

# QUALITY REQUIREMENTS OF TOURISM IMPACTS EVALUATION

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## ABSTRACT

Within the globalization, the information, the people, the price and the capita is speeded up, causing the tourism to dynamically develop and valorize. The study points out the economic, social and environmental effects of tourism, and the importance of the government's role, as well as the increasing role of the regions and touristic destinations and the needs of information. The EU's Grant System also requires the development of tourism in the assessment of choosing the impacts and indicators professionally, and use of the design during the planning phase.

### 1. Impact system of tourism

The mayor impact of the tourism, that it contributes to economic development, it has a compensating effect on negative balance of trade, on the distribution relations with fostering demand, it is growing employment and its contribution to budget incomes. Tourism has a social impact, which can be grouping in the following way:

The first group is the impacts on population such as change in population number, in- and outflow of periodic employment, presence of seasonal population, movements of individuals or families and changes in distribution of age, gender, race, and ethnicity.

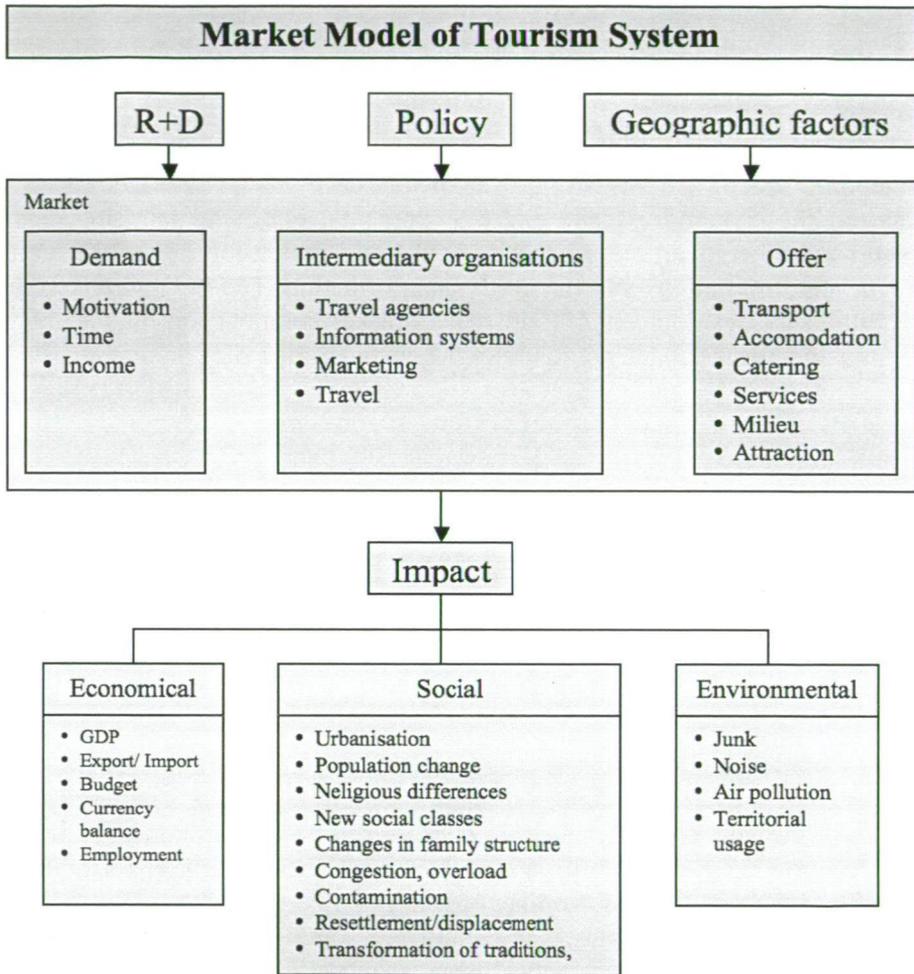
The second group is the change in labour force for example new workplaces, growth in the number of seasonal workplaces, diversification of economic branches, growing economic disparities, change in the working opportunities of minorities and changes in the working opportunities.

The third group is the changes in the attributes and structure of communities, just like appearance of new society classes, changes in the economic orientation of the community, conflicts between the local and incoming population, changing political, societal, religious, moral values, religious disparities arise in the community, changes in the infrastructure of the community and changing landownership.

The next group is the changes on individual or family level, such as daily habits and movement habits turn upside down, the family structure changes, social networks brake up, changing opinion on public health and safety and changing habits of consumption.

The last group is the impact on natural and cultural resources, for example increased reserve of resources, damage of resources, overload, and overcrowded sites, pollution, commercialization, and changing habits, traditions.

**Figure 1: Market Model of Tourism System**



Source: Veres, Lajos (2008)

Tourism has an environmental impact too. The changes can be direct or indirect. Indirect impact become unambiguous after a longer time, and their connection to tourism can be divided more difficult.

Direct impacts have different effects on natural and built environment (built environment is more resistant to direct effects).

An impact – either positive or negative - can be considered as reversible, if it can be dissolved in a certain time scale. An impact can only be considered as reversible on the long haul.

There are impacts regarded as so called quasi-reversible, as in theory the impact is reversible, however the probability is small that it really is going to happen, and the cost of dissolving the effect is so high that the reversibility is inconceivable.

The environmental impact can be desirable or undesirable. It is rather uneasy to mention positive change in the environment caused by tourism, the media also does not devote too much attention to these effects, and these impacts are not assigned to tourism. This is due to the fact that most often positive impacts are indirect, while the negative ones are direct. Positive impacts are visible most often in the field of economic impacts.

## **2. Sustainable tourism**

A number of definitions have been conceived on sustainable tourism. One of the most cited definitions is drawn up by the World Tourism Organization, which was based on the directives of the United Nation's Rio de Janeiro summit or Earth summit on 1992 for sustainable development, and so has the following characteristics:

Sustainable tourism development on the one hand satisfies the demands of present tourists and host areas, on the other hand protects and increases the possibilities of the future.

According to the theory, the management of resources is possible in such a way, that there is an opportunity for the satisfaction of the human kind's economic, societal and aesthetic needs, at the same time the possibility is given to reserve the fundamental ecological processes, biodiversity and the conservatory systems of life, as well as integrity of different populations and groups.

Therefore the concept of sustainable tourism can be construed in many different ways (societal, economic and ecological). Sustainability most of all means a focus on the ecological segment, as the highest number of problems are related to the destruction of environment and nature. Fulfilment of ecological sustainability however is only one necessary assumption for real sustainable tourism, the other two factors (economic and societal sustainability) also have to be realized.

During the sustainability assessment it is vital what the carrying capacity of the given region is. In case of a destination or an attraction ecological carrying capacity means the highest number of tourists that does not generate irreversible in the natural environment and does not lead to the impairment of natural or man made attractions. The physical bearing capacity is also easy to define to a certain point, e.g. in the case of coastal tourism the size of the beach or thinking of winter sport the size of mountain slopes determines the highest number of tourists.

Sustainable tourism is an interest of the tourism branch, as the random utilization of the resources might cause damage in the nature and so the branch can lose what meant its biggest attractiveness.

Possibilities for the implementation of sustainable tourism when the impact balance can be moved in a positive direction with decreasing the number of tourists participating in mass tourism by the popularization of alternative (possibly environment-friendly) tourism types or laying the mass tourism on an environment friendly base, and increasing the positive impacts. The question arises how the positive tendencies can be strengthened and the harmful processes can be confined.

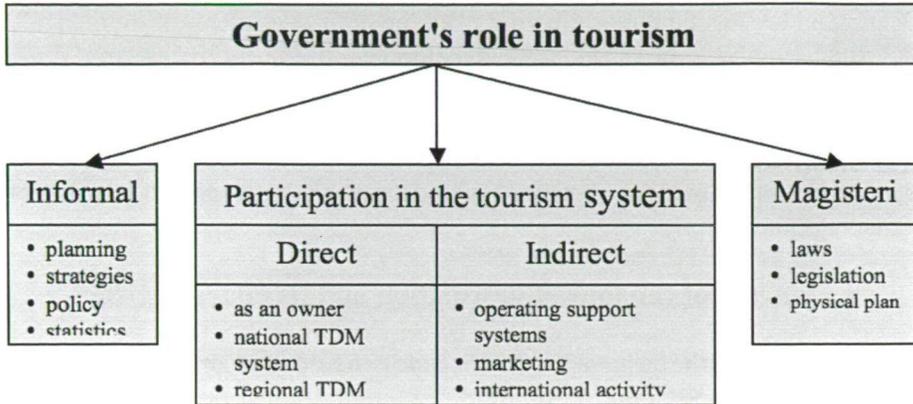
One of the important steps, which are leading to sustainable tourism, is the planned, conscious development in order to control the environmental impacts of tourism. In the course of planning the objectives are defined in advance, so that the possible negative impacts can be prevented, and, in case the negative impact is unavoidable, its extent can be decreased. Restoration – if possible at all - of the damages caused is much more expensive than prevention, in our case the well-developed tourism development, environmental impact assessment etc. Conscious planning not only mitigates negative impacts, it can intensify positive effects and improve the natural conditions.

Media, information: sustainability has an aspect besides the planning, technical implementation, or obligations, and that is about the human side, namely, in how environment-conscious way do the tourists behave. Naturally the requirement for this is that the tourists shall have the knowledge about what the consequence of their acts is. As the behaviour pattern of the local people is very important in this respect, their own behaviour is also fundamental, this way the consuming habits can be affected for instance. This can have a long lasting impact in the case of receptive tourists, who take home these habits.

### **3. Possibilities for governmental intervention in tourism**

The social, economic and environmental impacts of the tourism are positive overall and at national levels the tourism is a major contributor of GDP growth, fiscal balances improve and foreign exchange gains. Therefore, the states in the national development plans, strategies place great importance on the development of tourism. The reason for governmental intervention is because the tourism, like any other economic activity, takes place in an environment that is shaped by many different forces: complex policies, laws, regulations, and other actions. The reason for intervening national and international forces is that tourism is comprised of industries and activities that stretch not only across nations and regions, but across traditional lines of business and industry as well. Moreover, international regulations are also needed, because international tourism relies on a high degree of communication and cooperation among nations with respect to this complex network of laws, regulations, and policies (figure 2).

**Figure 2: Government's role in tourism**



*Source:* based on Veres, Lajos (2008) edited by the author

#### **4. A new multi-level institutional system**

The destinations – as the organizational systems developing on the regional concentration and cooperation – have to be taken into connection with the economic processes in the world, one basic principle of which is that the durable industrial and business competitive advantages are appearing concentrated geographically more and more. In the competition there are not taking part separate persons of the market but the basic units of the market competition, the companies, enterprises and regional institutions. The establishment and operation of these systems are helped by the EU orders and supporting resources as well. The regional concentration principle is playing a determinant role in the effective operation of the destination as well, which is generating competitive advantages.

The tourist target areas are worth settling to a regional concentration being significant from the point of view of tourism, based on definitive basic principles, so that the economic potential of the region can be increased. Determinant factors of the tourist competitiveness of each region are the development and operation of the management system with the effective, suitable competences and calculable financing and organisational background. Modern tourism management and operation, that is the revaluation of the current traditions, are needed to the development of an effective management system organised on the basis of the regional concentration principle. The integrated planning, management and operation of tourism are needed on all levels of tourism. Development of the system is taking for granted such kind of regional and organisational planning basic principles as the:

- Revaluation of cooperation, development of consciousness in the cooperation, development, planning, organisation, operation of the forms of cooperation.

- More close cooperation with other regions, branches in the processes of planning and development originating from the multiplier effect of tourism.
- More complex approaches in the development of the service system of tourism: beside the development of the tourist infra- and superstructure the development of the background infrastructures, the supporting factors have to be emphasized too.
- The use of innovative, modern, up to date technologies in the processes of development.

## **5. Concept of the tourist destination and its characteristics**

The characters of the destination, its concept, can be opened in the knowledge of its forming factors and of the „behaviour”, nature of destination.

In the conceptual estimation of destination different standing-points can be followed. In the whole, destination is a physical location where the tourist is spending at least one night. It is containing tourist attractions, products, relating services that are necessary to meet the stay of a tourist on the place at least for one day. Destination has physical and administrative limits, which are determining its management, and has an image and perception. It includes a lot of elements being concerned, it is capable for constructing a network, a cooperation and to become a bigger destination; the determination of destination is made from the point of view of the tourist.

To become a tourist destination the location, the region has to have the factors that determine the tourist destinations. These factors are determinants in the bordering, determination of the core area destination; their development is essential by the increase of the competitiveness of the specific destinations. Determinants of the destination - which supported by many research (Aubert-Csapó-Gonda-Hegedűs-Szabó, 2007) - are as follows:

- Tourist attractions, e.g. natural factors, factors made by human being, heritage, special age, special events, etc.
- Approachability, e.g. the entire traffic system, including roads, traffic means, etc.
- Tourist services, e.g. accommodation, host services, other tourist services, etc.
- Product packages.
- All kind of activities that can be run by the tourists during their stay.
- Public-utility services, e.g. banks, telecommunication, hospitals, etc.

Definition of destination, summarizing the aspects regarding the nature of destination and its determining factors, the characters of destination can be summarized as follows:

Destination:

- Area target that is chosen by the tourist as the target of his travel.

- Receiving area that is providing services for the tourist and people living on the spot.
- It is defined from the point of view of the tourist.
- A place/region that is confinable physically and geographically.
- A place/region that is containing tourist attractions, products, services and other background services being necessary for spending at least one day.
- The tourist is spending at least one night here.
- It is containing a lot of persons being concerned who are cooperating with each other.
- It has an image.
- It has perception (it means that each of the tourists can form an opinion about a destination through his own “screen” subjectively).
- It is providing integrated experience for the tourist.
- In a wider sense it is a tourist product that is competing with other tourist products (destinations) on the market of tourism.
- A kind of a complex and integrated system that is taking the existence of a modern tourism controlling and management system to the successful operation for granted.
- It is a system being built from below and supported from above.

Not all locations, regions can become a tourist destination. There are such kind of basic criterions that has to be met so that a location, region could become a tourist destination. The above mentioned are only the most basic criterions. The determination and bordering of the destinations or the core area destinations are supposing the development of a special system of criterions that is made according to preferences, expectations, and points of view of the tourist first of all.

## **6. Changing role of statistics, new quality requirements**

The demand for statistics has increased in the last years: reliable, high quality statistics is needed for the development and monitoring of the implementation of community’s policies.

In more and more cases concrete economic and political consequences/decisions are linked to the concrete value of an indicator, like Maastricht criteria or prerequisites for regional development programs.

This increases importance and responsibility of statistics consequently the need for guarantee of quality. The European Statistics Code of Practice provides a solid background for this since 2005. European statistics has to be relevant, accurate, based on international standards to assure comparability, easy to access, understandable, and for this accompanied by metadata. Quality should be monitored, and reported for users. On the other part statistical literacy of the members of society has to be increased, the education system has an important role here.

The requirements for statistical data service needs arises in national levels (Reference: OECD 2010, Eurostat yearbook), national macroeconomic level, where there is an increasing need to detect the effects of tourism (Figure 1: Economical, social, environmental impacts). Furthermore, there is a growing demand in regional levels (Reference: 5. Concept of the tourist destination and its characteristics).

Despite the fact that the statisticians at the highest level of compliance is discussed at conferences used to demonstrate the effects support system of national and regional funds established in the EU today is close to the operation and support of the operational program systems of ex-ante, mid-term and ex-post rating based on the accepted special indicators.

The indicators established by the specific indicators have been overestimated in tourism which shows the effects of tourism in economic, social and environmental ways.

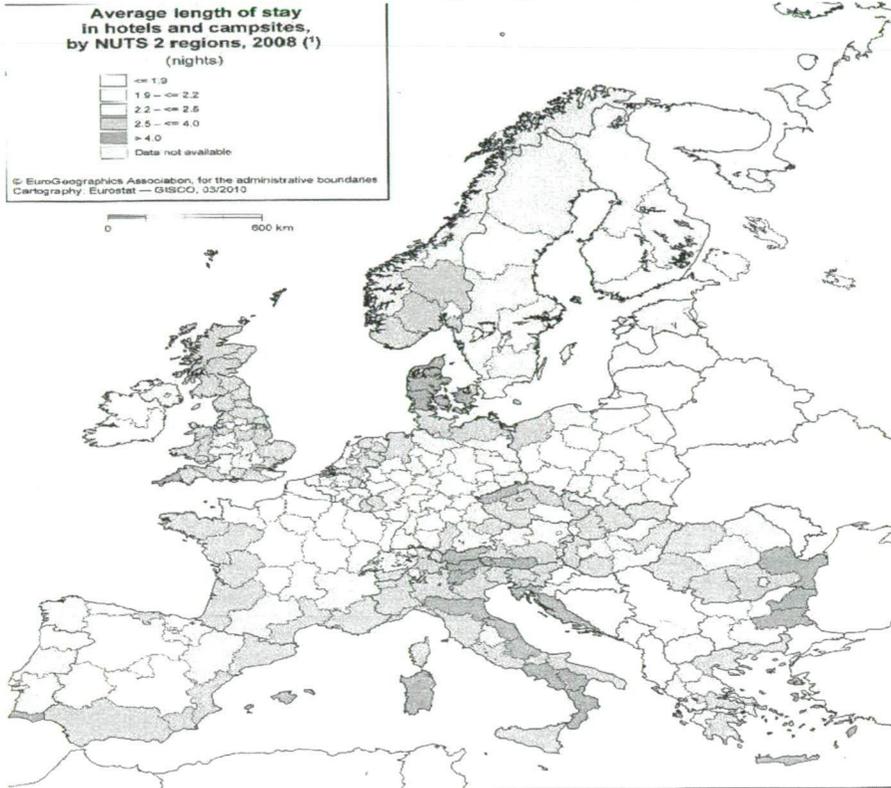
Sustainability requirements of appropriate complex indicators are getting to the forefront gradually.

**Table 1: Some selected tourism indicators**

Indicator	Destination Region	Country	Type	Impact
1. Spent nights	x	x	Quantity	Total
2. Spent nights per 1000 inhabitants	x	x	Density	Total
3. Spent nights per km <sup>2</sup>	x	xx	Density	Total
4. Average length of stay (nights)	x	xx	Quality	Total
5. Tourism share of GDP (%)	xx	x	Quality	Economy
6. Tourism share of employment (%)	xx	xx	Quality	Economy
7. Eco-footprint (ha)	xxx	xx	Complex	Environmental

*Source:* edited by author

**Figure 3: Average length of stay**



Source: Eurostat 2010

## Conclusion

A statistical data requirement has been significantly changed by the globalization and its effects. These should be highlighted that due to the more advanced technical means to accelerate the flow of information. Another effect of this, is the dynamically growing demand for information. The demand is growing dynamically in coordination with the information management capacity, so now we can say that there is plenty of information available in global, management and regional levels. In view of this fact, the question arises as to what is important for the future's information needs. What information is required in the preparation of its decisions, the financial statement for the report and the planning?

To sum up, the growing demands of tourism development is in part of the state levels and partly due to regional levels.

The sustainability criteria go to the forefront and the role of the prognosis is evaluated.

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