of Transport and Construction, European Commission network, European Travel Commission network, European destination of excellence), specialized seminars (2 respondents mentioned a seminar of the Ministry of Transport and Construction) and printed or audio-visual documents.

Another part of the survey was information on already functioning projects, which should already be known to the professional and business community. These are: European Destination of Excellence (EDEN), Network of European Region for Sustainable and Competitive Tourism (NECTouR) and HotelStarsUnion. Part of the question was also finding out about their implementation into the practice of the Slovak tourism.

**Table 1: Acquaintance with the organization, content, focus and objectives of EU projects**

Project	Unfamiliar	Familiar	Recommended	Not recommended
EDEN	18	7	7	-
NECTouR	21	4	4	-
HotelstarsUnion	18	7	6	1

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

From the stated table, relatively little awareness of these already functioning projects is clear. This is particularly the case with the EDEN project, which was also suitable for implementation in the Development Strategy of the Czech Republic until 2020 (2013). At least the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic should communicate this project with the professional public and potential partners for cooperation. A specific activity is the European HotelStarsUnion hotel classification, which is applied in most of the Central European countries of major importance in tourism (Austria, Germany, Hungary, Czech Republic, and Switzerland). This project is currently in Slovakia hindering the obstacle represented by the binding Decree regulating the classification of accommodation facilities (No. 277/2008 Coll.).

Another major tool of tourism destinations marketing of Europe and its individual countries is the European Tourist Destinations Portal, which is primarily aimed at addressing potential visitors from the Overseas. Out of a total of 25 respondents, only 5 said they knew the goals of this portal. The guarantor of this project in Slovakia was the SACR, which was cancelled and its activities were taken over by the Ministry of Transport and Construction. One respondent in an open question mentioned that: *"The SACR portals visiteurope.com and tastingeurope.com did not fill with its aim. It communicated with the destinations in Slovakia only at the national level, but almost never at the international tourism market issue. There is missing a distribution network, which would allow the newly created attractive regional DMO packages to be delivered to the end client or intermediary tourism and many other practical steps."*

The next question was focused to the informing about the objectives of joint initiative of the European Travel Commission (ETC) and the European Commission „Destination Europe 2020“, which aims to define a long-term strategy for European tourism. Out of 25 respondents, only 5 of them had information about the initiative. The source of information

for them has been printed or audio-visual documents retrieved from Internet portals and networks.

The key question of the questionnaire survey was the one, in which the respondents assessed the benefits of the possible involvement of the Slovak Republic in the creation and implementation of joint European brands and their downstream networks. For clarity, the results are shown in Table 2.

**Table 2: Benefits assessment of the Slovak Republic's involvement in the creation and implementation of joint European brands and downstream networks**

Benefits	Positive opinion of respondents
Higher competitiveness	11
Visibility as a European Tourism Destination	20
Better presentation of the natural and cultural heritage of Slovakia	18
Improvement of tourism potential use	13
More efficient tourism marketing of Slovakia	14
Deepening partnerships of Slovak regions with other European regions within the creation of joint tourism products	13
More effective joint marketing	12
More efficient use of European union funds oriented to tourism	10
Improvement of the provided services quality	8

Source: own processing based on questionnaire survey

From the table above it is possible to see the greatest benefits implementation of joint European brands and follow-on networks in the following areas:

- visibility as a European Tourism Destination,
- better presentation of the natural and cultural heritage of Slovakia,
- more efficient tourism marketing of Slovakia.

The following research has emerged and confirmed the following research hypotheses:

- Slovakia does not sufficiently utilize joint European marketing projects and tools to make the tourism market more visible.
- Responsible bodies of Slovak tourism are insufficiently informed about joint marketing projects for the professional and business public.
- The professional public in Slovakia supports the use of joint European marketing projects and initiatives.

Apart from the above mentioned facts, the questionnaire research also showed the fundamental fact that the professional and entrepreneurial public itself does not take an initiative in obtaining information on the possibility of Slovakia to join joint European projects.

## ***Discussion***

### *Possibilities of Slovak participation in joint European brands*

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic (hereinafter MZVaEZ) is responsible for building the Slovak brand and for coordinating the unified presentation of Slovakia abroad based on the Competency Act, which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2012, and on the basis of which this competence was assigned. The aim is to create a functional inter-agency coordination mechanism of a unified Slovak presentation abroad. As the main material of whole brand creation process it is considered the study of Branding Slovakia - From Ideal Concept to Messages and Communications (MZVaEZ 2013), prepared for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs, which aims to develop the idea to create an ideal concept of Slovak presentation as "*Slovakia Landscape with Potential*". Among the multiple possibilities of interpreting the four defined fundamental values (MZVaEZ, 2011) - "*individuality*", "*diversity*", "*vitality*", "*resourcefulness*" - the study processors chose to discuss 10 messages that should be discussed at the societal level. It is a message (MZVaEZ 2013, p. 8 - 9): *authenticity, emotionality, folklore, a lot of contrasts on a small territory, intersection of civilizations, something is still happening, adaptability, innovation, skill and ambition.*

The stated specifications of the basic values and, in particular, the diversity of the regions of Slovakia appear as an opportunity for tourism. Diversity, however, can also be a source of uncertainty, is also a source of wealth. This is a point for cooperation with the European Union. It has the same view of these assets. It sees it as a tool of Europe's competitiveness in competition with other tourism destinations. *The importance of engaging Slovakia in joint European brands to make Slovak tourism more visible in the global tourism market can be justified:*

- strengthening the importance of the destination brand of Slovakia at the global tourism market,
- utilisation of new information channels for communication of tourism products and their follow-up brands in the development of information technologies,
- by the importance of the EU as an integration group at the global world market,
- the membership of the Slovak Republic in the EU and the subsequent commitments resulting in particular from the Treaty of Lisbon amending the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty establishing the European Community,
- the possibilities of financing, creating and implementing joint European brands from EU funds,
- increasing of the number of Slovakia's visitors and thus its position within the international tourism.

## Conclusion

The conducted research pointed to the absence of the use of European brands in tourism marketing in Slovakia. Even tourism experts are not sufficiently informed about the EU's activities in the area of joint marketing activities in the interest of a joint approach to the visibility of European tourism products at the world market. The involvement of the Slovak Republic in the creation and implementation of joint European brands and their follow-up networks were treated positively by respondents. Among the biggest benefits of Slovakia's participation in mentioned projects respondents stated as its visibility as a European tourism destination, better presentation of Slovakia's natural and cultural heritage and a more efficient marketing of tourism. Small and medium-sized countries, like Slovakia, can be hardly presented only by communicating of geographical brand at the global tourism market. For geographical brands, in general it is true that they lose importance especially in remote markets. Therefore, it is advantageous to link up activities within the framework of building the Slovak brand with overlapping European-wide activities. The issue of cooperation within the European Union on joint marketing activities is insufficiently developed within the basic conceptual documents of Slovak tourism. The accent is rather on cooperation in the Central European Initiative V 4. A new perspective is needed to develop tourism branding issues. It should be linked to the creation of common geographic and thematic brands covering the territories of several states or their regions sharing a similar geographic location and culture with their neighbours, which reduces the possibilities for their differentiation. Therefore, mutual cooperation with neighbouring countries to create brands for the same themes and values they share together creates a potentially greater impact of common brands on the international market of the travel market is important. It is more effective than the individual countries would address these activities individually on their own lines. That is why we can consider this area open for further research. Concerning the limitations and limitations of research, in our case, this is especially the number of respondents that we would like to expand in the future to obtain more precise and up-to-date data on the problem solved.

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