

Strategic Planning in the Development of Tourism in the Republic of Kosovo

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Abstract: Tourism can be seen as a set of connections and phenomena arising as a result of temporary movements and lodgings of people traveling, mainly for leisure and recreational purposes. Traveling and lodgings in host countries, typically for tourism, which can be provided by the tourist industry companies dictate the demand for various services. Unlike other forms of leisure, tourism sees these tours, lodgings and holidays not only in terms of meeting tourist demands but also in terms of economy and trade.

Seeing the great importance of tourism, trends of development of this sector in the region, Europe and beyond, tourist values that Kosovo, as well as the importance of management of these tourist values, I tried to contribute a little bit in this field and looking forward that in the future these materials will be complemented with new data and research with regard to tourism management. For exploration and study purposes, the Republic of Kosovo is a large tourism market.

The great importance of these tourist values and their management, in recent years, has drawn the attention and raised a great deal of interest in exploration, preservation and promotion of these tourism values.

Tourism management in Kosovo is developing, not enough investments, it is required that municipal institutions show more commitment and more investment in order to preserve and develop sustainably these tourist values and manage them. In this assignment I will present tourist resources and potentials as well as advance best practices in tourism management through contemporary identification and tourism management.

Kosovo is going through a rapid transition phase. In this regard, the future holds great promise in advancing values in the field of tourism management and its sustainable development, and also very soon we will have greater institutional interest and treatment.

Key words: management; Kosovo; tourism

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1. Introduction

Research, analysis and studies that I have made in the field of tourism management as well as work experience in hotel facilities and acquaintances that I possess, it has been an incitement for me to conduct a study theoretically and practically on tourism management. Having in mind that the management of tourism before the war had other types of management, and after the war beside the damages that war has brought to all segments of tourism and transformation of tourist public properties into private ones (especially tourist infrastructure), there are not enough investments on tourism development and tourism management.

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One of the main objectives was to upgrade procedures and techniques as well as increasing the professional level of tourism development and management.

The purpose of the research was to make connection and apply contemporary specifications of tourism management and tourism strategy of modern management specifications tourism and tourism strategy with tourism development in the Republic of Kosovo.

1.1 The Aim of the Study

Kosovo has many tourist resources which are in constant influence of many factors of tourism development. However, there are elements or actions that affect the prevention of the development of tourism. Therefore the aim of this paper is to reflect the real situation of tourism management in Kosovo and finding best tourism management ways to eliminate weaknesses in order to ensure consistency and stability in the development and management of tourism in Kosovo. This assignment is done based on real facts of resources and tourism potentials in Kosovo ranging from major and not neglecting the tourist values and also on the basis of facts suggesting to eliminate weaknesses in order to influence good tourism development and management in Kosovo.

1.2 Methodology of the Study

Assignment methods and means of study have to do with scientific aspects of tourism management and their practical aspects. We applied adequate scientific methods, such as comparative and analytical methods, various local and foreign literature is used for research and scientific purposes on tourism management.

We used different surveys with hotel employees giving options, recommendations and suggestions to eliminate some weaknesses for a successful management of tourism in Kosovo.

The objective of this assignment was also to contribute a little bit in this field and help individuals and institutions in the future to have better and easier opportunities on tourism planning and management.

2. Definition and Characteristics of Tourism

Recent years, tourism development has had a great burst and it has become phenomenon with social character to which are connected took of processes. We can conclude that tourism is a social phenomenon but at the same time a significant economic phenomenon as well. In order to get a definition for tourism, tourism researchers dedicated a great attention to common denominators that explain tourism entirely as and its features. There were difficulties and problems while determining the definition of tourism in order to be analytical and compositive at the same time. The presence of a definition of tourism is necessary in order to have a starting point from which to commence developing the tourist system.

Recently, tourism became typical phenomenon for societies of developed countries closely linked to economic and social progress. The main reasons for this development are (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 9):

(1) The peace process that prevailed during the years after the world wars, the high level life standards reached by industrialized countries,

(2) Establishing social conditions for all strata of the population,

(3) The engagement of governments to progress,

(4) Reduce transportation costs.

With regard to transport vehicles, tourism development is characterized by massive use of aircraft, marine navigational tools, fast trains, etc. So, this historical tourism phase continues to consist 75% of national tourism and of 25% of international tourism (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 9). During these years offering tourist package

services became a real industry. We have newborn industries providing services of travel agencies transportation and accommodation. Tourist product prices are continuously declining, ensuring peace and security for tourists. Continuous influence in modern life, as well as connection with all the effects deriving from social and economic nature, over the years created the opportunity to blossom new forms of tourism, as well as a greater commitment of governments towards tourism policies and tourist propaganda.

2.1 Modern Definition of Tourism

Tourism being a phenomenon quite complex which continuously changes, it is necessary to exist a single final definition where we can rely and study it systematically and scientifically. Tourism phenomenon is related to different sciences such as economy (its significant economical effects), sociology (for its social aspects), psychology (for seeking individual or group motives), geography (for its space content), history (the values that it carries in this field). In the center of the tourist phenomenon is the human being. By eliminating the weaknesses of previous definitions, we can come to a final definition of tourism in terms of its broader and more accessible to all constituent elements and features (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 14):

- 1) In order to have tourism, the element of transfer e should exist,
- 2) The transfer should be accompanied by tourist stay in a place, outside his usual residence,
- 3) His/her attitude should be of a temporary character,
- 4) Minimum stay of tourists includes excursion, the maximum duration of the stay is controversial and varies from one country to another, but the most important is that settling not to be converted into permanent residence,
- 5) Tourism phenomenon consists of two elements: the subject (person) and the object (tourist hosting capacity),
- 6) Between these two elements there must be a direct report, one should use the tourism equipment to be called "tourist".

So "Tourism is a complex and typical phenomenon of industrialized civilizations, which originates from travel and temporary stay of non-permanent residents in accommodation facilities. Various processes deriving from this phenomenon, human relationships represent the original basis" (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 14).

2.2 Tourism as An Object of Science

Tourism as a scientific subject was discussed long ago by researchers in various fields. The abovementioned definition contains all the integral and characteristic elements of the phenomenon. This makes possible building up a systematic theory of tourism which at its core is science itself and it is related to modern human being for the fact of original characteristics, travel times, opportunity to travel to places and countries in a short time and with sophisticated technical means that the progress technology made available.

The evolution of scientific theory of tourism relates to the difficulties of defining the phenomenon theoretically and methodologically, its link with best practice, production and the various public operators. The science of tourism is at the level of maturity as a result of series previous researches that are made for specific elements of the phenomenon, as well as consideration of tourism as an economic and social phenomenon.

Tourism scientific theory relates to confirmation of its two constituent elements such as: method and object. The core of the study of tourism phenomenon is related to the characteristics of the object, i.e., tourist phenomenon, which itself is a field of study of various sciences such as economics, sociology, geography, etc. This is where contradiction begins that has to do with the method of the study of this science and also it is related to various scientific disciplines. Various scholars define tourism as interdisciplinary classic phenomenon. At the

beginning, tourism is considered as one of economic fields of study, but later it was developed creating a broad articulation in various aspects in other scientific disciplines.

Tourism is service activity, which brings forward the necessity to study internal broad range of relationships in order to increase quality production of tourism services. Interconnection and splicing several interpersonal relationship between tourist and tourist service manufacturer, tourist destinations usually frequented and the impact of tourist flows are attractive and important to various scientific disciplines dealing with this field.

Tourism became privileged field of study for economists, sociologists, psychologists, anthropologists, geographers, etc. This discipline emerges when studying problems in order to establish country's development tourist policies. It is worth mentioning here that some corrections should be made for not confusing between this discipline and other scientific disciplines for instance those who can be used to formulate a single tourist policy but they can never be specific on studying this phenomenon entirely.

2.3 Types and Forms of Tourism

Forms of tourism are many, although this phenomenon is quite individual. For this it is necessary an attempt to regulate these notions in order to have classification of visible forms of tourism.

It is quite difficult to determine the basis of the classification criteria of tourism because of its diversity. However, classification of motives can be done in three main groups (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 32):

- **Leisure tourism** — this kind of tourism is quite heterogenic because the notion of leisure is subjective associated with the following disciplines: recreation tourism, cultural tourism, sports tourism, handicraft, gastronomic, hunting, festivals, family visits, religious tourism, etc.

- **Business tourism** — is a section in which can be grouped types of tourism caused by the movements of professional interest such as technical tourism, scientific tourism, congresses, seminars, missions, fairs, etc.

- **Health tourism** — in this group we can mention types of tourism such as: medical tourism, thermal spa, climate, some forms of religious tourism, etc. Inside these groups may be mentioned types and sub types of tourism that can be distinguished by special expressions.

Besides this classification we also will mention some other well known types of tourism dealing with the origin of tourist arrivals:

- **National tourism** — has to do with domestic tourist flow, so tourists movements within their territory of origin for holidays or recreation.

- **International tourism** — has to do with external flow, crossing national borders and extends beyond not only for leisure but also for business trips as well.

Today, in many countries of the world it is one of the engines of economic growth and international economic relations.

Each product or service consumed by a foreign visitor is equivalent to an export that does not create obligations of transportation and distribution in foreign markets. International tourism is in fact the generator bringing in foreign currencies and at the same time and distribution of purchasing power.

Its influence is not only economical but also is related to social, environmental and regulation of the country's policies. International tourism also realizes the transition from a closed society, composed of closed states in an open, universal where contacts among people have become a daily reality. It constitutes one of the most visible phenomena for economic and social development of society.

Of course, the positive effects of international tourism as those related to employment, production and income growth are facing negative effects such as inflation, the loss of national traditions, etc.

2.4 Forms of Tourism

Travel motives are not the only criterion to classify tourism. We can arrange other types relying on the forms of travel such as (Bakiu, Vjollca, 2009, p. 35):

(1) Transportation Means

In this case it is about sharing the main market for all operators such as air, sea, rail, road, horses, on foot, across the river, cycling, etc.

(2) Destination of the Location Where the Activity Is Performed

This limits the space in which tourist activity is performed such as: medical tourism, mountain tourism, rural tourism.

(3) Time Conceived

(a) Tourism for a specific time of stay, (b) Passage tourism, (c) Weekend tourism, or conceived as season tourism: summer tourism, winter tourism, tourism between seasons.

(4) Size of the Group

We can perceive individual tourism (or family tourism) and collective tourism or group tourism (its importance has increased today due to new transport conditions).

(5) The way of Accommodation

In a broad sense: camping, secondary residences, residences of parents and friends, village houses, vacation, etc.

(6) Based on Age

(a) Youth tourism, (b) Tourism for other ages.

(7) Based on the Budget

(a) Luxury tourism, (b) Social tourism.

2.5 Swot Analysis

Strengths refer to abilities which enable and facilitate the sustainable development of tourism. As such, they are very important because the strengths can be used for the use of all opportunities to mitigate and reduce the weaknesses and also to reduce the threats. Weakness can be called substantial deficiencies that hinder the growth, development and survival of tourism of a country or region.

Opportunities are good chances and possibilities that are available for their further functioning of development and growth.

Threats or risks are extraordinary challenges, which could hinder or leave aside a force identified or could hasten a certain weakness which will prevent further exploitation of diverse opportunities.

Bellow we will mention some of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats which affect the development of tourism in the Republic of Kosovo, respectively the effective implementation of the plan.

Strengths	Weaknesses
Geographical position	Unfair competition
Natural Resources	Institutions not developed enough to provide tourist services
Cheap labor force	Lack of finances for sustainable development projects
The interest of international tourists	Inadequate planning of capital projects
The existence of recreational activities and eco-tourism	Lack of electricity supply
Climatic conditions for tourism development	The emergence of a series of other costs associated with and arising from tourism but which are not compensated by tourism enterprises
Tradition for tourism development	Administrative bureaucracy

Opportunities	Risks - threats
Development of technological infrastructure and development of cooperation	Financial constraints (high interest rates of commercial banks)
Underway changes of legal infrastructure (in compliance with EU standards)	Entry into the market of substitutes
Capacity enlargement	Lack of coordination between central and local government
Offering services in installment payment	The possibility of entry into the market of non-professionals

2.6 Strategic Plan for Development of Tourism

Planning begins in an earlier stage than the development of the tourism of development strategy. The main steps for the development of tourism in the Republic of Kosovo are:

- 1) Analysis of previous development of tourism.
- 2) Evaluation of the role of tourism.
- 3) Analysis and synthesis of data.
- 4) Formulation of policies and tourism plan.
- 5) Defining the development strategy.
- 6) Processing of an action program.

Starting from the first step that requires a prior study specifying the needs for planning and setting up the team that will work. Then it dedicates particular importance to the tourist evaluation in relation to the country's economic development, which includes the collection of data relating to the listing of existing activities as well as tourism potentials of the country.

Herewith the planning of activities help planners to define the regions that are most suitable for tourism development.

2.7 The Existing Plan

Creating maps is essential in terms of tourism, and while is contained the element of planning, using maps through computers where are reflected the relations between inputs in the plan and components. Bellow we will mention some of the highlights of the existing plan, such as:

- 1) Surveillance and analysis of inputs, where to formulate a systematic quantitative and qualitative tourism policy it is important the analysis of inputs and surveillance.
- 2) Tourist attractions, where the surveillance and evaluation of existing potential tourist attractions and activities related to them, indicate the type and location of the main attractions which constitute a basis of the input for the plan.
- 3) Touristic services and demands for drafting the tourism plan, important inputs that are taken into consideration during the drafting of the tourism policy consist the projected types of development, land requirements, services and tourist facilities.
- 4) Equipment of transportation and services, generally suggest improvements of the existing system, same as the new packages of services and transport serve to the development of tourism projected levels.

Also, the analysis of the validity of other existing infrastructure, the terms of type, extension and localization constitute an influential factor in the drafting of the plan

2.8 Preparation of the Alternate Plan and Finalizing the Plan

Each alternative presents different theories and different types of recommendations. Then alternatives are evaluated based on the fact that which of them meet the objectives of the plan, which one reflect the development

policies, generate the desired economic benefits, minimize negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts and reinforce positive ones. Government involvement is important in evaluating the alternatives because such a phenomenon constitutes a fundamental step in making decisions on the planning process.

The best alternative of the plan or a combination of alternatives is selected on the basis of the evaluation which afterwards is prepared the final version. The final structure of the plan includes these elements:

- Main and secondary characteristics of tourist attractions.
- Transportation entry points in the country
- Internal transport network which connects the main points of the country with the region's main attractions and developed areas.
- Defining the main phases of development.

The final plan must be detailed in terms of economic benefits and costs, as well as that of environmental and socio-cultural impacts to make sure that such a plan is an optimal plan and the best and effective merge of objectives of the tourism development, through the full expression of tourism policies.

2.9 The Proposal for Strategic Planning

To achieve the successful managing and development of tourism it is essential the planning of tourism. The experience of many countries has demonstrated the planning of tourism development can bring benefits and maintain satisfactorily tourist markets as well as emerging markets in tourism that are so necessary for the life cycle of tourist destinations. But, if realized a process of comprehensive planning is realized only development of tourism, then through analysis, forecasting and evaluating the existing potentials can be specified and estimated future developments with higher priority, which means that the planning results will be visible and indeed there will be tourism development. The planning process is difficult because it requires time, requires high financial investments, but it is essentially necessary for countries suffering from social problems and cannot compete with other countries.

Tourism should be a planned industry, primarily because this sector covers various sectors of society and economy. Without planning there can be unwanted and unexpected collisions. Tourism is still relatively new activity in many countries. Some governments and often private sectors have little or no experience on how to develop tourism. For countries which already have tourism, planning is often necessary in the revival of this sector and the preservation of its survival. Tourism should be a planned activity at regional and national levels. In these levels, planning is focused on tourism development policies, structured plans, institutional factors and other elements necessary for the development of tourism. Therefore in the context of regional planning, there must be prepared more detailed plans for attracting tourism and other forms of tourism development.

Strategic planning proposal of the Republic of Kosovo should contain these elements in order that not only development but also the survival of tourism to be more sustainable, such as:

- 1) Drafting a development plan by the Ministry of Planning in the central level,
- 2) Professionalism of bidders based on fields of action,
- 3) Equipping with modern technology (rooms, restaurants), TV, WiFi, and other technology,
- 4) Provide 24 hour service for passengers with vehicles,
- 5) Establishing large tourist agencies,
- 6) Restoration of existing buildings and construction of new buildings,
- 7) Investments in capacities which contemporary coherence but at the same time preserving the past.
- 8) Tourism development related to the preservation and maintenance of natural and cultural resources of

the country.

- 9) Tourism integration in all policies and patterns of a country or region, and a close link between tourism and other economic sectors.
- 10) Creating a sustainable institutional framework for an effective coordination of private and public sector, achievements and investments in tourism, etc.

The usage of planning for tourism development at regional and national levels is widely adopted as a principle in itself, although the implementation of relevant tourism policies and plans is still at early stages in many countries.

3. Conclusion

For a successful management of tourism, for each group of tourism resources, we have proposed ways and projects in tourism management.

Kosovo in general stagnated in the past on tourism management and projects to protect and preserve natural and cultural heritage therefore only few investive projects are drafted implemented. These problems have been inherited for many years and when it is added the fact that tourism resources have been damaged to a large extent in the last war, it requires a long time to repair and revitalize them.

Kosovo over the years had a stagnation developing these values and then there is a tendency of slow development.

Based on general analysis on the situation of tourism resources and their management in Kosovo, we conclude that tourism resources and their management for a long time is facing problems of a different nature such as:

- Central and local institutional absence in the preservation and maintenance of natural and cultural resources and their management,
- Lack of funds for investments in such projects,
- Lack of professional staff in the management of tourism resources,
- Undefined ownership of tourist resources for institutional management,
- Lack of communication and defining powers between central and local institutions in conservation and management of tourism resources,
- Major damage caused during the war in valuable touristic facilities,
- Construction of hotel compounds without standards and not in harmony with regulations for their regular proper functioning,
- Unfair and uncontrolled competition between tourist and hotel facilities,
- Poor communication and cooperation among institutions and the community etc.

But in recent years it can be said that there is a positive development and a new spirit from institutions and the community of tourism management where we can say that it is as a result of institutional interest and awareness, community awareness, training and seminars held, the interest of NGOs and donors with projects and investments in the preservation of natural and tourism resources of their successful management. In this context it is noteworthy to mention recent decisions taken by central institutions (ministries) in preservation of tourist resources and their contemporary development, such as:

- 1) The prohibition of the use of inert wastes in Kosovo rivers in order to preserve rivers, river beds and

their surrounding environment from degradation and damages made during recent years.

- 2) Decision on obligations for hotel facilities to register visitors online (E-Tourism) who use their accommodation. This software will send electronically the data to the Ministry of Trade and Industry and Ministry of Internal Affairs.

4. Recommendations

Based on studies conducted in this assignment we conclude that:

- Kosovo has enough resources and tourist potentials for a sustainable and stable development of tourism.
- There are required plans and projects at all levels, financial investments to conserve and manage tourism.
- Drafting a strategic plan by experts for tourism development in Kosovo is required.
- Due to great economic importance that tourism development has for Kosovo, tourist resource management should be ranked as a priority for local government.
- The level of institutional cooperation with the community should be increased for the purpose of increasing awareness and better management of tourist resources.
- Central and local levels to inspect more business hotel facilities on quality and hygiene, lodging, food, drinks and other hotel services.
- Local institutions to support shopkeepers who cultivate crafts,
- To invest in professional education of personnel in the field of tourism management, etc.

Currently, Kosovo needs desperately to develop in this area and it requires greater central and local institutional support and financial support.

In the future, special importance should be given to provide best possible conditions to foreign investors for specific or joint projects in the field of tourism. However, apart from financial needs, professional personnel is required.

It is necessary as well to complete the legislation framework with laws and other sub-legal acts harmonizing them with directives and international conventions. Although Kosovo has solid legal infrastructure for tourism development.

These factors enable the development of tourism, which impacts economic aspects by producing positive effects. Their successful implementation enables achieving planned objectives through which tourism development progress and fulfilling national and international standards achieved that are required in the process of European integration.

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