

The Future of Tourism

Key outcomes and conclusions of the 7th Tourism International Scientific Conference (TISC) held at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja, June 2–4, 2022

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For a seventh year in a row, the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja successfully hosted the seventh TISC Conference titled "The Future of Tourism" in the period from June 2 to June 4, 2022. The key theme of this year's conference was the future of tourism in the circumstances surrounding global tourism recovery from the crises in the travel, destination and hospitality industry due to the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Two years after the COVID-19, the organizers are proud to have successfully organized this year's conference in the "new normal" conditions. The TISC 2022 conference was organized by the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in cooperation with a number of national and foreign institutions and the support of the Ministry of Education, Science and Technological Development of the Republic of Serbia. The conference brought together a great number of both domestic and foreign participants from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Japan, Malaysia, North Macedonia Romania, Russia, and Serbia.

Prof. Drago Cvijanović, the Dean of the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja officially opened the conference. In his keynote speech, Prof. Cvijanović greeted the participants and thanked them for attending the conference and thus acknowledging the work and dedication of the Faculty. During the plenary session, the four keynote speakers, namely, Prof. Michael Anastasiou from Cyprus, Prof. Andrei Jean-Vasile from Romania (who presented the co-authored paper written together with Ovidiu Condeianu), Prof. Marcus Stephenson from Malaysia and Prof. Tsuyoshi Kigawa from Japan addressed the conference participants.

Michael Anastasiou, Ph.D., is the Academic Director at the Department of Culinary Arts and Catering Services at MIEEK and a Visiting Professor at the School of Hospitality at InterNapa College. Prior to his current position he worked as a lecturer at the University of Cardiff Metropolitan (Cyprus campus) and as a special teaching staff at the University of Central Lancashire Cyprus. In addition, he has a long teaching experience, in graduate and undergraduate level studies. Furthermore, he has administrative working experience in higher education institutions in Cyprus (American College, CDA College, Larnaca College). He has an extensive experience in the quality assurance and the accreditation process in

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higher education. He is primarily interested in the thematic areas of knowledge management, organizational learning, vocational and technical education. He co-authored four books, published various academic articles and participated in international conferences. He serves as a member in different scientific committees of academic journals and conferences. **Andrei Jean-Vasile**, PhD, is full professor at Petroleum-Gas University of Ploiesti and scientific researcher at National Institute for Economic Research Costin C. Kirițescu, Romanian Academy. He is co-founder and Head of the Research Network on Resources Economics and Bioeconomy (RebResNet). Issues like agricultural and resources economics, bioeconomy, micro and macroeconomics are among his research and scientific interests. **Marcus Stephenson**, Ph.D., is a Professor of Tourism and Hospitality Management, and Dean of the School of Hospitality at Service Management at Sunway University (Malaysia). Prior to this appointment in October 2017, he was Professor and Head of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at the University of the South Pacific (Fiji). He also worked at Middlesex University Dubai (United Arab Emirates) as the Chair of Research and as an Associate Professor from 2005-2014. He is the co-author of 'Tourism and Citizenship: Rights, Freedoms and Responsibilities in the Global Order' (2014) and co-editor of 'International Tourism Development and the Gulf Cooperation Council States: Challenges and Opportunities'. He is a member of the editorial advisory board for several academic journals, and has been an external examiner and academic adviser for institutions in the Middle East, East Asia, Europe and the South Pacific. **Tsuyoshi Kigawa**, Ph.D., is a Professor at the Faculty of Tourism, Wakayama University. He was born in the Nishijin District of Kyoto, which is known as a district of Japanese filmmaking. His grandfather was an art joiner in films and worked with filmmakers such as Akira Kurosawa and Kenji Mizoguchi. After graduating from the Kyoto Institute of Technology, he explored several countries, Sri Lanka, China, and USA as an architect and studied urban morphology at the Graduate School of University College London. After his return to Japan, in addition to urban research, he conducted research on how to distill narrative stories from local cities; and wrote scripts on Rakugo and short films. He produced several short films as a producer and a director. His latest film is "Yokosuka 1953". In this film, he tried to find a real mother of a woman born of mixed races, who was born in Japan just after the war and was adopted and relocated to the United States. This film received the Grand Prix at the Tokyo Documentary Film Festival in 2021, 1st place in ethnography and society at the 2021 Terres Festival Awards. He currently directs Japan World's Tourism Film Festival.

The aforementioned keynote speakers gave presentations dealing with the key topics in modern tourism, travel and hospitality industry. The first presentation "*Gastronomy: the past, present and its future role in Tourism*" was given by prof. Michael Anastasiou. The second presentation titled "*Tourism, agriculture and circular economy developments in European Union: a global scan of expectations and future challenges*" was delivered by Prof. Andrei Jean-Vasile and Ovidiu Condeianu. The third presentation on "*Deciphering research-related tourism (RRT) as a multifaceted form of special interest tourism*" was held by Prof. Marcus Stephenson. The plenary session was concluded after the fourth presentation titled "*The future of tourism based on the trend of films about tourism*" was delivered by Prof. Tsuyoshi Kigawa.

The conference discussed a new multilateral approach to innovative, environmentally-friendly and sustainable tourism in the post-COVID-19 environment, as well as tourism planning, including the capacities to perceive and meet the needs of tourists and actively respond to challenges in different tourism and hospitality sectors. The center of the global tourism conversation referred to national and international recovery plans for the future period. The conference participants had a chance to learn about the practical experiences and examples of good practice through the presentations given by both international and

domestic lecturers. These presentations were mainly focused on the issues pertaining to restarting ideas in tourism, travel and hospitality industry. A special session was dedicated to the presentation of papers and during this part of the conference the following papers were presented: “Determining the travel risk perception and travel behavior of Serbian residents during the post-pandemic period”, “Applying technologies of the fourth industrial revolution and the future of ecotourism and tourism of protected areas”, “Improving hotel performance in the “new normal” business context”, “Digitalization and artificial intelligence: new dimensions in tourism”. The Thematic Proceedings of this international conference (a total of 38 scientific papers written by 69 authors/co-authors) are available to the scientific community and other interested parties (ISBN9 978-86-89949-65-0). In addition, as a part of this event, the prizes were awarded to young researchers up to the age of 35 by the Research Network on Resources Economics and Bioeconomy Association (RebResNet). Since 2 papers were of equal quality and merits, the authors of these papers shared the award. The awarded papers are: “Material basis in the function of future tourist development of Pčinja district” by Anđelina Marić Stanković and “The future of tourism requires origin: trace of an old cultural policy in Vrnjačka Banja” co-authored by Danijela Pantović and Nemanja Pantić. Other papers were presented in the form of poster presentations on the Faculty premises. The authors were given the opportunity to disseminate the findings of their research and answer the questions of all interested participants.

The conference outputs, conclusions and recommendations were agreed upon by the participants based on the inputs provided by the presentations of papers, exchange of practical and theoretical experiences, as well as relevant discussions. These are as follows:

- In terms of the COVID-19 crisis impact and consequently its numerous challenges to tourism, travel and hospitality industry, the following can be concluded: The tourism industry is very susceptible to the impacts of the different crisis situations that can affect tourism development patterns in the future. The issue of trust in the context of destination choice, transportation, health risk, etc, is still a vital matter and as such significantly influences the future of tourism.
- The “recovering tourism” trend implies the transformation of various sectors/industries directly or indirectly linked to tourism including gastronomy, food tourism, destination management, hotel performance in a new business context, tourism in protected areas, supply chain management, organization and performance of administrative tasks, marketing and promotion, etc.
- Tourism industry should come up with new solutions in order to address new challenges brought about by COVID-19 pandemics. With this in mind, the following should be considered: improving communication with travelers/tourists; building trust; travel companies need to improve the transportation offer and make travel more convenient. Modern tourists are well informed and they usually ask for a full-service package which requires a large number of suppliers. Therefore, the 4IR technologies and digitalization due to their transformational roles have a huge potential in terms of managing tourism destinations and hospitality industry by implementing Smart Tourism paradigm and/or artificial intelligence.
- The human-nature relationship should be considered as a basis for building a new environmentally sustainable tourism offer. A truly sustainable ecotourism development, i.e., ecosystem tourism, should be pursued in order to attract a larger number of tourists, especially those coming from abroad. Many destinations that were attractive and popular in the past are considered “out of fashion” nowadays. Production and broadcasting of travel TV shows, as well as films, are very

important since these easily reach a large audience and attract tourists to less known destinations. This should be used as a tool to support further development of the tourism and hospitality industry.

- Currently, while waiting for the tourism mobility to fully recover and for the tourists to accept the “new normal” circumstances in the post-COVID-19 era, it would be desirable that the tourism and hospitality industry embrace the virtual practices which are becoming increasingly popular among the people and accordingly the target population – tourists. In this respect, it should also be noted that people are becoming more confident in utilising new technologies which opens new opportunities for the introduction and application of the “Research-related Tourism (RrT)” as a multifaceted, dynamic, progressive, inimitable and adaptable model.
- Cutting-edge technologies and rapid technological advancement, as well as the two-year long COVID-19 pandemic, have brought about numerous challenges, particularly including social, economic and demographic ones. The hotel industry has thus been faced with many changes and challenges. Therefore, a quick and proactive response to new demands is required, as well as getting down to creating new business environment by improving hotel performance and implementing an innovative marketing approach, risk management and supply chain management.
- Tourism and agriculture are considered important sectors in terms of the transformation of the European economy and meeting the needs and expectations of the general public. These sectors must be prepared for proactively solving all possible future challenges. Adequate measures and models must be implemented so as to achieve long-term sustainable future, particularly focusing on bioeconomy and circular economy.
- The outbreak and long-term consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic are significantly affecting and reshaping the modern tourism and hospitality industry. The consumer demands are rapidly changing and becoming more complex and challenging. This is particularly noticed in the rural tourism, ecotourism and gastronomy sectors. The increased interest in nature tourism, natural food products, getting back to roots, heritage and tradition should be considered. In this respect, enhanced nature protection and green infrastructure development should also be promoted.
- Decades-long uncontrolled tourism growth and irresponsible travel have harmed the global economic, social, cultural and natural resources. The COVID-19 outbreak was a wake-up call for the tourism industry. It is imperative to achieve sustainable tourism development if the tourism industry wants to stay afloat. Therefore, the tourism and hospitality industry must focus on, as well as implement global tourism recovery principles.
- The models of tourism and travel industry recovery in the post-pandemic period are attracting increased attention. In this short period of time, domestic and leisure travel have recorded the greatest revival. However, the tourism industry’s performance depends on numerous factors, where changing of market dynamics, consumer preferences, ability of businesses and destinations to adapt are among the most influential ones.
- Predicting the future of tourism is a very complex and demanding task. There is an infinite number of future solutions to be anticipated and a large number of

circumstances to be considered. With this in mind, it is important to mention that the tourism experts emphasize that radical changes, both innovative and sustainable, are required in order to make the tourism industry sustainable and profitable one.

Considering the above-stated facts, it may well be argued that the tourism industry indeed has the promising future, despite all challenges including those brought about by the COVID-19 pandemic and associated restrictions and limitations. This also represents the general conclusion of the 7th Tourism International Scientific Conference (TISC) held at the Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja in the period June 2 – 4, 2022. However, all actors involved in the tourism, travel and hospitality industry should foster a multilateral and interdisciplinary approach to solving the identified issues and potential risks in this field. The exchange of experiences and knowledge, as well as the examples of best practices are vital for sustainable tourism development. In this respect, events such as this conference are very important. The dialogue between the actors, interested parties and travelers should be promoted, enhanced and facilitated – this is a win-win situation. Although the last two years were marked by the severe COVID-19 consequences and restrictions changed the way we live, work, communicate, interact and travel, we learned a lot and came out stronger. The pandemic has given rise to a new trend driven by the “sustainability-conscious” tourists. The demand for sustainability in all aspects related to tourism and travel, even the eco-verified destinations, has risen. Therefore, it is important to keep in mind that in the years to come sustainability issues and nature conservation will be of critical importance for tourists.