RISKS IN TOURISM
(ON THE EXAMPLE OF EVENTS)

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Abstract: As we know, tourism is a global process which involves residents from all parts of the world and which mingles peoples, cultures, customs. Tourist movements create a cultural environment completely different from a daily one, which represents the greatest strength of tourism as an economic activity. The interaction of various peoples, cultures, customs, habits and the inclusion of geographical spaces and economy are the basis for the development of different types of tourism. The risks that occur in every segment of creation, promotion, presentation, marketing and sales of a tourism product have a constant effect on the growth and development of tourism market. Not only tourists are exposed to risks, there is also the risk for tourist destination, which often needs protection – environmental protection, protection of local culture, cultural monuments and archaeological sites.

Organizations of events consider special attention, especially because the levels of risk may arise on that occasion. The dangers are numerous and represent a source of potential harm to the local community, while the risks are real threat to achieve the stated objectives of event organizers

Key words: economy, events, risks, terrorism, tourism

Introduction

Risk assessment in tourism is crucially important taking into account that this industry is extremely "vulnerable" and subject to a variety of negative influences. We know that tourist movements are the largest migration of human population since the origin of humankind. The latest data from UNWTO indicate that 1.245 million tourists took part in foreign tourist movements in 2014. This is only a fraction of tourist movements directed towards all parts of the globe and various tourism destinations, as domestic tourist movements, which are much greater than foreign ones, are often disregarded. As we know, the number of tourist journeys depends on economic strength of a country economy. During a recession the number of foreign tourists decreases, while this does not have to be the case with domestic tourist movements, as the journeys abroad are usually replaced with journeys within the country. Despite such a relation in tourist movements, it is often mistakenly thought that only

tourist movements abroad, i.e. foreign tourists are exposed to risks, and sacrifices of local tourists and indigenous people are ignored. Precisely because of that this paper will consider the impact of risks on tourism activity development depending on the type of risk as well as preparedness and readiness of a destination to grapple cope with them.

It has been a long time since tourism, known as "passport of peace", exceeded the limits of careless development and became an economic activity prone to many risks. Therefore, the issues of *risk identification, analysis, mitigation and control* are very important for further existence of tourism as a desirable and safe activity. Therefore, there have been more and more researches and papers about risk management in all segments of the tourism business as well as about the risks in different forms of tourism.

The issues are very broad and we have neither much time nor space to write extensively about all of them. We will list examples of measures that can be taken to protect not only tourists but also local population. Tourists can be exposed to criminals' attack not only while travelling but also when purchasing tourism services. Tourists can be deceived even by the people working in tourism as well as by local retailers, they can be exposed to the impact of natural disasters; they may be subject to infections. (Gleasser, 2006) The protection is also needed for the local community, e.g. from crime, i.e. establishing companies that are used for money laundering, which badly affects local economy and preservation of a destination positive image, because only one negative event may result in a noticeable drop in the number of tourists (Štetić, Šimičević 2014) because this industry is very sensitive to the changes caused by both, economic and non-economic factors.

Tourism and Risks

Any unforeseen events usually have a negative impact on tourism, which is first reflected through the reduction in the number of tourists and later through the economic effects. This causes poorer use of all services, from traffic through catering and other services, which leads to various problems, not only in the service industries, but also across the economy, given that tourism generates a large number of different services. In addition, lower attendance rate in areas affected by different types of risk leads to a reduction in the number of employees (Mansfeld, Pizam 2006), to reduced foreign exchange earnings as well as to weakening the economy of local community. In case of serious disturbances, this is then reflected wider spreading in regions, whole country, and even some parts of the world. Because of all this *"tourism is becoming a victim"* of natural disasters, medical reasons, economic problems as well as terrorist attacks and criminal acts. Thus, a tourism destination loses its image which is very difficult to acquire and easy to get lost.

According to the World Tourism Organization, there are four main sources of risks in tourism (UNWTO 2015):

1. tourism sector and the related commercial sources (disrespect of contracts, frauds, insufficient level of hygiene and sanitary protection, fire, earthquake);
2. human and institutional environment outside the tourism sector (social conflicts, wars, terrorism, organized crime, delinquency and human trafficking);
3. personal risk - individual travelers (poor health, crime, causing conflict with local residents, visiting dangerous places, loss of money and documents, etc.);
4. physical risks from the environment - natural, climatic, epidemics (vaccination, visits to dangerous areas, exposing to dangers during natural disasters and epidemics).

The conflicts that affect tourism development may be various. These are primarily: *natural disasters and catastrophes, terrorism, wars, economic crises, epidemics*. These events can have a different impact on tourism, different duration, different effects and uneven spatial influence. We can talk about short- or long-lasting effects, individual influence or impact on groups of population or even on the whole society, about the influences that are reflected only in the local community, whole region, country or continent.

Different conflicts and risks affect the development of specific types of tourism unequally, as they also unequally act both timely and territorially. In general, tourism is affected by a number of trends that are sometimes quite contradictory and act in different ways on different market segments. Special types of tourism accept and deal with the risks with different intensity. Events are primarily important for improving the quality of tourism and at the same time they are a source of income for the local community. Every *receptive place* that wants to improve the quality of services wants to create a distinctive event, and every potential tourist destination that has a distinct event wants to use it in order to become a real tourist destination. What is common to all the mentioned spaces is the existence of different events taking place in those areas.

Weaknesses in the Security of Spaces for Organizing Tourist Events

Tourism is deeply sensitive to all the negative phenomena in both, natural environment and social happenings. Therefore, in the development of tourism in a destination it is extremely important to look at all the weaknesses that occur in the field of safety and security. Let us list only some of them that can serve to ill-intended visitors. These are (Štetić 2003):

- insufficiently developed network security in a destination;
- poor training of the local population;

- the desire for foreign currency inflows without proper control (money laundering);
- inadequate involvement of local people in tourism development;
- the difference between economic development of local community and countries of tourist demand;
- developing illegal forms of tourism (poaching, sex tourism, etc.);
- inappropriate behavior of tourists (opposite to customs and religion of the local community);
- infiltration of terrorists in the local economy;
- inability to control mass tourist movements and seasonal labour in the tourist destination;
- tourism has become a "cover" for terrorist operations.

The tourist destination where the events are held is only a part of the area when it comes to the phenomenon of risk (Štetić 2011). Let us remember only a few countries and tourist destinations where terrorists operated in the last decade of the twentieth century and early twenty-first century and carried out their attacks: the USA (New York), Egypt (Cairo, Sharm el Sheikh, etc.), Israel, Spain (Madrid), United Kingdom (London), Kenya, Algeria, Bali, Morocco, Russia, the Philippines ... Unfortunately, the list is much longer with more and more victims. Looking at all these countries, we see that they are on different continents, that there are different types of tourist destinations (city tourist centres, photo safari centres, residence tourism centres, pilgrimage centres, cultural tourism centres, etc.), they belong to different religions, but they also have one common trait: they are popular tourist countries and developed tourism destinations. This is exactly what the terrorists need: great popularity and publicity for their objectives, regardless of the type and quantity of human victims and material damage. Actually, their main motto is: "The more ... the better".

Everything is changing. The basis for tourism development is not made only of natural and cultural resources, but of *safety* above all. In order to achieve this, we need to talk about the strategy for tourism security and the creation of *safe tourism destinations and consequently tourism without risk*. In order to create a safe tourist destination we must bear in mind:

- the safety of all tourists and visitors;
- the safety of employees in tourism and other fields;
- security of space;
- environmental safety;
- economic security;
- creation of a positive image in the security field.

This means that every country that wants to be on the world tourism map in the future must know and must be able to implement the basics of security in each and every tourist destination, as well as in the country as a whole (Getz 2008). The task is neither easy, nor simple. That is why we distinctly talk about

the implementation of "risk management" in tourism. The fact is that a tourist destination without *risk recognition and its prevention* (Štetić , Šimičević 2014) cannot talk about further tourism development in it. Thus, media have a crucially important role in timely informing. Awareness and risk planning are the basis for further impact on reducing negative consequences of natural disasters. A critical role in the creation of programmes of prevention, education and awareness about the potential disasters belongs to UNESCO. Advocating for timely and accurate information, its placing and mutual use by potential users, UNESCO has started a new risk management programme.

An Example of Crime and Terrorism Impact on Organizing Events in a Tourism Destination

When we discus about crime in the tourist destination where the events are held, we usually think of petty theft: pickpocketing, purse snatching or theft from hotel rooms and cars. Why and how does this happen? How can we prevent this and what is the way to do so?

Criminal attacks on tourists in a tourist destination while holding events are characterized by the following features:

- the most common reasons for these attacks are economic ones;
- the victim of these attacks is a careless tourist;
- the victims are rarely injured;
- there is no a political background of the incident;
- there is no great publicity;
- the data about these incidents in a tourist destination are usually hiding;
- the negative consequences of these attacks are short-term (most commonly);
- a very rapid response arises from local community and the tourism industry in solving problems and preventing similar cases ...

The *terrorist attacks* on tourists in the tourist destination where tourism events are held can be devastating for both, the destination and the event. What characterizes these attacks are the following facts:

- their objectives are to hurt or kill as many people as possible, because of the publicity, as well as to inform the public about the struggle they lead;
- the political background of attacks is significant (so-called Model Robin Hood);
- victims are not important; the number of injured and killed is not important; it is important to achieve the aims;
- the more publicity is given to the event, the success of their idea is greater;
- the terrorists do not choose type of tourism (domestic, international, etc.) or type of weapons (bombs, chemical weapons, etc.)

- statistical data on victims are a very important fact and indicator of the terrorists' strength, so that their repetition in the media is extremely important;
- negative impact on tourist destination is usually a lengthy one;
- the strategy of returning to the tourist market of event or destination after these attacks is a long- term one that requires a carefully created plan.

Criminal groups operate mostly at the local level (Štetić 2005); terrorists operate globally and transfer locations for their activities often and quickly. During their functioning criminal groups *do not want to prevent the development of tourism* in the destination because this would disable their further operation and earnings through theft and similar crimes. Terrorists want *to destroy the development of tourism* in the tourism destination, because this is the only way to draw attention to their demands and to achieve their objectives.

Risk Management in a Tourism Destination

The establishment of risk management in tourism destinations requires a lot of work, knowledge and patience. What is to be done in a tourist destination so that a guest feels safe? There is so much to do, and we will write about that on another occasion. Let us list only what is most visible:

1. Employees in the tourism industry and local police must secure tourists from the attacks by local people (criminals) and other ill-intended visitors (with criminal intentions).

2. Tourists can also be deceived by the unscrupulous workers in tourism or sellers in local stores.

3. Tourists can be exposed to the impact of natural disasters (hurricanes), catastrophes (earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, etc.) and diseases (SARS, mad cow disease, avian flu, etc).

4. During tourism development the protection of employees in the tourism industry must be borne in mind. It must be taken into account that tourism is a very demanding and intense activity which leads to fatigue and loss of work enthusiasm. This is unfavorable for both employees and tourists.

5. Tourism also offers a variety of challenges for employees, where only well-trained and focused staff can resist.

6. The space of a tourist destination is extremely vulnerable. This means that the protection of a tourist destination requires an exceptional insight about the space and possible devastations made by tourism or some other activity.

7. Environmental protection of the area is a special part of tourism destination protection. Not only ecological, but also cultural heritage protection must be considered.

8. The protection of culture and cultural achievements is a particular problem that occurs in tourist destinations. In addition, the devastation of cultural and

historical monuments, archaeological sites, ambient units, hotel and catering industry and infrastructure can also occur.

9. Economic protection from crime is extremely important in tourism destinations. A special problem is setting up "off-shore" companies and money laundering, which affects local economy and creates keeping up a distorted awareness of the local population.

10. Preserving the positive image of a tourist destination is a must. Decades were needed to create a tourism image of our country, and only one incident to destroy it completely.

How Much Event Tourism Is Prepared

Observing the readiness and capabilities to accommodate tourists, to organize events and to react to unwanted situations, corrections and acceptance of unforeseen happenings, as well as the speed of recovery after them, it is certain that so far many destinations have been unable or have not realized the size and importance of different types of risks for the development of tourism.

If we want to develop a high-quality event and earn certain income, then we must approach its organization with special attention, taking also into account the levels of risk that may arise on that occasion. The dangers are numerous and represent a source of potential harm to the local community, while the risks are real threat to achieve the stated objectives of event organizers. People often do not recognize the differences between threats and risks, and when they realize it, it is too late because they cannot achieve the objectives of the event organization and completion.

Organizers of events should be familiar with the problems of risk in the tourism industry in general as well as the risks that arise in the area of their local community and in the environment (Wood, 2005). However, for the organizers of an event the issue of risk is multiple because it is not just about space, but also about the level of local community development, about local population and their readiness to participate in the event organization and completion, about economic and political support in organizing the event, about the opportunity to attract and bring domestic and foreign tourists, about the connection of local economy with the event, about local community involvement into the completion and organization of the event, about the capabilities of infrastructure to support the organization of the event. If the event organizers have not comprehended the real situation on the terrain, this leads to a crisis that can not be resolved and therefore the risks for all those who are involved in the organization of such an event are unpredictable.

If we want to prepare the organization and realization of tourism event well, we have to ask specific questions and set tasks to the organizing team that will be able to answer these questions, and to resolve potential problems (Stokes

2008). In this way we get the opportunity to react before the possibility for problem emergence occurs. What are the issues that we should raise? We should:

- appraise who can participate in the risk assessment from the local community;
- assess which occurences that may emerge are dangerous to the event;
- appraise which techniques and works can prevent the occurrence of certain risks;
- compile a list of all the risks that may occur in the area;
- compile a list of all the risks that may arise in the event organization;
- compile a list of all the risks that may arise in the event realization;
- rank the listed risk according to the strength and importance of a specific event;
- appraise the possibilities for different types of damage to the destination;
- assess the possibility for disappearing or dying away the event due to its poor organization and realization.

Risks for event organizers are numerous and we need to think about them much earlier, i.e. in advance. They should be prevented, especially those risks that are evident and that are highly probable to occur during some of the event stages, as well as those risks that may have a huge impact on the event. Those are the risks that most often lead to poor event organization and realization, low attendance, negative economic consequences for the destination, as well as to the dissatisfaction of tourists and local population.

How to Prevent Risks

It is obvious that tourism often becomes a victim of events that can be observed *immediately or gradually*, due to the development of the situation after the first 'shock' when the problem emerged in a tourism destination. Tourism is largely dependent on the preservation of the environment and cultural, social and historical heritage. This sector is also exposed to another type of vulnerability associated with demand volatility. The news about real or potential disaster can cause immediate booking cancellation by foreign tourists and significant reduction in tourists' number and tourism revenue.

One of the fundamentally important tools in the fight against the risk is *insurance.* Before you start organizing public meetings or receiving a large number of guests, check the adequacy of your insurance with your insurance company. You might need additional insurance.

➢ *Identify the places* that guests will visit, activities in which they will take part, how they will be monitored, the precautions you will take, as well as all the codes of conduct; the warnings should be set on visible places. For some activities (e.g. horse riding), introducing insurance of the type "agreement on injuries" might be a good idea. This agreement stresses that the visitor is willing

to accept responsibility for a particular type of risk. However, the agreement can not completely release you of the responsibility for the health and safety of your visitors.

➢ *Plan emergency procedures*. Always have a well-equipped box with first-aid kit on hand. Make sure that the personnel is trained to provide first aid, CPR and heart massage. Develop a plan for the actions in case of natural disasters such as earthquakes, floods and fires.

➢ *Suggest* visitors to wear appropriate footwear (closed-toe one, sneakers or boots, not sandals) and clothing (trousers are recommended for some activities).

➢ When giving *instructions to your guests*, explain that your event is held outdoors. Since certain accidents are always likely to happen in an area (uneven ground, insects, climate, unpleasant odors), visitors also have to accept that kind of risk.

➢ Set up information points and clearly write the information needed for the guests during their stay at the event,

➢ If the local community has special characteristics which imply a specific code of conduct, dress code, contact with local population, this should be pointed out to trip organizers so that they can prepare tourists to meet different way of life and different views.

➢ Clearly mark the places that are not allowed for visitors and places that are intended for visitors.

Instead of a Conclusion

We are witnessing the risks of life and risky experiences, not only around the world but also in our immediate surroundings. We do not often think about them until these sporadic events turn into a crisis. However, is this the right way of thinking and acting when it comes to tourism and especially tourism destination. An old proverb says: "An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure". Security in tourism, security of stay and safety of a tourist destination have become basic elements in the selection of a tourist destination. The issue of security must be viewed through its entire preparedness and organization. Therefore, the following must be taken into account:

✓ preparedness of a destination;
✓ preparedness of a local industry;
✓ preparedness of a local community.

A question is posed: what will happen with tourism and future development of tourism events. Besides positive elements in their development, tourism events are often completely autistic for the events from their surroundings. Organizers of events do not often think about what is happening in the environment, but they are focused only on "their event". They want their event to be the best, which is understandable. However, this does not depend

only on themselves and their event, but it depends on the whole tourism industry, local community and environment.

Risks in organizing events are increasing not only at the global, but primarily at the local level. Organizers of events do not often take into account the fact that their event is not the only one and that we should "listen to" the market and competition. This is equally important for both, already known and recognized as well as for new events. The most common risks at local level are: unpreparedness for the events, inadequate equipment of the site, unadjusted contents, inadequate offer, poor turnout of local population, unfamiliarity with the demand, inadequate time of holding an event, inadequate duration of an event, inadequate media coverage of an event, inadequate awareness of visitors and local population, the gap between supply and demand. Each organizer of events could certainly enumerate many more things which are not favourable for a successful event.

What should be especially emphasized as the risk of further successful development of tourism events in Serbia is definitely stronger and better cooperation between the organizers of tourism events. This is often the greatest risk when it comes to tourism in Serbia. The discussion and agreement of event organizers should be constant and continuous in order to avoid a lot of unnecessary risks in this segment of tourism development in Serbia. The fact is that tourism events without recognition of business risks and their prevention can not have successful development and long-lasting, high-quality existence.

"Coming together is a beginning, keeping together
is a progress, working together is a success"

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