

# The influence of tourism on the southern and northern region of South Moravia

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*Abstract:* In the South Moravia there are some areas that can be more oriented on tourism. The paper is focused on two areas. One area is located in the north, in the Moravian Karst (case municipalities Jedovnice and Křtiny) and second is located in south, in the Lednice-Valtice area (case municipalities Lednice and Valtice). Both regions are important tourist centers in the region, also in the Czech Republic. The Lednice-Valtice area is inscribed on the UNESCO list and its landscape are under protection by Natura 2000, by Special Area of Conservation and by the Ramsar Convention. In the north is famous and most important karst area in the Czech Republic and Central Europe. The employment rate of people working in tourism in these regions is about 5.3 %. The catering and accommodation facilities in Lednice and Valtice are in operation year-round in all cases, in Jedovnice and Křtiny are 25 % of them operating only in the summer season. The main reason of tourists to visit Jedovnice and Křtiny is vacation, particularly summer holidays and the most preferred reason for visiting Lednice and Valtice is a wine tourism. The most residents expressed a quite strong support for tourism development. Findings in this paper is based on our questionnaire survey, own investigations and data from the Czech Statistical Office.

*Key-Words:* tourism, accommodation facilities, community development, Moravian Karst, Lednice-Valtice area

## Introduction

The tourism sector belongs to the largest component of the national and global economy, even in the Czech Republic. Tourism brought a significant contribution to the economy of tourist destinations, but also to their socio-cultural development. Being a labour-intensive domain, tourism industry has proven its ability in creating and maintaining jobs even when other industries are in decline (Mahika, Răvar, 2014).

In the Czech Republic there are some areas that may be more oriented on tourism. Such areas that bigger part of their activity is oriented to the tourism may face problems but at the same time can have benefits more than others (Štastná, et al., 2014).

A major problem of tourism in the Czech conditions is its seasonality. It is given by the natural conditions and lore. The South Moravia has relatively weak opportunities for the development of winter tourism (in terms of winter sports). For the most part it is reliant on the summer holiday period, despite the fact that some forms (gastronomy connected with the culture of wine) are enabled a

virtually year round. The pitfall is a general habit of Czechs to be engaged in tourism, especially in the summer months.

The potential for rural tourism is evenly distributed in the South Moravian Region (Zvara, 2010). However, we can find considerable differences in individual tourist regions, especially between their cultural and historical value.

For the needs of tourism, the South Moravia is divided into 5 natural tourist areas. The paper is focused on two areas – located in the north Moravian Karst (municipalities Jedovnice and Křtiny) and south located the Lednice-Valtice area (municipalities Lednice and Valtice).

## Southern region is above all Lednice-Valtice area

The southern area is very popular not only for domestic tourists but also for foreign tourists. Lednice-Valtice area is the largest man-modeled territories in Europe ("Garden of Europe") and in 1996 was inscribed on the UNESCO list.

Since 2003 it is a part of the Biosphere Reserve called "Dolní Morava". Biosphere Reserve Dolní

Morava is the youngest and smallest of the Czech Biospheric Reservations, however it is the only one in the Czech Republic which has twice UNESCO status. It is not even on a global scale too common.

There are the set of six ponds and the largest Moravian pond called Nesyt. Around the pond Nesyt is occurred salt-loving flora. The ponds are also protected as bird area (NATURA 2000), Special Area of Conservation and as a wetland of international importance by the Ramsar Convention. There is one of the most important bird sanctuaries in the country (Kmet, 2011).

The surrounding of Lednice ponds is a very popular tourist site. There are many paths or trails for hikers. The route between forest, meadows and ponds is surrounded by a variety of romantic historical buildings, which in the past belonged to the Liechtenstein family. Near the Lednice Castle is a greenhouse and labyrinth with geometrically cropped shrubs and minaret with views of the nearby Lednice-Valtice area.

The region is popular for tourists not only because of the beautiful nature, but also because of the history. Lednice castle charmed even the filmmakers who enjoy shooting there. This is evidenced also by attendance of visitors. A total of 330,000 people visited the Chateau Lednice last year. It was the highest attendance ever (Lindnerová, 2013). This attendance has been surpassed in August. Chateau Lednice is the most visited monument in the Czech Republic. Preservationists estimate that the park annually visited by about 1.5 million people (Šupálek, 2014).

This southern region has very beautiful nature, charming romantic architecture, unmistakable genius loci, which makes it one of the most visited tourist regions in the Czech Republic.

Lednice and Valtice lies in the hottest area in the Czech Republic. A typical altitude ranges from 170 to 250 m above sea level, so quite favorable for touring all groups of tourists (parents with strollers, seniors or small kids on bikes).

### **Northern region is mainly Moravian Karst**

The attractiveness of the northern area in terms of tourism is high and means the significant potential for the development. It is the most famous and most important karst area in the Czech Republic and Central Europe. More than 300,000 visitors is visited this area annually (Hromas, 2013).

In contrast with the southern area there is an average altitude 450 m above sea level and there are no significant ponds here. However, tourists can find a wide variety of karst phenomena, as well as valuable species of flora and fauna, which are

protected and monitored by experts in terms of the impact of climate. Seven basic climatic characteristics are being measured at the specialized automatic climatological stations built in years 2006-2008. The highest mean air temperature was measured at the station Sloup in 2009. This locality shows the highest variability of air temperature due to its position. The highest relative air moisture (about 85 %) is reached in the bottom of the dry valley (Rožnovský et al., 2010).

Most of the area of interest lies in the Moravian Karst. The Moravian Karst is declared as a protected landscape area from 1956. The forests cover almost 60% of the area and there are more than 1,100 caves and five of them are open to the public. It is a cave Punkevní, Sloupsko-šošůvské caves, Balcarka cave, cave Výпустek and Kateřinská cave. This cave was also monitored by experts in terms of the impact of microclimate. The result was that there is no significant negative effect of attendance on Kateřinská cave microclimate. During normal operation does not exceed carrying capacity of the environment (Středová et al., 2013). The cave system called collectively Amaterská cave is the longest cave system in the Czech Republic (Mackovčín, 2007).

In this example we can see, what even the scientific literature demonstrates - that only nature can be considered a commodity that can be used for the production of tourism experiences - signifying attractive places for tourists leading to increased tourist numbers and employment (Byström, Müller, 2014).

## **Material and Methods**

### **The selection of the area and case municipalities**

The selection criteria for inclusion municipality in the survey was a qualified estimate of active tourism (estimate intensity of tourism activities, taking into account several factors – size, density of population, degree of seasonality). Another criterion was a relative frequency of range occurrence of the text in guides, where the municipalities are characterized as a tourist destination (in Czech and also foreign guides). We also considered the importance of recreational functions, which is referred in the Atlas of tourism in the Czech Republic (Vystoupil, 2006).

Based on this reasoning, we selected two municipalities from southern and northern area. These municipalities are considered as a center of tourism or they are attractive for tourist.

The selected areas of interest are shown in the Figure 1 by green dial.

Fig. 1 The location of studied area on the map of the South Moravian Region



Source: Czech Statistical Office and own additions, 2014

### The survey and obtained data

The survey was conducted through questionnaires and interviews.

Questionnaire was distributed via online questionnaire system Survio (<http://survio.com>). The questionnaire constructed a team associates on the project. Pilotage was conducted before the start of the research. Questionnaire found out the state of tourism in the area (the economic situation of workers in tourism, attendance, capacity, development of tourism in the village, promoting tourism in the area, etc.) through 33 open and closed items. The invalidity of questionnaires eliminates the permeability of the items. The providers of catering and accommodation services workers and tourist information centers and other authorized persons, competent in the field of tourism, filled the questionnaire. We approached all of them in case municipalities by e-mail or by personal interview.

The answers were converted into electronic format using MS Excel and processed by using standard statistical methods.

Other data were obtained on the basis of own investigations or from the Czech Statistical Office.

## Results and Discussion

### Questionnaire survey

The questionnaire survey was carried out from April to October 2014. Respondents were contacted by email and telephone. Those respondents, who prefer a personal meeting, completed a questionnaire in paper form and we transferred it into electronic form. To complete 33 items in questionnaire did not take more than 15 minutes. Rate of return was about

30%. Some respondents did not want to cooperate on research, because of high frequency of research carried out on various topics. Total has been contacted 34 providers of catering and accommodation services workers and tourist information centers and other authorized persons in Jedovnice, 9 businesses in Křtiny, 81 firms in tourism in Lednice and 87 enterprises in Valtice.

### Tourism in southern and northern region of South Moravia

For the case study were selected municipalities Lednice, Valtice (southern region) and Jedovnice and Křtiny (northern area). If we had evaluate the potential of communities in tourism, it seems that most important is the ability to accommodate visitors. A major problem may be low capacity of beds, which do not cover the demand of tourists.

The numbers of accommodation facilities with their capacities are recorded in Table 1. As we can see, the difference of accommodation facilities in Lednice and Valtice is only one company, in Křtiny is 12 accommodation facilities less than in Jedovnice.

The selected municipalities are tourist localities, which becomes evidenced by the employment rate of the economically active population working in tourism. The employment rate of people working in tourism is even larger than in people working in agriculture, where the rate is 2.2% (Ministry of Agriculture, 2013). And the Southern Moravia is traditionally agriculturally oriented. Even if there are only 3 accommodation facilities in Křtiny, employment rate in tourism takes similar values, as in the other municipalities.

Table 1 Case municipalities

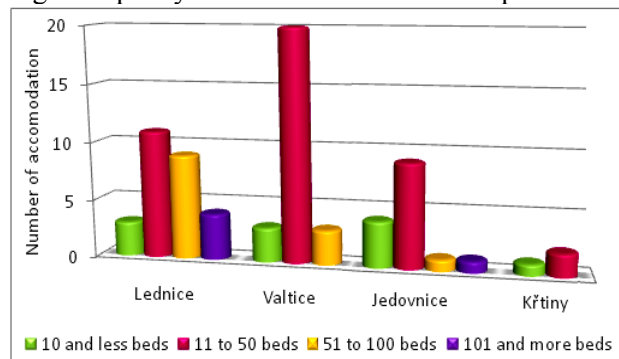
Case municipality	Number of accommodation facilities	Capacity of accommodation	Working in tourism
<b>Lednice</b>	27	1,387	5.95 %
<b>Valtice</b>	26	682	5.48 %
<b>Jedovnice</b>	15	692	5.59 %
<b>Křtiny</b>	3	66	4.24 %

Source: Czech statistical office and own investigation, 2014

Lednice is very popular not only for Czech visitors but also for tourists from abroad. It also illustrates the fact that the Lednice has the largest capacity of beds in accommodation facilities (1,387 beds) of all surveyed municipalities. Valtice and Jedovnice reported a very similar bed capacity (Tab. 1), although in Jedovnice is smaller number of accommodation facilities. Accommodation facility

with medium capacity of beds (from 11 to 50 beds) predominated in all the areas (Fig. 2). Accommodation facility with 101 and more beds cannot be found in Křtiny and Valtice. It is mainly for the reason that in Valtice is more family suites offering accommodation for lower income groups. While in the Lednice, which is spa town, is located more hotels and higher category accommodation.

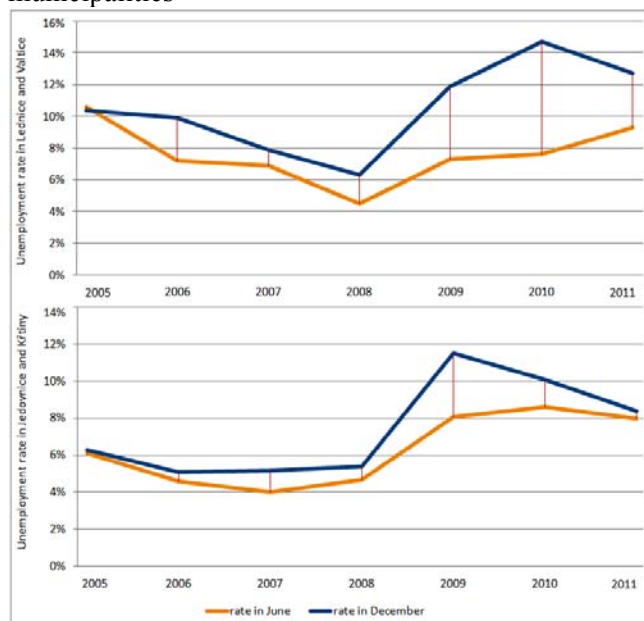
Fig. 2 Capacity of beds in the case municipalities



Source: data from own investigation

Catering and accommodation facilities (approached by our survey) in Lednice and Valtice was in operation year-round in all cases. The reasons of it are various cultural events (wine exhibitions) that are held throughout the year. In Lednice support it even year-round open spa. However, 75% of respondents in Jedovnice and Křtiny are in operation year-round and 25 % of them only in the summer season.

Fig. 3 Seasonal unemployment rates in municipalities

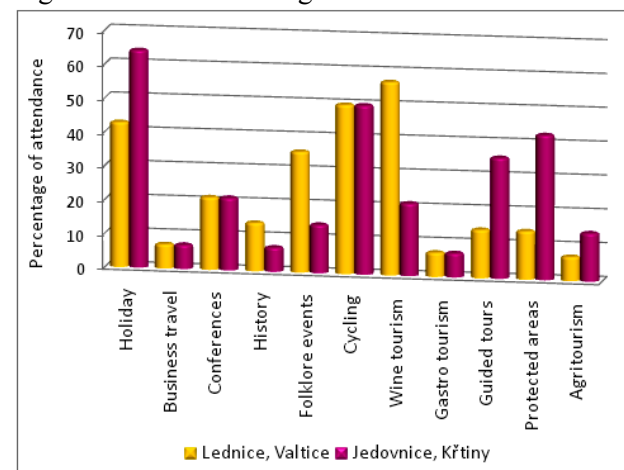


Source: Czech statistical Office, own elaboration, 2014

Although 1/4 devices work only seasonally in Jedovnice and Křtiny, but seasonal unemployment is higher in Lednice and Valtice, where tourist facilities in operation year-round (shown in Fig. 3). In Lednice draws a distinction in seasonal unemployment up to 7.1% in 2010. That may be due to a greater number of agricultural workers in southern Moravia. Nevertheless Dorobanțu et al. (2013) sees tourism as one of the economic activities with most significant potential to generate future growth and employment

Based on the questionnaire survey, it was found that the main reason for visiting northern region is vacation, particularly summer holidays (64%) as we can see in Fig. 4. Instead of the most preferred reason for visiting Lednice or Valtice is a wine tourism (57%). As was mentioned earlier, these festivals and events related to wine have a tradition in this area. Figure 4 shows noticeable difference on surveyed areas - the biggest difference in order of visiting is a wine tourism (36% difference), more disparity was determined on visiting protected area. A large part of northern interest area is located in the Moravian Karst, and that is the biggest attractiveness of this region. Due to cycling go 50 % of visitors on both areas. The southern area is suitable for less demanding recreational cycling of all age groups, and the northern area is for cyclists seeking adventurous ride by diverse terrain.

Fig. 4 Reason for visiting



Source: data from own investigation

### Promotion of tourism and marketing

Municipalities are aware of the natural and historic potential of landscape and they put the importance of tourism and they are trying to foster the development tourism in their region – they particularly co-organized cultural events and take care of the development cycling paths. Their efforts

are do not purport only to tourists or locals, what is good. According to Knifton and Warn (2010) local events and festivals which are originally intended for locals can be highlighted by tourist participation. The authors also point out that the services built primarily for tourists (such as cultural and sports facilities, shops, etc.) may be used by the local population too, which will contribute to its sustainability.

Most respondents (90%) consider tourism as a carrier for the development of the municipality. Addressing respondents agreed that one of the positive impacts of tourism on the area is that "... employees come from the municipality, thereby promoting employment in the village."

Some respondents are concerned about excessive tourist pressure on the landscape, which is in both studied areas protected, and they do not wish to be focused so much on tourism. Ryan (2013) in his study finds that, on average, countries that promote biosphere reserves as tourist destinations tend to have better environmental records than countries that do not.

Shapley's research (2014) with 262 households and also our research detected, that most residents expressed a quite strong support for tourism development.

Our research also showed that marketing and advertising cannot be target only the Web or leaflets promotion. In the surveyed municipalities rely more on direct experiences and references "tourists extend their gained experience beyond the borders of visited areas."

## Conclusion

Although it might seem at first glance that it is impossible to compare the tourism in southern and northern parts of South Moravia, it can be said, that both areas use its potential very well. Both regions are different; nevertheless the cycling is a common link. A well-established network of cycling routes could be found as a development means of studied municipalities.

The positive impact of tourism is the availability of services to citizens and better infrastructure in the villages.

Tourism in the Czech Republic is tied to the holidays and summer months. Seasonality is therefore a significant problem, which is reflected not only unemployment rate but also in the daily life of the municipalities.

We also identified mild tourist inflation in both areas. Nevertheless, the tourism is a core industry in both areas, which brings profit to municipalities, employment and cultural life.

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