TOURISM DEVELOPMENT PLANNING IN SELECTED EU COUNTRIES

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Abstract

Tourism development planning is now part of the regional policies of all Member States of the European Union. Strategic plans at national or regional level are specific instruments of regional management which contain results of the planning process and ensure the development of tourism in the selected region. The paper analyzes the representatives of these plans from Great Britain, Germany, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Romania and Bulgaria. It evaluates their contents and form of processing according to suggested united methodology respecting main principles of current quality management. The paper tests the process of evaluation on a selected sample, compares different approaches to planning and identifies the best transferable practices as the first step of creating the complex system for evaluation and quality improvement of regional planning in tourism.

Keywords: regional management, tourism, strategic documents, evaluation.

1. INTRODUCTION

Despite the lingering global economic crisis, tourism still represents one of the largest economic sectors and is widely recognized as an important factor in regional development (European Commission 2006, 2007). It contributes with its character to the stability of regional and local economies, mainly due to its positive multiplier effect, that works to create business opportunities in a wide range of activities and significantly influences the development of employment in the region (Sharma, 2004).

Many statistics show the importance of tourism to the region's economy. World Travel and Tourism Council (2010) for 2010 estimates the tourism contribution to global GDP in the amount of $ 5.751 bn and its re-growth of 3.2% for 2011. European Commission (2006) indicates that tourism contributes around 4% of total GDP of the European Union. The share of tourism on employment in the European Union is estimated at 4% of the total workforce (12% considering the subsequent sector).

The European Community has systematically been engaged with tourism since the mid-1960s, with greater intensity since the early 1980s. Currently, the issue of tourism on the level of the European Commission

belongs to the competence of the Directorate General for Enterprise and Industry, accurately its Department of Tourism. Since 2000, the Commission has elaborated on a number of strategic and conceptual documents related to the development of tourism and its sustainability (Hall, Smith and Marciszewska, 2006). It places great emphasis in these documents on the growing importance of tourism for region's economy, especially in terms of job creation, and declares its long-term support for its development. The following documents can be mentioned as the examples: "Agenda for a Sustainable and Competitive European Tourism" (European Commission, 2007) and "A Renewed EU Tourism Policy: Towards a Stronger Partnership for European Tourism" (European Commission, 2006).

The actual creating of the tourism policy is an exclusive matter of each Member State. Relevant public authorities show greater or lesser effort to manage effectively the tourism development at their territories within the framework of regional management, accurately regional planning. Great Britain, the most experienced country in the area of regional planning, is sometimes called the cradle of regional policy (Hall, 2002). Countries of continental Western Europe, began to assert regional policy and planning later, especially in the 1950s. Countries of the former communist bloc are much less experienced, elements of regional management were usually carried out only in the context of preparations for accession to the European Union (Wokoun, 2003).

2. PLANNING IN TOURISM

Trend of convergence of management of private and public sector appeared also in the application of planning technique in regional policy. At the most general level, planning can be defined as "a process aimed at deliberate achieving the objectives through a system of events" (Hall, 2002:3). Regional planning can then be understood as a specific subset of planning, which is focused on managing and influencing the development of the region and is a key part of the regional management (Bentley and Gibney, 2000). One of the areas in which regional planning technique is successfully applied, is tourism support (Sharma, 2004).

Regional planning in tourism based on the basic principles of regional planning, but has some specifics. The element of competition works quite strongly in tourism (Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse, 2003), when regions, almost like normal business units, compete for their "customers" at the tourism market. This fact should be reflected in the regional planning that should be much closer to the concept of the private sector and emphasize the need to achieve the comparative advantage by developing the key internal resources and capabilities, so they are in accordance with the requirements of the external environment. External and internal strategic analysis is enormously important from the perspective of the planning cycle (Vourc'h and Denman, 2003), including the knowledge of development trends in tourism, and link of their findings with the strategic objectives, or the strategy itself.

The steps of the planning cycle can be generalized on the basis of the knowledge of the classic regional planning (eg, Allison and Kaye, 2005) and planning in tourism (Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse, 2003). The typical process is displayed in the following figure.
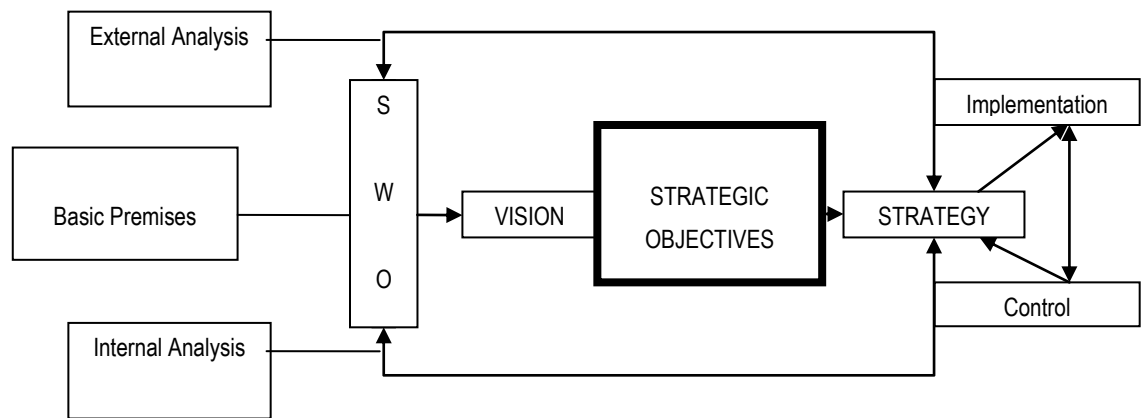

FIGURE 1 – PLANNING CYCLE

Clear definition of sense of planning and its initial conditions should be the initial step of the planning cycle. Identification of the key stakeholders should also be part of this phase (Bryson, 2004).

Strategic analysis follows this step. It makes the necessary information base for determining the vision of tourism development and strategy for its achievement. Tourism responds quite strongly to changes in a variety of factors in the economics, politics, legislation and demographics, which analysis should not be ignored (Evans, Campbell and Stonehouse, 2003). It is also necessary for the external strategic analysis to be engaged with the development of the tourism market and identify its main trends. It can help to get prepared to some extent for the future development and select the appropriate strategy to minimize the negative consequences of unwanted factors and vice versa maximize their positive impact. The analysis of tourism sector should be followed by a quite detailed analysis of competition. In this way the destination can determine its most important competitors in the number of visitors, but also in the nature of the services offered, identify their goals, strengths and weaknesses.

The success of the strategy depends, however, not only on external conditions, but mainly on internal resources and how to use them (Bryson, 2004). Analysis of internal environment should deal primarily with these facts and give answer to the question whether they are in harmony with the environment in which a given destination exists and are able to contribute to its competitiveness (Grant, 2008). Another important part of internal strategic analysis is investigating the development of tourism in the destination. It serves as the primary indicator of success of the destination at the market. Attendance monitoring should not only be engaged with the current or previous state, but it should also include the prediction of development. Results

of external and internal strategic analysis are summarized in the SWOT analysis which identifies the key factors of development and kompetence for the next stages of the planning cycle.

The results of external and internal analysis are closely followed by the definition of long-term vision of the region development and main strategic aims. Vision reflects the direction where the destination wants to get, aims give more details. The proposed strategy (accurately detailed arrangements and actions) represents the way to achieve them. The chosen arrangements should support the development of internal resources and capabilities to use possible further opportunities and effective defense against threats from outside. They should also help to change or diminish the identified weaknesses. Therefore the coherence of strategy with the conclusions of the analysis perform an important role (Luštický et al., 2010).

The phase of strategy implementation identifies the specific conditions for its conversion into practice. It should specify the way of proposed arrangements realization, including the accountability specification and mainly absolutely necessary resources. Part of this phase is also the definition of control mechanism to monitore the results and strategy update (Vourc'h and Denman, 2003).

3. QUALITY OF STRATEGIC PLANS

Strategic plans include the results of planning process and can be considered as specific tourism management tools. At the regional level, these are usually documents of medium to long term range based on broader national strategies which they developed in detail. They define specific arrangements for achieving the goals on the basis of detailed analysis of the region. Their typical content is composed of the following components (Vystoupil et al., 2007):

- Introduction and basic information

- Analytical part (characteristic of the area considering tourism, analysis of tourist offer and demand, the system of organization of tourism)

- SWOT Analysis

- Proposal part (vision, goals, problem areas, and follow-up activities arrangements and activities)

- Financial framework the implementation, timetable

Although the plan content plays a primary role, their formal aspect should not be forgotten. These are publicly accessible documents, which should at least meet the basic rules of typography and aesthetics. Otherwise, even the content-perfect dokuments lose the overall quality, they become less applicable for the user, reduce the desire to use them actively. This fact also negatively influences credibility of the documents for the key stakeholders.

Plans play a key role during the active influencing of the tourism development in the regions, but it is very difficult to assess their quality. Plan quality is a hard to define term, most of the experts can distinguish between quality and lower quality plans, but they cannot accurately identify key characteristics of quality plans. One of the options is to consider plans as specific products (Baer, 1997), and define their most important qualitative characteristics using basic principles of classic quality management. Subsequent setting of quality level enables to distinguish these documents, compare and give them different values. This can also lead to sharing the experience and transfer of the best practices between regions or countries. That was brought to attention such by e.g. Coles and Hall (2004).

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A project team chose the Baer approach while designing the evaluation process. The most often used definition of quality for products and services were used. It is defined by quality standard ISO 9000:2005 as "the degree of requirement compliance through a set of inherent marks". Requirements can be understood as a need or expectation that is set somewhere, required by someone or generally expected. Every product or service can be identified with certain typical marks of quality which are defined by quality standard ISO 9000:2005 as "inherent marks of product, process or system connected with demand". They are related to the characteristical attributes of the inquired object with their content and issue from given requirements for these attributes. The degree of requirement fulfilment indicates the final quality of product or service (Hoyle, 2007).

Conclusions of Baer (1997), Boyd and Reuning-Elliott (1998) were used for setting inherent marks. Two main inherent marks were set for plans - the contents of documents and their formal elaboration. The contents of plans are understood as a reflection of the planning cycle, ie. a description (publication) of results of all the phases, and it plays a primary role in the process of quality evaluation. The form of elaboration is also very important from the user`s perspective. Macrotypography approach was emphasized in the evaluation process dealing with the overall concept of the document, concentrating on individual sections (pages) and their arrangement (Stöckl, 2005).

A background research of publications on strategic and regional planning was chosen as the source for setting general requirements for document contents (eg. Allison and Kaye, 2005; Bryson, 2004; Grant, 2008; Hall, 2002). Theoretical findings were added to the results of research which was focused on programme documents of tourism in the Czech Republic (Vystoupil et al., 2007). The research team used basic typographic principles and lay-out rules while defining general requirements for plan forms (eg. Felici, 2003; Stöckl, 2005).

In order to objectively determine the requirements for both inherent marks, it was necessary to address also the users of strategic plans. Two main groups were used from the whole range of potential users - so-called professional users and professional public. Those who use the documents directly for their work are considered to be professional users (ie. clerks of the departments at regional authorities). Those who use the documents only at certain specific cases in their activities represent professional public. Addressed users had the chance to complete, correct, and evaluate the requirements according to increasing level of importance.

Next phase of research was focused on necessary transfer of the requirements to inherent characteristics into the precisely defined and measurable quality marks that can be evaluated in documents. Method Quality Function Deployment was used as a transfer principle (ReVelle, Moran and Cox, 1998). The project team used the information from conducted questionnaires for evaluating the importance of the individual requirements. Then the evaluation of the relation intensity between requirements and derived quality marks at a given scale was done. The rate of importance of quality mark (IQM) is given by the following formula.

$$IQM_i = IRE_n \times RREQM_i \quad (1)$$

IQM$_i$ importance of i-quality mark

IRE$_n$ importance of n-requirement for document user

RREQM$_i$ relation between n-requirement and i-quality mark

The evaluation procedure for measuring the quality of tourism plans is based on a fundamental proposition, which says that quality is determined by the level of satisfaction of requirements through set quality marks (Hoyle, 2007). Requirements are met the better, if more quality marks meet their key characteristics. Therefore, the system uses two rating scales enabling to assess how intensively the quality marks meet the key characteristics. Key characteristics are defined for each mark in the case of document contents. The form of documents allowed certain simplification in the form of one key mark for all of the quality marks (the occurrence of the mark in the document).

TABLE 1 – RATING SCALE FOR QUALITY OF PLAN CONTENT

Point Value	Characteristics of the qualitative level
0,00 – 0,10	Unsufficient - a quality mark does not occur in the document at all or achieves the key characteristics with a minimal intensity
0,11 – 0,40	Sufficient - a quality mark achieves the key characteristics with a limited intensity
0,41 – 0,60	Good - a quality mark achieves the key characteristics with a moderate intensity
0,61 – 0,90	Very good - a quality mark achieves the key characteristics with a high intensity
0,91 – 1,00	Excellent - a quality mark achieves the key characteristics with a maximum intensity

TABLE 2 – RATING SCALE FOR QUALITY OF PLAN FORMS

Point Value	Characteristics of the qualitative level
0,00	Unsufficient - a quality mark is not represented in the document at all
0,50	Good - a quality mark is partially represented in the document
1,00	Excellent - a quality mark is fully represented in the document

Individual quality marks related to the given requirement are part of the evaluation process. The evaluator allocates each of them by a point value according to the level of requirement fulfillment – meeting the key characteristics. This point value is further adjusted by the strength of quality mark (SQM) expressing its part in the overall quality of the document contents by 100% achieving the key characteristics. So the resulting value of quality mark (VQM) gives the real quality mark part in the overall quality of the document depending on the achieved degree of its key characteristics – depending on the degree of fulfillment of the requirement. From this point of view, the results can be considered to be the main qualitative characteristic. Both relationships are expressed by the following two formulas.

$$SQM_i = \frac{IQM_i}{\sum IQM} \quad (2)$$

SQM$_i$ strength of i-quality mark

IQM$_i$ importance of i-quality mark

$$VQM_i = LKCF_i \times SQM_i \quad (3)$$

VQM$_i$ value of i-quality mark

LKCF$_i$ level of key characteristics fulfillment of i-quality mark

SQM$_i$ strength of i-quality mark

The mentioned procedure suggests involving more evaluators to reduce subjectivity of the evaluation. The way of determining the overall quality of both inherent marks of the strategic plans uses the Distributively Delegative Awarding Points method, based on the principle of the Delphi Method, and consisting in determining the vote strength of individual evaluators. This method divides the evaluation process into three phases (Plamínek, 2008):

- Distributive phase – the values of quality marks (VQM) from the individual evaluators are converted into a common table

- Delegative phase – the evaluators may transfer their relative vote strength according to the individual assessment of own skills, knowledge or experience necessary for the evaluation; the resulting relative evaluator strength (RES) is expressed by formula 4.

- Synthetic phase – here the initial evaluation is adjusted to the resulting relative strength of individual evaluators (RES); adjusted value of quality marks (AVQM) is expressed by formula 5.

$$RES_n = \frac{100 + RP_n - SP_n}{100} \quad (4)$$

RES$_n$ relative strength of n-evaluator

RP$_n$ number of received points by n-evaluator

SP$_n$ number of points sent by n-evaluator

$$AVQM_i = VQM_i \times RES_n \ (5)$$

AVQM$_i$ adjusted value of i-quality mark

VQM$_i$ value of i-quality mark

RES$_n$ relative strength of n-evaluator

The final value of quality mark (FVQM) respecting vote strength of individual evaluators is weighted arithmetic mean of individual evaluations, which is expressed by formula 6.

$$FVQM_i = \frac{\sum AVQM_i}{\sum E} \ (6)$$

FVQMi   final value of i-quality mark

AVQMi   adjusted value of i-quality mark

E   evaluators

The real total quality of program document can be expressed as a sum of final values of individual quality marks, ie. as a real portion of all quality marks on the overall quality of the document content and form.

5. EVALUATION OF STRATEGIC PLANS

The following documents were randomly chosen as a test sample for the application of the suggested evaluation system: North East England Tourism Strategy 2005 - 2010 (Great Britain, GBR), Tourismuskonzept Baden-Württemberg (Germany, DEU), Strategie rozvoje cestovního ruchu v Jihočeském kraji (Czech Republic, CZE), Stratégia rozvoja cestovného ruchu Bratislavského samosprávného kraja 2007 - 2013 (Slovakia, SVK), National Eco-Tourism Strategy for Bulgaria (Bulgaria, BGR) and National Tourism Development Master Plan 2007 - 2026 (Romania, ROM). The reason for chosing these strategic plans was the assumption of different ways of the documents elaboration depending on national customs and experience with the application of regional management, especially the techniques of regional planning.

Tables 3 and 4 summarize the results of the evaluation process. They include the evaluated quality marks including their key characteristics, strengths of quality marks and final value of quality marks which were generated using the Distributively Delegative Awarding Points method. The last row of tables shows the sum of final values of quality marks expressing a real portion of all quality marks on the overall quality of the document content and form.

TABLE 3 – ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF PLAN CONTENTS

QUALITY MARKS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS	SQM	GBR	DEU	CZE	SVK	BGR	ROM
Its purpose is justified in the document: initial conditions for creating documents are defined, reason for creating the document is explained	**0,056**	0,051	0,040	0,053	0,031	0,034	0,045
Target groups are described in the document: persons or organizations significantly affected by the implementation of the strategy are identified, the impact on target groups is set out, the assumed impact on individual target groups is set out	**0,056**	0,017	0,024	0,038	0,014	0,019	0,010
Link up to other documents is **described in this document:** documents higher and lower in hierarchy are listed, coherence of the documents is explained; specific examples of coherence are listed	**0,054**	0,006	0,000	0,049	0,032	0,016	0,005
Document takes into account the impact of selected global factors: development of sectors influencing tourism is assessed, factors from the political-legal, social, economic and technological sphere are analyzed; demographic development and its impact on tourism is assessed	**0,019**	0,004	0,007	0,017	0,015	0,010	0,007
Document takes into account the impact of selected local factors: size of the tourism market is analyzed, major trends of tourism are analyzed, research of development of factors in time is done, analysis of wishes and needs of visitors is done, situation in selected regions is mapped	**0,055**	0,036	0,040	0,048	0,032	0,031	0,025
Document deals with internal resources to achieve the desired future state: human, tangible, intangible and financial resources are analyzed, the compliance of identified sources with the condition of the outside environment is analyzed, geographical segmentation of resources is made, possibilities of impact of key resources of the region are identified	**0,056**	0,023	0,024	0,041	0,040	0,033	0,040
Document takes into account the different uses of resources: monitoring of ressource use is done, quality of selected sources is assessed, consistency of ressource use with outside environment is analyzed	**0,056**	0,011	0,013	0,041	0,024	0,010	0,019
Document assesses sources and methods of their use according to the ability to create competitive advantage: sources are analyzed in terms of ability to exploit opportunities and neutralize threats, unique character of sources and resistance to imitation is examined	**0,056**	0,023	0,022	0,034	0,024	0,016	0,023
Document contains a clear synthesis of the results of external and internal analysis: the SWOT analysis or other summary form is used, clarity and truthfulness of formulations is provided, the most important results of external and internal analysis are identified, consequences of the obtained results for the proposal part of the document are described	**0,055**	0,022	0,033	0,045	0,045	0,031	0,020
Proposal part comes out from conclusions of the analytical part: it is possible to identify a link between objectives and identified core competencies of the region with a view to further strengthening and it is possible to identify a link between objectives and identified weaknesses in the region with the aim to neutralize	**0,055**	0,048	0,029	0,047	0,044	0,029	0,038
Document contains the vision and global objective of tourism development: initial (real) state is taken into account, situation desirable in the horizon of strategy is characterized, primary direction to achieve a desirable situation is determined	**0,020**	0,015	0,012	0,017	0,016	0,014	0,014
Specific objectives are set out in document: continuity of targets on vision or global objective is ensured, specific conditions which must be achieved to fulfill the vision and global objective are described, priorities for meeting the objectives are set.	**0,056**	0,039	0,031	0,049	0,025	0,039	0,043

QUALITY MARKS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS	SQM	GBR	DEU	CZE	SVK	BGR	ROM
Objectives correspond to the SMART parameters: specific and clear wording is used, indicators of setting the objectives are set, expectations of the people and groups are reflected, achieving realistic goals is taken into account, time is bounded by the deadline for meeting objectives	**0,056**	0,052	0,021	0,039	0,021	0,011	0,039
Arrangements for achieving the vision / global objectives are suggested in the document: logical system of partial measures elaborating the objectives is created, internal conditions of the region are identified, emphasis on developing core strengths and eliminating weaknesses is taken into account	**0,060**	0,035	0,026	0,047	0,042	0,027	0,039
Proposed arrangements are worked out into concrete actions: concrete activities (projects) to achieve their objectives are specified; logical continuity of proposed arrangements and derived activities is done	**0,058**	0,031	0,025	0,046	0,043	0,028	0,047
Document identifies the necessary resources to implement the proposed activities: human, financial and tangible resources for the implementation of activities are set, type and intensity of resource use is defined	**0,058**	0,030	0,005	0,032	0,014	0,010	0,037
Document sets timetable for implementation of proposed activities: detailed timetable of implementation of proposed activities is described; so-called control points (milestones) are set	**0,058**	0,051	0,000	0,036	0,025	0,004	0,038
Responsibility of individual entities for implementation of proposed activities is set: responsible entities are identified, specific responsibility of defined entities corresponding with activities implemented by them is defined	**0,058**	0,027	0,005	0,020	0,010	0,004	0,036
Document proposes a system of monitoring of implementation of proposed activities: control of success of realization of the proposed activities is provided; indicators of success are done, the procedure of updating documents is designed in connection with the results of success inspection	**0,058**	0,035	0,004	0,014	0,006	0,003	0,027
REAL QUALITY OF PLANS	**1,000**	**0,557**	**0,361**	**0,714**	**0,502**	**0,369**	**0,551**

TABLE 4 – ASSESSMENT OF QUALITY OF PLAN FORMS

QUALITY MARKS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS	SQM	GBR	DEU	CZE	SVK	BGR	ROM
Document is easily identifiable by name	0,087	0,087	0,087	0,087	0,087	0,087	0,087
Author of the document is clearly intended	0,087	0,060	0,087	0,087	0,087	0,060	0,064
Document contains the date and time of validity	0,087	0,070	0,060	0,060	0,087	0,064	0,044
Document contains clear contents	0,083	0,074	0,083	0,078	0,083	0,078	0,083
Document is divided into individual chapters	0,083	0,083	0,083	0,083	0,083	0,083	0,083
Document contains a list of graphic elements and information sources	0,028	0,000	0,014	0,009	0,000	0,000	0,000
All the paragraphs have the same format	0,073	0,073	0,065	0,073	0,073	0,051	0,073
All graphic elements have the same format according to the type of displayed data	0,073	0,073	0,065	0,058	0,056	0,051	0,073
All titles have the same format according to their hierarchical level	0,025	0,025	0,025	0,025	0,025	0,018	0,025
Text is written in appropriate font type and degree of script	0,073	0,073	0,065	0,068	0,073	0,068	0,073
Text is divided into paragraphs	0,073	0,073	0,065	0,073	0,073	0,073	0,073
Key passages are appropriately marked	0,025	0,020	0,020	0,017	0,020	0,014	0,011
Suitable text passages are accompanied by tables and / or graphs	0,079	0,009	0,063	0,079	0,079	0,010	0,058
Graphic elements are aptly named according to the displayed content	0,026	0,015	0,026	0,023	0,020	0,018	0,024

QUALITY MARKS AND KEY CHARACTERISTICS	SQM	GBR	DEU	CZE	SVK	BGR	ROM
Headings of various levels are distinguished by logical numbering system	0,025	0,025	0,022	0,025	0,025	0,025	0,025
Headings of different levels are visually distinguished	0,073	0,073	0,073	0,073	0,073	0,068	0,073
REAL QUALITY OF PLANS	**1,000**	**0,832**	**0,902**	**0,919**	**0,943**	**0,769**	**0,869**

Although plans are at the first sight different from the formal point of view, differences in the fulfillment of most of the key quality characteristics are not significant. All documents are structured into chapters, distinguished in logical system of easily identifiable headings. The contents, which is not missing in any of the documents, helps to clarity and quick orientation of users. The most important identification data are always stated. Certain problems can be seen in the term of validity of documents, which can be a problem mainly for the professional and general public, which does not use documents as a tool for planning, but they are actively influenced by them.

The largest reserves of the analyzed plans are in the area of graphic elements that are well-valued by users for their clearness and clarity. From this point of view the documents can seem a bit rigorous and there is a risk that the reader gets lost in longer text passages. Even if the graphic elements are part of the document, they are usually not consistent with the view of displayed data, and their naming is usually not sufficiently accurate. This complicates the quick orientation in the document and may affect the understanding of the transmitted information. A separate set of problems is the omission of a list of information sources which are used as the plan source. This really detracts from the credibility of analyzes and can negatively impact the willingness of key stakeholders to accept the proposed arrangements.

The content of the plans is much more diverse, yet it is possible to identify some common features of all the documents. The most common mistake in introduction is the lack of definition of target groups, ie. individuals and organizations that should be affected by the implementation of the strategy. Accurate targeting of the strategy is not known, which may hinder its implementation. Although the planning process passes considering the development of the given territory, it is not possible to ignore similar documents standing higher or lower in hierarchical level. The designed strategy should be in accordance with them and it should be clear in the very initial stage of its formulation, how it fits into the overall framework of regional planning. Unfortunately, this does not happen in most cases, and thus planners greatly reduce the possibility of achieving synergic effect.

The analytical part is mainly focused on factors that directly affect tourism. Despite the usual vastness, they unfortunately contain only cursory analyses, mapping the current situation, at best, historical development. Visitor statistics are mentioned the most often, a list of tourist infrastructure, sometimes visitor segmentation. Key internal resources are not examined in terms of providing competitive advantage, manner and intensity of their use is analyzed in minimum of cases. Absence of these important analysis is related to a certain

isolation of plans. They indirectly do not call in question outside world in terms of global factors affecting tourism and in the sense of comparison of the level of own resources with the situation in other regions. This approach to planning was reflected in the phase of the requirements survey for planning documentation and real condition of documents confirmed it. Plans would benefit from the use of some of the best managerial, analytical tools, which would significantly enhance the explanatory ability of analytical data in order to provide better information base for formulating the strategy of tourism development.

It is gratifying that the objectives reasonably well reflect the findings of the analyses, summarized in a SWOT analysis or by other means. Although the selected method of summary is usually not ideal, its main purpose – linking the analytical and design parts – they fulfill. Objectives should be precised according to SMART parameters. This process will ease their concretization into the practical measures that would solve the identified weaknesses and support development of key strengths, which does not always happen. The last phase of the planning cycle is the strategy implementation. Here the approaches to planning are different, analysed documents pay either a relatively detailed, or almost none attention to the implementation. But all of them fail in strict delimitation of responsibility of concrete entities for realization of component parts of strategy and in the area of control of achieved results. This problem is widely known and the evaluation only confirmed it. Despite the difficulties in quantifying the results of planning in tourism, it is necessary to propose a general procedure involving real measurable quantifiers, which could determine success of the strategy implementation and it can be the basis for updating changing external and internal conditions.

6. CONCLUSIONS

Competition in the quality of individual documents was not the objective of the evaluation, but verifying the possibility to use the evaluation method in different conditions of regional planning, comparison of plans and emphasising their common strengths and weaknesses. Doing the closer analysis of the results it is possible to identify some transferable practices. This is mainly quality planning of implementation of the strategy in the documents of the UK and Romania, which are surprisingly similar, setting the plan within the overall framework of regional planning of the Czech document, as well as a fairly good analytical part of the Czech and Slovak documents. The German document can be appreciated for the list of graphic elements and overall formal presentation.

The research team is aware of the weaknesses of the proposed procedure, consisting in its subjectivity and a small sample of evaluted documents. It is not possible to completely remove subjectivity factor from this type of evaluation, statistical and mathematical methods will be applied in the following stages of research to reduce its impact to the smallest level. Despite the small number of documents reviewed, we can say that the selected quality marks and their key characteristics proved in international comparison and the process can

be further exploited. It has real potential to reveal strengths and weaknesses of planning process in tourism, to compare the documents and transfer of "best practices" to improve the current stage. In addition, we can assume that with some modifications it will be possible to apply the evaluation system in other areas than in tourism.

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