

Rural Business Development in the Balkan Region: Hospitality and Tourism Management

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Abstract: *Balkan is part of Europe, but in the past years it has not been known like that and negative effect of it continue also now days with not being part of European Union and not having profit from that. Balkan states have been under stratocracy and this has caused to them to not have the knowledge about management and last methods how to make profit from rural regions and from this we have the effect of immigration. The economy of Balkan has been underestimated from the other parts. Balkan region, especially rural areas do not have the infrastructure to make them frequented from the tourists. Infrastructure is one of the main problems which is related with the electricity, 24h water, Wi-Fi areas etc and this causes problems to the natives, services and goods that they offer and with the domestic production.*

Tourism should give one of the main revenues in the economies of these states like Albania, European part of Turkey, Serbia, Macedonia etc, together with the agriculture too. Population of the Balkan is known for its hospitality and people speak different languages like English, Italian, Spanish and now days they can speak Turkish too. This characteristic give to them an opportunity that other problems of technology and infrastructure cause to them disadvantages and from this the tourism is not developed as much as it had to be. There are a lot of places which are virgin and not explored from foreigners (for example in Albania or Kosovo and Macedonia too, as well as in other countries which are part of Balkan). The governments of these countries and their policies do not offer opportunities enough to be promoted. Since they have been isolated from other parts of the World, most of the people do not know how to manage with the three levels of the managing (in rural areas) and the only type that exists is just the sole-managing. There are not enough advertisements or not good marketing in the Balkan region to make them known. Still there are countries which do not know where the Balkan is.

In continue of this research will be attached what can governments do to solve this problem and how this problem can be solved about the rural areas which are more than underestimated even if they keep precious values.

Keywords: underestimated, values, profit, infrastructure, three-level management, domestic production.

Intorduction

Balkan is located in the southeastern of Europe and it is made up from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Serbia, Albania, Europe part of Turkey, Kosovo, Greece, Montenegro, Croatia, Bulgaria, Romania and Macedonia. All of the 11 countries are in developing stage so their economy is based mostly in the agriculture rather than in services.

The problem of these countries is that their capital cities are the most visited ones, while the rural zones are completely on backstage. This problem is not part of the countries like Switzerland, which has a lot of touristic places to be visited for or Germany or other countries which are developed. There are different factors why this part of Europe is in developing stage starting from history which is related with political factors and wars and so on. All of these factors has brought these problems to the Balkan, which still is in that position taking loans from BE and here is the example of Greece which every year takes loans from BE.

There are different types of tourism and here we can include: Culinary tourism, sport tourism, educational tourism, history tourism, and nature tourism, discover tourism. All of these types have their differences and each of these is part of every country. Balkan countries especially rural zones of Balkan do not have developed any of these types, because they are not still discovered from the tourists who visit Balkan. Last 5 years the North part of Albania is being heard from Albanians and i take Theth or Valbona as an example.

Except the types of tourism which are listed before we have two other definitions which are: Rural tourism and Tourism Management.

Rural tourism

It focuses on actively participating in a rural lifestyle. It can be a variant of ecotourism. Many rural villages can facilitate tourism because many villagers are hospitable and eager to welcome (and sometime even host) visitors. Agriculture is becoming highly mechanized and therefore, requires less manual labor.

Tourism Management

It is the leading international journal for all those concerned with **the planning and management of travel and tourism**.

As it is said up to the definition of the rural tourism, Balkans are known for their hospitality. Hospitality is one characteristic of Balkan that everyone appreciates for. It is main characteristic that tourist are attracted for, despite the nature. Balkans are polyglots so they are able to speak different languages like English, Italian, Turkish, some Spanish and German and this is an advantage for the natives who offer different services for example in restaurants, hotels, hostels and so on.

According to the World Economic Forum, The Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report 2017, Balkan countries had an average of 3.8/7 (without Kosovo which do not have any statistic in the WEF)¹. Countries are ranked according to the Business Environment: Safety and Security, Health and Hygiene, Human Resources and Labor Market, Prioritization of Travel & Tourism, Ground and Port Infrastructure, Price Competitiveness, Tourist Service

Infrastructure, Air Transport Infrastructure, Natural Resources ,Cultural Resources and Business Travel.

The disadvantages of rural zones are:

Infrastructure:

Rural zones of Balkan have a lot of problems related with infrastructure. Roads have a bad quality and can not be safe to drive through, there is a missing of electricity most of the time and water too. Another problem related with the infrastructure is Wifi zones or at least to have some internet or just to be able to call or text.

Government's policy and expenditures:

Government's policy and expenditures are related with what governments are doing to rise up profits from the tourism. This is not related just with increasing taxation, but with what they offer to the natives for the development of the tourism in these zones.

Investments:

Since there is no government's policy or expenditure, foreign investors or even natives one are going away from these rural zones. Even if last years it has changed still investments are not in that level where they had to be. In these rural zones for example in Albania there exist just few guest houses which offer the role of the hotels.

Management:

In rural zones the only type of management is the sole management because each of them wants to be independent from the others, even if they offer same service and no one of them changes something to be different and attract more. They think just to increase their incomes and not to work together to do something different.

Advertisement:

Advertisements are related with management, since each of them is in a sole managing, so the advertisements which are one of the main keys to the business are not well developed.

Economy of Balkan still is in developing phase and it needs time to become in the same level as the other countries. But tourism is one part to be more developed in Balkan zones, but not just main/capital cities, but also rural zones which can increase profits and GDP more than the other parts which now have been visited from the tourists and natives too.

According to some researches that what can be done which do not have too much cost for the rural zones are listed above:

- Improve AIRLINE /RAILWAY /HIGHWAY- which are main factors of these zones to be more developed.
- Water and electricity 24h- related with the infrastructure.

- Different courses for managing, since the only way is the sole proprietorship and this means sole managing.
- Employee managers to each of the hotels or restaurants paid from government to help increasing management knowledge.
- Courses for learning English or other languages in rural zones.
- Credits without interest % to help them improve their managing and services
- Gather them together to share ideas and take decisions and plan which are their strategic points and what can they offer so they can be unique on their type
- Free advertising-

Advertising is needed to make them known; these places should be in Google Map and applications like this so everyone can be able to check them out.

- A 12 month touring for each: Different cities or countries have different seasons which have more tourists, but this should be changed from the governments are natives. Each city should be visited not only in summer because of the nature, but also in winter because of the culinary tourism etc.
- Help to innovate their houses from investors:
Policies from governments should attract the investors in these zones, but also from advertisements they should be affected.
- Building and bidding trust with them (B&B)

As the Bed and Breakfast webpage to book a room or a bed in a place to stay, where bed and breakfast are related so strong together with each other, we should build and bind trust with each other and we should believe that Rural zones of Balkan will be developed.

Balkan doesn't mean to come and visit once, it means to come and visit and explore in every detail. Capital cities are not the treasure; rural zones are the real treasure which keeps high values from cultural, historical etc.

Let's make the Balkan Rural Zones be the most frequented and complete their needs, so GDP will increase and countries will pass in another stage, the stage of developed countries!

References:

<http://reports.weforum.org/travel-and-tourism-competitiveness-report-2017/>