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TRENDS AND THE NEED FOR NEW PROFESSIONS AND FORMS OF EDUCATION IN TOURISM AND HOTEL MANAGEMENT

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Abstract: Tourism is a very significant sector of the economy in most countries. Its quality growth is not possible without an effective policy of developing human potential. All this, surely, is a weight to be borne in particular by hotel managers who are specifically responsible to ensure new know-how and professions within the corpus of employees. The paper shows the benchmarks and anticipates the prospects of tourism development. It deliberates over the modern forms of formal, not formal and informal education of personnel in tourism. It defines new trends in tourism and their impact on the professional development of personnel and on the innovating of knowledge to employees in tourism.

Key words: education, personnel, innovation of knowledge, management, tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is no doubt the strongest «industry» and a worldwide phenomenon. It encompasses a broad combination of processes and relationships that emerge in the course of tourism travel. It is precisely the realization of these relationships and new trends in tourism that encroach not only on the economical, but also on the ecological, educational and sustainability aspects of life at every tourist destination.

1. PROSPECTS AND BENCHMARKS OF TOURISM

In structural analyses and long-term projections tourism has been estimated as one of the most dynamic examples of inestimable importance for the development of the world economy. In most countries tourism is looked upon as a sector that contributes to the total increase of social wealth and the creation of new jobs, especially when the traditional industrial utilities are in decline. Tourism is expected to contribute to the increase of the gross social production to an important degree. In the contemporary world, tourism is a strong instigator of jobs in numerous activities, and as the quickest growing sector of the economy with regard to creation of new workplaces.

The World Tourism Organization has announced in its reports that year 2006 was a year of big growth² in tourism. The number of tourists visiting other countries amounted to 842 million people which was an increase of approximately 4.5% in comparison to year 2005. The largest flux of tourists in 2006 was registered in South Asia, with a 10% increase in comparison to the preceding year. India positioned herself as the most attractive country to foreign tourists in 2006. An evident growth of 8.1% was actualized in Africa. The bulk of foreign tourists in this region visited the South African Republic, Kenya and Morocco. In the countries of the Asia-Pacific region, there was an increase of 7.6% in the number of tourists, whereas the growth in Europe was about 4%. The leading destination in Europe was Germany, and the World Championship in soccer contributed to such a result. Many tourists traditionally visited Italy and Spain. In 2006, international tourism in North and South America indicated an increase of only 2%. Such a low index of growth was registered mainly due to the drop-off of tourist visits to Canada and Mexico. According to data of the World Tourism Organization, tourism and tourism supporting industries constitute 8.3% of the global employment, 9.3% of foreign investments, 12% of the exports and 3.6% of the world's GDP. One half of the total number of tourists travel to other countries for their vacations, and of that number 25% travel for the purpose of visiting friends and relatives, for reasons of health or due to religious motivations whereas 16% travel due to the needs of business. Traveling for which reasons are unidentified comprise about 8% of all travels. In traveling on vacation, 45% of international tourists make the journey by airline to the destination in a foreign country, 43% – go by motor car, 7% – travel by waterways, and 5% – go by railway. In recent years airline travel has increased more than ever, with a steady growth of its popularity.

² <http://www.world-tourism.org/facts/menu.html>, (21.8.2007).

1.1. Tourism benchmarks in Europe

Tourism is of extraordinary importance for the European economy. Tourism in Europe still remains an internal phenomenon, in light of the fact that approximately 87% of the tourists visiting the EU are tourists from countries in Europe itself. At the same time the majority of trips have to do with leisure time and only about 20% pertain to business trips. Identifying trends in the tourism of Europe, which may be considered as reliable, point to the prospect that the coming of tourists to Europe will double in the forthcoming 25 years and will be related to travels inside Europe. This means that by the end of 2020 more than 720 million tourists per annum would be crossing borders inside of Europe and travel in Europe³. At the same time a great increase in the number of elderly tourists is expected, and the most rapid growing segment of tourism will be cultural and historical tourism (natural heritage and cultural tradition) whereupon the main actuating forces for the future of tourism in the EU will be the liberalization of rendering services, freedom of movement of people and goods, and the protection of consumers and healthcare.⁴

Tourism also has the greatest range of worker mobility inside Europe. This is why the discussion on new professions (qualified skills and abilities) and new future knowledge for the needs of tourism is of particular importance and meaning. When discoursing on trends and needs of new knowledge and skills in the sector of tourism it is always important to start from certain defined facts that depict the existing situation. An overview of the general scene and prospects for this dynamic sector in relation to other traditional sectors of the European economy, we may say, can be considered as positive and optimistic in the upcoming years. In international travel, the EU is first in the world in spending and second in revenues from tourism. According to data, tourism generates approximately 4% GDP in the EU, with about 2 million business firms, employing around 4% of its total labor force (which represents approximately 8 million workplaces). When other sectors are included into this calculation, the estimation is that tourism's contribution to the GDP of the EU is around 11% and assures 12% of the total number of employed in about 24 million workplaces.⁵

In 2005, EU habitants spent more than 86.5 billion € outside of the EU and with such an amount the EU remains the biggest consumer in the world. According to the effectuated incomes from traveling the EU is second, right behind the U.S., with an income of 71.0 billion € in 2005. Spain, France and Italy are the most attractive destinations, while the tourists from Germany and Russia are the biggest consumers. Around 69% of the total income from travel comes from transactions based on travel between EU's member countries. The leading destinations outside the EU for the EU habitants are the United States, Turkey and Switzerland, whereas the greatest income in the EU is realized from visits of tourists from the USA, Turkey and Norway. The capacities for accommodation of tourists in Europe show differences with regard to accommodation capacities relevant to hotels and camping facilities. In general we may

³ The World Tourism Organisation. *Tourism 2020 Visions*. <http://www.world-tourism.org> (25.7.2007.)

⁴ Jonckers, P.: *General trends and skill needs in the tourism sector in Europe*. CEDEFOP Panorama series; 115., 2005., 8

⁵ Hussain, M., Bylinski, G.: *EU remains a major player in international travel in 2005*. Eurostat: Statistics in focus 85/2007. p.2., <http://epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu/portal> (28.9.2007.).

say that the hotel sector is dominant at most of the destinations. In 2004 there were 201,021 hotels on the level of EU 25.

Regardless of the realization of such „organized“ tourist travel results, when talking about individual tourists, we can then say that this component is very delicate and particularly susceptible to external influences of the surroundings. In this connection, the firsthand knowledge of the immediate past points out that the individual tourists are highly susceptible to scenarios of conflicts and violence, as well as to health risks and surges of ecological disasters. The whole process of the tourist's making a decision is very complex and commonly linked to changes in their established customs. The possibility of booking by means of the Internet and accordingly of individual travel and accessibility to low-priced transportation, and increased interest in destinations offering lower prices, make tourism one of the most changeful and most dynamic sectors of the economy.⁶

1.2. The impact of tourism on economic development in Croatia

Tourism is becoming an increasingly important sector of the Croatian economy which, directly and indirectly, to a significant extent is conducive by 25% to the country's gross domestic product, nearly 5% employment and in a multiplicative manner has an impact on the growth and development of other industries. Of a total of 10,4 million tourists in Croatia during year 2006, 8,7 million of them were foreign tourists or 86 %, and the proportion of tourists from the EU was 7, 6 million or 73 % of the total number of foreign tourists. In the course of 2006 Croatia actualized more than 53 million overnight stays, of which 47,8 million were foreign tourists (90 %), and among these, the tourists from EU countries participated with 42,6 million overnight stays (89 % of the total number overnight stays actualized by foreign tourists). In light of the constant increase of physical indicators and income from tourism since year 2000, and in particular from the aspect of large investments in the quality and variety that Croatian tourism offers, the expectations are that this trend will in the future continue, especially in view of the large presence of tourists from the EU countries in the total number of foreign tourists in the Republic of Croatia. At the same time Croatia has in 2007 realized a foreign currency income from tourism of approximately 6,7 billion €. According to the number of overnight stays of registered guests from January to December 2007, the foremost were the German tourists. Thereafter come the Slovenians, Italians, Austrians, Czechs, Hungarians and the Dutch.

Croatia is among the most popular tourist destinations in the world. According to the World Tourism Barometer of international tourist arrivals, in 2006 Croatia was placed 23rd in the world on a scale of the first 50 tourism countries.⁷ At a higher position of rank among EU countries were France, Spain, Italy, UK, Germany, Austria, Poland, Portugal, the Netherlands and Hungary; then followed in rank by countries from other parts of the world, the USA, Mexico, China, Hong Kong, Canada, Ukraine,

⁶ The World Tourism Organisation. *Tourism 2020 Visions.*, <http://www.world-tourism.org/facts/menu.html> 0 (25. 7.2007)

⁷ UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, Volume 5. No. 2, June 2007. www.unwto.org; (30.9. 2007)

Thailand, Malaysia, Turkey and the Russian Federation. According to the barometer of incomes from international tourist arrivals, Croatia holds the 26th place in the world. The main reasons for arrivals of international tourists, regardless of whether they are arriving from the EU or other regions of the world, are vacations and leisure time travel, and a lesser extent refers to arrivals linked to business trips.

According to the data of the Central Bureau of Statistics for 2006, Croatia has at its disposal 926 thousand beds in all categories of accommodation and this represents a n increase of 2% in comparison to year 2005. The hotel capacities are insufficient in relation to market demand, especially during the high season, and this continues to be the „bottleneck“ that blocks the increasing of the total tourism traffic and extension of the duration of the season. (The number of hotels increased from 498 in 2005 to 521 in 2006). The apportionment of hotels according to category for the period from 2001 to 2006 is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: **Hotel apportionment according to category for period 2001- 2006 in %**

Category	2001.	2002.	2003.	2004.*	2005.**	2006***
1*	8,2	5,1	3,7	3,6	3,4	-
2*	40,9	32,5	31,7	30,6	29,3	25,2
3*	45,3	53,0	55,0	53,1	55,1	60,7
4*	2,4	6,0	6,3	8,4	8,2	12,1
5*	3,3	3,3	3,3	4,3	4,0	2,0
TOTAL	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0	100,0

* includes accommodation that has temporary work permit
 ** data on 9.05. 2005.
 *** data on 1.09. 2006.

Source: Ministry of Sea, Tourism, Transport and Development

From data in Table 1, it is apparent that there are no more hotels of 1* category in Croatia, and that the portion of 2* category hotels is decreasing from year to year, whereas, contrary to this, there is an intensive growth in the apportionment of 3* and 4* categories. The portion of hotels in the 5* category in the total hotel structure has fallen by 50%. This is the result of greater building of new facilities, but also of reconstruction of existing facilities into 3* or 4* categories, since the present facilities under construction in most cases are unable to satisfy the basic requirements for a 5* category.⁸ Along with the large number of renovated hotels, swimming pools and other facilities (wellness, fitness etc.) have been installed, which enable the season's extension and determine the growth of a need to employ personnel with new know-how and skills. Since tourism is a strategically important sector for a country's development,

⁸ Ministarstvo mora, turizma, prometa i razvitka. Analiza turisticke 2006 godine. str. 3. Zagreb, rujan 2007., www.mmtpr.hr (30.9.2007).

permanent schooling of new personnel and advancement of already employed for work in tourism is crucial for development of the tourism sector in the forthcoming period.

An analysis of tourist traffic in the period 2005-2006 demonstrates that organized tourist traffic had a greater growth than individual tourist traffic, which is an exceptionally positive trend in Croatian tourism. The reason for this quicker growth can be looked for in changes of the structure of guests who due to the distance of destinations usually give way to the organized manner of reaching destinations through tour operators and passenger agencies. At the same time we can expect a further increase of individual tourists in light of the fact that substantial investments in the road and traffic infrastructure have been achieved.

2. TRENDS AND THE NEED FOR NEW KNOWLEDGE IN TOURISM

The abrupt increase of leisure time prompted by a steady decrease of working hours is one of the sociological trends that have a powerful impact on tourism. Today we are witnesses that the bulk of the population is imparting a new role to leisure time. It is for the most part utilized for recreation and achievement of personal satisfaction. Leisure time now, more than ever before, provides possibilities for satisfying man's main needs. Leisure time has become the essential component of quality living. People desire new experiences and are forever searching for something new and different.

2.1. New trends and forms of education in tourism

Identification of needs for new knowledge, especially in the sense of future expectations, demands cognition of definite trends and numerous changes.⁹ Thus we can then talk about new trends such as cultural tourism, tourism of happenings, urban tourism, business tourism, wellness tourism as a component of health tourism, and other forms the likes of:¹⁰

- **Tourism and sustainability:** With the growth of human awareness regarding the impact of mass tourism on the environment and the search for ecological contents and autochthonous products, tourists want to eat in local restaurants, use local guidebooks for vacationing, explore for the real story about the local destination.
- **Tourism and accessibility:** Demographic trends bear a crucial influence on the type of tourism products and services being offered. Retired people and inhabitants with reduced mobility as a consequence of age or disability are a developing target group. Nearly 40 million Europeans are

⁹ Activities of such bodies as the World Tourism Organisation, World Training and Tourism Council, International Labour Organisation, Tourism Unit of the Enterprise General Directorate of the European Commission, and European Travel Commission. See e.g. in: Nickson, Dennis, at all. *Skills, organizational performance and economic activity in the hospitality industry: A literature review*, SKOPE, Warwick Business School, University of Warwick, Coventry, CV4 7AL.

¹⁰ Jonckers, P.: *General trends and skill needs in the tourism sector in Europe*. In: Olga Strietska-Illina and Tessaring Manfred (Eds.), *Trends and skill needs in tourism*. Cedefop Panorama series; 115. 2005., 8-9.

a population with special needs, and it is not advisable to neglect them as consumers and users of various tourism services.

- **Tourism and peace:** Tourism is related and attached to tolerance, cultural exchange, mutual studying of one another, instigating cooperation and friendship;
- **Tourism and technology:** New technologies forcibly motivate e-trade and communication, and as such it becomes our personal vacation travel organizer;
- **Tourism and sports:** This segment of tourism continues its powerful growth both as an individual and as a group tourism; of exceptional interest are sport centers for mass gatherings,, mega-sport projects – sailboat riding, cycling, skiing, parachuting, diving, nautical programs, various sport competitions, especially European and World championships.
- **Tourism and health:** A healthy life-style and promotion of various health SPA and Wellness programs for healthcare purposes calls for the need of close cooperation with professionally educated medical staff and with the preparation of users regarding the health risks on vacation;
- **Tourism and nature:** The cultural and natural heritage, industrial inheritance is a developing market as a nontraditional form of tourist destination; a sojourn outdoors, experiences on the water, beside the water and in the water, on land, photo sessions, hikes, mountain climbing, rural tourism, hunting, fishing etc.
- **Tourism and accommodation:** accommodation facilities: hotels, camping sites, apartments, have to be segmental, there are no more non-specialized hotel facilities; rather they have to be specified for a distinct offer and tourist segment (children, sportsmen and boutique hotels etc). Next to accommodation there is a supplementary request for equipment and offers, the likes of parking lots, garages, playgrounds, pools and similar facilities.
- **Entertainment & business tourism:** Visits to cities and outstanding events - sportive, religious, cultural, political, scientific, economic and those the likes of carnivals, festivals, forums, congresses, fairs, show programs of “gala affairs” and other occasional manifestations.

All the indicated trends and sociological changes reflect themselves on the various tourism products and services, and as such on the changes attached to professional activities and the qualification structure of employees. It is considered that employees in tourism must have formal, not formal and informal education to perform a particular job¹¹.

Formal education is characterized by attributes that come forth in the regular educational system and its institutions. Formal education is determined by regulations and specific legal sources. For this kind of education the responsible state ministry approves and prescribes programs and gives permits to institutions that will conduct them. Formal education is often criticized for the obtuseness of educational institutions,

¹¹ Vujic, V., «Obrazovanje i strucno usavršavanje kadrova u hotelijerstvu», HUH, Zagreb 2007.

methods of work, needs of the economy, imposition of standards, network of instructive institutions, democratic orientation and harmony of the educational system.

Nonformal education embraces a wide choice of various programs of innovative knowledge. Its orientation is in the direction of extracurricular needs of both business systems and of adults individually. The most common forms of education or training of personnel in economic praxis are: instruction, orientation, follow-through of profile, job rotation and specialized professional education. In addition to the indicated forms in the economic practice of developed countries, particularly in hotel management, the following nonformal kinds of education are used most frequently: lectures, panel discussions, symposiums, seminars, courses, instructions, practical training, study consultations, study tours, scientific excursions, introduction to job, apprentice training, group studies, conferences, presentations, consultations, tutorship, functional innovation of knowledge and various combinations of the indicated forms. The needs for training and innovation of knowledge are numerous and particular accent is on those related to the development of science and technology, methods of managing business processes and user¹² demands.

Informal education is most frequently practiced and expressed through guild associations and various methods of informing certain groups on topical themes, trends, and events. New scopes of informal education are becoming accessible to almost all civilian structures by means of the internet and other communication technologies. Communication technologies have become reachable to a large number of people; they are more available than teachers and managers – mentors. As opposed to books and teachers, information science technology enables countless variability of freedom of deliberation and innovation of knowledge, as well as the enhancement of leisure time.

All forms of formal, nonformal and informal education and their relationships should be interacted into the business system's educational policy. This need arises for several reasons: **Firstly**, the attendant of whichever of the levels in the system of formal education is seldom immediately qualified for a concrete workplace in a company. **Secondly**, no matter how up-to-date an education program may be, the extent and speed of changes taking place nowadays in some degree makes existing programs outdated. **Thirdly**, due to the constant changes, the demands of workplaces and of jobs respectively, are caused to change, therefore knowledge and abilities have to be innovated in the sense of lifelong education and improvement on the job, alongside work and through work, combining the theory of new technology with concrete practice.

2.2. The need for new knowledge and skills in the hotel industry

The system of education in just about all tourism countries, Croatia included, does not keep abreast with the trends of modern tourism. As a consequence there is a lack of quality personnel in many areas, and without high-quality personnel there is no high-quality tourism. According to relevantly accessible sources, the tourism sector has

¹² Cerovic, C., *Hotelski menadzment*, Fakultet za turisticki i hotelski menadzment Opatija, 2003., 555.

a deficiency of well-educated and qualified (trained) personnel for jobs requiring a moderate degree of responsibility in organizing with specific knowledge and skills in every single segment of an offer.¹³ The most frequently observed deficiencies in the tourism sector are: a lack of basic knowledge and skills with regard to tourism products and services, target areas, marketing, selling, consumer orientation, electronic data processing of bookings via the Internet. The employees are also lacking in inter-personnel skills, especially tasks involving development of human potentials and direct contacts with consumers.

At the same time the needs for specific professional knowledge have to be defined in accordance with the category of the workplaces. On the management level there is in the first place a need of professional skill and the kind of know-how that we come across on different organizational levels. As a rule, managers need to have knowledge in accounting, law, economics, marketing, managing of human capital as well as in business and strategic planning. Managers are expected to have professional knowledge and capability to work on a computer, to develop products, to innovate, to manage the destination, projects, results, possess the managerial knowledge of getting the best of the impact of globalization, management of changes, knowledge and skills in marketing and selling¹⁴. It is necessary to pay particular attention to the education of private lease givers and other participants in the tourism destination. They are inadequately acquainted with the regulations and standards of accommodation units. Table 2 displays the required knowledge and competences according to the structure of workplaces in tourism.

Table 2: Required knowledge and competences in tourism

Knowledge and competences	Managers	Skilled co-workers	All employees
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning and organizing - Consumer orientation - Communication - Speaking a foreign language - An understanding of cultures - Teamwork - Flexibility - Problem solving - Training skills - Personnel management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PC capability - Business planning - Managerial skills - Management of changes - Management of results - Decision making - Management of human capital - Management of destination - Management of projects - Educated to teach others - Leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional competences - Problem solving - Knowledge of working on PC - Knowledge innovation - Management of projects and work processes - Communication - Specialized competences - Presentation skills - Creative and innovational 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Professional competences - Technical skills - On-the-job training - Personal development - Security and job safety - Orientation towards customers and work results

Source: Created by author.

¹³ Federal Association of the German Tourism Industry (BTW), www.btw.de
 WTTO (The World Travel and Tourism Council: <http://www.wttc.org>
 UNWTO (World Tourism Organisation), <http://www.unwto.org>

¹⁴ European Commission, DG Enterprise. *Improving training in order to upgrade skills in the tourism industry*. Final report of Working Group B. Brussels: European Commission, 2001, str. 26.

Experiential norms of time necessary for innovation of knowledge and upgrading of employees in the contemporary economy amounts to an average for:¹⁵

- the directorate 15 - 20 days per year, or 6 to 8% of the total working time,
- operative managers 10 - 15 days, or 4 to 6% of the total working time,
- all other employees 5 - 10 days, or 2 to 4% of the total working time.

The assignment of all forms of educational activity is their permanent upkeep, to impart the conforming kinds of knowledge, skills and competencies to employees and managers. By all means the education program should not only rely on the existing level of technique, technology, and organization, but should also look forward to those that are perceived or are already beginning to be applied in the most developed countries of the world. On-the-job training for work and through work, as well as the principle of lifelong education and development is steadily growing in importance. Every system of business must possess a plan of innovating knowledge that should incorporate: an analysis of the educational needs and competencies of the employed, a plan for workplace learning, a training program and an evaluation of educational undertakings.

Besides formal education, the quality development of personnel also comprises nonformal and informal education as well as other significant elements among which we should by all means mention the employees' satisfaction in performance of their jobs. It is hard to expect high quality from personnel if it operates in an uneasy milieu lacking an atmosphere of cooperation and the culture of dialog between managers and co-workers. The challenges that are encountered in that process have to be overcome, with an awareness of the importance of innovation of knowledge of employees in tourism. The innovation of knowledge and training for work in tourism requires:¹⁶

- associating with the workplace;
- wherever possible, application of the model of tutorship;
- giving strong support and equal importance to all the structures of employees and managers;
- that training plan is transparent for all users;
- establishing of targets and standards for evaluation of results and outcome of trainings.

Tourism forcefully expresses a demand for flexibility and mobility of personnel. The demand for flexibility is apparent through the growing pressure on personnel to possess a greater degree of various skills combined with diverse qualifications, or in combination with specific skills that are, broadly speaking, linked to different qualifications. This has an impact on the development and emergence of new hybrid forms of vocations, in which one person performs several lines of business that require special training and specific skills.

¹⁵ Vujic, V., *Menadzment ljudskog kapitala*, Sveuciliste u Rijeci - Fakultet za turisticke i hotelske menadzment Opatija, 2004., str. 239.

¹⁶ Junggebur, J.H.F. et al. Training and development under construction. Hospitality and the changing environment. The Hague: Hotelschool the Hague, 2004. p. 32-34.

CONCLUSION

The need for new knowledge and skills in the hotel industry is increasing more and more every day. New trends and the ever more intricate processes of activity in tourism and hotel management are reflected not only by way of different products and services but also thru professional activities and the qualification structure of employed personnel. It is considered that the employed in tourism should have formal, nonformal and informal education in order to perform a definite job. Education and innovation of knowledge must necessarily be defined according to the category of the workplaces. This process cannot happen of itself, but ought to be managed.

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