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**TOURISM  
IN FUNCTION OF DEVELOPMENT  
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**Spa Tourism in Serbia and Experiences of Other Countries**



**THEMATIC  
PROCEEDINGS**

**II**



**UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC  
FACULTY OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT  
AND TOURISM IN VRNJAČKA BANJA**



# THE IMPORTANCE OF OPERATIONS OF TOURISM SME'S FOR REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF VOJVODINA

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## Abstract

*The importance of entrepreneurs in tourism has always been difficult to define and determine, especially in terms of business economics in the Republic of Serbia. Micro, small and medium enterprises are currently the most important driver of economic trends in every country. Tourism is a fertile ground for the development of entrepreneurship. It is therefore necessary to analyze the characteristics of enterprises, in order to exploit their comparative advantages and achieve more effective results in tourism sector in Vojvodina. The aim of this paper is to examine the specific characteristics of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, thus confirming their importance for destination's development. In 2014, the questionnaire was conducted on a sample of 345 enterprises. Statistical analysis yielded results that indicate the comparative advantages and specifics of tourism enterprises in Vojvodina. Also, it were analyzed the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, who manage policy and strategy of the company.*

**Keywords:** *tourism, hospitality, micro, small and medium tourism enterprises*

## Introduction

The concept of entrepreneurs and entrepreneurship in tourism or micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, has always been difficult to define and determine, especially in terms of economic management and the scope of business economics in the Republic of Serbia. This makes it difficult to determine and define which of micro, small and medium sized

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enterprises constitute the tourism industry, given that tourism is a very complex activity (Pavlović, 2015).

Small and medium enterprises are currently the most important driver of economic trends in the economy of a country. Since tourism is a fertile ground for the development of small and medium enterprises, it is important to emphasize the synergy between them and to utilize their comparative advantages to achieve more effective results in tourism business.

The main objective of this paper is to examine which specific characteristics of micro, small and medium tourism enterprises differ from large companies, and thus to confirm the importance of small business in relation to large-format business in the tourism industry. Modern business conditions, the unique characteristics of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, as well as their limitations, are actually the key reason and truly need to develop new and more suitable approaches that will lead to improvement of the competitive position of tourist destinations.

The subjects of research are micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the region of Vojvodina. We have analyzed the causal link between the characteristics of enterprises and performance of their operations, as well as their impact on the overall development of destination. At the same time, the task was to determine how socio-demographic characteristics of managers, owners and employees affect their growth, development and improvement of market position. In order to obtain the results in this research paper are posted the following hypotheses:

H1: There are differences in business performance between micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina.

H2: Profession of the owners, managers and employees is in line with the needs of the company's activities.

Expected results should provide theoretical and practical contribution to the current process of the involvement and the application of modern business concepts in the operation of SME's. In this way, it will improve its market position and so Vojvodina, as a tourist destination, will become more competitive in the market - domestic and international.

## **Characteristics of tourism development and policy in the region of Vojvodina**

Tourism in Serbia, and also in Vojvodina, can no longer be uncontrolled and unplanned activity. Tourism development is governed by large multinational companies, as well as small, but to change adjustable enterprises that can easily anticipate changes and meet the tourist demand (Pavlović et al., 2010). Regarding the fact that tourism development requires natural resources, sustained environment, cultural and historic heritage etc., Serbia as a country rich with such factors has a chance to improve its competitive position on the world economic map by developing tourism products. In order to develop tourism products which are to be internationally competitive, a complex management system is needed, as well as policy makers' commitment (Milovanović & Milićević, 2014). Despite noted significant progress in the development of the tourism sector in recent years, Serbia (as well as its regions which include the Vojvodina), yet its offer is based on comparative advantages: possesses diversified structure of the basic attractions, located near the traditional and new tourism markets, has a long history and tradition, preserved natural resources and good communication, but unfortunately the market is not properly positioned.

The Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia until 2015, states that Serbia is on its way to define those clusters and the development of economic sectors with a chance of success, where they independently, and with the support of the international community, will have to build as soon as possible and develop a competitive growth strategy. Tourism in this context is imposed as an unavoidable complex where there is untapped growth potential (Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, 2006). As tourism is an important generator of national prosperity the transition from tourist to competitive advantage in Serbia must be integrated into the overall economic reform processes and created through the appropriate tourism policies.

The closed nature of Serbia to the markets, has delayed the process of restructuring and privatization, and there were no significant investments in the development of new forms of tourism. Due to the high centralization, investments in infrastructure and maintenance of inherited tourist destination were lacked, because local communities are not financially able to meet the requirements of maintenance and new development (Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, 2006).

Given of the above, Serbia and its tourist clusters (defined Tourism Development Strategy until 2015, according to which a cluster of Vojvodina belongs to the second development potential), must raise the competitiveness and attractiveness of tourism products and experiences through a respectable innovations, relying to those products and business sectors that have a global perspective. Revitalization of inherited superstructure, while leveraging the pristine attraction and in this way formed tourism products, will lead Serbia on the world tourist market. So, definitely the important role has to play the private sector, and the sector of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises which are the backbone of every economy and society.

### **Position of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the scope of tourism business of Vojvodina**

The position of SMEs in the scope of the tourism industry is most easily identified based on their impact on the volume of tourist turnover. In domestic and foreign literature can be found different classifications and organizational forms of tourist services. However, there has been a high degree of consensus on the attitude that catering companies and travel agencies are the most active and most effective carriers of the tourism industry. On this basis, it is clear that in the analysis of development must be taken into account the specificities of all the activities that complement and which directly or indirectly participate in meeting the needs of tourists.

Accommodation and food capacities have the most significant impact on the volume of tourist turnover in a given tourist destination. In the context of the mutual relations of hospitality and tourism industry, it should be noted that a part of the catering industry, primarily in the food sector as a whole does not have the same importance for tourism development, because it provides services to the local population, and certain organized groups of users (nutrition in children's institutions, in schools, in colleges, in boarding schools, hospitals, etc.). In other words, this part of the hospitality is beyond the scope of the tourist industry (Kosar, 2008).

To tourism industry, and enterprises, also belong travel agencies and tour operators who have a mediating role in the realization of tourist turnover, traffic and transportation companies, retail companies, wineries, producers and sellers of souvenirs and the like. Position and categorization of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises is

determined on the basis of activities they perform, and they are recorded in the Register of Tourism, the Business Registers Agency (APR, 2013).

The position of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in the volume of business tourism industry is determined, above all, by definition of small and medium enterprises and their representation to the activity they perform. Accordingly, the sector of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises are representing legal entities and entrepreneurs, which are classified as follows (Law on Accounting and Auditing, 2013). The micro enterprises shall be classified as legal entities that do not exceed two of the following criteria: 1) The average number of 10 employees; 2) Operating income of EUR 700,000 in RSD counter value; 3) Average value of business assets (calculated as the arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the financial year) EUR 350,000 in RSD counter value. Small enterprises shall be classified as legal entities that exceed the two criteria referred to in paragraph 2 of this article, but do not exceed two of the following criteria: 1) The average number of 50 employees; 2) Operating income of EUR 8.8 million in RSD counter value; 3) Average value of business assets (calculated as the arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the financial year) of EUR 4,400,000 in RSD counter value. Medium-sized enterprises shall be classified as legal entities that exceed any two of criteria referred to in paragraph 3 of this article, but do not exceed two of the following criteria: 1) The average number of 250 employees; 2) Operating income of EUR 35 million in RSD counter value; 3) Average value of business assets (calculated as the arithmetic mean value at the beginning and at the end of the financial year) from EUR 17.5 million in RSD counter value. Large enterprises represent legal entities that cross the highest amounts of two criteria. The classification in accordance with the criteria is set out by the legal entity independently. In the spirit of this law, in the sector of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina also are belonging entrepreneurs. Entrepreneurs are individuals who independently perform economic activities to gain a profit and which are managing their business by the double entry bookkeeping system, if special legislation is not regulated differently (Law on Accounting and Auditing, 2013). The average number of employees is calculated by dividing the total sum of employees at the end of each month, including employees working abroad, divided by the number of months (Penezić, 2009). Activities carried out by entrepreneurs are those that are determined by special rules and regulations on the classification of activities, art and handicrafts, as well as local cottage industry jobs. For

the purposes of research in the paper, the data from the 2013 were used and they are showing distribution of tourism and hospitality enterprises by form of organization and the activity they perform, registered in the Register of Tourism in Business Registers Agency (Table 1).

**Table 1:** *Enterprises by activities from the Register of tourism*

<b>Activities of legal entities/enterprises</b>	<b>Legal entities</b>	<b>Entrepreneurs</b>	<b>Total</b>
Camps, campsites and campgrounds for tourists	4	0	4
Tourist agencies	137	94	231
Restaurants and mobile catering facilities	304	2091	2395
Tour operators	38	4	42
Companies providing rental and leasing for recreation and sport	1	1	2
Providers of hunting tourism services	18	2	20
Holiday and short-stay accommodation	15	10	25
Other reservation services	7	9	16
Other accommodation	10	43	53
Passenger transport by inland waterways	7	10	17
Wine makers	26	66	92
Hotels and similar accommodation	0	28	28
<b>Total:</b>	<b>567</b>	<b>2358</b>	<b>2925</b>

**Source:** *Pavlović (2015, p. 59)*

From data analysis in Table 1, it is noticed that biggest number of registered enterprises in Vojvodina (82%) are representing restaurants and mobile catering facilities. These companies were registered for performing the activity which includes preparing and serving food to guests, whether they are served at the table or for self-serving, whether they eat prepared meals in the objects, or carry them with themselves, or are shipped. Also included is preparation and serving of food for direct consumption from motor and other vehicles (Regulation on Classification of Activities, 2008). They are followed by companies registered to perform activities of travel agencies (8%), wineries and wine producers

who have registered for the activity of wine production from grapes (3%). The remaining 7% of enterprises and entrepreneurs, who are registered in the Register of tourism, perform the following activities: other accommodation (2%), activities of tour operators (1%), hotels and similar accommodation (1%), holiday and short-stay accommodation (1%), providers of hunting tourism services (1%), passenger transport by inland waterways (1%), while other companies registered for reservation services, activity camps, auto-camps and camps for tourists and for renting and leasing of recreational and sports, have a share of less than 1% of the total number of registered enterprises. Regional distribution of companies is essential for determining the concentration of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises by areas in Vojvodina (Table 2).

**Table 2:** *The regional distribution of tourism and hospitality enterprises in Vojvodina*

Area	Legal entities	Entrepreneurs	Total
The area of West Bačka	38	220	258
The area of South Banat	51	340	391
The area of South Bačka	291	930	1221
The area of Northern Banat	25	120	145
The area of Northern Bačka	70	179	249
The area of Middle Banat	24	235	259
The area of Srem	68	334	402
Total:	567	2358	2925

**Source:** *Pavlović (2015, p. 60)*

On the basis of distribution to areas where they are registered and operate, it could be concluded that the largest concentration of micro, small and medium-sized tourist and hospitality companies and entrepreneurs are in the area of South Bačka, where there is 42% of the registered entities. The surprising fact is that there is a small share of enterprises (9%) in the area of Northern Bačka, where there are extremely significant tourist destination - Subotica and Palić. The area of Srem is on the second place in the region of Vojvodina (18%) according to the number of registered enterprises in the field of tourism and hospitality. It is followed by the area of South Bačka, which has 13% of registered enterprises. The area of Middle Banat, Western and Northern Bačka have the same share of 9%, while the smallest number of companies (5%) is registered in the area of Northern Banat. From the aforementioned analysis can be concluded that the most attractive enterprises, observed from the aspects of activities

they perform, for initiating and developing their own businesses are actually catering companies, restaurants or those that are registered for mobile catering facilities. Also, it is observed that there are a large number of companies engaged in reservation activities in tourism, such as travel agencies, tour operators and companies or entrepreneurs registered for performing other services of reservation. Hotel companies are not represented in the large extent in the analyzed data, but companies that are registered as the other accommodation, are in fourth place according to the frequency. This fact indicates that the private companies and entrepreneurs prefer to perform activities of complementary accommodation. Therefore, from the Register of tourism left behind the information on the final number of companies, especially those that provide accommodation services. However, Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia keeps records of the accommodation objects, which are included in the analysis, as well as catering companies.

### **Research scope, subjects, and methodology**

For the purposes of this work paper it was used a questionnaire which was implemented in 2014. The target population in the study has consisted of micro, small and medium enterprises in Vojvodina, which are representing entrepreneurs and companies. According to available data of the Business Registers Agency (2013), in Vojvodina during 2013 has been registered total number of 567 legal entities and 2358 entrepreneurs whose business is related to tourism and hospitality. These data were used to create the sample size (Pavlović, 2015).

The study applied disproportionate stratified sample, where tourism enterprises were classified in groups based on activities they perform. Sampling research unit was made of the following participants: the owners, managers (management at all levels) and employees in tourism SMEs in Vojvodina. For the study were collected 345 correctly completed questionnaires. They were used in the statistical programs SPSS 19.0 and Statistica 12 for further data analysis. By descriptive statistics were examined the basic characteristics of the operations of micro, small and medium-sized tourist companies in the region of Vojvodina, as well as socio-demographic characteristics of owners, managers and employees in companies, which will be used for further research.

## **Business characteristics of investigated micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina**

Most of the investigated enterprises (53.3%) is located in the area of South Bačka, and it is followed by the share of 15.7% of enterprises in the area of Srem, the North Bačka area with 7.5% and West Bačka area with 7.2%, while the lowest number of surveyed enterprises was in the area of Northern Banat (5.8%) and Middle Banat (5.5%). This indicates that the tourism and hospitality industry is well developed in the South Bačka area, mainly in the City of Novi Sad. This was founded and shown also in the data from the Business Registers Agency (2013). An interesting fact is that a relatively small number of observed enterprises are settled in the area of Northern Bačka, where are Subotica and Palić, which after Novi Sad, are the most visited tourist destination in the province of Vojvodina, and also belong to the top five destinations in the Republic of Serbia. This information has also been observed in the overall sampling population, on the basis of Register of tourism (APR, 2013). The only deviation that appeared in research regarding the sample size, has occurred in case of the number of investigated companies in the Southern Banat area, where the established overall number of business entities (companies and entrepreneurs) is relatively large, because this area is at the third position in the number of subjects. This fact in research indicates the unwillingness of the representatives of SMEs to respond to the questionnaires or reveal their business data.

The largest number of investigated micro, small and medium-sized enterprises is operating in catering industry, or performs activities of restaurants, mobile catering facilities, serving drinks, etc. These companies make 36.8% of the sample. They are followed by the travel agencies and tour operators, as well as enterprises providing other reservation services and activities associated with them (20.3%). In third place there are hotels and similar accommodation, which constitute 16.7% of the surveyed companies. They are followed by holiday and short-stay and other accommodation, campsites industry (13% of the sample), wine makers and wineries (6.7%) and companies registered for other activities (6.4%). For easier processing of data it was necessary to group companies in smaller number of groups. Descriptive statistic showed that the largest number of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises primarily performs restaurants and mobile food facilities activities. Then follow enterprises who perform activities of travel agencies and related services, which coincides with the data from the sampling population and justifies

the use of disproportionate stratified sampling. In the other enterprises we have grouped these with following activities: activity of arena and stadium; investment and marketing management of tourist destinations; rental and leasing of equipment for sport and recreation; passenger transport by inland waterways; consulting in tourism; manufacture and sale of souvenirs; care and maintenance of the body; hunting, trapping and related service activities; freshwater aquaculture and the wholesale and retail.

How tourism SMEs account economic entities (legal entities and entrepreneurs) that carry out activities in the field of tourism and hospitality, according to the data of descriptive statistics can be seen that 45.5% are legal entities, while 55.5% of the investigated companies make entrepreneurs. At the same time 85.5% of the surveyed SMEs in Vojvodina operate independently, while 14.5% is part of a larger company. Length of business of interviewed companies has been ranged from less than one to 110 years. The average length of operation of enterprises ( $M=10.79$ ) is 11 years old. Most of the surveyed firms (64.3%) operate in a period of one to 10 years.

On the basis of characteristics such as number of employees, business assets and annual business turnover is determined the size classification of each of the tested enterprises and following results were obtained: the highest number of surveyed tourism enterprises in the region of Vojvodina are micro enterprises (69.3%), followed by small (24.3%) and finally medium enterprises (6.4%). In most of the investigated companies (85.8%) owner is fully involved in the management and running of businesses, which points to another parameter in defining entrepreneurship and SME sector, typical for small and medium-sized enterprises.

### **Socio-demographic characteristics of owners, managers and employees of investigated micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina**

Socio-demographic characteristics of owners, managers (top, middle and lower management) and employees, and the description of these characteristics through statistics was necessary to determine do they have influence on the growth and development of enterprises, and therefore to improvement of destination competitiveness. Descriptive profile test showed that 56.8% of total subjects were men and 43.2% women. Most

respondents aged between 31 and 50 years (59.7%). Data related to the position in the company showed that the most of examined were owners of SME's (51.9%), followed by managers (top, middle and lower management makes 39.1%) and finally the remaining 9% of the respondents were employees and other part time employees.

Regarding the educational profile of respondents can be seen that 35.1% of participants completed college, while 32.7% of respondents have completed secondary school. Higher education had 23.2% of respondents, while the smallest is number of those who have completed post-graduate studies, and they make 9% of the sample. Analysis of the profession of respondents showed that the majority of survey participants (50.1%) has acquired education from activities related to tourism (primarily economics and management), 28.4% of respondents were tourism and hospitality professionals, while the remaining 21.5% acquired other professions. This information is obtained when the variables are reduced to a smaller number. Further examination of the educational profile founded that the largest number of respondents (31.9%) have other professions. Taking into account the previously mentioned fact that the participants in this field enter even a profession which belongs to the listed tourism and catering, we can say the following: economic (19.1%) and managerial (21.4%) leads the profession in relation to tourism (16.2%) and catering (11.3%), which is inferred from data analysis. This is supported by the fact that the majority of respondents (62.6%) work in tourism from a few months to ten years, which means that these respondents were doing another business. In tourism and hospitality they were engaged in since it established expansion and benefits that can arise from those activities. Also, it was found that most of the companies were registered to perform other activities, and have been registered under a different business activity code, which didn't have anything in common with tourism and hospitality industry. A number of respondents (22.9%) have between 21 and 30 years of experience in tourism, while the smallest is number of those (12.5%) with over 30 years of professional experience in tourism.

These results can be interpreted in several ways. The fact that the least number of respondents have experience over 30 years indicates that the majority of tourist companies that once operated in Vojvodina, no longer exists and that the tourism and hospitality industry of Vojvodina is destroyed. But encouraging fact is that many micro, small and medium enterprises in Vojvodina are registered for performing of tourism and

hospitality activities and they are doing business for up to ten years. This fact points to the new trends, not only in Vojvodina, but also in Serbia, as well as increasingly investments in tourism were made in the last ten years, considerable attention is paid to the tourism industry.

### **Research results**

Research for this study led in the direction of determining the existence of relationships or differences between variables that represent characteristics of the operations of tourism SMEs in Vojvodina, as well as the characteristics of those who manage or work in companies. In this way, we can determine the basic performance of the surveyed firms and predict the strategies and tactics that can lead to the growth and development of the SME's tourism sector, and thus the competitiveness of the tourist destinations of Vojvodina.

By statistical methods, were analyzed the main specifics, which can be used to further strategic plans and tactics of micro, small and medium-sized tourist and hospitality enterprises in Vojvodina. In the following text will be displayed only those results and tests which showed the statistically significant difference between the examined groups, or variables.

Chi-square test of independence (with continuity correction according to Yates) showed a statistically significant difference between the classification of companies by size and type of organization of the companies surveyed,  $\chi^2(1, n = 345) = 64.47$ ;  $p = 0.00$ ;  $\phi = -0.439$ . The coefficient phi indicates a high connection between the two variables. This means that the proportion of legal entities, which are classified by size on micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises, is significantly different from the proportion of entrepreneurs who are classified as micro, small and medium tourism enterprises in Vojvodina. In this case, 31% of legal entities are micro tourism enterprises, while 69% of entrepreneurs are micro enterprises. For small and medium-sized enterprises, this proportion is reversed: 78.3% of small and medium-sized tourism enterprises are registered as companies, while only 27.1% of small and medium-sized enterprises registered as an entrepreneur.

Through Chi-square test was tested whether there is a connection between the size of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises and activities they perform. Since the minimum frequency in all cells was

satisfied, strength of the relationship between the variables were measured by Cramer's V coefficient of multiple categories. This test of independence demonstrated the link between the size of enterprises and activities they perform of a medium strength:  $\chi^2(1, n = 345) = 50.89$ ;  $p = 0.00$ ; Cramer's  $V = 0.38$ . This coefficient for  $R-1$  and  $C-1 = 1$ , shows that the impact of firm size on the activities they perform is middle (Gravetter & Wallnau, 2004). Travel agencies, tour operators and other enterprises in business of reservations were 82.9% of micro-enterprises, while only 17.1% are classified as small and medium-sized tourism enterprises. Restaurants and other catering enterprises are also in high percentage (72.4%) of micro-enterprises, while 27.6% were classified as small and medium tourism enterprises. Enterprises for holiday and short-stay (the proportion of 82.2% of micro enterprises and 17.8% of small and medium enterprises) and other companies engaged in tourism and hospitality (75.6% micro and 24.4% small and medium enterprises) have similar indicators according to the size and activities, as previously shown in the surveyed companies. Only the proportions of hotels is different from the other enterprises, as 31% of hotels are micro enterprises, while 69% are classified as small and medium enterprises.

For the purpose of this work paper were analyzed the relations between the location of enterprises (by areas in Vojvodina, where they were registered) and their size, as well as the activities they perform. Chi-square test of independence did not show a significant link between the location and size of the company,  $\chi^2(1, n = 345) = 8.48$ ;  $p = 0.21$ ; Cramer's  $V = 0.16$ . This means that the proportion of micro tourism enterprises that are located in the abovementioned areas in Vojvodina is not significantly different from the proportion of small and medium-sized enterprises in these areas.

The relationship between firm size and length of business operations has been tested using Spearman rho correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyzes were performed to demonstrate satisfaction of the preconditions for the application of correlation (Pallant, 2009). It was measured a small positive correlation between these two variables,  $r = 0.15$ ;  $n = 345$ ;  $p = 0.005$ , where longer working of enterprises causes the bigger size of the surveyed enterprises.

In order to draw conclusions concerning the characteristics of the owners, managers and employees in the surveyed companies (i.e. those who run them) and determine the control levers and guidelines for the future, we

have been tested socio-demographic variables of respondents in relation to variables that reflect the performance of the enterprises. Through Chi-square test was investigated whether there is a link between the profession of respondents and activities that enterprises perform. Strength of the relations between the variables were measured through Cramer's V coefficient of multiple categories. This independence test showed bond of high strength between the profession of respondents and the activities of that enterprises perform:  $\chi^2(12, n = 345) = 91.89$ ;  $p = 0.00$ ; Cramer's  $V = 0.30$ . In travel agencies and other businesses dealing with the services of reservations and booking are employed 22.7% of economists, 15.7% of the managerial profession, 55.4% tourismologists and 11.8% employees with other professions. In restaurants proportion of employees is as follows: 25.8% were economists, 35.1% were managers, 5.4% tourismologists, 64.1% catering technicians and 50.9% are employed in other professions. In companies that provide accommodation services were employed 34.8% of economists, 40.5% of managers, 32.1% of tourismologists, 28.2% of catering technicians and 19.1% others. Other tourist and hospitality enterprises employ 16.7% of economists, 9.5% of managers, 7.1% tourismologists, 7.5% of catering technicians and 18.2% employees of other professions.

## **Conclusions**

Research results of this work paper have shown that there are differences in the operations of micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina. First of all, it is necessary to point out that the largest numbers of enterprises are registered for restaurant and catering services and tourist agencies. So, it can be concluded that the income from tourism in Vojvodina is achieved most of these companies. Regarding the regional distribution, it can be seen that in the number of registered micro, small and medium enterprises the leading areas are South Bačka and the area of Srem. It was explored that the surveyed enterprises, registered for various activities, also vary in size. Also, examined micro and small and medium enterprises differ according to the type of organization. All results indicate that the performances of micro and small and medium-sized tourist and hospitality enterprises in Vojvodina are different. Regarding to this, the first research hypothesis is accepted and it could be concluded that there are differences in business performance between micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina.

Based on the determined differences recommendations are given to help micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina to become and remain competitive in the tourism market. These are related to the recommendations aimed at adjusting enterprise strategy in relation to the type and size of company. The research in this paper gave only initial guidance on the appropriate application of modern marketing and management resources that could improve the competitiveness of Vojvodina as a tourist destination. Tourists consume primary elements (places of activities, tourist ambiances, facilities for entertainment and socio-cultural characteristics) in different combinations, depending on their needs and desires, and to this combination they join secondary elements of the proposal (which is in the most part consisted of tourism and hospitality companies) and additional elements of such supportive services (Milićević & Đorđević, 2016).

Complex tourism structure imposes the necessity of marketing orientation to total relationship marketing. As market becomes more competitive, a greater understanding of total relationship marketing will become more intensive (Pavlović et al., 2015). The total relationship marketing is a complex concept whose adequate application leads to numerous benefits, both among micro, small and medium-sized tourism enterprises in Vojvodina, as well as the destination. This concept refers to the entire operations of tourism enterprises and involves relationships, interactions and networks (Gummesson, 2008) with all stakeholders in the tourism market. The total relationship marketing as a complex concept includes the sustainable development of tourism destination. Sustainable tourism minimizes environmental and cultural damage, optimizes visitor satisfaction, maximizes long-term economic growth, and balances tourism growth potential and the conservation needs of the environment (Pavlović et al., 2015, p. 493).

Consumer behavior research is very important for both the distributors of tourism services and for the tourist destinations since tourism consumers have the option to choose between various tourist destinations. Distributors of tourism services, which in our case are tourism SMEs in Vojvodina, can benefit from the researches of decision-making processes when competing to design more efficient promotional activities directed towards the wishes and preferences of the consumers (Djeri et al., 2015). In their work paper, Đokić et al. (2014) suggested that there is a need for connection between steps in marketing management process: consumers' profile research (i.e. market segmentation research), belonging to strategic

marketing, and creating promotion mix (as marketing mix instrument), that belongs to tactical part of marketing. Their mission must be based on a strategy of customer relationships and quality management. The basic task of management in this case is the creation of strong relationships with guests, continuous monitoring of changes in consumers' demands and the creation of service standards that reflect identified demands by customers, including that physical evidence of service through well-planned and designed service ambience is provided (Blešić et al., 2015, p. 493).

Preferences, expectations from tourist destination and attitudes and opinions of potential tourists about tourist offers represent the most important factors of the estimation of alternatives between different tourist destinations (Djeri et al., 2015, p. 277). At the same time, can not be avoided creating a culture and values of enterprises, on this basis, and it should be worked on their continuous strengthening. To implement these activities, micro, small and medium tourism enterprises in Vojvodina must improve their potential (both human and material), as well as the implementation of program activities and value systems within them. The study found that owners, managers and employees of SMEs have adequate profession depending on which industry the enterprise carries on. Regarding to this, the second research hypothesis is confirmed, and it means that the profession of the owners, managers and employees is in line with the needs of micro, small and medium tourism enterprises. Also it was examined an extremely important role of the managers and owners of investigated enterprises, because of their attitudes, mostly depends on the acceptance of specific strategies and policies of the company. This fact reflects the basic difference between small and large enterprises. Relationships, interactions and networks of those who manage the company with the business environment are the most important influencing factors on performance of enterprises and competitiveness of destinations.

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