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# CHANGES IN TOURISM IN COUNTRIES OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA AFTER GAINING INDEPENDENCE – INTRODUCTION

**Tomasz Wiskulski**

Department of Tourism and Recreation Management, Faculty of Tourism and Recreation, Gdansk University of Physical Education and Sport, Górskiego 1, 80–336 Gdańsk, Poland, ORCID: 0000-0001-7802-721X  
e-mail: [tomasz.wiskulski@awf.gda.pl](mailto:tomasz.wiskulski@awf.gda.pl)

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A Yugoslavian leader once said: “I rule a country with two alphabets, three languages, four religions and five nationalities that live in six republics, are surrounded by seven neighbours and must live in harmony with eight minorities” (Lopatka, 2018). This short sentence explicitly shows how complicated the internal situation in Yugoslavia was.

The example of Yugoslavia clearly shows how difficult it is to even out the level of income between particular regions (countries). These countries have been in different cultural and civilizational areas for many centuries.

After the Second World War, when communists had taken power, a system of financial transfers was introduced with the main objective to even out the standard of living and development in individual republics. All the republics had to contribute a part of the generated income to a specially allocated fund which then was supposed to be transferred to the poorest parts of the country, whether in the form of grants or loans on preferential terms. Despite these transfers, after the dissolution of Yugoslavia, it

became apparent that the disparities in the development of particular countries have survived.

In the 1960s and the 1970s Yugoslavia implemented the most liberal policy among the socialist states (Furubotn, Pejovich, 1973; Rusinov, 1967). Its openness to western countries led to the inflow of foreign investment; the Yugoslavian passport allowed citizens to travel around the world, and millions of tourists from capitalist countries left money in Yugoslavia.

Before the dissolution, Yugoslavia had been famous for its enchanting Plitvice lakes, the Belgrade Kalemegdan, the Sarajevo Old Town and stunning Dubrovnik. However, for a growing group of tourists it was not these sites that were the main destination of tourist trips. The media image of the Balkans, which consisted of beautiful elements of nature and the richness of its cultures, was complemented by an image of the devastating and tragic civil war.

The first signs of a registered tourist movement in the area of the former Yugoslavia should be recorded at the end of 1992, when an Italian tourist agent, Massimo Beyerle, organized special expeditions

to various conflict-torn corners of the world (Lisle, 2007). Customers who used his services spent two weeks on Bosnian or Croatian fronts. During that time they were equipped with bulletproof vests and helmets, and their health was supervised by doctors. Participation in this form of tourism cost its participants 25,000 dollars.

For many tourists, a trip to Bosnia and Herzegovina is complemented by a stroll along the Sarajevo Sniper Alley, and sometimes it is the highlight of the trip; some tourists choose Srebrenica or mine fields, still quite abundant in the country, as their destination. The war tours in Sarajevo were organised already a few months after the Dayton agreements had been signed. The first tour guide licenced after the war in Sarajevo offered tourists a few hours' tour of Sarajevo's cemeteries, the devastated Olympic complex and walking through the tunnel used by fugitives to escape from the besieged city. All of this had the English name "Mission Impossible Tour" (Volcic et al., 2013), which makes it easy to define the target group of the prepared offer.

The situation in the market of tourist services began to improve after the end of military actions aimed at the independence of individual republics. The countries of the former Yugoslavia again became attractive to the mass tourist. Slovenia, which was the first to gain independence, has undergone a huge cycle of changes in the market of tourism services. We can find out from an article by D. Cigale on changes in the spatial characteristics of tourism in Slovenia that, in many regions, tourism has become a very important, if not the most important, factor shaping the GDP and stimulating the volume of unemployment. The author also draws attention to many factors influencing the development of tourism in Slovenia. Among them, he includes the country's accessibility, the change in economic conditions, the existence of many diversified natural values, the policy of sustainable development pursued by the authorities and factors related to the prevailing trends. The article also highlights a change in the structure of the tourists' origin, in particular an increase in the number of tourists from non-European countries.

Croatia was the next country that gained its independence. In his article, T. Wiskulski described changes in the number of tourists and the use of accommodation in Croatia throughout the period of 21 years. The paper presents results of an analysis of the Tourism Density Index, Schneider's Rate, the Tourist Accommodation Density Index, Baretje-Defert's Index, the Average Length of Stay, the Accommodation Development Index and the Charvát Index. The conducted analysis allowed the author to

identify tourist regions and their change in 1997 and 2017. The author points out that, on the one hand, there was clarification of tourist regions based on similar geographic conditions. On the other hand, there were even greater disparities in playing the tourist function by the various counties. Attention has also been drawn to the lack of a common policy on creating the tourism potential, which begins to have consequences in terms of imbalance in the level of tourism capacity and tourism absorbency.

The third country that gained independence from Yugoslavia was Macedonia. As the first country, it managed to gain the independence in a completely peaceful way. However, an etymological problem emerged, as Greece considered itself to be the only heir to the traditions of ancient Macedonia. The conflict was resolved in 1995 when the country changed its name to FYROM (Danforth, 2010). This name, however, did not cease to diminish the Greek claims, which was expressed in the fact that Greece blocked Macedonia's accession to NATO and its integration with the European Union. It was not until February 2019 that the country changed its name to the Republic of North Macedonia, which met the expectations of both the Macedonian and Greek citizens (Asani, 2018; Hagemann, 2019). In his article, D. Iliev described the evolution and changes in Macedonian tourism during the post-socialist period of 1991–2018. In his paper, he used the TALC model to help explain complex processes of development and changes in tourism over the analysed years. He distinguished and described in detail four stages of tourism development in the territory of Macedonia while describing the variability of the tourist movement, the number of bed nights and the gastronomic facilities. The study used secondary statistical materials.

The country which won its independence in a very bloody way was Bosnia and Herzegovina. During fighting, the country's capital, Sarajevo, was besieged by troops of the Serbian Republic and Yugoslavia for 3.5 years, resulting in 23% of the buildings being seriously damaged and 64% partially destroyed (Final Report of..., 1994). A. Pobric, S. Sljivo and N. Mulaosmanovic presented in their article the valorisation of the tourist centre of Sarajevo in the cultural and historical context. They used the Hilary du Cros method in their assessment. The authors also presented changes in the volume of the tourist movement and accommodation in Canton Sarajevo in the years 2008–2018. Disproportions in the distribution of the tourist movement and the number of bed nights in particular municipalities in Canton Sarajevo were also analysed. The authors then

assessed the Bascarsija district using the presented research method.

Montenegro is the country that was the last to gain independence from Yugoslavia (actually the State Union of Serbia and Montenegro). This was the last peaceful separation of the new country from Serbia, which took place gradually until 3 June 2006, when as a result of the referendum of 25 May, the creation of an independent state was proclaimed (Friss, 2007). Since 4 February 2003, a new constitutional act has been in force, which has guaranteed, among others, independent economic policy, parliaments and the currency – the Euro. In their article on changes in the market of tourist services between 2007 and 2017 in Montenegro, W. Szymańska and A. Wiśniewska focused on the analysis of changes in the volume of the tourist movement and the accommodation base. The regional analysis was conducted with a breakdown into the coastal and the mountain areas, Podgorica, other tourist areas and other places. Due to the nature of the descriptive values, the authors focused on a thorough analysis of the three largest groups of areas.

The editor of the volume would like to thank all the authors who contributed to this issue of the journal, working in various scientific centres in the countries of the former Yugoslavia and in Poland. Special thanks are also due to the reviewers of the volume, without whom this issue could not be published. Simultaneously, I do hope that the articles presented in the journal will contribute to further cooperation between authors of particular texts.

Tomasz Wiskulski

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