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# IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS OF INDICATORS ON SUSTAINABLE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF ISTRIA (CROATIA)

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## **Abstract**

*In this paper, tourism is being explored as a social and economic phenomenon affecting the entire economic and social life. Therefore, there is a need to approach the overall tourism development more accurately and with greater responsibility based on principles of sustainability. In this context, the aim of the research in this paper is to identify and evaluate indicators that support the sustainable development of tourism. Selected patterns of sustainable development indicators from various available systems were used in the research. The research will examine the hypothesis that links sustainable development, responsible and excellence-based tourism using Istria as an example. We also confirm that the link between sustainable development, responsible tourism and destination excellence is measurable and unbreakable.*

**Key Words:** *Istria, tourism, sustainable development, methodology, forms, indicators*

**JEL classification:** *O1*

## **Introduction**

The fact is that the world has been trying to implement various projects that support sustainable development for many years. In this regard, various institutions have developed and developed indicators to find the right solution, protect space and people, facilitate the strengthening of the economy and at the same time develop with minimal or completely neutralized negative aspects of nature, the environment and the community.

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The primary objective of this research is to determine the synergy of the overall economy and tourism. Tourism is most often seen as an economic category that brings revenue to the local community, but also to the wider economy. The issues we will particularly emphasize in this paper are: What are the potential gains and losses of tourism for the local community? Are they really realized? Do we have any solutions? It is extremely important to find answers to these questions, and to analyze potential solutions. The subject of research is to determine which economic indicators are suitable for measuring sustainable development and their implementation at the level of the tourist destination of Istria. The basic problem of work is to establish: sizable economic indicators involved in measuring sustainable tourism development. Indicators can help to prevent loss, damage due to inadequate responsiveness at the right time, timely planning of destination projects at the right time. The paper will test the hypothesis that there is a link between sustainable development, responsible tourism and excellence in tourism in the Istrian tourist destination and that this connection is measurable and unbreakable. With sustainable development, we create the preconditions for responsible tourism, the satisfaction of the inhabitants of life in their city. At the same time, the excellence of the destination, the excellence of service and tourism offer is needed to create the overall quality.

### **Definition of sustainable tourism development**

During the 60s, especially the 70s and to the greater extent of the 80s of the last century, focusing on the attention of many countries and enterprises of tourist service providers was solely on the economic aspects of tourism development, i.e. its direct, indirect effects on the economy of domestic and foreign tourists. This has caused sharp criticism and attention to the issues of tourism development impact on society and tourists themselves. The arguments were drawn from numerous examples with a negative sign in tourism development such as the destruction of space (its "burning" for the purpose of tourist construction), derogation from the natural environment and natural attractiveness, commercialization of cultural-historical and other heritage, neglect of anthropological specificity and distinctiveness, and the other (Dobre, 2005). This has caused changes in many destinations that, adapting to the needs of tourism development, have lost their originality and uniqueness, which has distorted tourist travel.

After the 1990s, the whole movement of "humane tourism", "responsible tourism", "healthier tourism", "tourism with vision and future", "eco-tourism" (McMinn, 1997; Wall, 1997; Buckley, 2000; Spenceley, 2008; Jiaying & Sanjay, 2009). More recently, all these terms include the term "sustainable tourism". It can be concluded that the concept of sustainable tourism as a form basically implies the aspiration of a local community (or community of broader scope) in relation to tourism development, which should become responsible for the type, type and pace of the selected tourist development. In other words, sustainable tourism planning should recognize the rights and needs of residents (hosts), respect their resources (physical environment), lifestyle and culture, as well as their right to affect the fate of local resources (tourist and others).

Sustainable tourism could be defined as tourism that "takes into account the current and future impacts on the environment, the economy and society, taking into account visitors, the industry, the environment and the local community" (Sustainable tourism, 3rd edition, Blue & Green Tomorrow, 2014) as a positive approach that seeks to reduce the tensions and fictions that arise from the complex interaction between tourism industry, visitors, the environment and society as a host (Dobre, 2005). It is an approach that involves working for more durable quality and natural and human resources. Also, sustainable tourism is defined as a meeting to meet the needs of current generations (tourists and hosts) without overwhelming interpretation of the ability of future generations (tourists and hosts) to meet their needs.

### **Indicators of sustainable development in tourism**

Sustainable tourism development indicators are defined by measuring instruments that represent sustainability indicators, identified boundary values. They have multiple functions if they are properly defined can lead to better decisions and more effective measurements. The measurements clarify all the problems that the stakeholders have, and provide the total information available to the public and decision-makers. Properly selected indicators of sustainable development provide an entire range of activities, activities, content in the destination that measures them, and provide alertness to problems and prevent economic, social and ecological constraints in development. They are also useful tools for communication, reflection and evaluation.

Below is an overview of the known system of sustainability indicators and institutions that participated in their proposals in their foundation. The term sustainable development has entered the general terminology of the '80s of the 20th century and points to the link between development and environmental protection, and was definitively accepted at the Rio de Janeiro Conference in 1992' (Endl & Berger, 2012). Then, the Rio + 20 Indicator System was adopted, which includes seven critical points: employment of energy sustainability, urban challenges, food safety and development, security of drinking water, ocean and ocean, and disaster relief solutions (<http://www.uncsd2012.org/rio20/7issues.html>).

Following the Environmental and Development Conference held in Rio de Janeiro in 1992, representatives of 179 governments for the future of a healthy society and economy in the world supported the way to the future through "sustainable development", initiated a process called Agenda 21 - Action Plan for 21. century. "Agenda 21 provides a template for action in 40 different areas (soil, forest, water, air, sustainable agriculture and rural development, biodiversity conservation, waste management, etc.) and lists 9 key social groups: women, children and young people, population, associations, local authorities, workers and trade unions, the business world and industry, scientists and farmers, whose actions are of crucial importance for the sustainable development of the Earth. Agenda 21 launched a call to local governments (cities and municipalities) to engage with their residents to discuss sustainable development and to make individual plans for action on that path. (<http://croatia.rec.org/wpcontent/uploads/2012/01/LA21KChrv2.pdf>).

UNWTO 2005 puts a proposal on sustainability measurement with twelve very concrete indicators that overlapping many elements with the Rio +20 proposal. Indicators UNWTO insists on measuring in the segments of local population satisfaction with tourism, the effects of tourism on the local community, the satisfaction of tourists, the seasonality of tourism and the economic benefit of tourism. It further suggests measuring indicators in the category of energy management, availability and preservation of drinking water, drinking water quality, household waste management, rigid waste management (garbage), development control and controlling the intensity of tourism development (UNWTO, 2004). They are still valid today, but are supplemented by current moments and monitoring.

The system of sustainable development indicators adopted by EUROSTAT aims to continuously improve the quality of the residents of the destination, the future of projects and lifestyles, spatial planning and ecological care. This system offers 20 interesting indicators that can point to numerous positives, but also threats and opportunities in space. Eurostat results are published every two years on the Eurostat website (<http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/sdi/indicators>).

The Tourism Sustainability Group (TSG) proposes a measure of sustainability with 23 indicators. This concept of measurement is aimed at public institutions, private companies and other organizations at European, national, regional and local level. Its main goal is to encourage joint action between the public and private sectors.

The GSTC (Global Sustainable Tourism Council) has created a system that is being implemented for the first time in 2010 to achieve a mutual understanding of a sustainable tourism destination. It proposes measuring sustainability in 4 key themes-areas (<https://www.gstccouncil.org/en/gstc-certification/gstc-criteria/criteria-for-hotels-and-tour-operators/39-general/general-content/634-global-sustainable-tourism-criteria-for-hotels-and-tour-operators.html>).

The Sustainability Measurement Indicators proposed by the Global Tourism Council are not different in many elements from other already proposed measurement systems. Particularly emphasized is the effectiveness of managing sustainable tourism development, maximizing economic benefits, minimizing the negative effects of tourism, maximizing benefits for the local community and visitors while minimizing the negative effects of tourism. The biggest difference from the previous systems is that the Global Tourism Council proposes and certification for hotels, which is a marketing extremely interesting and modern approach to tourism (<https://www.gstccouncil.org/en/gstc-certification/gstc-criteria/criteria-for-hotels-and-tour-operators/39-general/general-content/634-global-sustainable-tourism-criteria-for-hotels-and-tour-operators.html>).

The Mission of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) promotes policies that improve the economic and social benefits of people around the world. Trends encouraging policies designed to improve the quality of people's lives are encouraged, thus

encouraging systematic measurement of enterprise sustainability and competitiveness of tourism under OECD principles.

OECD Tourism Sustainable Development Indicators include 4 areas/themes, 11 indicators (<https://www.oecd.org/innovation/green/toolkit/oecd-sustainable-manufacturing-indicators.htm>): impact and effects of tourism, direct share tourism in GDP, revenues from foreign tourist arrivals per tourist to emitting markets, number of overnight stays in all types of accommodation capacities, export of tourist services, the ability of the destination to provide quality and competitive tourist services, labor productivity in tourist services, purchasing power parity and prices tourist services, state requirements for entry visa, destination attractiveness, natural resources and biodiversity, cultural and creative resources, visitor satisfaction, political responses and economic opportunities, national tourist action plans.

In accordance with all the projects and systems of sustainable development indicators presented in 2014, the European Commission has invited 100 European destinations to participate in the European Tourism Indicators System (ETIS) pilot project. "ETIS is a process managed locally and is designed to monitor, manage and strengthen the sustainability of a tourist destination, consisting of a range of indicators, tool sets and data sets. It is a useful means of tracking the results achieved by destinations, helping to make better management decisions and policy direction. ([Http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/](http://ec.europa.eu/growth/sectors/tourism/offer/sustainable/indicators/)) The indicators according to the ETIS program consist of: 27 main and 40 electoral indicators. The basic principle of the system of indicators is that responsibility for the destination, ownership and decision-making brings in a synergy between each other.

### **Research methodology**

The research in this paper is based on primary and secondary sources, and approaches and methods based on the attitudes of domestic and foreign researchers. Secondary and primary sources of data will be used for the research to obtain the necessary information. Secondary data refer to books, scientific and professional articles, internet sources of relevant international and domestic authors in the field of tourism, sustainable tourism, destination management, and so on. Descriptive research is applied in this paper, and data collected will be quantitatively and qualitatively analyzed with the help of Microsoft Office Excel and will be

presented in a tabular and graphical form. Descriptive methods of synthesis and analysis, comparisons, the collected data are systematized into a logical unit, with the aim of providing a review of the previous knowledge on the topics discussed above. The key elements of sustainable tourism development will be explored using the indicators outlined in the 7 system indicators. In this study, data from statistics on realized arrivals and overnight stays were used in the entire area of Istria, i.e. Istria county.

The basic objectives of this research are to identify key elements of sustainable tourism development in Istria. In this connection, a hypothesis has been put forward that claims that there is a link between sustainable development, responsible tourism and excellence in tourism in the Istrian tourist destination and that this connection is measurable and unbreakable. Proof of the hypothesis set will be performed on the example of the tourist destination of Istria.

The research is based on the data available in 2016 as the last year for which it was possible to collect / obtain the relevant data. Based on the available data, the aspects of sustainability were analyzed and the level of sustainable development of Istria's tourism was achieved.

The spatial coverage of the research is related to the rural and maritime space of Istria, located in the northeastern part of the Adriatic Sea on the westernmost and largest peninsula of Croatia. Istria is the westernmost part of the Republic of Croatia and is the largest Croatian peninsula, the closest Mediterranean tourist destination to the countries of Central Europe.

The surface of the Istrian peninsula in the Istrian County is 2,822 square kilometers, which represents 4.98% of the total area of the Republic of Croatia (<http://www.istra-istria.hr/index.php?id=610>).

Istria is the leading tourist destination in Croatia. According to available data, [http://www.istra.hr/app/upl\\_files/TZIZ\\_2010.pdf](http://www.istra.hr/app/upl_files/TZIZ_2010.pdf); [http://www.istra.hr/app/upl\\_files/TZ\\_2014\\_01-12.pdf](http://www.istra.hr/app/upl_files/TZ_2014_01-12.pdf) in 2016, the total accommodation capacity of 294,339 units (camp beds and beds) was available to tourists in 2016. Of the number of accommodation units mentioned, 50% of campsites are located. With total capacity, the Istrian County participates with 25% of the total capacity of the Republic of Croatia. In six years (2010-2016) capacities in Istrian County increased by 26%. Tourist traffic

in the Istrian County recorded a higher increase in capacity growth. Thus, according to the latest public data, in 2016 more than 3.8 million arrivals were achieved, which is 25% in total arrivals in Croatia, and over 25 million overnight stays or 32% of realized in Croatia. The average stay of tourists in Istria in 2016 is 6.5 days and is higher than the Croatian average for 5 days.

### **Results of research and discussion**

Sustainable Tourism Development in Istria country (Istria) is considered as a development that, with its internal structure and overall practices and the effects of tourism, as well as their natural environment, keep themselves (only) reproduced, by means of sustainable and thoughtful cooperation. Thus, sustainable development, i.e. sustainability, is understood as an integral sustainable development that, apart from ecological, also has the economic, socio-cultural and political dimensions (Lay, 2007) of sustainability. Whether all four dimensions of sustainability in any such balance - the concept of sustainability falls. It is important to emphasize here that all dimensions of sustainability are measured with the help of indicators to measure the sustainability of development processes.

The first group is ecological indicators to examine and monitor the impact of tourism on a natural basis. The second group is economic-tourist indicators whose purpose is to assess the development and importance of tourism, contribution to the economy and the community through the impact on employment, investments and revenues of municipal or city budgets. The third and fourth groups are socio-cultural and political indicators that follow the mutual relationship between tourism and cultural heritage, i.e. the harmony of tourists with the local community.

#### **Ecological aspect of tourism sustainability of Istria**

The purpose of the ecological indicators is to examine and assess the impact that tourism has on individual elements of the natural base. This means that from the aspect of sustainable tourism the primary objective of these indicators is to monitor and limit the invasive action on a natural basis, which can have adverse consequences. The most striking influences of tourism are occupation of the natural space by building tourism capacities, drinking water consumption, production and disposal of municipal waste and production and discharge of wastewater.

Table 1: *Indicators of ecological sustainability of Istria tourism*

Indicator	Unit	Quantity	Indicator	Impact
Areas of Protected Natural Areas	ha	22080,19	-	Attractiveness
Share of Protected Earth's Surface and Water Surface in the Total Surface	%	-	7,82	Attractiveness
Potable water consumption and measures to reduce consumption	-	-	Sufficient quantities are provided	Contribution
Water quality (sea and water)	-	-	The quality of the good is regularly monitored	Attractiveness
Waste water and measures for its exploitation	-	-	To a lesser extent it is used	Contribution
Municipal waste and measures for its reduction and recycling	-	-	Disposal is good, small fraction is sorted and recycled	Contribution

Source: *Authors' research*

Protected natural areas fall into the most attractive areas of some country, and they are a tourist function by categorizing the importance of second-tier management goals. However, in addition to tourism, protected nature has the function of conservation of plant and animal habitat, educational and research function (Boyd, 2004; Ružić, Amidžić, Ružić, 2011). However, increasing the share of protected natural areas on the surface of the tourist region has two major positive consequences for the further development of sustainable tourism. Primarily, the importance of nature protection and biodiversity is increased, and the tourism attractiveness of the region is further strengthened.

On the territory of the Istrian County there are 33 protected areas of 22,080.19 hectares, which occupy 7.82% of the land area of the county.

The consumption of potable water and water for tourism purposes has certain specificities in relation to other consumers. The most important thing is that increased water consumption in tourism occurs in the summer months when in most cases the smallest amount of rainfall and the hydrological minimum. Related to this, in the summer months there is a maximum consumption of about 100 days (Gulić, 2000). Part of this spending is not only related to tourism but to irrigation of agricultural land and other economic activities.

Finally, in tourism, there is a hidden consumption of water through the production of food and alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages intended for receptive tourist regions (Müller, 2004). Istria has sufficient quantities of drinking water for the needs of the population and the economy, and thus increased consumption in the current tourist accommodation facilities cannot endanger the water supply provided by the three Istrian water supply systems (Istrian Plumbing, Buzet Vodovod, Vodovod Labin).

In Istria and especially in domestic wastewater management, it is hampered by factors that limit and hamper the implementation of the principle of sustainable management. The first group of factors are natural, and among them the most important composition and geological structure of the relief of the largest part of Istria with water-permeable sedimentary rocks and high density of underground and surface waters. The second group of factors are social, among which the most important settlement structure with many small and spatially scattered settlements and parts of settlements, which makes it difficult to build a sewerage network.

Disposal of municipal waste generated in each area is an ecological, social and economic issue and a technological challenge for local self-government units. Therefore, from the aspect of sustainability, it must be environmentally efficient, economically viable and socially acceptable (Morrissey & Browne, 2003). The increased number of tourists in the receptive regions further jeopardizes the natural base, creates costs for the local population and burdens the communal systems in the destination. Utility Waste Management in Istria is carried out by seven public utilities, whose headquarters are, except for Umag, in the centers of former municipalities. The municipal waste is disposed of at seven landfills and about 150 illegal landfills.

In previous scientific research and practical application of the principle of sustainable tourism at various spatial levels, great attention has been paid to the mutual influence and linkages to the natural basis, and numerous indicators have been developed and implemented for this purpose. However, it would be wrong to interpret the meaning and goals of sustainable tourism solely from the aspect of interaction with the natural basis because the economic implications were the driver of development in some receptive regions.

Table 2: *Indicators of Economic Sustainability of Istria Tourism*

Indicator	Unit of measure	Quantity	Indicator	Impact
The ratio between the number of tourists and local residents (average and top of the season per day)	average per day	-	0,329	Social pressure
	average in top of the season per day		1,187	
Accommodation capacity accumulation rate	annual average%	-	23,3	Pressure
	average in peak season%		83,9	
Number of tourists per square meter and beach per day	Whatever. average:	-		Pressure
	destinations		0,024	
	beaches		0,042	
	top of the season:			
	destinations		0,087	
	beaches		0,150	
Total number of beds and places in camps per 1000 inhabitants	-	-	1,41	Social pressure
The share of tourism in GDP	%	-	18,2	Contribution to the economy
Average spending per visitor	€	-	75,90	Contribution to the economy
The average length of stay in days	-	-	6,5	Contribution to tourism

Source: *Authors' research*

The significance and purpose of using economic-tourist indicators are multiple. First, the indicators show the level of development of tourism, i.e. the tourist significance of the municipality and the city through the burden of space for accommodation capacities and degree of concentration. Secondly, from the aspect of sustainable tourism, they show how much the realized tourism traffic utilizes to the local community (Ružić, Amidžić, 2017) through overnight stays and collected tourist taxes without creating any negative effects. Third, indicators show the importance for the local economy from the aspect of investment in tourism and hospitality of municipalities and cities, i.e. the contribution of tourism to employment.

Table 3: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Istria, the average stay of tourists and capacity utilization in 2016*

Month	Arrivals	Nights	Average stay in days	Average capacity utilization in days	Average capacity utilization in%
Januray	18.268	76.272	4,2	0,2	0,6
February	33.95	102.789	3,0	0,3	1,0
March	83.137	281.067	3.4	0,9	2,9
April	165.727	563.399	3,2	1,8	6,0
May	366.477	1.554.161	4,2	5,3	17,1
June	510.41	3.010.083	5,9	10,2	37,7
July	1.009.068	7.121.501	7,1	24,2	78,0
August	1.033.160	8.192.689	7,9	27,8	89,7
September	472.516	3.405.377	7,2	11,6	38,7
October	124.168	518.474	4,2	1,8	5,8
November	29.265	117.752	4,0	0,4	1,3
December	37.748	112.23	2,9	0,4	1,3
Total	3.851.405	25.003.197	6,5	84,9	23,3

Source: *Istria Tourist Board. Tourist arrivals and nights by Tourist Offices 01-12/2016, [online] Available at: ([http://www.istra.hr/.app/upl\\_files/TZ\\_2016\\_01-12.pdf](http://www.istra.hr/.app/upl_files/TZ_2016_01-12.pdf))*

Tables 2 and 3 analyzed the economic aspect of sustainable tourism with several selected indicators such as: tourist operating indicator, specific sleeping threshold, contribution to economy and tourism. The tourist operating indicator shows the pressure of tourism on space and society as a ratio of tourist numbers and local population per day and the total number of accommodation units per 1000 inhabitants. These indicators show social pressure that can have a negative impact on the quality of tourism and its sustainability.

Increasing the number of nights has positive effects as it can strengthen the local economy and increase the number of employees. By contrast, the increase in overnight stays can negatively affect the natural base through increased emissions of harmful gases, wastewater, municipal waste generation, traffic jams and the like. Likewise, a sudden increase in the number of overnight stays can have a negative impact on the local population due to increased crowding in settlements where the emergence of tourists with different lifestyle habits and styles can cause open conspiracies. The negative effect on the local economy comes from the threat of unilateral development with tourism that would depend on most

of the community's employees. The quantification and determination of the tolerance threshold over which the number of overnight stays starts, with positive, negative and negative effects on the natural base, the local economy and the population of some space is not possible without considering the developmental specificity of each individual tourism region. Attempts to quantify such a specific sustainability threshold were conducted in the Mantova and Lepontinin Alps (Castellani et al., 2007, Castellani & Sala, 2010) surveys by calculating daytime loads per local inhabitant by dividing the total number of overnight stays with the number of days in the year and the number of inhabitants of the observed area and multiplied by 100. A subjective assessment of the researchers that the specific sustainability threshold of 25% (in Istria 23.3%) after which the overnight stays, with positive, also have negative effects on the tourist destination.

For implementing the full monitoring of sustainable tourism, apart from the ecological and economic-tourist indicators, it is necessary to analyze and incorporate socio-cultural indicators that cover a wide range of quantitative and qualitative data. One of the fundamental values of sustainable tourism is the respect of the socio-cultural authenticity of the receptive region, the preservation of its cultural heritage and its traditional values, and its contribution to intercultural understanding and tolerance.

Table 4: *Socio-cultural aspect of sustainability of Istria tourism*

Category	Indicator	Impact
Cultural and Historical Heritage (Cultural Historical Monuments of Istria)	Over 83 monuments from different times; ancient Roman monuments (Amphitheater Arena, Archbishop of Sergijevac, Augustan Temple, remains of many Roman villas ...); the Euphrasian Basilica complex in Porec from the 6th century, listed on the UNESCO List of Protected Cultural Heritage; the other valuable sacral heritage such as medieval churches painted in frescoes, church of Sv. Blaža in Vodnjan with a collection of sacred art and preserved mummified bodies of several saints; the remains of Glagolitic influence in medieval art and literacy; medieval castles and fortresses, the historic town center of the small towns in the Istrian interior and on the coast; numerous Austrian fortifications from the 19th century in the vicinity of Pula; Italian architecture between the two world wars with a mining settlement and a separate urban plan of Raša; recognizable traditional rural architecture with drywalls and chalks	Attractiveness

Respect for Traditions and Traditions	Traditions and traditions of Istria are respected and included in the tourist offer by organizing thematic events.	Attractiveness
The culture of living in the spiritual and material sense	Thanks to the rapid development of tourism and its accompanying activities, a high standard of living has been achieved in Istria, which has allowed its inhabitants a pleasant life in a spiritual and material sense.	Quality
Cultivating a regional identity in Istria in everyday life or on special occasions (customs, manifestations...), homeland	In Istria, preserved traditional values testify of interculturality and tolerance. There are also events, social gatherings where domestic "rape" or dialect is kept. At folk music and dancing in Istria, musicians and folklorists meet with dietitian harmonics, beasts, sopilo and mihu ...). A distinctive feature of the Istrian folk tradition is the way of playing and singing known as the five-tune Istrian scale as part of UNESCO's protected intangible heritage, as well as numerous traditional daily Istrian dialects.	Attractiveness
Relationship with tourism: attitudes of owners of accommodation facilities and local population	Relations and attitudes towards tourism in Istria are correct	Satisfaction with population and tourists

Source: *Authors' research*

The protected material cultural and historical heritage in sustainable tourism has the same meaning as a protected nature because, apart from the emphasized tourist value as a part of the attraction, it has the role of preserving the cultural and national identity of a given space, and is also part of the anthropogenic and physiognomic constituent of the landscape. The importance for tourism is twofold because the protected cultural and historical heritage increases the attractiveness of a tourist destination and can increase the resources needed for its preservation.

Table 5: *Political aspect of sustainable tourism in Istria*

Indicator	Indicator	Influence
National and regional tourist plans	Master plan of Istrian counties 2015-2025.	Planning
Business support provided by tourist communities (local / county), infrastructure, family, neighbors and the like	Great support	Participation of the community
Security	On a high level	Quality

Source: *Authors' research*

With the emergence of a concept of sustainable tourism and the attempts of its application in different destinations, socio-cultural components such as respect for the customs, culture and languages of the receptive regions population and the creation of a multicultural atmosphere are put into the first plan.

The political dimension of sustainability is reflected in the functioning of the society / state in a way that determines its cultural identity and overall destiny, working conditions and the lives of people and, in general, of the population living on its territory. It is, therefore, the practice of self-determination, that is, self-determination in everyday life. The political dimension of the sustainability of tourism is concerned with the widespread support of the JLS (village, municipality ...), family, neighbors and similar business community in the tourist community (county and local). Local community support in business is most clearly seen in the degree of infrastructural equipment of the area where the analyzed subject of tourism is located and which greatly contributes to the quality of life and work. In this regard, we can conclude that the Tourist Board of the Istrian County provides a satisfactory support to the work of tourism.

Support of higher instances, such as a village, municipality, city, county, etc., is also recognized and strong. Local community support, in terms of logistics, organization, financial input, and the like, is no exception.

General security, although not part of the tourist attraction of the receptive tourist region, is the primary criterion for making a decision of a tourist in choosing a tourist destination. Peace and security of tourists are the preconditions for a successful development of tourism in the settlement, region or state. Any indication of a threat to peace and security causes a decline in tourist traffic, not only in the affected destination, but also in neighboring regions.

## **Conclusion**

Investigating the integral sustainability of tourism in Istria Country (Istria), we have concluded that it has been well achieved. The potential for achieving the integral sustainability of tourism in Istria are the natural environment and favorable tourist-geographical position.

By analyzing the ecological dimension of the sustainability of tourism in Istria it can be concluded that an elevated level of sustainability has been achieved. Indicators show that in Istria under protection 22.080,19 hectares or 7.82% of its total area. By analyzing other aspects of ecological sustainability of tourism in Istria, it was found that the amount of water provided by three Istrian waterways and alternative sources is sufficient to increase tourist capacities and tourists. The quality of drinking and seawater is regularly monitored, which also increases the quality of Istria's tourist offer.

In the economic dimension of tourism sustainability in Istria, the results show a satisfactory situation, but it is necessary to monitor the pressure of space tourism.

Tourism operational indicator and spatial concentration of tourism in Istria shows a lot of pressure. Confirmation of this indicator gave results of the modified index of importance of the tourist center. According to that location quotient, Istria has developed tourism. The realized tourist nights in Istria have so far had only positive effects on the natural base, the population and the economy. By analyzing the results of the specific peak of Istria overnight stays, 23.3 approached the assumed value of 25.00, whose overdraft would indicate the possible negative effects of tourism.

The socio-cultural dimension has also been achieved as expected, as well as the political dimension visible in all its segments, supporting the development of sustainable tourism of the entire community and economic subjects of Istria.

Integral sustainability of Istria's tourism is achieved in its entirety because it is based on the equal representation of all dimensions of sustainability in the ecological, economic, socio-cultural and political dimension.

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