

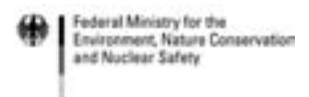


# INTRODUCTION TO SUSTAINABLE TOURISM

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The publication is funded by:



and was elaborated during the project Promoting Sustainable Tourism in Central and Eastern Europe: A Demonstration Model Applied to the Natural and Cultural Heritage of Banská Štiavnica (Slovakia) by:



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Translation: Sylvia Herianová

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## I. Goal Of The Programme

The goal of this training is to clarify the background and explain facts about sustainable tourism so the participants come to understand the principles of sustainable tourism, become motivated and able to implement these principles in their work or activity.

## II. Target Group

The target group of this training includes public administration employees (state administration, municipalities), employees of other public institutions (agencies, research organisations, etc.), commercial but also non-profit organisations who:

- **are responsible for tourism development in a territory, in the given institution or organisation;**
- **plan activities for tourism development in a territory, in the given institution or organisation.**

The training participants have no knowledge of sustainable tourism, but they should have some background information about and/or experience in the field of tourism itself.

It is assumed that the training participants are mainly from less developed areas with valuable natural and cultural heritage, and with a high potential for tourism development. The course is not designed for managers from well developed tourist centres where it is necessary to deal with the already existing problems caused by intensive tourism.

## III. Form

For the purpose of this work, a set of mono-thematic seminar blocks is considered. The duration of each of these blocks is approx. 5 hours. It has not been specified whether it should be a single intensive course or a long-term education consisting of a set of seminars and workshops.

The basic structure of the mono-thematic block is:  
*lecture – interactive part – evaluation – conclusion.*

For more information about the form and concept of seminars, go to part **V. Recommendations for the Organisation of Seminars.**



## IV. Recommendations for the Organisation of Seminars

### IV.1. Before the seminars

#### Developing the concept of seminars

It is important that the seminars encourage or promote the following:

- discussion during (a) lectures, (b) interactive part of the seminar and also during (c) breaks. It is required to inform the speakers that the participants may pose questions and discuss things during the lectures as well; in the course of interactive parts, it is needed to promote discussion in groups but also when the group work is being evaluated. The discussion should be encouraged also during breaks, lunch time, etc.
- the participants get to know one another. These mutual acquaintances could contribute in improving co-operation and developing partnerships. It is required to know the institution that the participants represent; this knowledge can be used in planning the working groups, the seating arrangements during lunch, etc.

It is likely that some of the participants will be more experienced in the presented topic and some will be less. This needs to be taken into consideration when planning the seminar – e.g. the distribution in working groups should reflect this experience level, or the more experienced participants should be allowed to answer (instead of the lecturer) questions posed by those participants that lack experience in the given field.

If possible and appropriate (see below), we may consider to divide the seminars according to various target groups, e.g.:

- **beginners and advanced**
- **according to sectors:** public, private, non-profit sectors;
- **according to professions and branches:** e.g. owners of accommodation facilities, employees of museums, tourist guides, town council members, representatives of relevant local state institutions, representatives of relevant local non-profit organisations, etc.

Since the interests of each of these target groups are different, the educational needs are different as well.

However, this dividing of seminars must be carefully considered and should not be implemented automatically, because it may happen that one of the goals of the seminars – to develop partnerships – may not be met due to such segmentation.

It is, however, clear that the above described approach of dividing seminars according to target groups may be implemented only in the case of larger educational cycles.

An abundance of illustrative examples and materials should be used during presentations. They can include slides, photos, leaflets, brochures, books, posters, objects, films, etc. The illustrative materials will make the presentation more interesting; they will also increase the attention of participants and enable them to better apprehend the presented topic.

#### Technical equipment

**The minimal equipment required to be at use in the presentation room:**

- **flipchart** with a sufficient amount of paper sheets, markers, tape (causing no damage to walls) to stick posters/papers on the walls;
- **overhead projector.**

**Recommended equipment:**

- data-projector + notebook with a CD drive;
- slide-projector.

**Recommended equipment if required by the speaker:**

- video with a television.

If possible, the environment where the seminars take place should comply with the principles of sustainable development. The following could be considered:

**buildings and equipment:**

- are owned by local entrepreneurs or institutions; the owners use products from local suppliers and local producers, if possible;
- local culture and architecture are respected in exterior and interior parts of the building;



- environment friendly technologies and designs are used within the building;

**food and refreshments:**

- drinks are not offered in PET bottles;
- products of supranational corporations are not served;
- local and regional traditional food and refreshments are offered.

**others:**

- both sides of paper sheets are used for invitation letters, other letters, outcomes of the seminars, etc.;
- both sides of flipchart papers are used;
- electrical energy and heating are used economically.



It is convenient to organise the seminars always at the same place and in the same time (e.g. always in Hotel Slavia, on even Tuesdays from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.). This way, the participants will have a chance to plan their duties conveniently. Also, it will be easier for them to remember the dates of seminars.

#### Work with public

It is important that the educational seminars are attended by those stakeholders who can somehow influence tourism in the given locality. Therefore, it is required to announce in advance that such an educational cycle is to be organised in the given locality/region. An appropriate way of announcement (see below) should be used, and the goals and objectives explained in detail. This way, exaggerated expectations of participants can be avoided, and the interest of people who otherwise would not participate can be stimulated.

The initial information campaign should be carried out in a way that is the most appropriate for the given locality. It may include:

- **articles in newspaper**, e.g. several articles in a row on the topic of tourism development ending by an information about the training and invitation to participate;

- **sending initial letters and invitations** to selected participants (entrepreneurs in tourism and tourism-related fields, local government officers, representatives of state administration, agencies, museums, etc.)
- **public meeting** focused on the topic of tourism where the preparation of such training is announced;



- **Internet page** that is commonly used for providing information in the given locality (including the system of advertisement banners);
- **posters** displayed on places designated for this purpose.

It is important to announce at least the list of topics and dates (and describe briefly each topic, if possible). This information is beneficial mainly for people who are interested only in some selected topics. In addition, the organisers will have a chance to structure the participants better and adjust the content and form of seminars as required.

### Preparing the seminar with the speaker

As mentioned earlier, the content and topic of the speaker's presentation need to be consulted in detail with him/her as part of preparation for the seminar. In addition, the structure of the seminar and possible topics of participants' interests should be discussed. It is also useful to think of the questions the participants are likely to ask.

It is appropriate if the speakers use (if possible) first of all examples that reflect the local or regional situation. This will make the seminar more interesting and the participants will understand better the presented issues because it will be easier for them to "imagine" what is behind the speaker's words. If there are no local examples, then it is necessary to go for some from the region or home country. Only if these are not available, the speaker should use examples from Central Europe, entire Europe and lastly outside of Europe.

The lecturers usually do not have the capacity to prepare the interactive parts of seminars (controlled discussions, work in groups, practical exercises, etc.), therefore, it is necessary to help them because the interactive parts and their quality have an essential impact on the participants' impression of seminars.

It is essential that the speaker had an abundance of illustrating materials (see above). Also, he/she must know from the very beginning that his/her contractual duty is to provide hand-outs (see below).



## IV.2. The day of the seminar

All items required for the presentation need to be connected and checked before the seminar (functioning markers, sufficient amount of paper in the flipchart, pieces of adhesive tape handy, connected electrical equipment, focused projectors, and the like). If activities such as cutting pieces of tape, focusing the projector, looking for the electrical extension cord and the like are done during the presentation, they certainly will have a significant disturbing effect on it.

Detailed minutes of each seminar should be prepared; for completing minutes, making notes during the seminar or tape-recording (the transcription, however, requires a lot of effort and time afterwards) should be used. It is necessary to take down all the main ideas of the presentation; it is, however, especially important to record the questions and suggestions of participants because they indicate their needs and interests, and reflect the issues that need to be focused on when working on tourism development in the given locality.

The seminars must be well facilitated; it is useful if the speaker does not need to facilitate the seminar and if there is someone else to do this task. Good facilitation can make the seminar variegated and interesting, it can help to avoid long monotonous speeches, and stop or re-direct inappropriate discussions. On the other hand, it can support interesting discourses that have a real contribution in the given issue.

It is required that the approved structure of the seminar, including timing and length of breaks, is adhered to. This applies not only to participants (tendency to extend breaks) but also speakers (tendency to make the presentation longer).

Evaluation is an inherent part of each seminar. It is not possible to rely on a summary evaluation to be completed at the end of the set of seminars because it is likely that the participants will have forgotten many things by then. Therefore, it is required to collect comments and ideas of participants (what was good and what needs to be improved) at the end of each seminar. This may be carried out publicly (discussion, making notes on flipchart, etc.) or confidentially (by filling out forms, see Annex XX). Such evaluation will take only a few minutes, but will provide an immediate feedback for both the speaker and organisers. In addition, many of the comments may be considered and implemented already during the following seminar.

## IV.3. After the seminar

Each lecturer is required to provide hand-outs, i.e. his/her presentation prepared in writing. If possible, the material should be in electronic form as well. These hand-outs should be given to each participant after the seminar (immediately or later by mail, e-mail) or at the next seminar. Another possibility is that the participants and other people may download the material from the Internet.

It is convenient to include the handout-providing duty in the contract with the lecturer and condition his payment by submitting these materials. Otherwise, it is usually quite difficult to acquire these materials from the lecturer ex post; he/she may consider this as an extra work.

It is appropriate if information that help the participants in their work or support development activities (e.g. numbers and names of Acts, articles, various legal cases, international agreements, and the like) are included in the hand-outs.

## V. Topics

Recommended topics and their content are provided below. Their purpose is to meet the given goal – to introduce the issue of sustainable tourism to the participants and motivate them to implement the principles of this approach in tourism. At this point, it needs to be emphasised that this is only a suggestion and the program of particular seminars may be changed according to the needs of those who ordered the training, also according to participants or based on the professional skills and opinions of lecturers. The authors of these recommendations are fully aware of the fact that the speakers' opinions of some of the technical or professional issues to be presented may be different (e.g. regarding the structure of a strategy, use of SWOT analysis, principles of marketing and others); therefore, the authors understand that content changes may be necessary. It is, however, recommended that the individual objectives of topics are respected. Information about the basic message is provided for most of the presentations, and it is advisable that this message is passed from the lecturer to the seminar participants.

Considering the fact that most of the topics are to be presented by different lecturers, it is likely that some of the themes, information, examples, etc. may be repeated. In general, it is not a problem (repeating same things from various points of view may be something quite effective) but the organisers should consult the content of presentations with each speaker to make sure that ineffective duplicity is avoided.



### V. 1. Introduction to Tourism.

The goal of this topic is to introduce the issue of tourism to the participants and develop a common information background among them. This background includes e.g. theoretical basics of tourism, forms of tourism, current trends, etc., and it is essential to have it so the participants are able to learn effectively during the subsequent parts of training.

#### Recommended content of the topic:

##### What is tourism?

Tourism is a set of activities focused on satisfying those needs of people that are related to travelling and their temporary stays outside of their permanent residence, usually in their free time (with a goal to relax, get spa treatment, learn, do sport or participate in cultural events) but also in working time (business trips, business events).

##### Some specific features of tourism in comparison with other economic activities:

**Bound to a territory** – a tourist product is interlinked with a geographical territory.

#### List of topics:

1. Introduction to tourism.
2. Impacts of tourism on natural and cultural heritage.
3. Natural and cultural heritage - tourism offers.
4. Principles of sustainable tourism.
5. Regional strategy of tourism development.
6. Creating vision, and defining the goals and objectives.
7. SWOT analysis.
8. Introduction to marketing in tourism.
9. Developing tourism products in the region.
10. Certification in tourism.
11. Organisational structure of tourism in the region.
12. Basics of interpretation.

**Non-material character** – a tourist product cannot be tested in advance.

**Great variability** – form and content of a tourist product depend on its provider.

**Storage** – a tourist product cannot be stored.

#### Tourism categories according to the target destination of visitors and their country of origin:

**Incoming (active)** – the visitor is coming to a given destination from abroad.

**Domestic** – the visitor is coming to a given destination from the same country.

**Passive** – the visitor is leaving for a destination in another country.

#### Tourism categories according to content: (they usually overlap)

**Summer tourism in nature and mountains** – hiking, walking, biking, learning about the natural and cultural heritage, relaxing, etc.

**Winter tourism in mountains** – down-hill skiing, cross-country skiing, extreme skiing, and the like.



**Tourism service chain includes:**

Stage	Client's activity	Means	Provider
<b>1. Preparation</b>	Generating interest	Marketing, information, advert.	Travel agencies, destination managements.
	Offer check-out and reservation	Marketing, advert, information and communication channels.	Travel agencies, destination managements, providers of various services.
	Preparation of equipment and gear	Purchase, repairs, rental.	E.g. salesmen of equipment for sport, hiking and travelling, bookshops, photo-shops, equipment rentals and repairs, etc.
<b>2. Journey</b>	Transport from home to a tourist destination	Car, bus, train, ship, plane, bicycle, on foot.	Transport companies, car and bike rentals, traffic infrastructure operators (train stations, airports, etc.)
<b>3. Stay</b>	Accommodation	Hotels, guest houses, hostels, camps and other facilities.	Operators of facilities.
	Taking meals	Restaurants, own preparation, etc.	Operators of facilities, shopkeepers.
	Free-time activities	Hiking, sport, relaxing, etc.	Guides, instructors, sellers of equipment, operators of playgrounds and other centres, etc.
	Learning activities	Visiting museums and castles, sightseeing in towns and their vicinities, and the like. Visiting protected territories and the like.	Managers of facilities and territories, tour-guides, bookshops, etc.
	Cultural activities	Concerts, festivals, custom presentations and the like.	Managers of facilities, music bands and theatre troupes, and the like.
	Working activities	Meetings, seminars, exhibitions, fairs, conferences, presentations, excursions, etc.	Providers of facilities, interpreters.
	Shopping and local service	Purchase of souvenirs and local products. Purchase of other necessities (photo-video, magazines, etc.). Banks, money exchange, car repairs, health care and the like. Transportation services.	Craftsmen, producers and sellers of souvenirs and local products. Shops in the locality. Bank and exchange service providers, car repair owners, health care facilities, and the like. Transportation companies, taxi, car and bike rentals.
	Other activities.	Spa service, educational activities and the like.	Operators of facilities, providers of services, and others.
<b>4. Journey back home</b>	Transport from tourist destination home.	Car, bus, train, ship, plane, bicycle, on foot.	Transport companies, car and bike rentals, traffic infrastructure operators (train stations, airports, etc.)
<b>5. Activities after returning home</b>	Equipment - maintenance and repair works.	Washing, cleaning, etc. Repairing items, and the like.	Laundries, car/bike repairs, craftsmen and the like.
	Recording and sharing of memories.	Making photographs, writing articles or web-pages, participating in discussion and other meetings, etc.	Photo-labs, providers of information and communication technologies, operators of facilities.

**Tourism focused on learning** – learning about natural and cultural heritage, experiences, etc.

**Staying by water** – at the seacoast, by lakes or rivers, and by swimming-pools (mainly thermal); river rafting, relaxation and water sports.

**Rural tourism** – relaxing in a quiet environment, learning about the natural and cultural heritage of a rural area.

**Cultural tourism** – learning about cultural heritage, going to concerts, exhibitions, theatre performances, etc.

**Fitness-wellness** – aimed at getting in shape, relaxing, etc.

**Congress and seminar tourism** – taking part in conferences, seminars, presentations, fairs, etc.

**Spa tourism** – curing stays in spas

**Scientific tourism** – organised expeditions, exploration and research, educational trips, etc.

**Cycle-tourism** – riding bikes from a region to region, or from place to place within one region;

**Eco-tourism** – learning about intact ecological and social systems, their heritage and customs, and the like.

**Tourism service chain**

A tourist product consists of a number of individual services and goods that are being used in a certain sequence – this is called tourism service chain. Knowing this chain in general or for a particular product allows a systematic and structured work to take place. This includes an estimate of the needs and wishes of a client, good management and co-ordination of services, tourism impact assessment and regulation, and the like.

**Tourism offer**

It is a set of interesting things to see, services, activities, and the like, for which the visitor comes to the destination or makes use of them during his/her stay. An analysis of a tourism offer serves the purposes of estimating the potential of a territory for various types of tourism, improving the offer, co-ordinating tourism management activities, and the like.

**Natural elements:**

- typical and/or attractive landscape;
- typical species or habitats (e.g. bear, peatbogs...);
- other unusual and interesting species or habitats;
- variability of ecosystems;
- anorganic nature (rock, cliffs, rock seas, etc.);
- protected territories.



The natural heritage offer is a subject of an individual seminar.

#### Cultural elements:

- **material cultural heritage – immovable** (historical monuments, castles, castle ruins, typical and/or interesting architecture, folk architecture and the like);
- **material cultural heritage – movable** (paintings, various items, and the like);
- **non-material cultural heritage** (songs, music, dances, customs, legends, superstitions, etc.);
- **theatre;**
- **handicrafts and art;**
- **gastronomy** (typical meals and drinks and typical mode of their preparation);
- **festivals and other events.**

The natural heritage offer is a subject of an individual seminar.

#### Landscape as a whole:

- general impression of the landscape;
- typical or interesting use of landscape;
- vista points, esthetic parts of landscape,
- climate.

#### Tourist infrastructure:

- lodging facilities;
- restaurants, buffets;
- possibilities of transport to destination and within it;
- service of guiding and instructing;
- activities (horse riding, fishing and the like);
- marked trails for hiking, biking, cross-country skiing, educational trails;
- small infrastructure (picnic sites, playgrounds, benches, and the like);
- rentals (gears, cars, bikes, etc.);
- offers for sport and relaxation (ski centres, golf courses, etc.);
- spectrum of shops and their offer.

#### Additional infrastructure:

- banks and exchange offices;
- health care centres;
- shops;
- car repairs;
- security service;
- post office, Internet;
- others.

#### Latest trends in tourism in the world and in the given country

- market differentiation, i.e. increase in favouring of specialised products (e.g. for seniors or bikers; thematically focused products, etc.)
- increased importance of quality and uniqueness of a product;
- quality of the environment is increasingly considered to be a significant factor of holiday site selection;

- active relaxation and experiences, health improvement and fitness are favoured;
- increasing interest of tourists in culture and history, and in learning about them;
- increasing interest in outgoing vacations at seacoast (Balkan countries, east Mediterranean), which means decrease of incomes from domestic tourism;
- increasing importance of conference/seminar tourism;
- increasing importance of the relation between price and value;
- increasing amount and importance of air travel (mainly low-cost airlines);
- increasing favour of artificial attractions (e.g. disneylands, aquaparks and the like);
- rapid spread of information technologies, mainly Internet;
- increased significance of comfort;
- greater mobility of visitors (own cars, caravans/RVs, bicycles and the like);
- development of global tourist institutions (e.g. for environment protection, consumer protection, etc.)

#### Interactive part:

- *Variant 1* (if all participants are from one region): divide the participants in groups and let them prepare a list of offers of the region for tourism; they shall follow the structure that was presented during the lecture; each group will propose one category of offers;
- *Variant 2* (if participants come from various regions): each participant shall prepare a list of offers in his/her region, while following the structure that was presented during the lecture.

#### Notes:





## V.2. Impacts of Tourism on Natural and Cultural Environment.

The goal of this topic is to get the participants acquainted with positive and negative impacts of tourism on the environment, in which it takes place, and also find means of eliminating or promoting these impacts.

### Recommended content of the topic:

*Note: it is important to have a thoroughly selected and reconsidered example for each presented (also for other) impact, for it is just a second seminar and it can be assumed that the participants will not be able to comprehend fully how are the given impacts actually negative or positive.*

### Negative impacts on the environment:

#### a) Consumption of natural resources;

##### Water:

*Example:* producing artificial snow, watering to golf courses, in aquaparks and swimming pools, watering of tourist complexes, direct taking of drinking water and the like;

*Consequences:* hydrologic and geo-hydrologic conditions of the territory are disturbed; water from the territory is drained; both the acceptable and absolute yield of water resources is decreased, part of it wasted.

##### Soil:

*Example:* building concrete and asphalt surfaces of car-parks and large recreation resorts;

*Consequences:* retention of soil and landscape is decreased; fauna and flora habitats are devastated, etc.

##### Landscape:

*Examples:* constructions at inappropriate locations; extraction of materials; cutting out trees; insensitive modifications;

*Consequences:* retention of soil and landscape is decreased; fauna and flora habitats are damaged and fragmented; the landscape is visually deteriorated, etc.

#### b) Direct damage to the natural environment;

##### Hiking, mountain biking, horse riding, terrain cars, ATVs:

*Examples:* damaging vegetation and soil cover; increasing erosion; changing the attributes of soil cover (e.g. porosity, retention, etc.);

*Consequences:* damaged or fragmented habitats; changed conditions in nature; disturbed animals.

##### Downhill skiing:

*Consequences:* damaged vegetation and forests; affected habitats; disturbed animals; changed hydrological conditions.

##### Lifts:

*Consequences:* Since lifts make it possible for a large number of people to visit exposed and vulnerable parts of landscape, rare vegetation, animals and other natural elements can, due to these visits, suffer various types of damage.

##### Stays by water, cottages by water:

*Consequences:* eroded banks; bank vegetation damaged; noise; etc.

#### c) Pollution and waste;

##### Air pollution:

*Examples:* exhausts from cars, airplanes and other engines and technologic equipment; heating; transport of goods required by tourism;

*Consequences:* changes in climate (global warming); decreased quality of the environment; impaired health of population; and the like;

##### Water pollution:

*Examples:* waste water from tourist facilities, direct pollution caused by activities on banks and in river basin (outlets of oils and fuels, outlets of organic waste, etc.), direct pollution on water surface (outlets from motor boats, and the like);

*Consequences:* water bodies are polluted and their biodiversity decreased; increased pressure on sewage systems and waste water treatment plants, i.e. higher costs.



#### Solid waste:

*Examples:* waste from tourist facilities, litter directly in nature (left by people hiking, on picnics, camping, etc.);

*Consequences:* The amount of waste increases in the locality, and a problem with its transport and liquidation may occur. The pressure on the waste dump increases as well, since it may have not been designed for such an increased amount of waste.

The life habits of animals change and their ability to survive decreases.

#### Negative impact on the cultural environment:

##### a) Disturbing of local people:

*Examples:* crowded shops, roads and carparks; sold out groceries and other products; hindered access to buildings and other objects; etc.

##### b) Losing of privacy:

*Examples:* tourists „looking around“, taking pictures, local people sharing traditional areas with the “incomers” and the like.

##### c) Losing of cultural identity:

*Examples:* negative impacts of globalisation; using inappropriate materials and solutions in an effort to get quick money; etc.

##### d) Changing of traditional ways of life:

*Examples:* subordination to tourists' interests; changes in people's behaviour, architecture (fences, asphalt shingles, concrete pavings, etc.), and the like.

##### e) Damage to infrastructure and buildings:

*Examples:* damaging bus and train stations/stops, spoiling public toilets, damaging/wearing out of railings, impairing shop windows, and the like;

##### f) Uneven development of regions or localities within them:

*Examples:* localities that are interesting for tourists attract greater attention of regional administrators, investors; less interesting localities/communities and their needs are left behind;

##### g) Growing of conflicts in locality:

*Examples:* between those who benefit from tourism and those who do not but have to restrict themselves because of tourism;

*Note:* Negative impacts on the natural and social environment are not inevitable! Almost all of them depend on people and on the way of tourism development and management. It is possible to minimize the impacts or totally eliminate them.

#### Positive impacts on natural and cultural heritage:

##### a) Financial benefits:

- **fees** – for admission, over-night stays, camping, parking, and the like; certification of tour-guides and tour-operators, issuance of permits, etc.;
- **grants** – tour-operators and producers of tourist supplements (or their associations and funds they established) contribute in natural and cultural heritage protection;
- **new jobs** – decreasing unemployment;
- **tax distribution** – intensive tourism means more tax money for the locality or region;

increased purchasing power – of people employed in tourism or in related branches.

##### b) Non-financial benefits:

- **increased sense of regional identity and pride** – tourism brings visitors (in acceptable numbers), therefore, the region must be protected for them;
- **influence on events, structures and decision-making** – need of new strategies, concepts and measures; changes in approaches to territorial administration; survey and implementation of new methods; efforts to handle minority issues; etc.;
- **support of new or revitalisation of traditional branches** – service in tourism, handicrafts, tourism-related service and branches;
- **environmental education** – learning about and increased understanding of nature and society may lead to an intensive need of their protection;
- **alternative forms of protection** – for example private protected territories and private villages.

#### Basics of impacts monitoring, measurement and management:

- there is a number of methods, e.g.:
  - a) determining the carrying capacity of a territory;
  - b) concept of acceptable changes;
- **basics of monitoring, indicators;**
- **suitable mechanisms of destination management, including continual monitoring and flexible feedback.**

#### Analysis of the present situation in eliminating negative impacts, or in increasing positive impacts:

An appropriate environment needs to be created and barriers removed (examples from Central Europe):

- **centralised tax system;**
- **inflexible public administration, structure of institutions and relations among them;**
- **lack of motivation in the managements of public institutions and protected territories;**
- **high taxes and levies;**
- **corruption;**
- **insufficient level of law reinforcement;**
- **obsolete way of thinking of authorities;**
- **others.**

#### Possibilities of systematic elimination of negative impacts, or increase of positive impacts, on regional or state level.

They depend on the state, in which the seminar takes place. Here, concrete examples have to be presented.

#### Interactive part:

Work in groups: developing a set of examples illustrating the negative or positive impacts, and defining the conditions that would make it possible to eliminate or soften the negative impacts.

#### Notes:



### V. 3. Natural and Cultural Heritage – Tourism Offers.

The goal of this topic is to define what out of the historical heritage is interesting for visitors of a typical Central European destination and why. The existing offer of such a destination should be considered primarily.

#### Recommended content of the topic:

##### Natural and cultural heritage – definition

The cultural and natural heritage is among the essential motivation factors, for which visitors decide to come to a tourist destination. Its significance is critical for educational, rural and cultural tourism as well as for eco-tourism. It is also a convenient additional offer that can accompany (a) activities of nature-oriented tourism, (b) the agenda of seminar and congress tourism, (c) biking trips, and (d) other types of tourism.

##### Heritage is characterised by two factors:

- **Affiliation with region or part of society**, i.e. heritage is tightly linked with a given locality, region or a part of society, and it is clearly related to it. Examples:
  - *folklore* – it is linked with a particular part of society (simple, poor or not too wealthy people) in a given region;
  - *mining tradition* – it is linked with a certain mining region or miners;
  - *biodiversity of a locality* – fauna and flora typical only for a given habitat.
- **time**, i.e. it comes from past (has remained in a given region for at least a generation) and has been preserved until today.

##### Cultural heritage

It includes nature in its complexity, i.e. not only fauna and flora, but also anorganic nature (geology, water system) and relations among natural components.

##### Cultural heritage

It includes any cultural phenomena that have their origin in the past and are being maintained by a local society (community).

**Landscape** is a specific category that is primarily part of natural heritage but it is often shaped by people (mainly by their economic activities and character of their settlements), therefore, it often lies on the interface of natural and cultural heritage (anthropogenic country). Similarly, gardens, parks, arboretums, etc. are situated on this interface.

#### Heritage forms and their use in tourism

##### Natural heritage

###### flora (vegetation)

- it is the most visible part of natural heritage, therefore, the most important factor influencing tourist activities in nature (enjoying the beauty of the landscape);
- it could be a goal of educational and/or scientific tourism.

###### fauna (animals)

- it is an important factor influencing tourist activities in nature but less dominant than flora;
- favoured are animal-watching and photo-safari;
- it could be a goal of educational and/or scientific tourism.

###### geology

- it determines the appearance and character of the landscape and, therefore, is an important factor influencing tourist activities in nature (enjoying the beauty of the landscape);
- in addition, it dramatises the landscape and creates individual subjects of interest (e.g. rock cliffs are vista points, caves provide an opportunity to have a look into the underground world, etc.);
- it could be a goal of educational and/or scientific tourism.

###### water

- it determines the appearance and character of the landscape and, therefore, is an important factor influencing tourist activities in nature (enjoying the beauty of the landscape);
- in addition, it creates individual subjects of interest, for example:
  - stays by water – recreation, relaxation, etc.;



- activities by water – swimming, rowing, surfing, rafting, and the like;
- activities under water – scuba-diving;
- target places – waterfalls, lakes, etc.;
- springs and small wells are considered specific phenomena that intensively and positively increase the experience of hiking, biking and other activities in nature that are physically strenuous.

### landscape

- it strongly determines the impressions and feelings during the time spent in nature as well as the spectrum of tourist offers;
- perceiving and admiring the landscape is an inseparable part of experiences gained during travelling;
- the landscape usually does not create an individual subject of interest, though taking photos of landscape is a very common tourist activity.

### Cultural heritage

#### immovable historical monuments

- buildings, memorials, gardens and parks, industrial buildings, technological constructions, traffic-related constructions, etc.;
- they strongly determine the impressions and feelings during the time spent in nature as well as the spectrum of tourist offers;
- perceiving and admiring historical monuments is an inseparable part of experiences gained during travelling in areas with human settlements;
- they create an individual subject of interest – they are target places of trips or part of a tourist product (e.g. particular buildings, areas, typical town and village settlements, monument reserves, open-air museums, technical monuments, and the like);
- they represent an attractive infrastructure for various tourist activities, e.g. lodging, eating, concerts, exhibitions, presentations, business events, etc.

#### movable historical monuments

- pictures, sculptures, furniture, church items, handicraft equipment, agricultural and industrial machines and equipment, etc.;
- they are an important factor of travelling, but they are less dominant as other forms of cultural heritage (because they are less visible);
- they create individual subjects of interest, for example museums, interiors of buildings, etc.

#### verbal and customs culture

- customs, legends, traditions, and the like;
- it is an important part of a tourist offer but usually not as an individual subject of interest, only as an additional element of a tourist product;
- it can be used as an additional programme for various other types of tourism (e.g. presenting customs, performing traditional events – such as weddings, and the like).

#### music culture

- music, songs, dances;
- it is an important part of a tourist offer but usually not as an individual subject of interest, only an additional element of a tourist product;
- though it is a “people to people” type of activity, it is not limited by the language barrier – this is a great advantage;
- it can be used as an additional programme for various other types of tourism (e.g. concerts, performances, programme music, dance lessons, and the like).

#### culinary culture

- meals and drinks, mode of their preparation and serving, way of eating/drinking them;
- it is an important part of a tourist offer but usually not as an individual subject of interest, only as an additional element of a tourist product;
- in spite of that, traditional meals and drinks are an attractive part of tourist stays because their different nature is easily perceivable – the visitor does not have to be an expert to understand how are the traditional meals and drinks different from the others, and this is a great advantage;
- various forms of use within tourist products – from being an every-day part of meals to guided tasting or even individual experiences, such as historical dinners, peasant lunches, etc.

#### handicrafts

- they are an important part of a tourist offer but they are usually not an individual subject of interest, only an additional element of a tourist product;

- in case visitors can try out a particular handicraft skill, then it is a very attractive part of tourism offers;
- various forms of use within tourist products – museums, presentations, personal tryout, etc.

### Issues of natural and cultural heritage protection

*Protection reasons* (from tourism point of view):

Natural and cultural heritage is among the most frequent motivations, for which a visitor decides to come to a region. It is, therefore, necessary to perceive the heritage as an “attraction” and protect it, so it remains to be a reason for tourists to come.

**Threats** (analysed in more detail within the previous presentation):

- vulnerability of natural and cultural heritage to impacts of modern developments, consuming life-styles and globalisation;
- low environmental awareness of local people;
- improper management, insufficient law enforcement, corruption;
- negative impacts of tourism itself.

**Ways of protection:**

- legislation (laws and their enforcement);
- direct protection (barriers, steering, guarding, excluding harmful activities, and the like);
- use of motivation (re-directing attention, creating attractions in less vulnerable localities and the like);
- increasing the environmental awareness.

**Forms of protection:**

- ideally, the various ways of protection (see above) should supplement one another;
- supranational agreements for heritage protection exist, however, their implementation depends on the particular state (e.g. UNESCO World Heritage, protected areas and their categorisation, historical monument reserves, and the like);
- certification and patent protection (e.g. PanParks, ViaBono, protection of typical production, etc.)
- regarding non-material heritage, collecting, recording and maintaining can be implemented (e.g. music, songs, dances, crafts, food, etc.).

*Note: it is required that enough examples from practical life are prepared for the seminar; if possible, they should closely reflect the given situation in region(s) where participants are from.*

### Interactive part:

**Work in groups:**

- *Variant 1:* developing a TOP5 list of localities of natural and/or cultural heritage in the given destination and proposing ways of their use in tourism (or improvements in existing uses);  
*Goal:* focus the attention of participants to the best places/things in the region and on their practical use in tourism without causing damage to them;
- *Variant 2:* designing an offer letter to be sent to clients/tour-operators; the letter should highlight the natural and cultural heritage as an asset of the given destination and as a source of both learning and pleasure;  
*Goal:* to change the participants' viewpoint of the heritage to be offered to visitors, from their passive “perception of beauties” to offering of actively experienced visits.

### Notes:



## V.4. Principles of Sustainable Tourism.

The goal of the seminar is to introduce the essential principles of sustainable tourism, its background and methods, to the participants.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### Sustainable development

Approximately in the middle of 18th century, the consumption of the Earth's resources started to exceed their actual possibilities, reserves and capacity. This was caused by industrial revolution and the consequent increased need of energy, furthermore by new methods implemented in agriculture, by an increased need of food products, by gradually decreasing poverty and increasing life standards, by growing population, etc. This trend has been left without noticing for a long time, until the second half of the 20th century and mainly the 70-ties when fuel crisis, extreme pollution, rapid growth of poverty in the third world, diseases, and other signs became too flagrant. This time, reflections started to appear among people who became to understand that development is inevitable, but not the way that leads to destruction of our planet.

The way society has been developing is maybe pleasant, however, it has become clear that it cannot go like this forever. The resources that this development was using (e.g. energy, water, soil, health, etc.) are limited and signs of getting close to these limits started to be apparent in some cases (e.g. the above mentioned fuel crisis in 70-ties).

Solution is seen in the **concept of sustainable development**. What is it? This term started to be used at the end of 60-ties and mainly at the beginning of 70-ties of the 20th century.

**Classic definition** (Brundtlandt et al., 1987): Sustainable development is such that meets the needs of present without undermining the possibilities of future generations to meet their own needs.

**Definition in legislation:** Sustainable development of society is such that preserves the possibility for both present and future generations to satisfy their basic life needs, while not decreasing the natural diversity and preserving the natural functions of ecosystems. (*Slovak Law 17/92 of Col. on the environment*).

**Detailed definition:** Sustainable development is target-oriented, long-term (continual), complex and synergic process that influences all fields of life (spiritual, social, economic, environmental and institutional), takes place at various levels (local, regional, national, international) and it is directed, through using practical tools and by institutions, towards a functioning of society that sufficiently satisfies

the material, spiritual and social needs and interests of people, while respecting the natural values and not exceeding the limits of the carrying capacity of nature (or landscape) and its resources. (*National Strategy of Sustainable Development of Slovakia*).

**Narrative description:** Sustainable development (SD) means that we have not inherited the Earth from our ancestors, but borrowed it from our children.

**The Earth Summit** – a major meeting of heads of states in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 – was a landmark in the entire process. Documents that clearly declared that the care of the environment is a top priority were adopted at this meeting. However, the development is not too promising; 12 years have passed, numbers of documents have been adopted and agreements signed. Unfortunately, declarations without taking actions define the situation in this field the most often.

**Goal of sustainable development:** to ensure better quality of life for everyone in the present and for future generations through implementing the following means:

- social development that recognises the right of needs satisfaction for all inhabitants;
- sparing use of natural resources and protection of the environment;
- sound economic development.

So it is clear that SD is not concerned only with the environment protection but considers successful economy and satisfaction of people equally important.

#### Principles of SD from the social point of view:

- **value increase and protection of cultural diversity and identity, including local specialities, and support of local communities;**
- **protection of health and comfort by:**
  - ensuring secure, healthy, pleasant and functioning living for all inhabitants;
  - implementing prevention and quality in health care;
  - ensuring access to water, food, accommodation and heating for acceptable prices;
  - providing access to knowledge and skills required for being fully useful in society (man in society, minority in society, region in society, etc.);
  - supporting participation of all community groups in decision making and, considering the impacts of these decisions on society.

## Comparison of sustainable and non-sustainable tourism:

Non-sustainable growth of tourism	Sustainable tourism development
<b>Unplanned activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• e.g. building a guest house ad hoc, without knowing if it is beneficial;</li> <li>• building a slope for down-hill skiing – could not be successful, but ecological damage remains;</li> <li>• duplicate activities in a region, useless competition and resource squandering.</li> </ul>	<b>Development concepts and plans</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responsible business plans;</li> <li>• plans of tourism development in a region... Makes possible a responsible and co-ordinated use (therefore in decreased amounts) of accessible resources...</li> </ul>
<b>Central planning and decision-making</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• decisions about regional projects are made in Bratislava;</li> <li>• when making plans, regions are not considered, and the like.</li> </ul>	<b>Decisions made at local level, involving local people and businessmen</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subsidiarity;</li> <li>• true public participation in zoning plan preparation; (entrepreneurs and citizens decide what they want and what they don't want in tourism, of course assisted by experts)</li> </ul>
<b>Unlimited development</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• when planning and implementing tourism-related activities, the tourism interests are considered only, nothing else;</li> </ul>	<b>Regulated development in time and space</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• restrictions are respected, e.g. acceptable number of visitors in village, nesting time of birds, carrying capacity of a territory, etc.</li> </ul>
<b>Intensive use of landscape and resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• things get concentrated on a few places;</li> <li>• effort is made to get the most out of a client;</li> <li>• negative impacts of intensive development are ignored.</li> </ul>	<b>Extensive use of landscape and resources</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effort is made to disperse visitors in the territory;</li> <li>• to get out of the client only what is necessary;</li> <li>• efforts to regulate impacts are respected.</li> </ul>
<b>Understanding tourism as a universal remedy for social and economic problems in a region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• unprofessional approach that ignores the basic economic and logical aspects of development;</li> <li>• development cannot depend on one sector – high risk, low capability to withstand threats;</li> <li>• low rate of using the potential of landscape and community.</li> </ul>	<b>Understanding tourism as one of the tools for solving social and economic problems in a region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• it is necessary to have a wider portfolio of branches, so if one fails or faces problems, the others can keep the economy going;</li> <li>• better use of the potential of the landscape and community</li> </ul>
<b>Focus on economic goals only</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• orientation on financial profit.</li> </ul>	<b>Harmonisation of economic, social and environmental goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• benefits include not only financial profit, but also e.g. good feelings, education, cultural exchange, pleasant atmosphere, clear conscience, pretty and diverse landscape, and the like.</li> </ul>
<b>Universal support of tourism activities without differentiation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• no priorities are determined, resources are just scattered with no true result required;</li> <li>• difficult-to-measure results, though usually there is no interest to measure them.</li> </ul>	<b>Differentiated and targeted support of tourism activities</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• defining priorities – what is important for the region, what has to go first and what can wait;</li> <li>• well measurable results, effort to transfer experience into next phases.</li> </ul>
<b>Implementation of individual projects in the region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• individual interests are promoted, interests and needs of others are not respected;</li> <li>• however, this could be "only" a consequence of bad co-ordination.</li> </ul>	<b>Coordination of projects in the region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• effort is made to increase synergy in the region.</li> </ul>
<b>Construction and dev. for the purpose of satisfying unlimited demands - "the more visitors the better" method</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• absence of professional analysis (or they are not respected) – they define what is best for the region and where is the focus meaningful.</li> <li>• if having a lot of visitors, low income is sufficient and so the quality can be worse;</li> <li>• effort to get quick money, not reflecting consequences.</li> </ul>	<b>Determining the limits of a territory - "the most proper visitor" method</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• analysis and surveys are prepared and respected;</li> <li>• rather to have fewer but better paying visitors – this, however, requires higher standards and quality (long-term process).</li> </ul>
<b>New constructions (lodging, recreation centres, various parks, etc.)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easier way, but causes more damage to the environment (occupying new areas, influencing biodiversity, etc.);</li> <li>• quicker money, easier preparation...</li> </ul>	<b>Use of existing objects</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• usually complicated and more expensive;</li> <li>• however, the strengths of the region are promoted and used.</li> </ul>
<b>Copying not local and not typical models and construction technologies in architecture</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• uniformity; global materials, technologies and companies</li> <li>• it is an easier way but decreases the quality of experience.</li> </ul>	<b>Implementing architectural elements and construction technologies typical for the region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult way, but increases the quality of experience</li> <li>• however, biases exist and results are expectable in mid-term horizon.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of cars</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• intricate problem, difficult to solve;</li> <li>• the entire society is based on cars;</li> <li>• cars have a strong negative impact on the environment – exhausts, spatially demanding, safety problems, degradation of tourism, and the like.</li> </ul>	<b>Promoting public and non-engine ways of transportation</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• difficult goal because public transp. (PT) is usually less comfortable and low quality;</li> <li>• PT - significantly less pollution, considering the number of transported people;</li> <li>• non-engine transportation – positive impacts on health, no pollution, more intensive experiences.</li> </ul>
<b>Seasonal character of demand and/or offer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• being satisfied with the peak time periods when enough money is made for the year but it is accompanied by a number of social (seasonal employment, crowded centres) and environmental impacts.</li> </ul>	<b>Permanent demand and/or offer</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• easier on the social and economic environment.</li> </ul>
<b>Stereotypic and universal offers for everyone</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• degrading the visitor to a „piece“;</li> <li>• decreasing the quality of experience, stronger feelings of dissatisfaction, and the like;</li> <li>• the visitor is then less sensitive to the landscape and community.</li> </ul>	<b>Tailor-made products for small groups</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• atmosphere of friendship and pleasant experiences;</li> <li>• good feeling from visiting the region;</li> <li>• visitor supports the community and landscape protection.</li> </ul>
<b>The visitor's passive acceptance of the environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lying on the beach, going up and down on skis, etc. the visitor is then less sensitive to the landscape and community.</li> </ul>	<b>Interactive relation between the visitor and the environment</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• visitor learns more and then understands the need to protect the community and landscape and is supportive of this protection.</li> </ul>
<b>Favouring cheap but unqualified labour force</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• attempts to have increased profit, even for the price of long-term losses;</li> <li>• frequently, this is also a consequence of a bad external situation.</li> </ul>	<b>Efforts to employ highly qualified people</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• thinking in long-terms;</li> <li>• investing in local people, who live in the place and presumably will stay there for longer.</li> </ul>
<b>Use of labour force from outside of the region</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• exploitation of employees and violation of human rights;</li> <li>• low quality of work;</li> <li>• outflow of financial profit from the region.</li> </ul>	<b>Use of local labour force</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• this is a responsible approach to the region where profit is acquired;</li> <li>• this way, usually, the visitor's experience is better, too.</li> </ul>
<b>Commercial way of selling</b>	<b>Selling "with heart"</b>





#### The SD principles from the environmental point of view:

- effective use of natural resources (energy, water, soil, etc.);
- waste minimising, recycling and repeated use of materials, or their proper depositing;
- keeping pollution within limits that do not cause threats to natural systems;
- conservation of biodiversity and further increase of its value.

These principles of sustainable development can be implemented on the following levels:

- **global** – i.e. principles are implemented by governments and huge organisations having impact on the entire world or a continent;
- **regional** – governments within a state, county, and the like.
- **local** – village, individuals, communities.

Gradually, the principles of sustainable development have started to be developed and even implemented in more practical fields of human life than are the conferences. Therefore, people began to talk about sustainable forest management, transportation, industry, etc., and also about sustainable tourism.

#### So, what is sustainable tourism?

It is a tourism that meets the needs of present visitors without undermining the possibilities of both future visitors and local people to meet their own needs.

The management of sustainable tourism makes use of natural, material and human resources of the target region, but preserves the cultural identity, ecological stability, biodiversity and life-supporting systems in both the target and other regions.

#### The management of sustainable tourism:

- minimizes the negative environmental, social and cultural impacts of tourism;
- generates economic profit from tourism for local people and improves (a) the quality of their life, (b) their working environment and (c) their access to technologies and information;
- makes it possible for local people to decide about those tourism-related issues that could affect their lives;
- contributes in preserving natural and cultural heritage and promotes the world's diversity;
- provides more meaningful experiences to visitors, such as meeting local people, communicating and co-operating with them, learning about their life, problems and joys;
- makes it possible for the visitors to understand the environmental and cultural relations and contexts, history, presence, etc.
- is sensitive to local people and their needs.

These principles do not depend on the type of tourism; they are applicable in each tourism category. It means sustainable tourism is not one of tourism categories (as are e.g. rural tourism, educational tourism, sea-coast recreation, and the like); it is an approach to tourism and, therefore, the individual tourism categories can be done in a "sustainable" or "non-sustainable" way.

Sustainable tourism can be implemented in a rural region of Hont in Slovakia as well as in the middle of New York, USA; it can be present during romantic winter walks, down-hill skiing, at the seacoast, during time spent at a cottage, and the like.

#### Interactive part:

The participants should identify acceptable and non-acceptable activities (facilities, centres, etc.) from the sustainable tourism point of view in the given region or country.

The choices need to be discussed and justified.

#### Notes:



## V. 5. Regional Strategy of Tourism Development.

The goal of the seminar is to explain the purpose and functions of a tourism development strategy and the procedure of its preparation. There will be additional two seminars dealing partially with this issue.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### Why do a strategic planning?

- A region could have a great potential for tourism; however, it is necessary to give a careful consideration to this potential in order to understand how to use it in a way that can turn tourism into a good source of development of the region. A strategy helps the management to create sound conditions for tourism development and the individual stakeholders to see their position in the development and implementation of tourist activities in a profitable way.
- Tourism development in a destination is a long-term and systematic process, while the projects of individual stakeholders are almost always of short-term, rarely mid-term, character. Therefore, it is necessary to create a framework, where the individual projects will fit in and thus support the long-term character of development. Strategy is such a framework.
- Tourist offer of a region is influenced by various factors and consists of a number of minor or major offers given by various stakeholders. If there is an intention to create conditions for tourism development in a region and sell tourism products, it is necessary to harmonise and co-ordinate these offers.
- To have a good strategy is a helpful moment if applying for financial support from banks, funds, etc.

#### Basic requirements:

- If a tourism development strategy (or any local/regional strategy) is to be successful and effective, it must be prepared in a co-operation of all stakeholders and adopted by them in a convenient form. The final document must be an outcome of intensive discussions and negotiations. General agreement must be achieved in visions and goals, as well as in actual measures towards meeting them.
- Tourism development strategy cannot be a formal document only; it must be a document, about which it is clear in advance that there is a will to respect it. The requirement to prepare such a strategy must come from, or be at least confirmed at the "bottom", i.e. by stakeholders. In addition, it cannot be initiated only by the wish to acquire money from various sources.
- Even if a strategy is officially adopted, e.g. by local parliament or tourism association, it is basically an informal and voluntary tool. A strategy shall achieve its goals through voluntary self-commitments of stakeholders.

- Strategy is flexible and open. Neither the process of preparing a strategy nor the final document are fully defined in advance; only the basic frameworks are predetermined.

- Strategy and action plans (derived from the strategy) shall focus solely on actual and real steps, not on great but unrealistic activities and goals. A well designed sequence of small and realistic steps can take people to meeting seemingly unrealistic goals.

- A significant feature of strategies is that the goals are achieved through co-operation and co-ordination of several (or all required) stakeholders. Tourism development strategy cannot deal with one sector in the region only (e.g. public administration or hotel service); it shall determine the co-ordinated steps to take by each sector.

#### Essential parts of a strategy

The strategies usually consist of five basic parts:

1. Diagnosis of the present state and problem analysis
2. Defining the vision and goals of tourism development
3. Identification of strategies
4. Operation programmes and projects
5. Monitoring and feedback

#### 1. Diagnosis of the present state and problem analysis

The diagnosis of the present state describes the existing situation in the field of tourism. It serves the purpose of creating a clear common base for determining goals and defining programmes, as well as for joint decision-making. It can include:

##### Analysis of the present situation in the region:

- natural features (landscape, interesting fauna and flora, rich biodiversity, geological formations, water, protected areas, etc.);
- cultural features (historical monuments, typical architecture, traditions, customs, music, gastronomy, events, etc.);
- tourist infrastructure (lodging, eating, attractions, services, etc.);
- other basic data (distances from cities, airports, bus/train stations; means of transportation to and within the region, density of shopping network, health care, banks, police, various services, etc.);
- marketing data (existing market segments; visitors' interests, needs and motivations; modes of marketing; modes and channels of promotion, etc.);
- legislative environment (national and regional tourism concepts and plans, small business legislation, zoning plans, nature conservation and historical monuments protection, etc.).



### Analysis of the external environment

- identifies relevant threats and opportunities that need to be faced or used in tourism development (e.g. trends, political situation, expected legislation, demographic development, etc.).

The present situation can be defined and problems analysed through a number of steps, including:

- **inventory** of the above introduced elements;
- **SWOT analysis** (topic of the next seminar);
- **benchmarking** – comparison of selected regional parameters with those from another region that is considered better and that people want to catch up with;
- **designing scenarios** – basic estimation of situations for various versions of development, usually the worst and best scenario are designed and compared, the result of this process is an initial identification of aspects that are especially important for tourism development.

## 2. Defining the vision and goals of tourism development

In this part, answers are looked for questions: “Where are we going?” and “What do we want to achieve?”. Here, the tourism development is justified and its goals, from the viewpoints of regional and social development, are defined. The vision and goals need to be defined within a creative process, where brave and even utopian ideas should be given a chance.

This will be a theme of an individual seminar.

## 3. Identification of strategies

Following the vision and goals, the basic and strategically important areas of long-term tourism development shall be defined. Also, the main directions of the goal-achieving process need to be determined. The following shall be specified: what needs to be developed, what given features of the region shall be used, what procedures shall be pursued, and who shall be the main actors.

Depending on the viewpoint, a number of strategies can be identified. However, all of them can be put in two basic groups:

### a) sectorial strategies, e.g.:

- **diversification strategy** – what new products shall be introduced and market segments addressed, if it is apparent that the existing products/market segments are not sufficient;
- **human resources development strategy** – identifying professions that need to be developed, and determining the focus and extent of this development;
- **marketing strategy** – detailed identification of market segments (target groups) and selection of a way of marketing for attracting these segments to the region;

### b) cross-sectional strategies (all sectors are regarded), e.g.:

- **win-win strategy** – it shall be decided which conflicts that have hindered tourism development need to be solved, so that their participants are satisfied and cease to be blocking the further development;
- **sustainable development strategy** – defines the principles of sustainable development for tourism.

## 4. Operation programmes and projects

The above identified strategies shall be put into actual steps that are required to take for achieving goals. Operation programmes (or in other words action plans) serve this purpose. They define the (a) measures that lead to meeting the goals,

(b) organisation and finances required, (c) time schedule, and the like.

The operation programmes are usually sectorial, i.e. deal with measures and actions to be taken within one sector. In the case of tourism development in a region, they can include:

- creation/improvement of conditions for doing business in tourism;
- protection of nature, landscape and the environment;
- development of human resources in tourism;
- building of infrastructure for tourism;
- transportation;
- ensuring of clean and safe public areas;
- marketing and promotion, etc.

Operation programmes, or the measures defined within them, form a basis for deciding about individual projects. Projects are comprehensive groups of short-term activities, having actual goals. A project shall deal with a real problem; its activities and outcomes should be thoroughly described in the operation programme. There can be a number of projects included in one operation programme; they can be implemented in parallel or be sequenced one after another. The projects have their managers and follow a clear project-making cycle (preparation – implementation – evaluation – feedback).

It is appropriate to create a supply of projects and ideas that are related not only to project activities but also to ways of project management, financing, communication, etc.

The following components need to be clearly defined for projects (in the operation programme or project supply):

- **project justification** (i.e. what measures of the operation programme are implemented and what goal of the strategy intends to be achieved by the given project);
- **project description** (localisation, goals and description of activities);
- **description of project outcomes**;
- **principles of project financing** (indicative budget, financial management, follow-up costs and the way of handling them, and the like);
- **people / institutions responsible for the project implementation**;
- **description of the project management**;
- **plan of activities and project milestones**.

Operation programmes should be consistent, mutually interlinked and the following aspects should apply to them:

- they should consist of short-term but complex measures focused on tourism development in the region;
- the measures should be prioritised, i.e. it should be determined what is more important and what less;
- programmes focused on operation and maintenance should be perceived as supportive of development and innovation, not as an individual goal of strategy;
- operation programmes should follow the integrated approach, i.e. effort should be made to link those measures from various sectorial operation programmes that are (a) common/shared, (b) in charge of one manager, or (c) possible to finance from a same resource;
- similarly, individual projects are integrated in a “central project” in such case if they share some of the project activities; these are then interlinked and they influence one another;
- projects should have a multiplicative effect, i.e. owing to one project, several new activities arise and they do not depend on the original project anymore;
- programmes and projects should be innovative, i.e. they should look for and bring along new views and solutions; an innovative element is usually tested on one project and if it is successful, it is included in other projects as well; innovations can be implemented in products, methods, approaches; creativity is an essential part of innovations;
- particular measures and projects should be as concrete as possible, they should provide deadlines and define people/institutions held accountable.

## 5. Monitoring and feedback

Tourism development strategy, similarly as any other strategy or development plan, is accompanied by a certain amount of risk and uncertainty. This is even increased if innovations and creative thinking are implemented in the strategy and in the process of its preparation. It is a natural thing, since nothing can be planned perfectly in advance. Unexpected development and changes in the strategy and its operation programmes can be eliminated to certain extent during the implementation of the strategy/operation programmes. From the very





beginning, however, it is important to take into account the feedback mechanism as being an important part of the process, i.e. the strategy and its stages, operation programmes and their stages, and projects all have to be evaluated. In addition, the acquired knowledge has to be included in the next updated strategy/operation plan, in the next stage or project.

For monitoring the implementation of a strategy, it is necessary to determine what shall be monitored, how shall things be measured, what shall be done with the results of the measurement, who shall be responsible for what, etc.

Regarding feedback: Already in the process of a strategy preparation, it is necessary to keep in mind that updates will be made (e.g. in regular intervals or after achieving a goal). Therefore, it is important to develop a mechanism of evaluation and incorporation of this evaluation's results in the updated version of a strategy.

## Basic principles of developing and implementing a strategy

The process of a strategy preparation is equally important as the strategy itself. Already during its preparation, it is being decided whether the given strategy is going to be a formal and unused document, or it is going to be a true framework of tourism development in the region. Two areas need to be considered:

### 1. „Ownership“ of strategy;

### 2. Participants in the strategy development process;

#### 1. Ownership of strategy

A tourism development strategy can be successful only if it is widely accepted by the public in a given region, i.e. it should be understood and accepted not only by authors but also by stakeholders (e.g. entrepreneurs, local parliaments, state institutions in the region, etc.) and local people (first of all). Therefore, the principle used in the process of a strategy preparation is important for its future. It can be as follows:

**a) Bottom-up** – the requirement to develop a strategy, and its principles and content (to some extent) come from people living in the region, or from a group of professional public, who do not hold decision-making rights (usually businessmen in tourism).

This approach is ideal because it creates “ownership feelings” towards the strategy among a quite large number of people, who then not only easier accept and implement the measures defined in the strategy, but also demand that the local authorities do the same. At the same time, this approach is the most difficult, for it requires an extensive communication with public.

**b) Top-down** – the requirement to prepare a strategy, and its principles and content come from local authorities (self-administration or state). The local people are then being convinced (or forced) to accept the strategy and the measures derived from it. Though this is the most frequently used approach, it is the worst one because people naturally do not trust authorities and their decisions. It is not unusual that when deciding about accepting a strategy people do not look on its content but intend to look on who from “up there” is presenting it (Popular or unpopular politician? Did I vote for him or not? What political party is he/she a member of?, etc.). In addition, it is usually not possible to find out and incorporate the requirements and wishes of public, or it is done in a formal and ineffective way without having some significant influence on the final strategy.

**c) Middle-out** – the requirement to prepare a strategy, and its principles and content come from local experts, research institutions or organisations on the middle management level (ones that do not hold decision-making rights, but have executive capacity and expert knowledge). This approach depends strongly on the capability of local experts both to perceive the requirements of public and to assert the expert requirements among local people and on decision-making

levels. In practical life, this approach has the same chance to be successful or unsuccessful.

**d) Combination of above introduced approaches** – it is the least systematic but still frequently used approach. It should be avoided, for it creates an intricate set of unclear relations; it is not clear who is responsible for what, who is the author and “owner” of which part of the strategy. In addition, it may happen that those who are to accept and implement the strategy do not identify with their tasks.

#### 2. Participants in the strategy development process

Should a strategy be successful, it cannot be a result of work completed by a small group of people (or even by just a few authors). It is required that an appropriate way is found for the entire community to participate in its preparation – local people, relevant social groups, decision making structures, professional and executive institutions (always in a rate appertaining to a particular group of people). In regard to this, the following issues need to be handled:

• **Who shall be responsible** for preparation, implementation and evaluation of the strategy? These things need to be clear and accepted by a large (as large as possible) number of stakeholders.

• **Who shall participate** (what persons and institutions) in the strategy preparation? Here, two viewpoints need to be distinguished:

- involving of various types of “action-takers”, e.g. leaders, innovators and creative people, “hard-workers”, pedants, “decision-makers”, etc. so the result is as harmonic as possible;

- involving representatives of all stakeholders (local people, parliament members, entrepreneurs, officers, etc.) already in the preparation process, not that they are invited only to final “commenting”. It will make it easier to adopt the strategy by both lay and expert public.

• **At what stages**, to what extent and in what activities shall the particular stakeholders, or public, participate?

• **How** (in what form) shall the individual stakeholders be involved in the strategy preparation and adoption?

• **How shall the consensus, compromise** and generally accepted decisions be acquired? How shall the suggestions, ideas, interests and needs of stakeholder be collected?

Though the participation of public and stakeholders is an inevitable prerequisite of a good strategy, equally important is an effective participation of experts – both local and from outside of the region. Tourism, similarly as other branches, has its rules, verified procedures or methods, and therefore it is essential that the strategy is a methodically correct document – otherwise it will not meet the expected goals. This is the reason why experts should be invited and assigned responsibilities; in spite of a general disrespect to experts, strategic planning cannot be done without them.

## Interactive part:

The participants will do a practical exercise of designing a procedure of strategy development in the given locality (i.e. organisation of the strategy development, finances, sequence of steps to be taken and time table, partners involved, etc.)

## Notes:



## V. 6. Creating vision.

The task of the seminar is to explain the role of the vision in regional and tourism development, and the methods of its creation. Furthermore, the purpose of setting and defining the goals shall be explained in the course of this seminar. Concerning its content, the seminar is connected with the previous one.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### What is a vision?

Vision is a foresight of future; it is a state in far future towards which the development effort should be directed. The vision does not serve the purpose of describing our goal and it is not an exact definition of things that want to be achieved; rather it is a direction that is intended to be followed. However, vision is frequently mistaken for strategic goals of development activities. Therefore, it is important to emphasize again: vision is not a state that is truly intended to be achieved! Vision is a description of an ideal state that wants to be approached by focusing the efforts towards it. However, a vision can be (and frequently is) impossible to achieve and people have to be aware of it. Important is that vision helps people to stay focused and it has a direction-giving effect on their work.

#### What is visioning?

Visioning (vision building) is a managed process that is used by a group of people (community, group of businessmen, local government, company, etc.) to build a vision.

Visioning is important mainly from two viewpoints:

- **It determines the direction** people want to go when engaging in development activities. It also defines the goals, while respecting the opinions, needs and wishes of all the participants of the visioning process. This is a strong prerequisite for defining the goals of development properly as well as for designing a good strategy to achieve them.
- **Vision building connects** a number of stakeholders, refines the environment where the development takes place, creates necessary links and makes dialogues possible. In addition, it leads toward adopting common goals, programmes and finally also projects.

#### How to build a vision?

There is a number of methods that can be used to create a generally acceptable vision, most of them being based on, what is called, guided imagination. When implementing this approach, the participants first imagine the ideal state and then they try to describe it, write some notes and finally create one vision (using their notes and images they pictured in their minds).

This seminar is oriented on practice. People together work on building a vision

of their town's future development as a successful tourist destination. It is much more beneficial than to lecture about theoretical knowledge for hours, without having a chance for the participants to have a real touch of the topic.

For building a vision, a method designed by dr. Trevor Hancock is recommended to be used. Dr. Hancock is one of the fathers of the healthy cities idea. He designed this method for Toronto, Canada, but it was successfully implemented also in Banska Bystrica, Slovakia – in the preparation process for including this city in the Healthy Cities network. It is a cheap and playful method that does not require high investments and too much experience. For the purpose of this course, the procedure has been slightly modified – participants will not work on a vision of a healthy city but on a vision of a successful tourist destination.

#### Material and conditions required:

- a set of markers;
- sheets of poster paper, or flipcharts;
- adhesive tape;
- a quiet room, well isolated from the surrounding world, for doing work together;
- a number of smaller rooms for work in groups;

#### Participants:

- 15 to 100 people, representing various sectors, groups, social classes – the greater variety the better;
- 1 facilitator + a few others who can be trained just before the event.

#### Time:

The workshop usually lasts for half a day.

#### Procedure:

*\* Start the workshop with a short explanation of what is actually a successful tourist destination.*

The goal is to introduce the issue to the participants, but make sure you do not present your own ideas. It is just a short start-off speech, without any details and personal inputs. Tell the participants that you are not going to do anything unusual; it is a commonly used method to motivate sportsmen, people to fight serious diseases, and the like. It has only been adjusted to the specific needs of the given course.

*\* Ask the participants to try to recall a recent experience that reflects or is an indication of a successful tourist destination, e.g. a positive thing they have seen, a pleasant feeling, etc.*

**Guiding text:** „In your mind, return back to 6 – 12 months ago and tell about a feature or an example of a successful tourist destination that you yourselves have experienced.“

Make sure that people recall their own experiences or knowledge, not something they have heard or read about. Insist on own personal positive experiences!

Give people only a short time to think – about 30 – 60 seconds for the goal of this part is not to collect examples but to set a positive atmosphere.

If working with a large group, ask 15-20 volunteers to present their positive experiences or knowledge – 2-3 words from each will suffice. When working with a smaller group (-15), each participant can get a chance to present their experience. In addition, you can ask them to introduce themselves briefly so that they get to know one another.

#### \* *Make notes of positive experiences and knowledge on a flipchart.*

After presenting experiences (maximum 15 people so that it does not take too long), review and analyze them together briefly, try to find their connecting points, common features, etc. But again, keep in mind that the purpose is not a true analysis of examples but setting the participants' minds in a constructive state. Therefore, it is not required to go into details and spend more than 10 minutes on this activity. After the analysis is over, make sure you mention that in fact the participants know what is a successful tourist destination and how it should look like.

#### \* *Introduce the process of guided imagination*

It is important to inform the participants that this part can take 15-20 minutes, so they can sit back and relax, stretch their legs, close their eyes (but do not have to), etc. It is required that they are not disturbed during this phase; therefore, put up a note on the door or have somebody to „keep watch“ at the door. Also, dim the lights, close the windows, close the curtains, etc.

Then, read the guiding text to the participants (it is quite long, therefore, it is enclosed at the end of this document) – this way you will lead them through the pictures in their mind and encourage their imagination. It is required that you read the text in a monotonous, hypnotising voice, while the following should be emphasised:

- we deal with future of 20-30 years from now;
- vision is an ideal situation that a person can dream of without demanding that one day it comes true (i.e. the self-censorship should be blocked);
- you cannot be directive and should avoid specifications (e.g. do not say „hotel“ but rather „place where visitors sleep“), do not mention colours, and the like;

Allow the participants to feel this part, give them time to finish dreaming and to complete the image reading in their minds

#### \* *Gather first impressions*

Ask everyone (but 15-20 people at maximum) to write on the flipchart their most vivid impression of what they have seen, heard, felt, something most unusual, surprising, pleasant, exciting, anything. The entire phase should not last for more than 7-10 minutes. Have a coffee break after it.

#### \* *Have people draw the pictures they imagined*

Divide participants to make groups of 6-10 people, as varied as possible. Isolate these groups from one another (put them to different rooms, or at least to distant corners of one room). Paper sheets and markers need to be prepared at the places of their work.

Ask the group to draw the images they pictured. The quality of drawing is not important; the drawing should embrace – e.g. in the form of symbols – all the images pictured by the participants. It is required to make sure that (a) no one dominates the drawing process (e.g. architects could be the first to grab the pens and they may want to draw and draw) and (b) everyone draws at least something.

This phase can last for 45-60 minutes.

#### **Suggestions to make this phase easier:**

- ask the participants to describe the key points of what they have seen in their mind, or what has occurred to them the most often;
- if somebody feels ashamed that they cannot draw, ask the group to draw as 7-year olds do;
- if no one takes the initiative, you give the pen to somebody's hands and ask him/her to start drawing – it can soften the stiff situation and others can join in the activity;
- if somebody keeps resisting, encourage him/her to say what he/she has seen, and after listing it let him/her draw it;
- ask them a number of times (every 10-15 minutes) to return in their minds

to the pictures they have seen – they should try not to forget anything and draw it;

- the drawing does not have to be realistic – the drawings can go various directions; the aim is not to draw a map but to get hold of things people have thought of. Symbols can be useful in describing abstract images (e.g. dollar sign for wealth or „shooting“ champagne bottle for joy).

#### \* *Join the images in one vision.*

After the drawings are completed, ask the groups to come back to their former places and let the speakers describe in detail their group's drawing. Allow the other group members to correct the speaker or add something, if necessary.

In the end, identify things that keep appearing in all or in the majority of drawings. Write them down on an empty sheet of paper; if there are too many of same things, cluster them to make the list shorter. When doing these final adjustments, make sure the final wording is understandable and clear.

The final list constitutes **the essence of a shared vision.**

#### **Guiding text for controlled imagination (example):**

We are preparing for a trip to future, to an ideal tourist town XY of 20 years from now. This town is neither the one we know today nor the one we think it probably will be in the future. This is a XY town that looks the way we would like to have it, if everything works out and we would become a truly successful tourist town. So, now just sit back and relax, maybe it will be helpful if you close your eyes in order to see easier the town of future by the eyes of your mind.

Now I want you to imagine that you are floating in a helicopter or balloon a couple of hundreds metres above a successful tourist town 20 years from today. Look down at the town. How does it look like? What colours and shapes do you see? What is the season of the year? How would it look like in a different season? Look at the town and its structure. You can see people and things moving about, places they are just standing at and places where they are doing something. What are they doing? What sounds can you hear and what smells can you feel?

Now, I want you to slowly descent to the centre of our tourist town; on the way down, look at the shapes and structure of buildings and public areas that you are passing by. You are preparing to land. It is a beautiful day. As you are getting closer and closer to the town, you can hear the sounds and feel the smells of the town better and better. What do you hear? What do you smell?

Land in the centre of the town and look around. Who is there? What is the age of people? What are those people doing? What activity are they engaged in? Are they tourists? Local? How do they interact with you and among themselves? Walk in the square, look into the side streets. How does this space look like? How safe it is? What activities take place there? Where are the people working? What kind of work are they doing? Where are they relaxing? How are they relaxing?

Enter a facility – it could be a café, hotel, museum, etc. Look who is working there. How do those people look like? How do you perceive this place, what are your feelings? Do you perceive it as a place to work or as a place to rest? Is it a good place for working and resting? How are people mutually interacting? Go to other working places, take a walk there. Now imagine yourself in various parts of the town – in the streets around the centre, on the hills and meadows outside of the town, in the park, forest, etc. What is different here? What activities are taking place? Who is doing them? Imagine it is lunch-time. Where are people going for lunch? What are they eating? How does it look like? How does it smell? Where are people going after lunch? What shops are nearby? How do those shops look like? What are they selling?

The day is coming to its end. Go with one of the visitors to his/her hotel or guest house. How far is it? How do you get there? How does it look like there? What types of buildings are there around? Do not forget that this is a successful tourist town. What are the people like? What are the buildings like? What are the public spaces like? What are the visitors doing? Who are the visitors? Are they families, do they have children? Are they retired people? Businessmen? From our country or foreigners? From where?

We are preparing to leave. Before leaving this successful tourist town, think of everything you have seen. Review in mind your walk. What have you seen? What has struck your eyes, nose or tongue?

*This is an example of a text. It can be adjusted according to the environment, in which it is to be used (town, village, region) and according to what needs to be achieved (i.e. choose questions that need to be answered).*

#### **Interactive part:**

Participants get involved in developing a vision of the development of the town or region, or a vision of tourism development, using an appropriate method of visioning (e.g. method of controlled imagination, and the like).





## V. 7. The SWOT Analysis.

The goal of the seminar is to explain the participants what is SWOT analysis and what is the purpose of its use, but mainly to teach them how to make a good SWOT analysis. This seminar is connected with the previous two ones.

### Recommended content of the topic:

When building a plan, strategy, operation programme, etc., it is necessary to evaluate the current situation and identify the desired direction of future development. This applies to business and town management, and it applies to planning tourism development as well. However, tourism is in a specific position because it strongly depends on both the tour-operator and a great number of other service providers that are involved in creating a tourist product. In addition, it depends on processes that the regional stakeholders have no chance to influence – such as trends, events, political decisions, climate, weather, etc. For tourism planning, however, all these circumstances need to be considered, summarised and evaluated. Furthermore, they need to be respected when strategic objectives and operation programmes are being developed.

To complete a complex analysis of both internal and external tourist environment, the SWOT analysis has proven to be an effective tool. When implementing this method, four basic groups of factors are identified:

- S** – **strengths** – of the examined matter
- W** – **weaknesses** – of the examined matter
- O** – **opportunities** – that can be used for further development
- T** – **threats** – that pose danger to further development

In principle, the factors can be put in two main groups:

- **Internal factors** (*strengths a weaknesses*): factors that are inherent in a region, society, project or other described unit; they can be influenced or changed, they are present in a given territory, their owners are identifiable, etc.
- **External factors** (*opportunities and threats*): factors that are outside of an analysed region (organisation, project or feature), we cannot influence them but they can have an effect on any of the examined matters.

The procedure of analysis and its use is simple in its essence. It consists of the following steps:

1. Before the analysis itself, **surveys and investigations** need to be carried out and all accessible facts and information gathered. In addition, an inventory of primary and secondary tourism offers should be made, and the general featu-

res of the region and anything else potentially important for tourism development should be summarised.

2. The task of the **SWOT analysis itself** is to include any of the acquired facts in one of the above described groups of factors.
3. **An outline of a further strategy** (plan, procedure, programme) should be proposed with an aim to:
  - **promote strengths and/or use them;**
  - **eliminate weaknesses;**
  - **use the opportunities offered;**
  - **eliminate threats.**

This procedure is simple in its essence because it itself “guides” the users through a detailed analysis and even proposes, as if automatically, the next steps. The SWOT analysis is simple and highly effective. These features make the analysis a convenient tool to be used not only by experts but also by general public, which can this way be naturally involved in various development processes .

The SWOT analysis can be used at more than one stage of tourism development. It can be used at the beginning of a process to find out what are the properties of a region or tourist product, and how should these be further effectively developed. The SWOT analysis can be also used to test the proposed solutions and measures, to analyse theoretically the state that is intended to be achieved and thus find out if the most effective solution was proposed for the given environment and objectives.

Here is an example of its possible use:

**a)** It has been found out (through SWOT analysis) that the **region has a potential for bicycle-tourism and learning about traditional life**. These two categories can use the strengths and opportunities, and are not excessively impacted by weaknesses and threats.

**b)** Based on this knowledge, **a plan for bicycle-tourism development and learning about folk customs is proposed**, while paying attention to promoting and using the strengths and opportunities, and eliminating the weaknesses and threats.

**c)** **Target groups of the proposed activities are part of a plan**. In order to verify if our plans are correctly designed and if the given target groups have the potential to take advantage of the proposed offers, SWOT analysis that considers the conditions of the given region will be applied to them as well. The results are then included in the plans and objectives.



**Frequent errors occurring during the process of SWOT analysis:**

- the authors do not distinguish between the “strengths” and “opportunities”, and between “weaknesses” and “threats”; usually (often more or less coincidentally), some of the strengths (weaknesses) are introduced as opportunities (threats), and the real opportunities and threats are not introduced at all; it means the

- authors do not follow the essential principle that the strengths and weaknesses refer to the internal features of the analysed object, while the opportunities and threats refer to the external situation, in which the analysed object is situated;
- actual steps to be taken are frequently proposed in the part of opportunities (according to a mistaken logic that “opportunities” are in fact “possibilities or steps that should be taken to improve the analysed object”);
- SWOT is usually not done publicly with the participation of residents, but it is meaningful to think about implementing this approach. It could make local people think about and analyse their region from the aspect of the activities they would like to do within its territory. In addition, this way they get involved in the strategy preparation, thus increasing the sense of “public ownership” of the strategy (read about its purpose above, in the part about strategy).

**Interactive part:**

The group can work on a SWOT analysis of a given topic (e.g. SWOT of the region from the general tourism development aspect, or from the aspect of a particular project, or from the aspect of attaining a particular goal, and the like). In this case, it is possible to work in groups (each group can do a different SWOT, or all groups work on the same analysis and then they compare, explain and review them).

**Example: SWOT analysis of Banská Štiavnica’s offer for new, perspective segments of travel market**

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Banská Štiavnica is on the UNESCO World Heritage List;</li> <li>• Banská Štiavnica is relatively well known in Slovakia as well as abroad;</li> <li>• Rich mining history of the town and region;</li> <li>• Presence of many mining monuments in the town and surrounding nature;</li> <li>• Possibilities to visit three mines;</li> <li>• Museum in St. Anton and its activities;</li> <li>• System of former water channels, roads and trails that are suitable for hiking and biking;</li> <li>• Many lakes providing opportunities for swimming;</li> <li>• Surroundings of the town is suitable for active relaxation in nature;</li> <li>• There are organisations in the town that can support tourism, or even become leaders in this field;</li> <li>• High schools and universities in the town have a great potential for co-operation in tourism development;</li> <li>• Patriotism of natives and people with positive attitude to the town (also those who do not live in the town);</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No generally accepted vision and strategy of the town’s development (including tourism) exist; there is no marketing strategy and no concept of tourism development prepared for Banská Štiavnica and its surroundings;</li> <li>• Local government bodies do not pay appropriate attention to tourism;</li> <li>• Low-quality service by the Tourist Information Office and its passive attitude;</li> <li>• Inadequate marketing of the region in Slovakia and abroad;</li> <li>• Unsatisfactory co-operation of institutions and organisations in the town (within sectors and among them), absence of a regional tourism association or other appropriate structure, limited co-operation of Banská Štiavnica with the surrounding towns and villages;</li> <li>• Poor quality of service provided, unqualified people working in tourism and lack of hospitality of personnel;</li> <li>• Poor physical condition of most of the buildings in the centre of the town, extremely dirty and abandoned public areas in the town;</li> <li>• Non-existence of complex tourist products and packages designed for individual segments;</li> <li>• Insufficient offer of service for active relaxation and free-time;</li> <li>• Absence of appropriate facilities for social events, such as concerts and theatre performances;</li> <li>• Few extra-seasonal cultural and entertainment events that can bring more life to the town and attract a greater number of visitors as well as domestic people;</li> <li>• Inconvenient open-hours in museums and galleries;</li> <li>• Insufficient marking of sites that are attractive for tourists, absence of an orientation system in the town;</li> <li>• Problems with traffic in the town (road conditions are unsatisfactory, not enough parking space, insufficient local public transportation) and also outside the town (poor transport connections with the surroundings);</li> <li>• Ignoring of the need to deal with the problem of Roma people living at Šobov;</li> <li>• Lack of free-time facilities that could be used by families and children (confectionery, play-grounds for children, etc.)</li> <li>• Lack of awareness of the benefits of tourism within the local population.</li> </ul>
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Good location that is close to the agglomerations of Bratislava, Budapest and Vienna;</li> <li>• Traditional historical relations of Hungary to Banská Štiavnica;</li> <li>• Increased interest of people from cities (with relatively high purchasing power) in centres of tourism that are not overcrowded and offer attractive things to see;</li> <li>• Increased trend in going on short-term additional vacations;</li> <li>• Reconstruction of historical buildings in the town;</li> <li>• Access to pre-entry, structural and other EU funds;</li> <li>• Membership of the town in the Association for the Central Hron Region Development;</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uneven development of regions in Slovakia, still unclear concept of the future development of Slovak regions;</li> <li>• Unclear concept of tourism development in Slovakia;</li> <li>• Unstable legislation;</li> <li>• Unfavourable qualification structure of the free labour force;</li> <li>• Lack of financial resources to support small enterprises;</li> <li>• Low level of law enforcement, bureaucracy and corruption.</li> </ul>



## V.8. Introduction to Marketing in Tourism.

The goal of the seminar is to introduce the issue of marketing to the participants, inform about documents required for marketing in the region and explain the role of marketing in sustainable development of the region and in tourism.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### What is marketing?

Marketing is a set of activities that seems complicated at first sight but it can be explained quite simply: Marketing helps the producer (businessmen, public administration, non-governmental organisation, etc.) to have the right product at the right place and in the right time, and to present it the right way and sell it for the right price. Thus, marketing is not only a promotion of a product or its sale support (these terms get often interchanged with marketing); it is a much more complex thing.

In the case of tourism, it is required that a product is created (using the inherent features of a destination) that will be bought by those visitors who can ensure profit. Certainly that an appropriate way and time have to be chosen for presenting this product to the potential visitors.

There is a number of marketing procedures and strategies but all of them have a common basis. This also applies to marketing of tourism, even though tourism offers products that have specific features (territory-bound, non-material nature, high variability, not possible to store, etc.).

#### So what is required to do, if the above stated goals of marketing are to be met?

1. First of all, it is important to know what can be offered to the potential visitors. It shall be clear what are the main targets of their visit in a destination, i.e. attractions (e.g. elements of natural and cultural heritage, possibilities of active relaxation, events, customs, etc.) but also the accompanying products (lodging, catering, travel, etc.).
2. Furthermore, it is required to know who are the potential visitors of a destination and what are their wishes. Though this partial goal can be never fully met in practice, for it is not possible to comprehend the every last possibility and wish of all potential visitors, it is always possible to determine some main groups – market segments, that will view the offer of a given destination

attractive. To complete this, various survey forms can be employed, human behaviour observed, etc. A good knowledge of the market is also very helpful. At this stage, the focus is not only on identifying the group of clients but also on learning about their habits – how long they are able to stay in a destination, how much money they can spend here, what standards they require, etc.

3. In the next stage, the right products need to be created for the identified groups. In fact, it is like "packaging" of accessible services and products according to certain principles. The purpose is to create something that can be sold to the visitor – a tourist product. Determining the price is part of the product creation. The price should cover all the costs and generate profit, but it also should not go over a level where the product is not sellable anymore to the selected target group of visitors.
4. After the product is created and the right target groups identified, i.e. those customers who are likely to buy a given product, they must be informed about the product in order to become interested. There are many methods of marketing communication but all of them pursue 3 basic goals: building the image (of the producer or product), increasing the awareness of the tourist product and informing about it. These three goals can mutually overlap, or – under certain circumstances – some can be missing. However, the basic approach is always the same: appropriate communication is used to inform about the product and convince the customer to buy it.
5. Distribution of the product is part of marketing. It means that once the customer learns about the product, there should be an easy way for him/her to buy it. Essentially, a tourist product can be distributed and sold by two ways: using sellers or directly, but frequently by combining both approaches.
6. In the case the customer buys the product, the marketing is not over, yet. To provide quality service (i.e. the product) is part of marketing as well, for if the customer is satisfied, he/she will serve the purpose of a communication channel – he/she will talk about the product, consciously or unconsciously promote it, thus form its image. He/she can even come back and buy the product again. Therefore, it is recommended to keep communicating with the customers after the product is "consumed" – find an appropriate way to make him/her remember the product (i.e. the stay in the destination), to offer new variations of the product, etc.

This brief outline of a marketing procedure tries to show only the basics of marketing. In fact, an individual seminar or even a set of seminars could be prepared for each of the above introduced parts of marketing.





### Who should be doing marketing?

Considering the things mentioned above, marketing should be done by those who want to sell their products, i.e. by service producers or providers. This is easy-to-imagine and implement when producing some tangible articles or providing one service (lodging, catering, guiding, etc.) However, if the product is a visit of a region, the situation is a little different, for the visitor should not come to the region just to stay in a hotel or look at the cultural monuments and leave. It is expected that he/she would spend more days and more money in the region.

Therefore, the product offered to the visitor shall consist of a number of products provided by various producers. Each of these producers should benefit from marketing. The public administration needs to be considered as well, for their goal (in fact a product sold to the citizens) is regional development, and this is almost always being pursued by various ways, including tourism. It is clear that effort of one hotel manager is not sufficient here; instead, co-ordination and joint action need to be employed. Therefore, a mutual organisation – e.g. a tourism association – is appropriate for marketing of a tourist product. Such an association or a similar agency can get involved in work that rarely gets started by a hotel or restaurant owner, or by a tourist guide: in marketing of the region or marketing of a tourist product in the region. This topic will receive more attention during the seminar: "Organisational structure of tourism in a region".

### Marketing Strategy

Similarly as for other activities, it is required that the goals that want to be achieved by marketing are defined. Also, the method that is to be used shall be stated and the entire activity explained through more detailed plans or programmes. This is the task of marketing strategy. In the strategy, the attractions and services at disposal (inventory) are described, and also who are the current visitors of the region, how many of them are there, what financial profit they offer, etc. Then, the target groups, i.e. market segments (including the description and analysis of their habits, possibilities, behaviours, etc.) are determined. Furthermore, the products that are to be offered to the target groups are described, while these products need to be compared with the competition. If the competition is too strong, a decision shall be made as to putting/not putting the product on the market. Then, a method of informing and convincing the potential clients should be selected. Also, it needs to be decided how should their satisfaction be measured in the case they bought the product. Marketing activities to be carried out after the client's return home shall be part of the strategy – how will he/she be made to remember the product, how should he/she be helped to promote the product at home, etc.

In the case of tourism, it is very important (similarly as with the tourism development strategy) that the marketing strategy is accepted by all tourism stakeholders. If this strategy is prepared by e.g. the town hall or regional tourism association without seeking the advice of service providers or the association's members, these can sooner or later impose doubts on the strategy. If this happens after the strategy starts to be implemented, it can imperil the image of the region and its products. In addition, some of the invested resources can be lost.

### Selected Problems of Marketing

When marketing tourism products and regions, same mistakes occur frequently. Some of them are as follows:

#### Region does not have a product

Both the service providers and public administration come to an agreement that they will co-operate in the marketing of the region and they do actual activities to promote it. However, they have no product for the customer to buy if he/she becomes interested in the offer. They only rely on the visitor coming to the re-

gion and choosing something. Though this may occasionally happen, systematic development of tourism cannot dwell on this approach. In addition, this type of marketing will sooner or later result in discontent of service providers.

#### Modern technologies are ignored

In many regions, the public institutions (mainly town halls) get intensively involved in the marketing of the region. These institutions are in their nature more conservative than businessmen; therefore, they depend on using old marketing methods. Trends in tourism, however, clearly incline to modern information and communication technologies. Some information sources even declare that 62% of marketing-related activities are carried out through Internet. In spite of that, there is a number of typical regional managers who view webpages just like a "board to tack information on" and they do not invest in their development and efficient use.

#### Marketing initiator and leader is missing

In spite of the fact that businessmen usually understand the need of good marketing and they even do it for their own facilities, they usually do not consider the joint regional marketing important enough to invest some of their own capacities and resources into it. In most of the cases, someone needs to take the initiative, do the first steps towards joint marketing and address the businessmen. Frequently, all the stakeholders subconsciously believe that it should be the task of local public administration but this often has neither the capacity nor experts for such work. As a result, no co-operative activities take place and everybody wait for the others to take action. The situation gets more complicated by the fact that competing parties need be involved in the joint regional marketing.

Therefore, it is necessary to find a leader who is prepared to take the first steps and has the support of stakeholders. The experience shows that if the first steps are successful (could be small), a number of stakeholders join in the project. In optimal case, the snowball effect can take place – successful marketing actions keep attracting more and more providers of tourism service in the region.

### Interactive part:

There are several possibilities (or work in groups):

- trying to complete a market segmentation;
- preparing a questionnaire for visitors' survey;
- proposing a slogan, etc.

### Notes:



## V. 9. Developing Tourist Products in the Region.

The goal of the seminar is to explain to the participants the principles of developing a tourism product (products) in the region.

### Recommended content of the topic:

For this seminar, it is necessary to prepare a great number of practical examples from the region where it takes place, if possible, or from a similar environment.

#### What is a tourist product?

Tourist product is a combination of services, commodities and other material and immaterial items that enable the clients to have a „complex experience“, which starts by leaving their home and ends by their return. A „complex experience“ is a wide spectrum of individual experiences, impressions and learnings that the client acquires at a destination.

When compared with others, a tourist product has a number of specific features:

- it cannot be produced on stock, it cannot be stored, and it is always prepared only for a certain customer and for a certain time;
- it is an original, i.e. no two same products can be „produced“;
- it also consists of items that the product's author has no power to influence, but he/she must consider them (e.g. weather, character of landscape, history, etc.)
- non-material items constitute the essence of a product (e.g. hospitality, customs and traditions, etc.)
- it is site-bound – it is not possible to transport the product somewhere else;
- the product user has an impact on its quality – the client can decide about the content and form of the product, even in the moment of its use.

#### What is the structure of a product?

The structure of a product is defined by the product chain that was described in the first lecture. It consists of a number of basic elements: preparation, travel to, stay, travel back and activities after returning home. The topic of this lecture deals mainly with one of these elements – stay in a region; therefore, the term *regional*

*product* will be used.

From a practical point of view, the product consists of four basic parts:

- programme;
- lodging;
- eating;
- additional services (e.g. travel, money exchange, purchase of maps and camera films, and the like).

These items are not products themselves but after combining them they can be part of a *regional product*.

#### Who should be producing a regional product?

In principle, three basic „producers“ can be identified:

1. **Businessmen**, providing the individual parts of a product, co-ordinate their offers and each of them tries to sell their own service, supplemented by the service of other partners. They generate profit mainly by selling the service that they provide primarily.
2. **Travel agency/tour-operator** – its product is put together from services of other providers, mainly providers and organisers of programmes, lodging and catering; then it sells this product under its own name (or in co-operation with vendors). The income of the travel agency/tour operator is generated from percentages received from providers of individual primary services or by increasing the total price of individual products, or (and the most often) by the combination of both methods.
3. **Management structure** of a destination (e.g. tourism association, information centre, department at the town hall), similarly as a tour operator, creates a product from services of other providers but it does not sell it; the product is provided to sellers. The profit is generated from percentages received from the seller (who generates his/her income based on percentages received from primary service providers) and/or from percentage gained from the income of primary service providers.

A regional product creation is often not clearly definable and the above introduced approaches are frequently combined in practice. The relations among



the primary service providers, product makers and its sellers are still unclear and complicated in most of the central Europe.

## Packages

Package is a form or even a synonym of tourist product, for package is what is sold to the client by the seller.

Producing a package includes a number of steps:

### 1. Offer inventory:

It is a detailed summary of everything that the region can offer to the client. It is important that existing things and realizable activities are included in the list, not the potential or wished ones. For example, included should not be: "folk customs" if there is nobody to present them to the client; "good traditional cuisine", if no restaurant offers local dishes; "gothical churches" if it is not possible to look around in them, and the like. For the purpose of a package, each of its elements shall be an independent service with a clear provider, price and conditions.

### 2. Combining offers for package and its organisation

When the list of existing offers of the region is completed, its individual elements need to be matched. It is required that a balanced composition is created, where the following features of the individual elements should match:

- *Focus* – the product should have a certain character, a unifying element (e.g. mining history of the region, active relaxation in nature, etc.). From this viewpoint, the product items should be combined so that they match – e.g. noisy discos should not be included in the relaxation programme for seniors, highly technical tours of architectural monuments should not be a part of the programme of active relaxation in nature, and the like.
- *Quality* – the individual items should be of similar quality. For example, we should not use an old and half-functioning bus for rich clients with high purchasing power who are accustomed to high standards or organise a seminar for them in a noisy restaurant, etc.
- *Length* – particular items of a package should have an appropriate and mutually balanced length. Therefore, it is required to make sure that the client is not put under time stress, that he/she is given enough time to get the "full flavour" of everything that is part of the product. A perfectly prepared programme is such that leaves a certain amount of time for the client to do activities on his/her own (e.g. going for walks, spending time in cafés, taking naps, etc.). It is important that the programme of activities is planned realistically so the clients do not need to be rushed or stressed, for this can impair their impression of the package they paid for.
- *Variability* – even if each package has its own focus, a certain level of variability needs to be assured, e.g. alternating of active and relaxation parts, indoor and outdoor activities, etc. Also, morning activities should be different than the afternoon programme, places to eat should vary and so should the character of activities.
- *Appropriateness of activities* – the client's wishes, habits and values need to be respected. A gourman should not be taken to a fast-food restaurant, nature conservationist should not be offered a colourful plastic aquapark, a mohamedan client should not receive beef for lunch, etc.

### 3. Marketing of the package

When the package is prepared, it is necessary to find the proper market for it. It is required that identified are e.g. the market segments, communication channels, sale methods, etc. More attention is given to this topic in the seminar focused on marketing.

The above described procedure is obviously a subject to change. The points 2 and 3 are often interchanged, i.e. the market segments that are to be attracted to the region are identified as first, and only then the available offer is used to make a package for this market segment. It is possible that some of the generally accepted principles are not adhered to; in such case it is recommended to inform the client in advance (e.g. if no other than half-functioning bus is available and it will need to be used, it is required that the client is informed before he/she decides to buy the package) so his later disappointment and bad impression are avoided.

## Frequent mistakes of product-making

- **services that cannot be guaranteed are included in the package** – a typical example is when churches are advertised as a great attraction of a region but entries into them are not possible to guarantee;
- **tight programme** – too many activities are planned for one day and this can result in late arrivals, nervousity and bad client's impression of the product. On the other hand, long and boring waiting for the next point of the programme, mainly organised waiting (e.g. waiting too long to enter a museum, and the like), needs to be avoided as well. Therefore, good knowledge of local services and ability to foresee and solve complications are required.
- **too much organisation** – effort is made to arrange the entire programme for the client and he/she does not get the chance to experience the magic of wandering in quiet historical streets, sitting in cafés, talking to local people, etc.
- **improperly set price** – tour-operator is afraid to include an appropriate price for their service (for making the product and organisation work) in the total price. As a result, they do not generate sufficient profit that would make their further work possible.
- **unequal offer** – in an effort to satisfy the customer as much as possible, things that were not part of the original package are offered to him/her as a surprise. Such additional and operative offer is all right if provided to each client. Problems may occur if this is not possible, for a client can find out about the new offer and, in the case he/she did not receive it and paid the same price as those who did, his/her satisfaction is at risk. Extra services need to be guaranteed for all clients, or each client has to pay for them additionally.

## Interactive part:

Practical exercise in developing a product for the given territory; discussion.

## Notes:





## V. 10. Tourism Certification.

The goal of the seminar is to explain the aims, principles and the use of certification.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### What is certification?

Certification means that a certificate or a logo is bestowed upon a facility, service or product (hereinafter facility) that has fulfilled certain requirements. A displayed logo then serves as a confirmation, directly visible by clients, that the facility meets the requirements and respects the goals of a given certification scheme.

#### Certification in tourism has two main purposes:

- **For the announcer of a certification scheme** (i.e. an entity that announces the scheme and ensures its implementation), it is a good tool to meet their goals. For example, if an association fights against smoking, it can start to certify non-smoking facilities.
- **For a facility**, certification is a good marketing tool, for it is very clearly focused on a specific target group. For a given target group, it is then easier to acquire information about the facility and the certificate increases the attractiveness of the facility for this group of people.

In addition, a certificate can show that the facility owner or operator respects the subject of certification regardless of the fact if the given certificate brings any marketing effect.

#### There are a few basic characteristics of certification schemes:

- They bestow a logo that differentiates the certificate holder from other competing facilities;
- Logo is bestowed only if certain criteria, which reflect the goals of a certification scheme, are met;
- The rules are clearly stated and they define the criteria, mode of application for certificate, way of evaluation of the facility and bestowal of certificate, way of monitoring and control, time and regional specifications, etc.
- Good marketing of certification is an inevitable prerequisite of a certification scheme to be successful. The certification itself, i.e. without good advertising

and true benefit for a facility, is meaningless, for nobody is informed about it (i.e. both the scheme announcer and the facility lose the advantages) and it will provide no marketing effect for a given facility.

#### Essentially, there are two main focuses of certification schemes:

##### Focus on process

These certification schemes bestow certificates upon facilities that show interest in meeting the defined goals, while not requesting meeting of certain criteria. In case of sustainable tourism, this way is used to certify facilities that put effort into minimising their impacts on the environment (both natural and cultural) while it is not important if a target state is achieved or not. This system is doubted mainly because practically any facility can acquire this type of a certificate. Unfortunately, this way the marketing effect of the certification scheme is lost.

##### Focus on fulfilment

These certification schemes bestow certificates upon facilities that meet the criteria, which ensure the fulfilment of the certification goal. If such certificate is to be bestowed in the area of sustainable tourism, it is not sufficient to only try to minimise the impacts on the environment but also meet the given criteria. Only then the facility can receive the certificate. This approach is more difficult but offers a stronger marketing effect, for only some of the facilities acquire the certificate. The ability of certified facilities to compete is then stronger (with regard to a given target group). On the other hand, this system is doubted because the difficulty to win the certificate (and thus the wished marketing effect) in fact hinders the promotion of sustainable methods in tourism and their advertising.

#### Certification in tourism

In tourism industry, it is possible to certify according to a number of criteria, e.g.:

- **Affiliation with a trading mark** (licensing) – the facility meets the criteria for receiving a mark with a goal to have benefit from a given affiliation (e.g. hotel chains: Holiday Inn, Four Seasons, etc. restaurants: MacDonald's, etc.);
- **Comfort for specific target groups** – the facility tries to meet the criteria that are important for a certain target group (e.g. non-smokers, bikers, people in wheelchairs, and the like)
- **Quality** – the facility makes an effort to meet the criteria of management in the



area of working with clients (selected ISO standards, and the like);

- **Sustainability** – the facility tries to minimise their impacts on the natural and cultural environment (e.g. ViaBono, Green Globe, etc.);
- **Regional identity** – the facility tries to meet the criteria that manifest its affiliation with a certain region (e.g. local gastronomy, typical appearance, etc.)

Many of the schemes can merge or overlap; e.g. the ViaBono certification is presented as a quality mark (it is attractive for a larger target group), even though it is focused on sustainability.

In certification schemes focused on sustainable tourism, the criteria to be met are divided into a number of basic groups, e.g.:

#### Natural aspects:

- Energy saving, use of renewable energy resources;
- Economic water consumption;
- Protection of nature and landscape influenced by a given facility or product;
- Prevention of air pollution;
- Prevention of noise;
- Minimising of impacts;
- Dealing with solid and liquid waste;
- Minimising the use of hazardous and harmful substances;

#### Social aspects:

- Protection of human rights;
- Prevention of labour force misuse;
- No discrimination of employees;
- No employment of children;
- No use of forced labour;
- Use of the approach of preliminary environmental cautiousness in management
- Educating and informing visitors;
- Involvement in local social development programmes.

#### Economic aspects:

- Fair-play business;
- Preferring local resources;
- Local ownership;
- Local profit investment;
- Involvement in local economic development programmes.

### Selected sustainability certification schemes:

#### Green Globe 21:

Worldwide certification scheme: <http://www.greenglobe21.com/>.

It is mainly focused on conservation of natural resources and biodiversity as well as on social impact of tourism.

#### Green Tourism Business:

Worldwide certification scheme: <http://www.green-business.co.uk/>

It is mainly focused on conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, while considering the impacts on the economy.

#### Swan Labels:

It is used in northern countries of Europe and its focus is wider than just tourism: <http://www.svanen.nu/Eng/default.asp>.

It is mainly focused on conservation of natural resources and biodiversity.

#### Certification for Sustainable Tourism:

<http://www.turismo-sostenible.co.cr/>

This scheme is focused on conservation of natural resources and biodiversity, and on social and economic impacts of tourism in Costa Rica.

#### ViaBono:

It is used in Germany, <http://www.viabono.de>

It is mainly focused on conservation of natural resources and biodiversity as well as on the social impacts of tourism.

### Interactive part:

1. Inventory of certification schemes for sustainable tourism in the country of seminar.
2. More detailed analysis of the ViaBono certification scheme ([www.viabono.de](http://www.viabono.de)).

### Notes:



## V.11. Tourism Associations.

The goal of the seminar is to show various forms of tourism organisation in the region, and explain the role and advantages of tourism associations or some similar organisations.

### Recommended content of the topic:

In countries where tourism service is highly developed, e.g. in Austria or Switzerland, tourism associations have been effectively functioning for more than 100 years. They have been established by local stakeholders and their goal is to develop tourism in the region. Frequently, the membership in these associations is obligatory for entities doing business in tourism (legal requirement – e.g. in Tirol).

### Goals and tasks of an association:

**1. Offer creation and co-ordination** – a complete offer of services that meet the required standards, quality and complexity level is prepared by an association. A complex tourist product in a region consists of a number of smaller services and activities that need to be co-ordinated. In principle, this is a task of a tour operator; however, if the association helps the businessmen with this work, they can then focus on other things (e.g. improving the quality of their service, extending their offer, marketing, etc.).

This is not a single activity of preparing a catalogue of services or a price list; it is a continual process that involves as many stakeholders as possible. As a result of this process, the services are continually being improved and extended, thus maintaining the ability of the region to compete with other tourist destinations.

Included among these activities should also be the work on organisation of events that are attractive for visitors, i.e. cultural, social or sport events, which are part of a tourist product in a region. They also have an important function in marketing (they contribute in the image of the region a great deal). In addition, activities that are focused on improving the offer and service provided, such as personnel training, are among the tasks of an association.

**2. Working on concepts and on the vision of regional development.** All stakeholders should get engaged in influencing or even creating tourism development policy (as well as regional development in general), for this is not an exclusive task of local governments or local state administration authorities.

Members of tourism associations should be actively involved in defining the development objectives of a town or region, while the association itself serves the purpose of a platform for communication. In addition, the association manages this communication, and takes part in preparation and implementation of some particular strategic steps of regional development – it links people and interests of tourism stakeholders. A well functioning and representative association has the power to influence the communication with the state administration authorities as well as with the local government; therefore, it is able to put forth its interests (e.g. adjusting the open-hours in museums or in the process of developing a zoning plan). The association puts effort in promoting tourism in the town/region and works toward helping the stakeholders to make their voice heard at decision-making levels.

**3. Acquiring public support** – for successful tourism development, it is critical that the local public has a positive attitude to tourists. Therefore, the association communicates its work, objectives and plans to the citizens (top-down). At the same time, it creates a platform for a bottom-up communication at regional or national levels where the interests of constituents are promoted.

Communication of the association with the citizens can be carried out in a number of forms; it can include e.g. media activities, various events, publications, training courses (study trips, seminars), round tables and discussion fora, exhibitions, etc.

**4. Operational function** – the association carries out practical activities that benefit a great variety of tourism stakeholders. These are often non-profit activities (e.g. running a tourist information office, marking and maintaining biking, hiking and cross-country skiing trails, preparing maps, and the like).

**5. Business advisory service** – provides or helps to find experts and consultants for various fields (e.g. advisory service for certification, use of EU funds, marketing, etc.).

**6. Marketing** – the association carries out surveys and analysis of visitors's satisfaction, produces and distributes promotion materials, prepares workshops and presentations for potential partners, invites journalists who can write about the given destination and its offer. Within the co-operation with local government and local state authorities, the association co-ordinates the "work share"; e.g. the public administration makes sure that the infrastructure for functioning and development of the region is sufficient, while the association is responsible for promoting the destination and its offer among the competing tourist sites.





7. The association can also serve the purpose of an independent institution and **deal with complaints or problems** of visitors, or handle conflicts between two stakeholders.

### Functioning of an association:

Essential features of an association should include:

- an open structure with a clear content and responsibilities;
- efficiency and expertise;
- acceptability by decision-making bodies and sufficient competence;
- sufficient personal, financial and methodical resources;
- management and co-ordination skills.

### Membership

The members include:

- **Businessmen** – active in tourism, but also those who are only partially involved in tourism business and provide only some part of their production to tourists (e.g. shops in the town centre, banks, etc.)
- **Town management** – its membership has a specific character, but it is very important for good functioning of an association because it improves the co-ordination of activities and contributes in building the image of the destination. Town halls often financially support the associations but their votes do not receive any preferences when adopting decisions.
- **Non-governmental organisations, citizens' initiatives** – local museums, galleries, civic associations and cultural institutions.

### Financing

- each member of the association pays a *membership fee* that is either a lump sum or it is calculated according to selected criteria (number of employees, share in turnover, etc.)
- *enrollment fees* - single payments paid at member's registration;
- *own income*, e.g. income from TIC (tourist information centre) operation, from providing information about lodging, selling souvenirs, organising events, etc.;
- *external sources* – visitors' taxes and fees are also a source of income for associations (typical examples where this type of income is used are Austria, Germany and Switzerland);
- *state and EU funds* – income from tax assignation provided to non-profit organisations, structural funds, etc.
- *gifts* – from large businesses and corporations, from dedicated individuals, etc.

### Internal structure

The associations usually differ legally; most of them are civic associations or associations of legal entities. Their structure is usually as follows:

- **General assembly of members** – elects members of the association's bodies, votes on principal decisions and plans;
- **Board of trustees** – it is in charge of supervision and control of the association's financial management;
- **Executive body** - it takes care of the association's every-day functioning and organises its programme;

- **Board of directors** – decides about and manages the work of the executive body.

The **preparation committee has a specific task** – it shall specify the picture of the association-to-be, prepare data and a proposal of initial documents and open a public discussion about the association, its functioning and goals. In addition, it shall define the tasks (problems that the association will focus on) in a real time frame and prepare the founding meeting of the association.

### Typical problems

There are not too many effectively functioning tourism associations in central and eastern Europe. The main reasons include:

- **psychological barrier** – the way of public life organisation in the past was enforced; therefore, people naturally distrust collective institutions;
- **lacking legislation** – missing are rules and regulations that would (a) guarantee resources of permanent financial income to associations and (b) assign them certain rights in tourism development in the region;
- **lack of money;**
- **absence of a clear and concrete programme** – regions have not prepared good plans of their regional development; these plans would then indicate the need of tourism development plans and „justify“ the foundation and existence of a tourism association;
- **missing executive bodies** – the activity of an association must be managed by an experienced professional; however, associations do not have the money to pay such professionals for their work;
- **unreasonable expectations** – inadequate expectations of association's functioning are induced and cultivated among its members, frequently as early as at the association's foundation;
- **lack of motivation** – businessmen have no motivation to become members of a tourism association, they are not able to see the potential of such an association.

### Interactive part:

- putting together a list of functions and the structure of the tourism association in the given region;

### Notes:



## V.12. Basics of Interpretation.

The goal of the seminar is to show what heritage interpretation is, what is its purpose, forms and results.

### Recommended content of the topic:

#### Introduction to interpretation

What is interpretation? It is a specific way of communication that is used in tourism and in protection of natural and cultural heritage. The goal of interpretation is not only to inform people about the value and the significance of the environment they are coming to (e.g. rare reservation or valuable historical monument) but also to convince them and change their behaviour. An exact definition of interpretation does not exist; however, in general it can be said that „interpretation helps people appreciate things that you believe they should“.

Interpretation as a specific form of communication has been developing since about the first half of the 20th century. This time, the American government wanted to convince their citizens to agree with the use of public resources for the protection of some of the national parks (despite the economic crisis). Therefore, the government started to promote new communication forms, other than simple informing.

Interpretation achieves its goals by respecting the 6 Tilden's principles:

- 1. Interpretation must be provocative** – i.e. it should not be only informing but also make the receiver interested, stimulate its curiosity, motivate him/her to act and form his/her own opinion;
- 2. Interpretation should be revealing** – i.e. the receiver should learn about new things, things that will truly capture his/her interest, or even surprise him/her;
- 3. Interpretation should deal with tangible things** – i.e. it must deal with something that is visible at the moment, or can be experienced by the receiver, or something that he/she knows from his/her previous experience;
- 4. Interpretation is a complex art, but can be learnt partially** – i.e. interpretation requires both multi-discipline approach and people with specific education and relevant inherent features;
- 5. Interpretation must reflect the whole** – i. e. the interpreted things need

to be understandably put into a wider context and the depth of knowledge should gradually grow;

- 6. Interpretation for children and adults are equal** – i.e. interpretation for children cannot be only some kind of a derivation of the interpretation for adults; quite opposite, it requires a completely specific approach, methods and activities.

#### How to interpret?

If something is to be interpreted, the following questions need to be answered:

- 1. Why do we want to interpret?** It would not be just enough to inform the visitor? For interpreting, it is inevitable to determine the goals that are to be achieved (they usually include: changing the visitor's thinking, initiating some action or activity, etc.). Interpretation is more difficult and more expensive than plain informing, thus it is required that it is well justified before its preparation gets started. This way exaggerated expectations and subsequent disappointments are avoided.
- 2. What do we want to interpret?** This question is important mainly when the aim of interpretation is to attract visitors to the region. It is quite possible that a number of things could be presented to them but only those should be selected that are of interest for them. Therefore, it is important to consult the theme of interpretation with a great number of people from various target groups. In the end, it is essential that the determined theme is adequately interesting for the given target group.
- 3. Who is our target group?** Each target group requires different forms of interpretation, or communication, different themes and depth of understanding. It is not effective to try to communicate with a too wide spectrum of receivers; it is beneficial to have only 1-2 main groups and 1-2 sub-groups. This shall help us to stay focused and select the right communication means.
- 4. Who is to be held accountable for the interpretation?** Interpretation is a challenging process that is permanent (not a single action). Therefore, it is useless to start it if there is a lack of capacity and resources.
- 5. How will we know if we achieved what we wanted to?** Interpretation requires feedback; it is an interactive process. It must be clear whether the planned things were achieved (see point 1. Why do we want to interpret?).



It is, therefore, important to take into account that after the interpretation is over (after the visitor is gone), various interaction forms shall take place. The purpose of this interaction is to find out about the outcomes of interpretation and about the changes it initiated. This point again emphasises the main difference between informing and interpreting: in contrast to plain informing, the purpose of interpretation is to change/improve things.

## Forms of interpretation

### Personal interpretation

– it is basically a guided tour.

A guide can accompany visitors during their walk along a marked trail, or he/she can have his/her own routes planned. Visitors can go with him/her e.g. to places where people work (workshop, sawmill, etc.); a guide can also present an activity to visitors, tell stories, visitors can participate in an activity with their guide (e.g. ornithological course), and so on.

#### Advantages of personal interpretation:

- personal approach – even complex things can be explained; flexibility – things can be easily adjusted according to the needs and requirements of visitors;
- visitors can get to places they would otherwise not have a chance to see;
- does not require big investments;
- financial profit and jobs can be generated.

#### Disadvantages:

- it often requires organisational work that is not directly related to interpretation (training, making reservations, etc.);
- people require support and care (social welfare, accounting, background, etc.);
- it is not delimited and clearly structured – new and new things can be added and that is not effective;
- it cannot serve a great number of customers;
- its quality is changeable.

### Publications

– leaflets, brochures, circulars...

#### It can serve a number of purposes, e.g.:

- to promote the locality;
- to explain clearly what is offered, where to go and how to get the most out of the visit;
- to provide basic information;
- to guide the visitors along the trail and give them more tailor-made information than they can find on panels;
- a publication can turn into a souvenir to remember the visit.

#### Advantages:

- it can provide a great number of information and, if appropriately designed, the visitors do not have to read them all, only to find the right piece in the right time (when arriving at the right place);
- interpretation is possible even after the trip is over;
- large territories can be interpreted while focus on details can remain;
- it can show the appearance of the given locality in various seasons of the year;
- it can promote the planned or regular events, thus motivate the visitors to return;
- it can generate income;

- it can be taken home as a souvenir that can motivate other people to come;
- it can be prepared in more than one languages;

#### Disadvantages:

- it requires reading, which many people are not fond of;
- there could be a problem to acquire the printed material, especially if no possibility to take/buy it exists in the locality.

Even the best printed material in the world is completely useless, if it is not at disposal for the addressee when he/she needs it. A number of questions arise in this context: How shall it be distributed? Is it necessary to hire someone to do this work? Is profit required in order to pay for the distribution?

### Multi-media

– audio-visual programmes, sound and light shows, videocassettes, CDs and DVDs, computer programmes and public hardware.

#### Advantages:

- a great amount of information can be provided;
- stories can be dramatically and sensitively narrated, shown, etc.
- a great effect can be induced and calculated in advance;
- phenomena and events can be speeded up (e.g. 200 years of a village's future development) or slowed down (e.g. insects flying), thus giving a chance to the visitor to understand these things better;
- performance can maintain its high quality for a long time;
- multi-lingual versions are possible;

#### Disadvantages:

- though effective they can require high investments;
- interpretation of a locality can be more impressive than the locality itself;
- can be disturbing;
- require professional material of high quality – unclear pictures or low quality sounds are not acceptable;
- depend on latest trends – what seems to be „in“ today, tomorrow may look silly;
- can cause disappointment if they break down.

### Visitor's centres

– rooms where an overview of things interpreted is provided. Summarised are also the reasons for interpretation and the value of interpreted things.

#### Advantages:

- a very good overview of the subject of interpretation can be provided, its values emphasised and basic information demonstrated;
- three-dimensional items can be exhibited;
- a background for an educational trail or other form of interpretation can be provided here (at the same time, it can be a museum, centre of amusement, rest area with bathrooms, and a place to get a cup of tea);
- visitors of the trail can be monitored and regulated;
- income and jobs can be generated;
- they could involve local people in tourism activities.

#### Disadvantages:

- they require big investments and extensive planning;
- they require personnel, opening and closing the facility, etc.;
- they are not accessible outside of open hours;
- they require permanent activity (marketing, improvement, etc.) and maintenance, i.e. money needs to be continually invested; once it is started, it is a responsibility and it cannot be easily terminated or changed;

### Education trails and information points

#### Advantages:

- they are here every day for 24 hours;
- if well designed, they can attract attention and efficiently explain things, mainly because:
  - they are located at suitable sites and appropriately oriented;
  - texts and pictures are combined;
- they make it possible to structure the theme clearly and organise it along the trail or route;
- they are impersonal – it can sound as a disadvantage but many visitors like it (e.g. if they are shy);



- they can present historical or other non-existing sceneries, show the given landscape in various times or seasons of the year;
- they do not cause disturbing effects in nature (no noise, no other threats to animals, etc.);
- considering the number of visitors that take advantage of them, their price is very low.

**Disadvantages:**

- they depend on the visitors' attention – they may be left unnoticed;
- they are not suited to be placed anywhere, for they can disturb the scenery, views, atmosphere (mainly if improperly designed);
- their multi-lingual character is always a compromise (the text in another language takes up space on the panel);
- only a few people can be served at a time – if the panel is viewed by 4-5 people, the others must wait or simply move on without reading it;
- they are not suitable for interpretation/guiding in large territories where they are too isolated and cannot be relevantly inter-connected;
- texts and maps on panles have only a limited use – they cannot be taken along;
- they cannot be regularly updated – they stay the same throughout years (this can discourage the more frequently coming visitors);
- they are easy to damage by vandals, then requiring investments again.

**Communication principles of interpretation:**

Four basic principles:

1. capture attention;
2. entertain;
3. accomodate the communication to the target group;
4. give a structure to communication.

**Interactive part:**

- each participant can choose a topic in the course of a group exercise;
- discussion analysis of selected examples (for example information desks, publications, etc.)

**Notes:**