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APPLICATION OF EU COMPARATIVE TOURISM SUSTAINABILITY INDICATORS — THE CITY OF UŽICE CASE STUDY (SERBIA)

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Abstract: Continuous and mass tourism development resulted in the need of putting this activity under sustainable development, in order to provide adequate usage of tourist potentials for meeting the current and future travel needs. Sustainable tourism is a form of tourism that contributes economic development of local communities with taking care of permanent environment protection. The subject of this research is tourism on the territory of the City of Užice, analyzed through the application of EU five group comparative indicators, in order to determine the current position of sustainability. The research also covered the following tourist places: Mokra Gora and Užice in Southwestern Serbia. Method of analysis and synthesis, mathematical-statistical method and comparative method were used. The collected data were analyzed by using the method of descriptive statistics. The research results show unequal tourism development in the City of Užice, precisely to the fact that tourism sustainability in tourist places (Mokra Gora and Užice) is different compared to the destination itself. Beside the contribution to the theory of sustainable tourism development, the results can also have a practical application within Užice tourist organizations, which may have a significant impact on destination sustainability in the future.

Key words: sustainable development, tourism, indicators, the City of Užice

Introduction

Adventure spirit of "urban" tourist is addressed to destinations with preserved environment. Protected natural and anthropogenic motives are considered as initiators of tourist trends. Availability of attractive destinations influenced the massiveness of tourism trends, which led to putting this sector under the concept of sustainable development, based on three main principles. The first one is the *principle of environmental sustainability*, which enables the development to be in line with ecological processes and biological diversity. This principle is followed by the *principle of social and cultural sustainability,* complying the development of tourism with the traditional values of local communities. The third one is the *principle of economic sustainability*, which provides the

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economic efficiency. All three principles of sustainable development insist on the preservation of resources, in order to provide the opportunity for their usage by the future generations, to the same or the similar extent (Jovičić, 1998; Maksin, Pucar, Milijić & Korać, 2011; Nađ, 2008; Stojanović, 2005; 2006).

Tourism, as a global socio-economic phenomenon, is constantly exposed to changes that could be turbulent. These changes caused the increased level of attention devoted to the environmental protection, which is corroborated by the growing desire of tourists for staying in preserved and pleasant environment (Porritt, 2003; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). Therefore, the main goal of this paper is to analyze and evaluate tourism sustainability on the territory of the City of Užice[2] by using the European Union's comparative indicators of sustainable tourism.

Field of Study

The territory of the City of Užice is situated in Southwestern Serbia. Located in the central part of Zlatibor County between 43° 42' and 43° 59' north latitude and between 19° 24' and 19° 59' eastern longitudes, the territory covers the area of 666.15 km^2. Bajina Bašta and Kosjerić are northern bordering municipalities, and Čajetina and Arilje are southern ones. Western border is the Republic of Srpska (BIH), while Municipality of Požega is in the east. The City territory includes two urban settlements (Užice and Sevojno) and 39 rural settlements (Tošić, 2002). Užice-settlement (411 m above the sea level) is situated in mountain valley in the middle part of composite valley of the River Đetinja. Užice has a dominant transit position because it is a crossroad that connects the Pannonian Plain and Central Serbia with the Adriatic coast and Bosnia and Herzegovina (the Republic of Srpska). This means that the most tourists come from Belgrade (198 km away from Užice) and from Vojvodina (Province in Northern Serbia), while, in recent years, tourists from the Republic of Srpska come more often (Romelić, 2008).

Methodology

The paper analyzes five groups of sustainable tourism comparative indicators (economic, tourist satisfaction, cultural, social and environment state indicators). These indicators demonstrate the actual situation and the potential tourism development of a certain area in accordance to three main principles of

[2] According to the Law on the Territorial Organization of the Republic of Serbia (Official Gazette of the Republic of Serbia, 2007), Užice Municipality received City status.

sustainable development: ecological, socio-cultural and economic. Marginal values are defined for each indicator and the tourism situation is assessed as critical, containable and sustainable. For each indicator three zones are defined: red zone (critical situation with the necessity of taking the certain measures), yellow zone (tolerable situation with taking the preventive measures) and green zone (sustainable development of tourist destination).

Table 1. Comparative indicators of sustainable tourism

Type of indicator	Indicator	Interpretation
	Seasonal overcome character: % of visits in full season (three months)	< 40% green zone 40-50 % yellow zone > 50% red zone
Economic	The ratio of overnight stays and accommodation capacities	> 150 green zone 120-150 yellow zone < 120 red zone
	The coefficient of multiplication	Not defined yet
Tourist satisfaction	Repeated visits: % of repeated visits for five years' period	> 50% green zone 30-50 % yellow zone < 30% red zone
Cultural	The ratio of accommodation capacities and the number of local population	< 1.1:1 green zone 1.1-1.5:1 yellow zone > 1.6:1 red zone
	Tourism intensity: the ratio between the number of overnight stays (000) and local population (00)	< 1.1:1 green zone 1.1-1.5:1 yellow zone > 1.6:1 red zone
Social	The share of tourism in local net national product	Compare with the share of tourism in local employment
	% of tourists that are not coming in organization of travel agencies	> 70% green zone 50-70% yellow zone < 50% red zone
Indicators of the environment state	Land: % of land with allowed but still not realized building	< 10% green zone 10-20% yellow zone > 20% red zone
	Land use and occupation: % of destination building changes throughout the five years' period	Not defined yet
	Traffic: % of tourists who do not travel by their own car	> 20% green zone 10- 20% yellow zone <10% red zone

Source of data: Jovičić (2002)

Analysis of five groups of comparative indicators (Table 1) was applied on the territory of the City of Užice, as a part of OI 176020 project. Depending on available data, the analysis included two most important tourist centers: Mokra Gora and Užice. During the process of collecting data, the secondary source was used (data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia and the Tourist Organization of Užice). The data were analyzed by using the method of descriptive statistics. Results are represented in tables and figures. According to data character, research conducted for the purpose of this paper is qualitative and quantitative. Variables were measured by applying statistical and mathematical methods, precisely by using the simple mathematical equations. The group of dependent variables consists of the capacity utilization and intensity of tourism, while independent variables are number of tourist overnights, number of beds and number of local population. Comparative method was used for identifying the similarities and differences between sustainable tourism development of a destination and its tourist centers. The availability of data enabled the comparison of the three groups of indicators (economic, cultural and tourist satisfaction).

Results and Discussion

Indicators are variables that could provide monitoring and measuring the certain conditions of a specific phenomenon. Selection, measurement, monitoring and evaluation of sustainable tourism development indicators are complex and demanding processes.

Economic indicators show the economic effects of tourism development within the specific region and they include *seasonal character of tourism industry,* then *the number of tourist overnights and accommodation capacity ratio* and *the coefficient of the local tourism increase (multiplication). Seasonal character of tourism industry* occurs as a consequence of the large tourist concentration during the summer and winter seasons. Because of that, many destinations are faced with the problem of occupancy in accommodation facilities (Sutcliffe & Sinclair, 1980), and infrastructure capacities utilization (Hinch & Jackson, 2000; Murphy, 1985) throughout the off-season. Sustainability of tourism destination development is considered as ideal when 30% of the total annual tourist arrivals are achieved during the full season. However, according to the terrain situation, the EU experts point out that seasonal concentration of tourist arrivals up to 40% during the three most intense months could permit sustainable development of destination. Tourist arrivals in the City of Užice are the most intensive during the three summer months (July, August and September). This is the result of

extended weekends and taking summer vacations during the cultural and sports events.

Table 2. Number of overnights per months in 2014

Months	Tourist place Užice	Tourist place Mokra Gora	The City of Užice (Municipality)
January	348	3,899	12,334
February	289	1,777	6,990
March	264	982	5,372
April	509	1,513	9,399
May	644	2,186	9,082
Jun	726	2,101	10,851
July	795	13,688	24,161
August	1,022	4,134	16,853
September	844	2,959	11,527
October	594	1,716	8,513
November	459	1,180	7,717
December	382	823	6,598
Total:	6,876	36,958	129,343

Source of data: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2014a

Data for 2014 indicate that during three summer months the territory of the City of Užice has achieved 40.6% of its total annual number of tourist overnight stays, in Mokra Gora 56.2% and in Užice 38.7%. According to EU standards this indicator is in the green zone of sustainability for the tourist place Užice, and for the territory of the City of Užice it is in the yellow zone of sustainability and for the tourist place of Mokra Gora in the red zone of sustainability.

According to authors Bar-On (1975) and Butler (1994), the rapid increase of tourist arrivals in many destinations is a consequence of its rapid development. Since 2004, the number of tourist arrivals in the City of Užice has recorded intensive growth and is closely linked with the development of Mokra Gora as a new tourist destination site. Tourist arrivals at destination is uneven and reaches its maximum in July (for Mokra Gora and the City of Užice) and in August (for Užice). The maximum of tourist arrivals is the result of organizing cultural and sports events in the vicinity of Užice, but also the consequence of seasonal operation of narrow gauge railway in Mokra Gora.

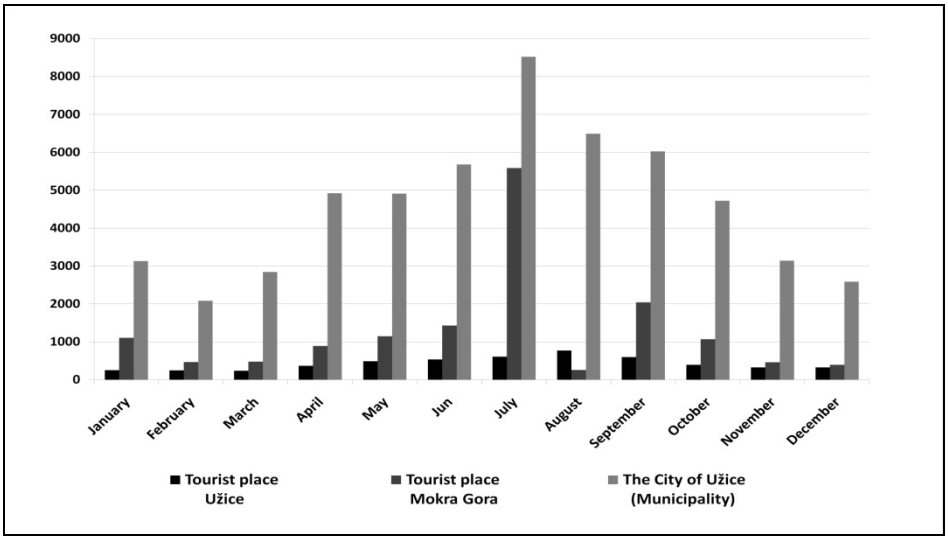

Figure 1. Tourist arrivals by months in 2014

Source: Made by authors on the basis of research results, 2015

Based on research results (Figure 1), we can conclude that the biggest arrival of tourists to all three tourist destinations was recorded during the summer months (July, August and September). The lowest arrival of tourist was registered in the winter months. The smallest number of tourist visits to Užice was recorded in January, February and March; to Mokra Gora in November, December and February and to the City of Užice in December, February and March. In order to achieve a more balanced distribution of the annual tourist arrivals, it is necessary to intensify the promotion of tourism in winter and especially in autumn months. Organization of events could affect the growth of tourist arrivals in off-season (Baum & Hagen, 1999; Lee & Arcodia, 2011). Price adjustments to certain market segments (e.g. retired people, business people, lovers of weekend tourism etc.) might affect the accommodation occupancy in off-season, which would lead to a higher inflow of money and improvement of service quality.

The number of tourist overnight stays and accommodation capacities ratio points to the level of utilization of destination accommodation. If the ratio between these items is below 120 overnights per bed, accommodation usage is not sustainable; between 120 and 150 is acceptable and over the 150 overnights per bed is sustainable.

Table 3. Utilization of accommodation capacities from 1981 to 2014

Years	Tourist place Užice			Tourist place Mokra Gora			The City of Užice (Municipality)		
OO	Overnights	Beds	Indicator	Overnights	Beds	Indicator	Overnights	Beds	Indicator
1981	56,390	310	181.9	/	/	/	193,100	800	241.4
1991	33,021	369	89.5	/	/	/	133,300	953	139.9
2002	23,907	364	65.7	/	/	/	101,505	877	115.7
2011	7,893	613	12.9	22,159	178	124.5	129,950	1,326	98.0
2012	7,136	613	11.6	26,338	178	147.9	122,892	1,332	92.3
2013	7,006	613	11.4	28,412	219	129.7	125,065	1,406	88.9
2014	6,876	405	16.9	36,958	219	168.7	129,343	1,170	110.5

Source of data: Made by the authors on the basis of research results, 2015

Research results indicate negative trend of accommodation capacities utilization in Užice. In the observed period, capacity utilization was at a sustainable level in 1981 (green zone: > 150 overnights per bed), after which there was a constant trend of unsustainable capacity utilization (red zone: < 120 overnights per bed). Capacity utilization in Mokra Gora was changed in accordance with destination development, from acceptable level (yellow zone: 120–150 overnights per bed) to sustainable level (green zone: > 150 overnights per bed). Utilization of accommodation facilities on the territory of the City of Užice from 1981 to 1991 was at a sustainable level (green zone: > 150 overnights per bed), after which the negative trend of capacity utilization was presented. A small increase in the degree of capacity utilization was recorded in 2014, however it is still at unsustainable level (red zone: < 120 overnights per bed). In order to increase the accommodation capacities utilization in Užice, it is necessary to solve the contentious privatizations and to invest certain funds in their reconstruction.

The coefficient of the local tourism increase (multiplication) connects direct and indirect tourism influences on economy and society of certain destination (Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Incera & Fernandez, 2015). This coefficient shows the rate of local products and services involvement into tourism sector (Jovičić & Ilić, 2010). The coefficient of multiplication was observed and analyzed from the aspect of tourism influence on other business sectors (traffic and agriculture). The favorable traffic position and the presence of adequate transport infrastructure, primarily of the road traffic, the tourist destination sites are connected with close and distant surroundings by internal and external communications. Agriculture as a complementary sector represents particular potential for the development and renewal of rural regions (Jaafar, Rasoolimanesh & Lonik, 2015). In the City of Užice the number of registered agricultural economies is constantly rising. Production of traditional agricultural

food is one of the competitive factors in the region. The development of service sector through self-employment system could be the motive for young people to stay in villages, which might increase the share of tourism in the local net national product (2.9% in 2002, 2.3% in 2005) (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2000–2005).

Indicator of tourist satisfaction shows the level of satisfaction with the quality of provided services among tourists and it emphasizes their opinion and attitudes regarding the attractions of tourist destination. According to some authors (Alegre & Garau, 2010; Benur & Bramwell, 2015; Chi & Qu, 2008; del Bosque & San Martin, 2008; Hui, Wan, & Ho, 2007) tourist satisfaction affects the revisiting of certain destinations. If the percentage of repeated tourist visits is between 30 and 50% then the observed destination is deemed attractive and it satisfies tourists' needs. This might enable carriers of tourism policy to take certain steps in further promotion of a resort (Jarvis, Stoeckl, & Liu, 2016).

Results of the survey conducted by the Tourist Organization of Užice in 2011 on the International Tourism Fair in Belgrade show that the City of Užice with its good position was recognized as a tourist destination. From 50 respondents 42 of them had already visited Užice and their main associations to this destination are potentials of nature and gastronomy. The major percentage of respondents said that the most attractive components of destination are kindnesses of people, gastronomy and tourist tours, while about 66% of respondents would like to try the traditional dishes (Data gained from the employees in the Tourist Organization of Užice, 2015). The survey results show that 84% of the respondents have already visited Užice. According to the EU criteria, indicator of tourist satisfaction is in the green zone and the current state of tourism development is sustainable.

Cultural indicators show the level of local community cultural identity preservation, regarding the influence of tourists who come from places with different cultural characteristics (Jovičić & Ilić, 2010). The most important ones among them are the following indicators.

The ratio between accommodation capacities and the number of local population indicates the measurement of potential tourism impact on sustainability of cultural identity of a destination. For local community the best ratio between accommodation capacities and the number of local population is 1.5:1, when the influence of intensive tourism is minimal. However, if the number of beds is over 1.6 times higher than the number of local community

population, then the pressure of intensive tourism development on the local environment is bigger (Pavlović & Belij, 2012).

Table 4. The ratio between accommodation and the number of local population

Years	Tourist place Užice			Tourist place Mokra Gora			City of Užice (Municipality)		
	Beds	Population	Indicator	Beds	Population	Indicator	Beds	Population	Indicator
1981	310	47,046	0.007:1	/	870	/	800	77,049	0.01:1
1991	369	53,864	0.007:1	/	816	/	953	82,723	0.01:1
2002	364	55,083	0.007:1	/	605	/	877	83,022	0.01:1
2011	613	52,646	0.01:1	178	549	0.32:1	1,326	78,040	0.01:1

Source of data: Made by the authors on the basis of research results, 2015

The research results indicate that this indicator is sustainable for the observed cities and tourist destination (green zone). In the analyzed census years, the growth in number of beds is evident. However, statistics for 2014 indicate that after 2011 there was a decrease in the number of beds in Užice (from 613 to 405), but also on the territory of the City of Užice (from 1,326 to 1,170). The reduced number of beds is a result of ownership transformation and privatization of tourist and catering facilities. In Mokra Gora, from 2011 to 2014 there was the increase in number of beds (from 178 to 219) (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2014b), and it is a direct result of the construction of accommodation facilities. However, regardless of space management and the construction of tourist infrastructure and supra-structure in Mokra Gora, this indicator is according to EU standards defined as containable, because it is in the green zone.

Tourism intensity represents the ratio between the annual number of tourist overnights (expressed in thousands) and the number of local inhabitants (expressed in hundreds). It is the indicator of tourist saturation. Pavlović and Belij (2012) pointed out that prominent tourism intensity negatively affects local environment, and that the most frequent problem is the boundary establishment between tourist and general organization for the needs of local residents.

Table 5. Tourism intensity

Place	1981	1991	2002	2011
Užice	0.12:1	0.06:1	0.43:1	0.01:1
	green zone	green zone	green zone	green zone
Mokra Gora	/	/	/	4.0:1
				red zone
The City of Užice	0.3:1	0.2:1	0.1:1	0.2:1
(Municipality)	green zone	green zone	green zone	green zone

Source: Made by the authors on the basis of research results, 2015

The intensity of tourism in the case of the City of Užice and tourist sites (Užice and Mokra Gora) varies. The most unfavorable situation is in Mokra Gora, because for the last Census year the results are in the red zone. With the restoration of narrow gauge railway, the development of Mokra Gora as a tourist destination was started. Peak development was reached after 2004. In the period between the last two Censuses (2002–2011), the population of Mokra Gora decreased, but the number of overnights rapidly increased reaching the maximum in summer. Bar-On (1975) and Butler (1994) found that the speed of destination development might influence the intensity of tourist arrivals, and therefore we conclude that the high intensity of tourism in Mokra Gora is a result of its rapid development as a tourist destination. It is a very attractive tourist place where facilities and accommodation capacities do not contribute to damaging of the space, because they are adapted to the traditional architecture.

Social indicators show social integrity of local community and they are considered through *the share of tourism in local net national product* and through *the percentage of tourists who are not travelling in the organization of travel agencies.* They contain precise parameters on the basis of whose marginal values the sustainability of tourism development can be determined.

The share of tourism in local net national product shows the contribution of tourism in realizing the national income (Incera & Fernandez, 2015; McLennan, Ruhanen, Ritchie & Pham, 2012) and local economy employment (Franzoni, 2015). The share of tourism in local net national product in the City of Užice in the year 2000 was 2.2% and in the year 2005 was 2.3% (Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, 2000–2005). Besides the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the Tourist Organization of Užice and the Regional Chamber of Commerce of South-western Serbia-Užice were also contacted. In these Institutions, there are no required statistics after the 2005, which is the reason for missing the recent data related to the indicator regarding the share of tourism in

local net national product. The authors assume that in the next few years the share of tourism in local economy development will be the same or similar.

Tourism is not a dominant economy sector of the City of Užice, although it takes the second place, according to the demand of the local work force. Misbalance between the business need and available workforce represents major barrier in the process of hiring people. Undertaking a certain measure (such as synchronization between economy and education), in order to increase the number of employees in providing the tourist services will reflect on the economic growth and on participation of tourism in the local economy.

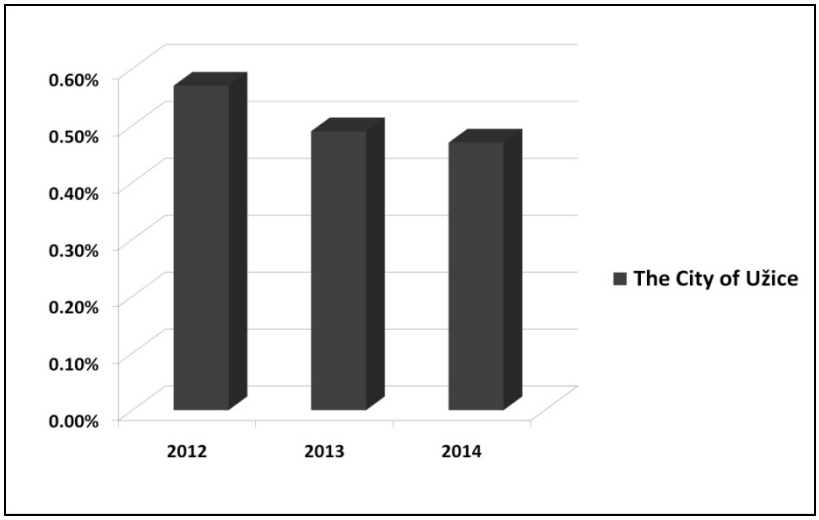

Figure 2. Comparative overview of tourism participation in the local employment

Source of data: Made by the authors on the basis of research results, 2015

The participation of tourism in the local employment is a supplement to this indicator. Research results indicate a slight decrease in the number of employees in the tourism sector for the referent period (Figure 2). Compared to the year 2012, when employees in the tourism industry represented 0.57% of the total employment in the City of Užice, in 2014 the percentage of people working in tourism decreased to 0.47%. Staff reduction is result of the bankruptcy and closing of tourist and hospitality objects. In rural areas, the percentage of full-time employees in the tourism industry is very low because for most of rural households, providing the services to tourists mainly represents the supplemental activity. No renewal of object categorization in the period from 2010 to 2015 resulted in decreased number of registered rural households, from 80 to 43. So,

we can conclude that a small percentage of the rural population is actively involved in the tourism industry.

The percentage of tourists who are not travelling in the organization of travel agencies represents the indicator of usefulness of tourism for local community. Tourists who come to the City of Užice mainly do not travel in the organization of travel agencies, unless if it is about transit, excursion or weekend tourism. The majority of tourists come making their own arrangements.

The indicators of the environment state points to the degree of local environment modification caused by the influence of tourism development (Buckley, 2012; Hughes, 2002). The level of a destination tourism development depends on the investment in building the infrastructure and supporting facilities, which results in the change of the existing purpose of land during the period of 5 years.

The percentage of land on which building is allowed but not realized represents an indicator of possible (but not necessary) accelerated and uncontrolled development, which requires the need of ascertaining the density of the constructed objects, by comparing spatial and urban plans (Jovičić, 2002). The Spatial Plan for the City of Užice anticipated the increase in the number of accommodation facilities by 2025. The planned changes are 10 times higher than the today's number of capacities, and the planned accommodation is based on pension and private accommodation. In rural areas, the reconstruction of existing accommodation capacities has been planned. The plan does not specify percentage of land intended for tourism development. The authors believe that the planned accommodation capacity increase will lead to extensive constructions in the future. According to international standards, unrealized tourist building constructions exceeding 20% can have a negative impact on the environment.

The utilization and occupying of land is the second indicator of environment state. The planned changes in the balance of the land usage until the 2025 will be mostly reflected on the forest land in private property which will have an increase for about 92% and it will take the surface of 466.31 km^2 or 70% of the City territory. Other land includes the building land and unproductive land. Building land will increase for 1.13%, where 0.12% is intended for building the tourist route. Increase of 3% is planned for building the narrow gauge railway Šargan–Vitasi–Branešci.

Table 6. Balance of the state related to the purpose of land use (in ha and %)

Basic Purpose of Space	State in year 2010.		Changes in Basic use of Space by 2025	
	(ha)	(%)	(ha)	(%)
Agricultural land	36,572	54.9	13,712.65	20.58
Forest land	24,289	36.5	46,630.50	70.00
Water land	642.4	0.96	1,137.20	1.72
Other land	5,111.60	7.64	5,134.65	7.72
City territory	66,615	100	66,615	100

Source of data: Directorate for Construction, the City of Užice, 2010

The transformation of agricultural land for different purposes in a percentage over 2% is disturbing and the trends like these should be reduced by taking certain measures. In the next period, agricultural land will be reduced (for 37.5%) in favor of the increase of forest land, but also for building the water facilities and roads. Until 2025, the total surface of this land will amount to 20.58% of the City territory. Based on the previous criteria this marked reduction is considered to be very critical.

The percentage of tourists who do not arrive by their private cars is an important indicator for identifying potential traffic congestion, parking problems, noise and air quality in the area (Jovičić & Ilić, 2010). Many authors (Dickinson & Robbins, 2008; Holding, 2011; McGuire, Uysal & McDonald, 1988; Romsa & Blenman, 1989; Taplin & McGinley, 2000) indicate that the percentage of tourists who use their private car exceeds 50%. For the purposes of determining the value of this indicator Tourist Organization of Užice and private carriers from Užice (Zlatan Raisen and Gaga tours) were consulted. However, in the above institution and companies the requested information is not recorded. Tourist sites (e.g. The Village of Zlakusa and Potpećka Cave) can be reached only by car. On the other hand, long-term absence of regular local public transportation from Užice to Mokra Gora also affects the transportation choice. The authors have noted that a small percentage of the tourists who come to Užice do not use their own transport.

Conclusion

The City of Užice is well positioned and recognized as a tourist destination. Visitors' satisfaction, together with achieved number of tourist overnights, resulted in summer season (July, August and September), which is an indicator of positive effects of economy development and sustainability of tourism destination, in a combination with higher tourist concentration. Unbalanced intensity of tourism development in the City of Užice contributed to the appearance of cultural saturation. The intensity of tourism is most evident during

the summer in Mokra Gora, when it is possible to notice the cultural difference between visitors from urban and rural areas. In order to keep the local environment identity, it is necessary to take a certain measure for controlling the tourism development, so that undertaken measures must be in accordance with the valid measures of Park of Nature "Šargan-Mokra Gora" and "Tara" National Park.

A low share of tourism in local net national product, together with the low level of employment, show that local community does not achieve sufficient benefits from tourism industry. Regarding to this fact, it is necessary to include a larger number of professionals in order to educate and include the local inhabitants in the sector of tourism.

The current state of tourism in the City of Užice is containable. The most critical situation within the City of Užice is with the environmental state, so this indicator is classified into the red zone. Changes regarding the purpose of the land usage might cause big problems for tourism development sustainability, so this problem must be seriously considered in the future. The situation is slightly better with the economic and social indicators of sustainability that could be classified into the yellow zone of sustainability related to tourism development. On the other hand, indicators related to tourist satisfaction and cultural aspects of sustainability are labelled as sustainable, classified into the green zone. However, for sustainable tourism development on the territory of the City of Užice it is necessary to achieve the balance between economy and ecology development goals but also the integrated approach in its planning and management.

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