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Analysis of Tourism in the Slovak Republic in the Period after Accession to the European Monetary Union

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Abstract:

Tourism is an important part of the economy in the world. Despite good conditions in Slovakia, the share of tourism in the economy accounts for only a small percentage. The rise in tourism would greatly benefit especially for the growth of employment rate, wage growth, the influx of foreign tourists and ultimately would particularly benefit the growth of Slovakia's economy. The aim of this paper was to describe tourism and selected indicators of tourism and their impact on employment, added value and wages of employees. Slovakia has many natural beauties, cultural and historical sights, so these advantages should be used to develop the economy. In the paper was used method of analysis of selected indicators of tourism. The indicators were examined and subsequently compared during the period from 2009 to 2015. Meaning of analysis of indicators has a direct impact on the growth of employment in Slovakia, the improvement of the services provided and the indirect impact on the growth of other products for the development of tourism. Slovakia has a high potential in terms of tourism but needs to be more visible, especially abroad, needs to offer more educated workers in the field, promote the growth of wages and bonuses and overall to support entrepreneurship in tourism.

Keywords: tourism; employment; wages; accommodation; added value.

JEL Classification: J31; L83; Z32; Z33.

Introduction

Tourism is one of the economic sectors that predominantly supports the entrepreneurship in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises. Tourism sector encourages economic growth by generating income and employment through business opportunities in both developed and developing regions. Tourism is considered an economic sector in itself, which could assist in diversification and revitalization of local economic regions (Meyer and Meyer 2016). The meaning of the word tourism can be considering as wider meaning of the complex of social activities. Tourism is a set of activities aimed at meeting the needs of traveling and staying outside the place of permanent residence usually in leisure time. The goal is rest, cognition, health, distraction and entertainment, cultural and sporting activities, business trips, *i.e.* gaining a comprehensive experience (Gučík 2006). Similarly, it is also the definition of a tourist. A tourist is a person who spends at least one night in accommodation facilities. Otherwise, it is a one-day visitor who spends less than 24 hours outside the home.

1. Literature Review

The beginnings of tourism cannot be accurately determined. Despite shifts in places, the cause of tourism was not rest and relax. Probably the first "tourist" way just with those reasons was Puntu (east coast of Africa), which was carried out by the Egyptian queen Hatshepsut around 1480 B.C. (Matlovičová *et al.* 2015). Till then, the tourism was formed predominantly by transportation, boarding and accommodation. Later, it began to be associated with religion, business trips and education. In the late 18th century, tourism began to shape on a larger scale as the result of technical, economic and social development. Later, tourism became part of the lifestyle of the population, whether from the point of view of tour operators or travelers themselves. Tourism covers any activity related to the temporary short-term movement of persons to destinations outside the places where they normally live or work and their activities during their stay in these destinations (Williams 2004).

Tourism is most often associated with relaxation and holiday (Hall 2005). Recently, in the category of tourists are also those workers, linking business trips and training with relaxation. International routes are classified by UNWTO into three categories according to the purpose of the trip, namely the following segments:

- segment: recreational trips, leisure and holiday trips;
- segment: business trips;
- segment: visitations of relatives and family, religious and other trips (Matlovičová *et al.* 2015).

According to Šenková *et al.* (2015), tourism is a modern socio-economic phenomenon affecting several sectors of the national economy of each country. A precondition for successful tourism development is sufficient quality of accommodation, since it is considered to be a key factor within infrastructure services of every tourist destination. The important milestone in the development of modern tourism in Slovak Republic was the year 1989, when fundamental social, political and economic changes happened.

During the last period, tourism in Slovakia has grown slightly, contributing to the growth of the economy, supporting entrepreneurship in the field of small and medium-sized enterprises and contributing to the growth of employment. In Slovakia are very good conditions for the development of tourism, starting with spa facilities, historical and cultural monuments, pilgrimage sites, etc. Not to mention the geography of Slovakia. In Slovakia are many beautiful natural areas, protected areas and national parks. It is also necessary to highlight the conditions for rural tourism and agro-tourism. Almost all Slovak towns and villages have good conditions for tourism, often also in cooperation with the business community. A special chapter consists of Slovak mountains with their likes and valleys, namely High Tatras, Low Tatras, Great and Low Fatra, Pieniny, Slovak Paradise, etc. Despite the fact Slovakia has no sea, there are several freely accessible caves and gorges, many lakes and waterfalls. Slovakia has beautiful mountains, thermal and mineral swimming pools and many other beautiful tourist areas. Slovakia is significant by its castles or their ruins, mansions, chateaus, and so on. Water reservoirs are also available in Slovakia, although they were originally established as a source of drinking water. For foreign visitors, Slovakia is the target of a visit or transit point to other than Slovak objective of the visit.

Despite this fact Slovakia has underdeveloped infrastructure, in particular as regards the construction of motorways and first-class roads. When comparing our tourism conditions with conditions created abroad, we cannot expect tourism to become a decisive area of our economy. Important for the development of Slovak tourism is the security on the territory of Slovakia and a very small risk of terrorist attacks, which contributes greatly not only to the rise of Slovak tourism but also to the increase in transit tourism from abroad. For tourism in Slovakia, quality services are provided, including well-established marketing. Important tourist areas of Slovakia can be broken down as follows:

- natural mountain and karst areas;
- spa towns;
- cultural and historical towns.

In Slovakia are very good conditions not only for winter but also for summer tourism. For winter tourism are created ski resorts, winter cross-country skiing and toboggan runs. For summer tourism is well-developed cycling and hiking. According to Kozegar Kaleji *et al.* (2017), the competitiveness is one of the most important concerns of commerce and activity in today's dynamic and competitive environment. As there is a competition in consumer goods, tourism destinations should convince their customers that they are capable of supplying a combination of benefits that no other destination can supply.

2. Methodology

The transformation of the economy from a centrally planned to a market economy is practically in all countries of Central and Eastern Europe accompanied by various market disproportions. Various animosities have been caused

by number of known factors such as: the deformed structure of the economy, the loss of markets of the former Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, the liberalization of trade and the related creation of a very harsh competitive environment. This paper provides different views on selected economic indicators in the tourism sector between 2009 and 2015 (20 years after the so-called "gentle revolution").

The aim of the paper is to evaluate the impact and development of selected economic indicators of tourism in the conditions of the Slovak Republic after accession to the European Monetary Union. The underlying data were drawn from the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, from scientific articles and professional books. Standard mathematical relationships and numerical calculations were used in the evaluation process. Due to the unavailability and discrepancies of some information sources, some analysis and comparisons have been dropped. Therefore, some results may only have a partial validity for the evaluation analysis.

3. Case studies/experiments/ demonstrations/ application functionality

One of the important indicators for tourism is also employment. It is possible to distinguish between direct and indirect impact. Under the term direct impact, we mean the employment in the form of jobs related to direct tourism:

- accommodation;
- alimentation;
- winter and summer sports service;
- travel agencies, etc.

The indirect impact of tourism on employment relates to the production of food, sporting goods, printing of literature. The subject of the paper is the direct impact of tourism on employment and the comparison of selected indicators of tourism. In terms of short-term also as long-term visit to Slovakia, the tourists use the accommodation and catering facilities. The overview of the number of accommodation establishments is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Overview of accommodation and catering facilities in Slovakia from 2009 to 2015

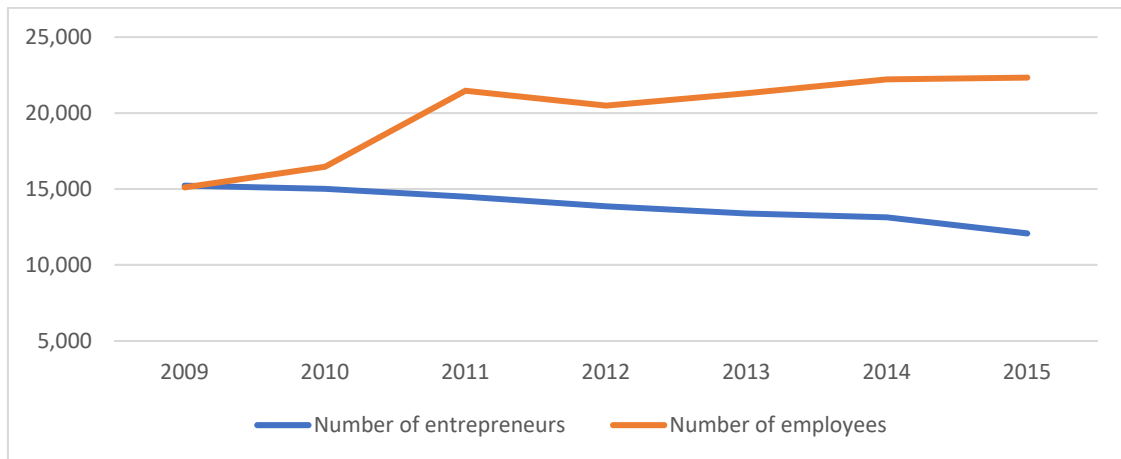
	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Accommodation facilities/ Total	3 292	3 126	3 011	3 643	3 485	3 318	3 724
Accommodation and catering services/ Number of entrepreneurs	15 220	15 005	14 495	13 857	13 390	13 137	12 072
Accommodation and catering services/ Number of employees	15 105	16 468	21 474	20 492	21 305	22 222	22 337

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2017.

Regarding the Slovak accommodation options, besides hotels and guesthouses, it is possible to accommodate in cottages, in wooden houses, tourist hostels or camps. Even spa and sanatoriums are trying to promote in the sphere of accommodation, alimentation, medical procedures, wellness and other offers, especially in the field of reconditioning or other short-term stays. Lately, there is also an increase in the number of private homes, which are popular because of greater privacy and better affordability.

The number of accommodation facilities is not very changing year-on-year. In 2009, 3,292 accommodation facilities were recorded in Slovakia. Their number in 2010 dropped by 166 facilities to 3,126. In 2011, the number of accommodation capacities again fell to 3,011 by 115 facilities. In 2012, the number of accommodation capacities increased by 632 to 3,643. The number of accommodation options in 2013 has increased by 158 to 3,485 facilities. In 2014, there was a decrease again, as accommodation facilities reduced their number by 167 to 3,318. In the last surveyed year 2015, the number of accommodation capacities increased by 406 accommodation units from 3,318 to 3,724 facilities. According to statistically monitored periods, it can be concluded that there are approximately 3,300 facilities on average in Slovakia. Statistically, most accommodation facilities are in the High Tatras, as the High Tatras, as the world's smallest mountain ranges, are lucrative not only for Slovak tourists but also for visitors from abroad. Up to two-thirds less accommodation capacities than in the Tatras are located in Bratislava. The least amount of accommodation is in the region of Trenčianske Teplice.

Figure 1. Number of entrepreneurs and employees operating in accommodation and catering establishments in 2009 - 2015



Source: (Own processing)

Accommodation facilities in Slovakia are mostly in the hands of private entrepreneurs. During the reference period from 2009 to 2015, the number of entrepreneurs in the field of tourism is declining. In 2009, there were 15,220 entrepreneurs in Slovakia who were engaged in tourism business. Their number in 2010 dropped by 215 subjects to 15,005. Also in 2011, the number of entrepreneurs decreased by 510 subjects to 14,495. In 2012 was again recorded the decline in business units by 638 to 13,857. Next year, the number of entrepreneurs fell to 13,390. The difference in the decline was quantified by 467 business entities. In 2014, in Slovak tourism were about 253 business entities less active than in 2013. According to the Statistical Office, the number of business entities was estimated at 13,137. In Slovakia, only 12,072 entrepreneurs were doing tourism, or 1065 less than in 2014. For the year 2015, the largest decrease was observed over the whole period under review. It is obvious that the number of business units in the monitored period tended to fall year-on-year. According to statistical data, only on average 2% of the total number of Slovak business entities are doing in this field.

The opposite is true in employment in tourism, hotels and restaurants. In 2009, 15,105 employees were employed in this area. In the following year, their number grew by 1,363 employees to 16,468 employees. In 2011, there was a sharp rise in the number of employees in this sector by up 5,006 to 21,474. In 2012, the number of employees dropped to 20,492. The difference was 982 workers. In 2013, 21,305 people were employed in tourism, with a positive difference of 813 employees. 22,222 employees worked in accommodation and catering facilities in 2014. Again, a year-on-year increase of 917 employees was recorded. In the last year, 22,337 employees were employed in the tourism industry. Compared to the total number of employed people in Slovakia, it is only a very small percentage (less than 2%). The number of employees in this sector is also negligible compared to total employment. According to these data, it is possible that part of the entrepreneurs in the area persisted, but not at the position of the entrepreneur, but as employee. The reason for this may be a lower level of education, bureaucracy in Slovakia and severe market conditions such as tax burden.

The minimum wage in Slovakia is currently determined by the sum of 435 euro per month. However, the evaluation serves only for unskilled labour. Tourism staff should be rewarded according to their skills, education and their direct impact on revenue growth. For the time being in Slovakia, mostly unskilled workers are employed in tourism. There is a lack of higher education level and motivation for employees to improve tourism services. An overview of development of wages and rewards in the accommodation sector is given in Table 2.

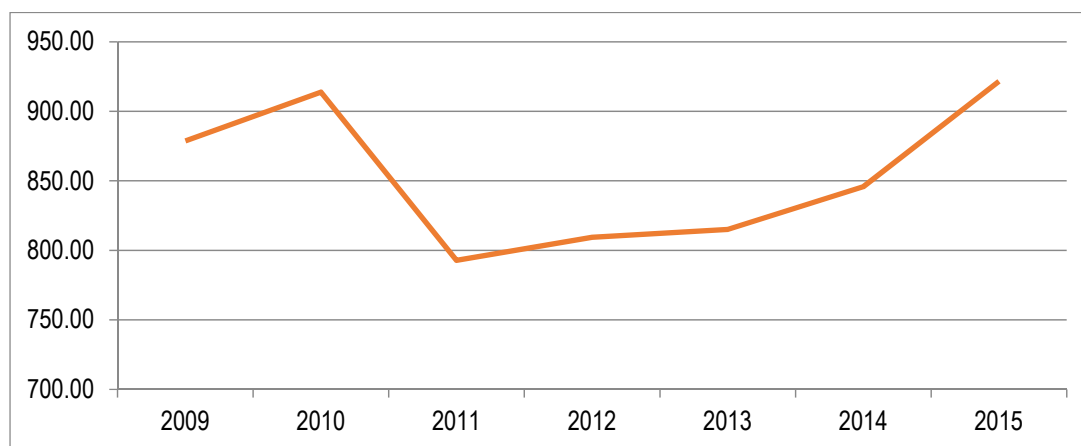
Table 2. Wages and rewards in tourism and accommodation from 2009 to 2015

Wages and rewards in mil. EUR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
By economic activities: Total	42 745,32	44 257,56	46 389,44	47 828,23	48 653,93	50 539,99	53 286,12
Accommodation	159,28	180,58	204,29	199,03	208,39	225,53	247,03
Share of accommodation / wages and rewards together	0,37%	0,41%	0,44%	0,42%	0,43%	0,45%	0,46%
Average wage per employee in EUR	878,74	913,79	792,78	809,38	815,11	845,75	921,60

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, 2017.

In 2009 in the tourism sector, the funds spent on the labour force amounted to 159.29 mil. EUR. In 2010, it was paid to workers by 21.29 mil. EUR more, exactly total of 180.58 mil. EUR. In the following year, wages and rewards in tourism increased by 23.71 mil. EUR to 204.29 mil. EUR. In the next year 2012, the amount of wages slightly decreased by 5.26 mil. EUR to 199.03 mil. EUR. In 2013, wages and rewards amounted to 208.39 mil. EUR, which represented a difference of 9.36 mil. EUR compared to the previous year. In 2014, the amount of wages and rewards increased by 17.14 mil. EUR. The value of wages in 2014 amounted to 225.53 mil. EUR. In the last year, the staff have achieved higher wages, generally with a difference of 21.5 million. EUR. Employees were paid 247.03 mil. EUR. According to Table 2, it can be seen employees in tourism are remunerated on average only at 43% level, in comparison of the total amount of employees' wages according to other economic activities in Slovakia.

Figure 2. Development of average wage in accommodation sector from 2009 to 2015



Source: (Own processing)

According to the graphical processing, it can be seen the average wage in Slovakia in the field of tourism has fluctuating values. It should be noted that the wage reflects the total cost of the labour, not just net wage that is received by employee monthly, but also the tax burden for the employee and the employer, which are paid by the employer directly to the tax office, social insurance company and health insurance company. Payroll tax accounts for 19% of the employee's gross wage after deduction of the insurance premium paid by the employee. Total insurance premiums paid by employees and employers account for 48.6% of the total gross employee wage. In 2009, the level of wages paid to employees was on average 878.74 EUR. In the next year, the salary of an employees in the tourism sector was increased by 35.05 EUR to 913.79 EUR. In 2011, staff salaries declined significantly by 121.01 EUR to 792.78 EUR. In 2012, employee remunerations slightly increased by 16.60 EUR to 809.38 EUR. Total staff wages in 2013 were at 815.11 EUR. In the following year, employee wages increased more by 30.64 EUR to 845.75 EUR. Similarly, it was in 2015 when the salary recalculation of employees increased again by 75.85 EUR to 921.60 EUR. From 2009 to 2015, the total wages of staff in the tourism sector were at 853.88 EUR on average.

Although Slovakia has good natural and geographical conditions, the potential is not used enough. Slovakia is predominantly a transit country for foreign tourists, up to 90%, so tourism contributes to only a small extent to Slovak GDP. According to EU statistics, Slovakia is in a worse position in comparison of the countries of Western and Southern Europe. In 2014, it was placed up to 19th place.

Each stage of product production is expressed in terms of added value, as the difference between revenue from sales of products and costs (intermediate products), which are intended solely for their procurement. In the national dimension, the added value is the interpretation of the gross domestic product. In practice, we can prevent multiple counting of intermediates by using the added value in the calculations (LISÝ. 2007). The share of accommodation services in value added is shown in Table 3. The values are reported in millions of euros.

In 2009, the added value of accommodation in Slovakia amounted to 205.71 mil. EUR. In 2010, there was a decrease of this value of 35.1 mil. EUR to 170.61 mil. EUR. In the next year 2011, the added value indicator increased by 30.3 mil. EUR to 200.91 mil. EUR. In the following year 2012, value added again fell to 183.93 mil. EUR. In 2013, the growth of the indicator was recorded up by 75.2 mil. EUR to 259.14 mil. EUR. In 2014, indicator values declined slightly by 13.25 mil. EUR to 245.89 mil. EUR. In the last reporting year, it was recorded increase of the added value by 20.26 mil. EUR to 266.15 mil. EUR.

Table 3. Share of accommodation services in value added from 2009 to 2015

Indicator in mil. EUR	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Added value by economic activities: Total	58 032,91	61 368,25	63 981,79	66 410,25	67 521,91	68 765,98	70 993,55
Accommodation	205,71	170,61	200,91	183,94	259,14	245,89	266,15
Share of accommodation in added value	0,35%	0,28%	0,31%	0,28%	0,38%	0,36%	0,37%

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2017.

While the indicator of value added for all economic activities in Slovakia tended to grow throughout the all monitored period, value added in the accommodation services had fluctuating values. The share of added value of accommodation in total value added in all activities was only at an average of 0.33%. According to the data evaluated, the accommodation services represents only a very small share in the total added value, which is reflected also on the overall development of tourism in Slovakia.

With tourism are inextricably linked expenditures of the population to travel. The participants have the choice to decide how many nights are willing to spend away from home. If the visitor spends less than 4 nights away from home, it is a short-term stay. When deciding to spend 4 nights and more in one year, it is a long-term stay. With a length of stay is closely related to the amount of expenses that the participant is willing to spend during their stay. In Table 4, the average expenditures on short-term and long-term stays in Slovakia are recorded.

Table 4. The number of long-term and short-term stays and average expenditures incurred from 2009 to 2015

		2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Long-term stays	Number of stays (in thous).	2 066	1 512	1 797	1 639	1 172	1 278	1 419
	Average expenditures (in EUR)	241	211	222	300	212	241	226,9
Short-term stays	Number of stays (in thous).	1 358	2 080	2 332	1 575	2 666	2 811	3 317
	Average expenditures (in EUR)	91	91	84	130	87	99,1	93,1

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2017.

When evaluating stays, it is clear Slovaks are willing to spend time outside their home on short-term stays, thus taking part in extended weekends.

In 2009, 2066 thousands long-term stays were implemented in Slovakia. In 2010, the number of long-term stays decreased by 554,000 to 1,512,000. In the following year, the number of long-term stays increased by 285,000 to 1,797,000. In 2012, the number of long-term stays in Slovakia fell to 1,639,000. In the following year 2013, the decrease of long-term stays was again recorded by 467,000 to 1,172,000. In 2014, there was an increase in stays of more than 4 nights. The tourists were on long stays by 106,000 times more than in 2013. The number of long-term stays increased to 1,278,000. Similarly, in 2015, the number of long-term journeys was higher than in 2014, with a difference of 141,000.

In the case of long-term stays, passengers have lost more funds on average in comparison with short-term stays. While in 2009, an average of 241 EUR was spent on one long-term stay, in 2010 tourists spent an average of 30 EUR less. In the next year, an average of 222 EUR was spent on one long-term journey. In 2012, there was again an increase in the volume of funds for long-term stay at the level of 300 EUR. On the contrary, in 2013 there was a decrease in the amount of average expenditures by 88 EUR. In 2013, tourists spent an average of 212 EUR, in 2014 they have spent by 29 EUR more. In the last year, tourists on average for one long-term stay spent by 14.1 EUR more than in 2014. The average funding amounted to 226.9 EUR.

The number of short-term journeys tends to grow. Short-term stays can include study trips, training, extended weekends, as well as short out-of-home trips. In 2009, passengers made 1,358,000 short-term stays. In 2010, interest in short-term travel increased by 722,000 to 2,080,000. In 2011, the number of short-term journeys rose again by 252,000 to 2,332,000. In 2012, tourists lost their interest in short-term trips. In the year under review, short-term stays decreased to the level of 2009, by 757,000 to 1,575,000. Passengers in 2013 were again interested in traveling from 1 to 3 nights. The number of stays increased by 1,091,000 to 2,666,000. Even in the next year, interest in short-term accommodation outside the home increased. The number of stays increased by 145,000 to 2,811,000. In 2015, interest in short-term stays increased by 506,000 year-on-year to 3,317,000.

Short-term stays are more interesting for Slovaks, because expenditures are significantly lower than in the case of long-term stays. In 2009, an average of 91 EUR was spent on one short-term stay. This was also the case for 2010. In 2011, the amount of expenditure decreased by 7 EUR to 84 EUR. In 2012, the Slovakian tourist paid the most money for the entire monitored period, up 130 EUR. In 2013, expenditures on short-term tourism again fell to the level of 2011 up to 87 EUR. The difference compared to 2012 was 43 EUR. In 2014, short-term travel expenses increased by 12.1 EUR to 99.1 EUR. In 2015, the expenditures on short-term stays declined year-on-year to 93.1 EUR. Over the entire period under review, the expenditure on short-term stays had fluctuated values. Comparing short and long-term stays, including tourism expenditures, it is clear the Slovak tourists prefer more short-term stays, which are less expensive than stays longer than 4 nights.

The most frequently visited in Slovakia are our mountains, both for domestic and for foreign tourists. Most visits are realized for recreation related to tourism, staying in spa towns and visiting wellness. Tourism is a little less developed in areas with cultural and historical monuments. Despite the fact Slovakia has no sea, it has several thermal springs, beautiful lakes and dams which can be used as resources to boost tourism. Tourism in Slovakia is also supported by tourists from abroad. A visitor to international tourism is a person traveling to another country where he has his permanent residence for a period not exceeding one year but also includes at least one overnight stay (Palátková 2014).

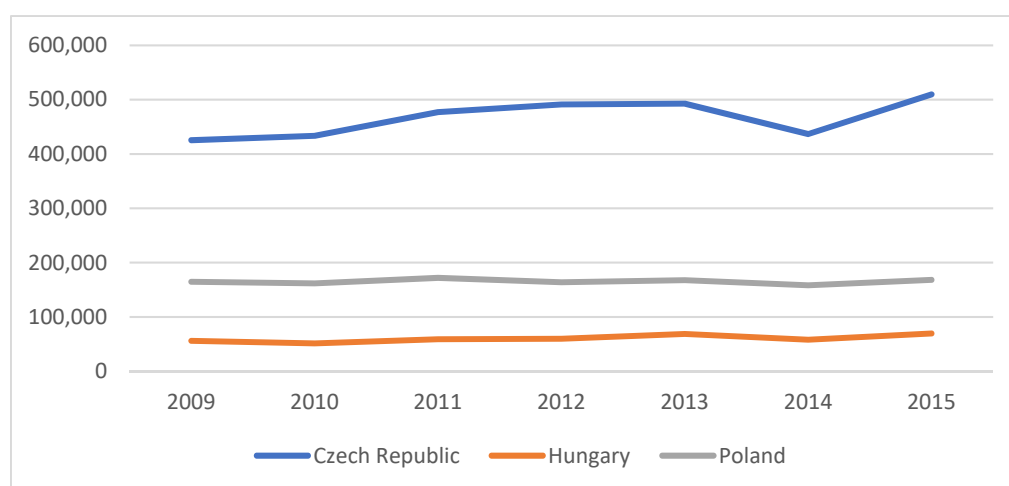
Table 5. Share of accommodation services in value added from 2009 to 2015

	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Tourists Total (in persons)	3 381 354	3 392 361	3 571 093	3 774 062	4 048 505	3 727 710	4 330 249
of which foreign tourists	1 298 075	1 326 639	1 460 361	1 527 500	1 669 948	1 475 017	1 721 193
Czech Republic	425 414	433 321	477 159	491 136	492 713	436 699	509 700
Hungary	56 111	51 324	59 000	59 885	68 832	58 050	69 563
Poland	164 712	161 851	172 001	163 754	167 751	158 250	168 358
Slovakia	2 083 279	2 065 722	2 110 732	2 246 562	2 378 557	2 252 693	2 609 056

Source: Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic 2017.

The unfavourable development of tourism over the last period is observable from the point of view of visits by foreign tourists. The influx of tourists from Western Europe declined, but the influx of tourists from former socialist countries increased. Only 39% of the total number of tourists in Slovakia is made up of visitors from abroad. For the purpose of the paper were used data of visitors from the V4 countries, namely Slovakia, the Czech Republic, Poland and Hungary.

Figure 3. Graphical processing of visitation of tourists from V4 countries from 2009 to 2015



Source: (Own processing)

In 2009, 425,414 Czech tourists arrived in Slovakia. In 2010, their number grew by 7,907 to 433,321. In the following year 477,159 visitors from Czech came to Slovakia. In 2012, the number of Czech tourists increased again by 13,977 to 491,136. Also in 2013, the number of visitors climbed slightly to 492,713. In 2014, Slovakia visited 436,699 Czech citizens. In the last surveyed year 2015, Slovakia recorded the largest growth of Czech tourists, up to 509,700. According to the annual comparison the largest share of foreign visitors are visitors from the Czech Republic with an annual growth tendency. Up to two-thirds less visitors come from Poland. The least visitors from the V4 countries were recorded from Hungary. In the monitored period was in Slovak Republic on

average 9 % of Hungarian tourists, 24% of tourists came from Poland and up to 67% of tourists were Czech nationality. Tourism, not only in the EU, in the past period was affected by factors such as the policy, economy of the country, climate, weather, education, public health and so on.

The demand for domestic tourism is growing more and more for Slovaks, while the demand for tourism abroad is declining. Similarly, it is also with foreign tourists. Short-term stays are generally preferred. There is a lack of presentation abroad in Slovakia, lack of quality services and underdeveloped infrastructure. The reasons for the weak development of tourism in Slovakia are mainly services, infrastructure and very poor promotion. According to Štefko *et al.* (2015), exactly strategic marketing communication is an important part of the strategy of each destination and site. Many of interesting destinations and sites are not visited solely because they do not pay attention to strategic marketing communications. Different destinations and sites can use various communications when communicated with the target market. Each segment of the market obtains information from more sources; information is one of the basic prerequisites for a visit to destination or site.

In Slovakia, very few accommodation establishments have also a workforce with adequate education. This means that there are missing the basics of economic functions of tourism, there is no communication with more than two world languages, gaps in gastronomy, there is a very weak animation of domestic tourism, lack of awareness. Slovakia is at the level of regions with poorly developed tourism services. The solution to the promotion of tourism in Slovakia is to increase Slovak national awareness, better presentation of Slovakia abroad, build better infrastructure, increase the educational level in the field of tourism, use the geographical potential of Slovakia, presentations of natural beauties also as winter and summer sports for tourists. To increase the share of tourism in the value added of Slovakia need to take into account the wage assessment of staff and the support of the business sector in tourism.

Conclusion

Tourism is the strategic economic activity of the European Union. According to the Commission, it has a great potential to contribute to the achievement of several EU headline targets, such as sustainable development, economic growth, employment and economic and social cohesion (Eurostat 2017).

In Slovakia, despite the diversity of climate, many natural beauties, historical and cultural heritage, there are large but untapped opportunities for the development of tourism. Inadequate evaluation and motivation of employees and entrepreneurs in tourism has resulted in a negligible impact on the added value of tourism in Slovakia. As result of low wage rates, increased tax and insurance costs, and almost no government support, the number of small and medium-sized businesses is declining.

Slovak tourist facilities are unavailable for most Slovaks, so, in addition to the operation of hotels, tourist lodgings, chalets and guesthouses, the operation of private homes has often developed, which is often the only income not only of small entrepreneurs, but also of pensioners as a source of casual income.

In most, Slovakia is for foreign tourists the transit country. The Slovak Republic is most visited by tourists from the neighboring Czech Republic, up to 39% compared to V4 tourists. In Slovakia is a very low percentage of visitations compared with summer and winter sports opportunities in the V4 countries. Similarly compared to other countries in Europe, Slovakia is in the last positions regarding the operation of tourism. Tourism expenditures in Slovakia are an average of 90 EUR, with a prevailing interest in short-term stays. The situation in Slovak tourism is unflattering. The main disadvantage for the development of tourism is insufficient educational level, lower quality of services provided, unsatisfactory wage evaluation and poor motivation to work in this field.

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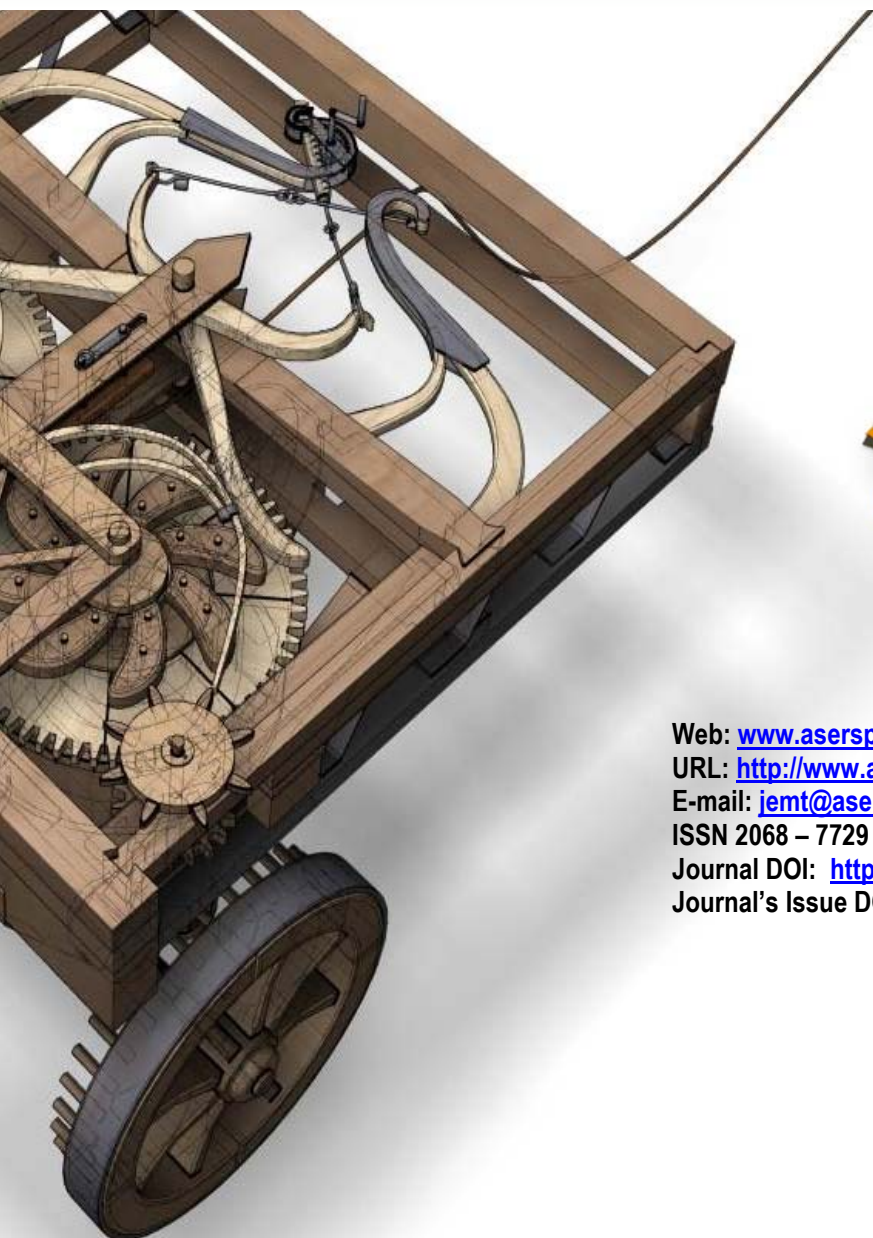
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