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EVALUATION OF DESTINATION MANAGEMENT ORGANIZATIONS FINANCING IN BANSKÁ BYSTRICA REGION

Hodnotenie financovania organizácií cestovného ruchu v Banskobystrickom kraji

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Annotation

Currently, there is one regional and seven local destination management organizations in the Banská Bystrica Region. The aim of the paper is to explore and evaluate the financing of destination management organizations operating in the Banská Bystrica region. We have obtained the materials from individual organizations as well as from various institutions' websites. We have focused on exploring the sources of organizations funding in the years 2016 and 2017. The financing of tourism organizations is secured from public and private sources, while the funding sources of the organization according the Law Act No. 91/2010 about the tourism support as amended may include membership fees, grants from the state budget, voluntary contributions of municipalities, natural and legal persons, income from activities, sales of products and services, rewards for mediation, income from the activities of tourist information centers, income from the sale of advertising space, non-repayable financial contributions from domestic and foreign sources and other sources of income. We have found out that destination management organizations operating in the Banská Bystrica Region received in 2017 total grants of € 299,685, which represents only a 6.9% share of state grants paid to local destination management organizations in Slovakia (€ 264,655 in 2016, which means 7% share). Organizations are mostly funded by state grants and membership fees. Own income forms only a small part of their financial resources.

Key words

Banská Bystrica region, destination management organization, financing

Anotácia

V súčasnosti v Banskobystrickom kraji pôsobí jedna krajská a sedem oblastných organizácií cestovného ruchu. Cieľom príspevku je preskúmať a zhodnotiť financovanie organizácií cestovného ruchu pôsobiacich v Banskobystrickom kraji. Materiály sme získali od jednotlivých organizácií ako aj z webových stránok rôznych inštitúcií. Zamerali sme sa na preskúmanie zdrojov financovania organizácií v rokoch 2016 a 2017. Financovanie organizácií cestovného ruchu sa realizuje z verejných a súkromných zdrojov, pričom zdrojmi financovania organizácií podľa zákona č. 91/2010 Z.z. o podpore cestovného ruchu v znení neskorších predpisov môžu byť členské príspevky, dotácie zo štátneho rozpočtu, dobrovoľné príspevky samosprávy, fyzických a právnických osôb, príjmy z činnosti, z predaja produktov a služieb, odmeny za sprostredkovanie, výnosy z činnosti turisticko-informačných kancelárií, príjmy z predaja reklamnej plochy, nenávratné finančné príspevky z domácich a zahraničných zdrojov a ostatné príjmy. Zistili sme, že oblastné organizácie pôsobiace na území Banskobystrického kraja získali v roku 2017 dotácie vo výške 299 685 €, čo predstavuje iba 6,9 %-ný podiel štátnych dotácií vyplatených oblastným organizáciám cestovného ruchu na Slovensku (v roku 2016 to bolo 264 655 €, t.j. 7 %-ný

podiel). Organizácie sú pritom do veľkej miery financované práve z dotácií a členských príspevkov. Vlastné príjmy tvoria iba malú časť ich finančných zdrojov.

Kľúčové slová

Banskobystrický kraj, financovanie, organizácia cestovného ruchu

JEL classification: Z32, L32

1. Introduction

The success of the destination is influenced by a number of factors from the current state of the world economy, through globalization, current trends to individual requirements of visitors. The presence of a primary and secondary offer at the destination does not represent an exclusive advantage compare to other destinations. Strategic planning, quality of product, targeted marketing and cooperation of private and public sector subjects in the destination are even more important. The public-private partnership is a positive contribution to tourism. In order to establish and operate a destination on tourism market successfully, it is important to create a destination management organization that would effectively coordinate the activities of all stakeholders. Ensuring sufficient sources of funding is a necessary aspect of the functioning of such an organization and the fulfillment of its objectives.

Several domestic and foreign authors are involved in the theoretical definition of the target site (Pompurová, 2011; Lednický, Pyka, 2011; Nejd1 2011; Holešinská, 2012; Gúčik et al., 2012; Malachovský, Pěč, 2015; Maráková, Šimočková, 2015). The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) characterizes the destination as a physical place where the visitor can stay overnight (www.unwto.org). Pompurová (2011) has explored theoretical approaches to destination research and has found out that authors interpret the destination from a geographical, organizational, marketing and economic point of view.

Szpilko (2017) claims that the development of tourism is closely linked to the functioning of destination management organizations and the products they offer. For the development of the tourism product, there is a specific need for cooperation of several subjects. A precondition for the development of the destination is to ensure cooperation between the public and private sectors, in which everyone has their own tasks to fulfill. Foreign authors also pay attention to destination management organizations. They perceive it as an essential component in the process of sustainable development and increasing the competitiveness of the destination (Buhalis, 2000; Ritchie, Crouch, 2003; Raich, 2006; Volgger, Pechlaner, 2014).

2. Aim and methodology

Tourism organizations in Slovakia are established on the basis of Act no. 91/2010 Coll. on Tourism support as amended. The law defines local and regional destination management organizations. In individual parts, in relation to local and regional organizations, it regulates the establishment of a regional organization, the rights and obligations of a regional organization, the demise of a regional organization, the establishment of a local organization, the rights and obligations of a local organization, local organization bodies, membership in a local organization, rights and obligations of a member of local organization, budget and accounting of local organization, establishment and demise of regional organization, concept documents, registration of destination management organizations as well as financing of tourism development and grants.

There are currently seven regional and thirty-seven local destination management organizations in Slovakia, with one regional organization and seven local tourism organizations operating in the Banská Bystrica Region. The aim of the paper is to explore and evaluate the financing of destination management organizations operating in the Banská Bystrica Region. We have obtained the material from individual organizations, from their websites, from the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic as well as from the register of accounts of the organizations. We have focused on examining the funding sources of organizations in 2016 and 2017 (data are not yet available for the year 2018). Since the regional destination management organization Banská Bystrica Region was established on December 17th, 2018, information on its financing is not yet available. A similar case is the regional organization Gemer, which was established on June 29th 2018.

Banská Bystrica Region is situated in the south of central Slovakia, with the area of 9,454 km² the Banská Bystrica Region is the largest region in the Slovak Republic. As of December 31st 2017, the population number was 649,788. Based on the statistical findings, it can be stated that in 2017, there were 516 accommodation facilities in the Banská Bystrica Region, which represented a 14.8% share of the nationwide number of accommodation

facilities (3,495 facilities). There were 21,587 beds available. In 2017, 569,164 visitors, who spent 1,680,911 overnight stays, visited the facilities. The average number of overnight stays per visitor in Banská Bystrica Region was approximately 3 nights (www.slovak.statistics.sk). Compared to the previous year, it is an increase in the number of visitors in accommodation facilities as well as an increase in the number of overnight stays. We can consider the average number of overnight stays for stable.

3. Results

There are four tourism regions in the Banská Bystrica Region, two of which are completely located in the region (Horehronský and Pohronský regions) and two of them reach the defined territory of the region with partly (Ipeľský and Gemerský Region). There are currently one regional and seven local destination management organizations in the Banská Bystrica Region.

3.1 Organizations characteristics

The regional destination management organization Banská Bystrica Region was established on December 17th 2018 (www.zahoramizadolami.sk). Its foundation was initiated by the Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region with the aim of developing tourism in the region and supporting the activities of its members in the creation and implementation of the concept of tourism development on the territory of Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region. Founding members were also local DMOs Central Slovakia Tourist Board, Region Horehronie, Gron, Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie, Banská Štiavnica Tourism and Dudince Tourism.

There are currently seven local destination management organizations in the Banská Bystrica Region: Dudince Tourism, Central Slovakia Tourist Board, Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie, Banská Štiavnica Tourism, Horehronie Region, Gron and Gemer.

Tab. 1: Basic characteristics of local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica Region

Destination management organization	Date of establishment	Number of establishing members	Location (tourism region)	Number of employees (2017)
Dudince Tourism	February 15 th 2012	5	Ipeľský	3
Central Slovakia Tourist Board	March 6 th 2012	6	Horehronský, Pohronský	1
Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie	March 8 th 2012	36	Ipeľský, Pohronský	1
Banská Štiavnica Tourism	December 15 th 2011	6	Pohronský	2
Region Horehronie (former Low Tatras South)	March 15 th 2012	9	Horehronský	3
Gron	December 27 th 2012	7	Pohronský	2
Gemer	June 29 th 2018	14	Gemerský	1

Source: Own elaboration according to www.mindop.sk, www.finstat.sk, www.registeruz.sk, 2019

Destination management organization Dudince Tourism was established on February 15th 2012 (www.dudince.sk). To date the organization employs three employees. It belongs to the organizations founded by only one municipality - Dudince. When established, the condition of 150,000 overnight stays in accommodation facilities located on the territory of the founding municipality was fulfilled. Founding members were the city of Dudince, Spa Dudince, Balnea Cluster Dudince, Spa Diamant Dudince and Hotel Flora Dudince. The organization focuses on the development of tourism in the destination Dudince and its surroundings (Ipeľský region), whose main product is spa tourism. The main tasks of the organization are to increase the attractiveness of the city of Dudince, prepare organized events, promote the destination and operate a tourist information center.

Destination management organization Central Slovakia was officially registered on March 6th 2012 at former Ministry of Transport, Construction and Regional Development of the Slovak Republic (www.centernalslovakia.eu). Two employees are employed in the organization (1 employee in 2016 - 2017). Founding members are the cities Banská Bystrica, Zvolen, Sliač and business entities operating in the field of tourism: Spa Sliač, Hotel Kaskády and Airport Sliač. The organization is located in the districts of Banská Bystrica (Horehronský region), Zvolen and Detva (Pohronský region). The main objectives of the organization are to promote the region of Central Slovakia (Banská Bystrica, Zvolen, Detva), increase the number of visitors and the number of overnight stays, support members' activities.

Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie is a destination management organization which was established on March 8th 2012 as the result of the initiative of thirty-six entities, of which twenty-seven were municipalities, nine business entities and civic associations (cities Lučenec, Veľký Krtíš, Filákov). One employee - executive director of the organization is employed in the organization. When setting up the organization he carried out his activities on a voluntary basis (www.tournovohrad.sk). The organization started to operate in the districts of Lučenec, Poltár, Veľký Krtíš (Ipeľský region) and Detva (Pohronský region). Their goals are to represent the destination, creation of hiking, biking and cross-country trails, creating a calendar of organized events (their time alignment).

Banská Štiavnica Tourism was established on December 15th 2011 (www.banskastiavnica.travel). The founding members were Banská Štiavnica, the municipalities of Baďan, Počúvadlo, Pohronie, Svätý Anton and Štiavnické Bane. The organization currently employs two employees. Its activities focus on the development of tourism in the district of Banská Štiavnica and partly in the regions of Žarnovica and Žiar nad Hronom (Pohronský region). The tasks of the organization are the presentation of the primary and secondary offer of the destination, the creation of promotional materials, the realization and maintenance of cycle routes and tourist educational paths.

Date of establishment of the destination management organization Rregion Horehronie, formerly called Nízke Tatry South (change of name was in 2018) is March 15th 2012 (www.horehronie.net). Nine members participated in the foundation: the municipalities of Brusno, Myto pod Ďumbierom, Bystrá, Osrbliie and Čierny Balog, Klaster Horehronie Association, business entities of Tatry mountain resorts Tále and hotel Partizán. The organization has three employees. It operates in the districts of Banská Bystrica and Brezno (Horehronský Region).

Destination management organization Gron was registered in the Register of local destination management organizations on December 27th 2012 (www.regiongron.sk). Organization office is located in Žarnovica. The organization has created two work positions. Founding members are self-governments of Nová Baňa, Žarnovica, Horné Hámre, Župkov, Ostrý Grúň, Repište and business entity Blanc. The organization focuses on the development of tourism in the districts Žarnovica and Žiar nad Hronom (Pohronský region).

The youngest organization is Gemer (www.visitgemer.sk). The organization was established on June 29th 2018. Founding members are cities Hnúšťa, Jelšava, Revúca, Rožňava, Tornaľa, two smaller municipalities, five business entities, the State Nature Conservation of the Slovak Republic and the Development Agency of the Banská Bystrica Self-Governing Region. The purpose of the organization is to manage the development of tourism in Gemer and to develop and promote the region while fully preserving the cultural and natural heritage. The organization has currently one employee.

3.2 Organizations financing

Destination management organizations financing is made from both public and private sources. Sources of financing for the organization are: membership fees, grants from the state budget, voluntary contributions from the municipality, natural and legal persons, income from own activities, sale of products and services, awards for mediation, revenues from the activities of tourist information centers, revenues from the sale of advertising spaces, non-repayable financial contributions from domestic and foreign sources, including contributions from the European Union and other revenues. The amount of membership fees is the result of an agreement between individual members of the organization. Each member of the membership is entitled to attend the general assembly meeting, where each representative has one vote. The terms and conditions for the selection and maturity of membership fees are therefore determined by the general assembly. "The main motivation for subjects association into regional and local destination management organizations is the possibility of obtaining a state grant, which together with member contributions, is intended to finance activities to support the development of tourism" (Vaňová, 2013, p. 16). The state grant for local destination management organizations is in the amount of collected membership fees, however, no more than 90% of the collected accommodation tax in previous years. This restriction ensures that membership fees are not artificially raised to achieve the highest possible state grant. The limitation is also a motivation for business entities providing accommodation services, to pay accommodation tax to the general municipality budget and thus to increase the budget of municipality as one of the members of the organization. The amount of the state grant for the regional organization is the same as the membership fee of the self-governing region, while the maximum grant to the regional organization is limited to 10% of the collected accommodation tax of all member municipalities of local destination management organizations which are members of the regional organization.

Tab. 2: Financing sources of the local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region in the years 2016 and 2017

Local destination management organization	State grants (€)		Membership fees (€)		Incomes from own activities (€)		Total amount (€)	
	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017	2016	2017
Dudince Tourism	44 503	71 730	98 443	122 217	34 243	36 342	177 189	230 289
Central Slovakia Tourist Board	75 060	76 868	128 235	130 840	14 198	-	217 493	207 708
Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie	15 956	18 312	18 779	18 900	-	-	34 735	37 212
Banská Štiavnica Tourism	48 490	58 777	39 799	39 896	7 964	5 976	96 253	104 649
Region Horehronie	72 590	63 500	91 400	68 090	2	11 151	163 992	142 741
Gron	8 056	10 498	17 451	22 126	10 062	6 713	35 569	39 337

Note: Local destination management organization Gemer ad regional destination management organization Banská Bystrica region were established in 2018, Region Horehronie was former called Low Tatras South (to the year 2018).

Source: Own elaboration based on information from www.finstat.sk, www.registeruz.sk, 2019

The destination management organization Dudince Tourism had a budget of €230,289 in the year 2017. Of this amount, the sum of €71,730 represented the state grant. Membership fees are received from the public and private sectors. Both sectors shared approximately 53% of the overall budget. State grants are expressed as a 31% share of all financial sources. Other financial resources (16%) come mainly from the commercial activity of the tourist information office. The rate of contributions from individual members is following: the town Dudince contributes €5 per inhabitant. Accommodation facilities are classified into five categories according to the number of beds. Accommodation facilities with a capacity of up to 20 beds contribute €200, up to 50 beds €500, up to 100 beds €800, up to 200 beds €1,000 and over 200 beds €6,000. Members' contributions fully cover the operating costs of the organization and partly the costs of activities of the organization.

In 2016, the destination management organization Central Slovakia Tourist Board had a budget of €217,493. The organization received a state grant of €75,060, which means 35% share of the total budget (in 2017 the subsidy was only €1,808 higher compare to 2016) in order to realize the activities which mean the main focus of the organization. The remaining 65% of financing sources is split 25:40 between the public and the private sector. The membership fees, which amounted to €128,235, sufficiently covered the operating costs of the organization and partly the costs associated with the organization's activities.

Destination management organization Tour Novohrad and Podpoľanie had the smallest budget among the tourism organizations surveyed. The organization's budget for 2016 was €34,735. The state grant accounted for 46% of the total budget (€15,956). Public sector membership contributions account for 50% of its budget and the remaining 4% has been received from the private sector. The amount of the membership fees are set out in the bylaws of the organization. The municipality contributes €0.20 per inhabitant. Entrepreneurs pay a single membership fee of €300. Members' contributions fully cover the operating costs and partly the costs of the organization activities.

Destination management organization Banská Štiavnica Tourism had a budget of €104,649 in 2017. 56% of that amount was a grant from the state budget (€ 58,777). The 38% share of the total budget is represented by member contributions of municipalities and entrepreneurial entities operating in the territory of member municipalities, while the contributions of the public sector prevail. The amount of the contributions is sufficient to cover the operating costs and partly to cover the costs for the activities of the organization.

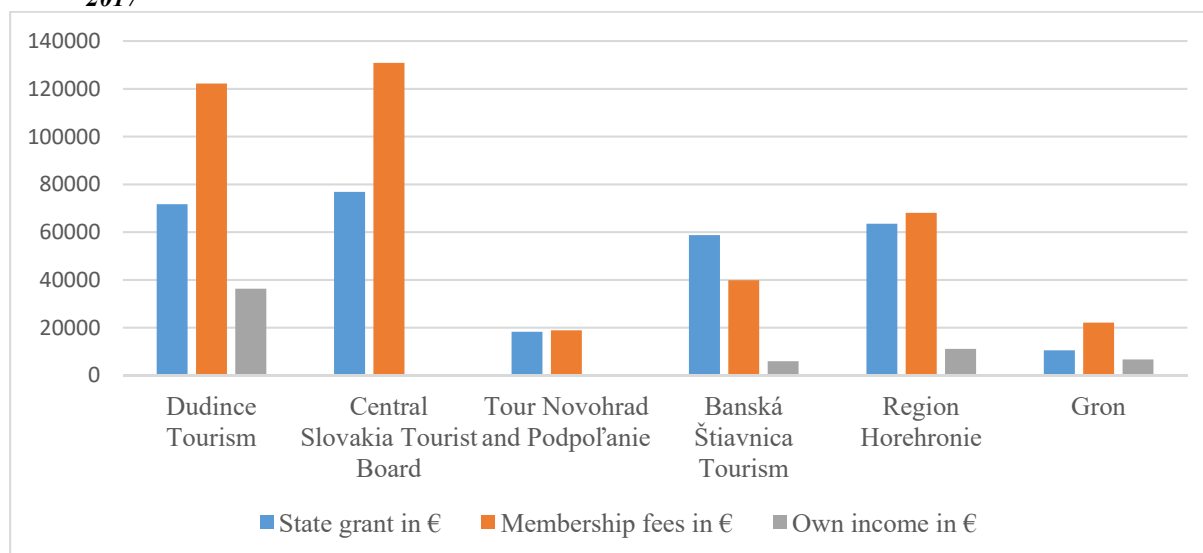
Budget of the destination management organization Region Horehronie for the year 2017 was €142,741. This organization has reported a total decrease in funding in 2017 compared to the previous year (a decrease of 13%). The amount of membership contributions decreased as well as the amount of state grant allocated. The grant of €72,590 for 2016 accounts for almost 44% of the total budget (the share remains the same in the year 2017). The remaining 56% of the budget is represented by membership fees from municipalities and business entities operating in the territory of the municipalities, which are divided in a ratio of 20:30. The minimum contribution rate for municipalities is €1,000. The membership fees cover only the organization's operating costs.

In 2017, the destination management organization Gron operated with a budget of €39,337. The state grant was €10,498, which accounted for approximately 27% of total financial resources. Membership contributions from municipalities and business entities accounted for about 56% of all resources. Municipalities contribute to the

organization 50% of the amount of accommodation tax collected and €0.30 per inhabitant. The uniform rate for businesses and other entities is €100. Contributions cover both operating and organizational costs.

The amount of the financial sources of the local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region divided according the source of financing in the year 2017 can be seen in the graph 1. We can see, that the highest amount of the money was gained by Dudince Tourism, the second most successful organization in the sense of gathering financial sources was Central Slovakia Tourist Board.

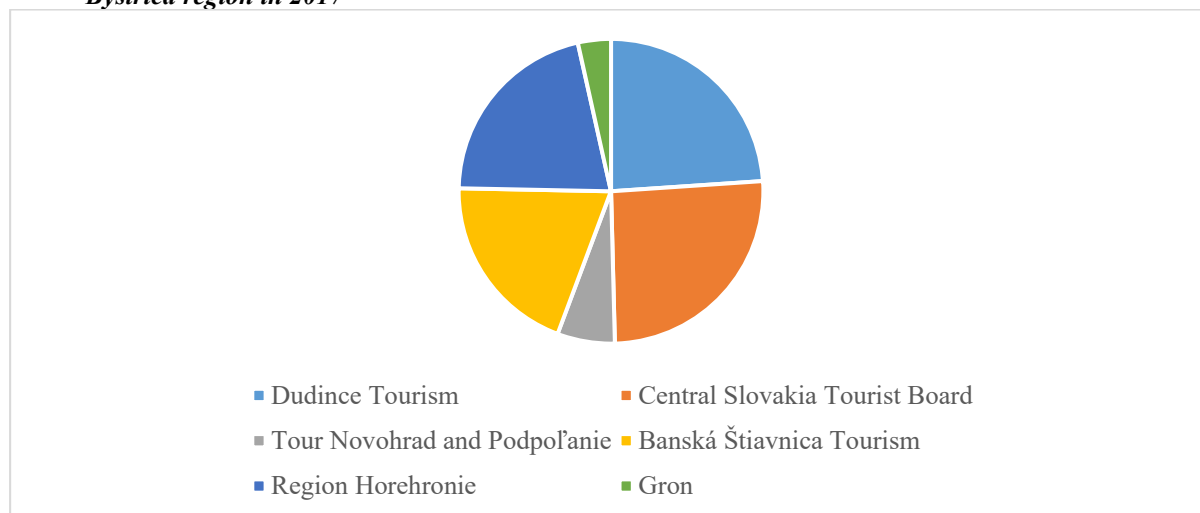
Graph 1: Financing sources of the local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region in 2017



Source: Own elaboration based on information from www.finstat.sk, www.registeruz.sk, 2019

Share of state grants received by the local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region in 2017 is displayed on the graph 2.

Graph 2: Share of state grants received by the local destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region in 2017



Source: Own elaboration based on information from www.mindop.sk, 2019

The total amount of state grants given to the local destination management organizations in Slovakia in 2017 was €4,329,583 (in 2016 it was €3,781,641). Destination management organizations operating in the Banská Bystrica region received a grant of €299,685 in 2017, representing only a 6.9% share (€264,655 in 2016, which means a 7% share).

4. Conclusion

Destination management organizations in Banská Bystrica region are widely funded by grants. Own income creates only a small part of their financial resources, the most significant share in financing activities by own resources is only in the DMO Dudince. As far as we take into the consideration the regional DMO, which has to be established by self-governing regions, such an organization was established in the territory of the Banská Bystrica self-governing region only at the end of the year 2018, which means that in the years 2016 and 2017, as well as in the previous period of time, it did not receive any resources for the development of tourism at the regional level (grants to the regional destination management organizations were €570,618 in 2016 and €725,830 in 2017).

The membership fees of organizations are differentiated, each organization sets a different rate of membership fees. Their amount is published in the bylaws of the organizations. The operating costs of all organizations are fully covered by membership fees.

The problem is in getting data about organizations. Despite the statutory obligation to publish account statements (these are non-profit organizations), it is often almost impossible to find the required data, or the financial data of same indicator is different in various sources (for example the amount of the grant from the Ministry of Transport and Construction varies on the web page of Ministry and on the financial statements register, or in the information given by the organization itself on its webpage). Some organizations criticize the system of obtaining state grants. Their view of the redistribution of state grants is that if the maximum amount of grant depends on the amount of membership fees collected, organizations operating in regions with a low number of accommodation facilities and overnight stays do not have the opportunity to obtain sufficient funding to undertake activities related to the core business of the organization.

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