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## **РЕГИОНАЛНИ СИСТЕМИ ЗА БЕЗОПАСНОСТ В ТУРИЗМА**

### **REGIONAL SYSTEMS FOR SAFETY IN TOURISM**

**PhD Student ASSYA CHRISTOZOVA**

**SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY "NEOFIT RILSKI", BLAGOEVGRAD**

**Abstract:** The safety of tourism on a local level is related to a lot of problems occurring in the tourist centers. In the tourist center the tourist uses a package of services which the servicing staff and the local population offer and the problems related to safety concern all participants in the tourist process. The organization of the regional or local system for safety is based on the complexity of the regional tourist market including the public safety services and the local population and this is a dynamic cooperative process based on common interests. The regional safety systems are determined by the number of tourists, their interests, the concrete peculiarities of the tourist entity and the local problems arising while ensuring safety. The performance of the activity ranges from informal activities to adopting complex and complicated safety systems.

**Key words:** regional tourism, tourist product, safety systems.

#### **Introduction**

Since 1997 the EU started becoming aware of the share tourism has in employment in Europe. On the basis of a report prepared by an expert group on the growth and potential of employment in the tourist sector, which forecasts a considerable growth by 2010, on 28 April 1999 the Commission submitted an announcement on developing the potential of tourism in employment (COM (1999)205). In the conclusion of 21 June 1999, the Council points out four different spheres of action:

- enhancing the exchange and distribution of information .
- improving the training and qualification in the tourist sector
- improving the quality of the products and services related to tourism
- encouraging the protection of the environment and the steady development of tourism.

The special measures proposed in the context of the basic spheres include facilitating passing through the borders and protecting the health and safety, as well as the property interests of the tourists, such as the Recommendation of the Council of

22 December 1986 regarding fire safety in the hotels and Directive 90/314/EEC regarding the package tourist trips, the package tourist vacations and the package tourist tours and 94/47/EEC regarding the temporary use of real estates. In the transport sector important rules regarding the protection of the travelers' rights in air transport (cf. 4.6.6). Directive 2006/7/EC of 15 February 2006 on the management of the quality of waters for bathing is also important for the pursued policy in the tourist sector.

In the context of the contribution of tourism for the regional development and employment, the projects in support of tourism and the cultural legacy were increasingly supported by the structural funds in the 2000-2006 period under programs such as LEADER, INTERREG and ESF which play an important role. The EU tourist industry and the companies working in the sector received support under a lot of other programs implemented by the Community. The Commission worked out an internet handbook on the measures the EU took to encourage the tourist companies and tourist destinations.

The tourist regions in international practice are considered destinations (territorially integral areas), not "regional products". The following tourist regions have been determined in Bulgaria: Sofia, that of Rila and Pirin, the Rhodopi mountains, Thrace, the Black Sea, the old Bulgarian capitals, Stara Planina, the Danube region. They lie in the basis of the regional strategy for the development of tourism. Unfortunately they do not coincide with the regions for planning stipulated by the Law on the Regional Development of the Republic of Bulgaria and therefore there are no practical documents on their development so far.

### **MAP**

The most widespread definition of a tourist product is that it is a concrete totality of consumer values the purpose of which is to meet a definite type of tourist demand. The tourist product is a result of the tourist industry and is a heterogeneous totality including the provided entertainments tourists enjoy, services of a communal and everyday nature, shelter, food and transport as well as other goods, which although seemingly free, are very often the aim of the tourist trip.

### **Safety in tourism**

What is understood under safety in tourism is guaranteeing the personal safety of the tourist and their property and not inflicting damage to the surrounding environment while making the tourist trips and visits.

The safety of tourism is included in the documents of the Hague parliamentary conference on tourism – 1989.

This is an issue not tackled in the common strategy for the development of the tourist industry in Bulgaria. At the same time a whole system for ensuring the safety of the tourist has not been implemented so far, which is based on: statistics about the casualties in tourism and their analysis, personal protection and protection of the property in the tourist sector, including accompanying insurance mechanisms.

What is worse, the problem has not been stipulated in the texts of the Law on Tourism and does not make references to other laws.

Safety is a common issue for the tourist industry, yet there are nuances regarding the internal and external tourism.

In this case I think the emphasis should be laid on the safety regarding internal tourism (for Bulgarians and foreigners) because it is the basic kind of tourism in terms of revenues and employment.

In general terms, the risk factors in the tourist branch boil down to:

- the possibility for the occurrence of natural disasters and technical disorders in the territories or routes of the tourist activities;
- the technical state of the accommodation and entertainment bases;
- the preparation of the tourists to travel along the respective route, the category of complexity;
- risks regarding information (meteorological conditions, marking the tracks of the routes and others);
- risk factors in tourism related to the social environment – thefts, assaults, fraud, violence, organized crime and others;
- personal factors – failure to control the tourists and dangerous conduct of the tourists during their stay;
- risk factors in the tourist sector (violating the safety standards in the tourist site)
- natural and ecological risks

The term safety and protection of the tourists covers the whole route (stay) from the time they leave their homes to the time they get back home, the sites of the stay and visit.

For instance: the negative impact of the climate on the human organism in a concrete case and the risks it poses, the tourist company is obliged to inform the tourists about the risks of the real and predictable climatic conditions of the route on time.

Other factors, phenomena and hypotheses during the tourist stay or when

the tourist uses the package product can be interpreted in a similar way.

What can the general requirements for ensuring safety and medical service along the tourist routes be ?

While offering the tourist service, an acceptable level of risk for the life and health of the tourists should be secured, both under normal conditions and during accidents (natural disasters etc.).

For each of the below mentioned risk factors in tourism, a set of measures for avoiding the given factor should be adopted, as well as measures for reducing the negative consequences in case the given risk factor occurs.

The danger of injuries

Impact of the environment

Danger of fires

Biological impact

Psychological and physiological burdens

Dangerous emissions

Chemical impact

Increased dust loading and gassing

Other factors.

For instance: the complex approach to the organization of medical service should have a lot of specific peculiarities:

1. a possibility to organize each administrative structure in a chain for offering medical services: first aid – consultations – preliminary medical and diagnostic examination – specialized medical and diagnostic examination – treatment – recovery and rehabilitation. What “possibility to organize” implies is a accompanying of the patient along the whole chain by qualified specialist. Moreover, the organization of such activities requires establishing a network of additional medical and information services, which are an indispensable part of the activity to provide medical service to the flow of tourists;

2. secondly, it is namely this approach to the organization of the medical service that the foreign tourists are oriented to by virtue of the established traditions in the world healthcare system and the peculiarities of their mentality;

3. third – the habit the foreign nationals have to receive a high-quality medical service, meeting the world standards;

4. fourth – linguistic peculiarities while working with foreigners.

The expected results from implementing the program for providing medical service:

- establishing a complex system for providing medical service to the tourists in the form of a single organizational structure integrated in the economic territory of the city;

- Applying the principles for offering medical service of the entering flow of tourists on the level of world standards;

- Establishing an organizational service capable of coordinating and rationally distributing the capacities of the medical institutions in the capital during large-scale activities;

- Creating additional jobs;

- Assistance in creating a favorable image of the capital in the sphere of organization of the medical service and accompanying;

- Innovating the process of medical service offered to the tourist.

Although part of what was said so far may be read in the Consumer Protection Law, which applies to every consumer, it does not tackle the specific forms of safety in tourism. Yet, when speaking about regional safety in the process of offering a tourist service, then the stress should be laid on a clear single national mechanism on the issue, in which the special cases should be a difference, not a norm of behavior.

According to this approach, entities which have equal commitments should be the state, the municipalities and the tourist companies, the united efforts of which should guarantee the high quality of the whole tourist product, which means competitive capacity, attractiveness, incomes and employment.

A piecemeal approach to dealing with an event that has occurred does not mean solving a problem of the system. Tourism is a high-rank system, which involves a lot of

components, and tipping the balance of one of them entails a disbalance of the system as a whole.

Therefore the measure safeguarding public order, protection of the concrete

environment, guarantees for health, informedness, concrete state policy means an increased flow of consumers, external advertisement, incomes and guaranteed market share,

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