

Sustainable Destination Management Planning: The Case of Slovenia

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Tourism is one of the largest and fastest growing economic sectors that promotes economic growth, boosts employment, self-employment and business development (Miloradov et al., 2018), whose important role in the European economy has been recognized by the European Commission (Notarstefano, 2008). In the past the development of mass tourism has caused serious damage to the environment (Lasart et. Al, 2014) so we must strive to achieve a competitive and sustainable tourism policy in Europe (European Commission, 2007). The opposite of mass tourism is the sustainable development, which Grundy et. al (2008) define as development that meets the needs of today, without negatively affecting the needs of future generations, since the goal of sustainable development is not to create greater economic benefits, but to create better living conditions for present and future members of society. In general, it can be argued that the concept of sustainable development is to strike a temporary balance between natural resources and their use (Gorica et al., 2010); it can be achieved through the economic, environmental, socio- cultural and climate pillars of sustainable development, which form the basic guideline in establishing sustainable development (Brokaj, 2014). We are also aware of the importance of sustainable development in Slovenia, where the Ministry of Economic Development and Technology (2017) defines it in its development strategy as green, sustainable and responsible development, which is deeply rooted among tourism stakeholders in the public and private sectors. However, for successful sustainable development, the concept of sustainability needs to be carefully defined and examined (Terzić and Simeunović Bajić, 2018), since the inaccuracy of the concept of sustainability makes it difficult to put into practice (Law et al., 2016). Gaps in the area of sustainable tourism planning appear especially in small countries, such as Slovenia, which is centrally managed and where tourism is not fully recognized yet as a driving force for economic growth (Koščak, Colarič-Jakše and Veljković, 2014). The latter does not apply to large destinations with efficient destination management that are aware of the importance of tourism (Nizić and Drpić, 2013). Therefore, the paper will introduce in more detail the first phase of research on sustainable destination management in the Republic of Slovenia, in which we will limit ourselves to reviewing and analysing domestic and foreign relevant literature, summarizing ideas and results of research articles published on this topic, and reviewing publicly available examples of good practice. In this phase of the research, we relied primarily on foreign authors, due to the lack of literature on sustainable destination management in the RS, which, however, explore a different reality than that in the RS. Based on the literature review, we will offer a new perspective for understanding the challenges and outstanding issues that, due to the magnitude of the problem of managing tourist destinations, prove crucial for their sustainable

development. At the same time, we will present the development of destination management in the RS and highlight all the good practices that can be transferred to other related countries.

Keywords: sustainable tourist destination, sustainable management, Slovenia

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