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COOPERATION FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE REGION AS AN EXAMPLE OF AN INNOVATION STRATEGY

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The aim of this article is to indicate the directions of the development of tourist sector innovativeness in the region. In the article was self-characterized the essence of the innovation strategies, used both by tourist enterprises and institutions supporting the development of tourism. The conducted analyses indicate that it is difficult for tourist companies to apply innovations by themselves, therefore it is the cooperation of subjects that seems to be crucial to become the shape of cluster. Thus, one should indicate that it is crucial to introduce further studies and encourage tourist companies to undertake the innovative action.

Key word: cooperation, development, tourism, region, innovation strategy.

Introduction

The aim of the project is to point out the trends of innovative development of tourist sector in the region. There has been an attempt to present the main issue of innovative strategies, used both by tourist companies and institutions which support the development of tourism. One has indicated that the innovative tourist companies are the ones which try to find a possibility to introduce new procedural and productive solutions.

In the era of continuous changes in the world, one should pay a special attention to innovation, as the main factor that increases the competitiveness of tourist companies. Thus, the innovations form the fundamental source of gaining the competitive advantage. Innovations are the essential element for a dynamic development in each tourist company, and they are understood as new services, information technologies or organization systems.

The tourist companies, which look for possibilities of introducing new productive and procedural solutions, deserve the term the innovative companies. All the directions of activities are determined in innovative strategies. The strategies ought to cooperate with all the regional subjects on the tourist market, and intend to establish a specific activity within the clusters as a form of cooperation with tourist companies and other subjects on the market.

The literary studies and empiric researches allow to form the main thesis of the article: The innovations are the essential element of shaping strategies in the sector of tourist services. The cooperation within subjects, in the form of clusters on the tourist market, is the leading direction as far as innovations are concerned.

2. The essence of innovative strategies in tourist regions

The term 'strategy' has a military origin – for centuries it has denoted a branch of martial arts that includes preparation and running a war as the entirety. Gradually the term has been adapted in other branches of human activity, especially in politics and economy¹.

The modern term of strategy has been expanded in other usages. It has been used more often by economic units or territorial subjects of public administration, including local authorities, which form the strategies in the development of regions, as well as the 'specific strategies, such as the regional strategies of innovations.

The term 'strategy' includes five basic elements: leadership, establishing the position, using resources, providing the competitive advantage, a success in the environment that attends to a given organization. The elements can be included in three main categories:

- the strategic process, that is planning and introducing which comprises the identification of company position, assurance of competitive advantage and usage of resources;
- the leadership (actions of a unit or units which run an organization);
- the effectiveness of organizations that leads to the insurance of the success in a concrete environmental context².

The methodology of the strategies, mentioned in many publications by numerous authors, is not explicitly established and commonly accepted. All sorts of authors define the scope of strategies in different way, as they formulate their aims or organize the process of forming them. The study points to the principles of forming the strategies which perfectly match the branch of economy, that is the tourism. Thus, one can formulate the basic principles of building up the innovative strategies³:

- The innovative strategies should consider the extensive use of natural, economic and social resources so as to achieve their goals. The innovative strategy, defined in such a way, should take into consideration the principles of balanced development in order to minimize the dangers of an excessive arduousness for natural environment;

¹ Krupski R. (ed.), Zarządzanie strategiczne. Koncepcje. Metody, Wydawnictwo AE we Wrocławiu, Wrocław 2001, p.13.

² Lundy O., Cowling A., Strategiczne zarządzanie zasobami ludzkimi, Oficyna Ekonomiczna, Dom Wydawniczy ABC, Kraków 2000, p.26-27

³ Gorzelak G., Jałowicki B., Metodologiczne podstawy strategii rozwoju regionu na przykładzie województwa lubuskiego, Studia Regionalne i Lokalne z. 3, 2000, p. 41-58.

- The innovative strategy should be a document that programmes a development, and does not aspire to satisfy the current needs of citizens or interest groups in a given tourist region;
- The concept should precede the strategies, because it is an evidence of tourists preferences, which allows to assess the current and predicted features of a tourist region formulated by a diagnostic analysis.
- The innovative strategy cannot include action that is found in the competence of subjects which are independent from the ones working out on the strategies, however it can present demands which refer to the subjects, as the 'surrounding' that has an impact on a realisation of strategies or as an action of a cooperant; it can really contribute to cooperation and joint actions described in the strategies.
- The defined strategy which aspires to gain aid should be described in the spirit and language of European Union documents and in agreement with the methodology accepted in the EU.
- The strategy should have clearly formulated assumptions and a defined system of monitoring in the process of realization.

3. The cooperation as far as the innovations in the tourist region are concerned

One can point out that the innovations in tourism refer to the concept of cluster. In the economic aspect, the word cluster was used for the first time by Porter¹. According to Porter, the cluster means a centre in a geographic neighbourhood of companies, specialized suppliers, units that perform services, companies which function in related sectors and institutions connected with them (for example universities, normalizing units or cooperation societies), which take up a given field, connected by similarities and complementing each other.

Most of clusters in the world refer to high technology industry. It arises due to the fact that they are marked by the highest share of expenses for research and development in income, as well as extensive connections with research and a developmental field (higher than in traditional industry). Moreover, the business is relatively new, therefore it is based on innovations. The innovative clusters are not only the high technology ones. It is also necessary to distinguish low and middle clusters, that is an international success, often due to high technology procedural and organizational innovations².

One should consider innovations of the tourist cluster in the following fields:

- The productive innovations, that result in the rise of innovative products and tourist services, as well as in other economic sectors;

¹ Porter M., *The Competitive Advantage of Nations*, Free Press, Nowy Jork 1990, [in:] T. Raport o stanie sektora małych i średnich przedsiębiorstw w Polsce w latach 2000- 2001, Polska Agencja Rozwoju Przedsiębiorczości, Warszawa 2002, p.233-235.

² Reports OECD: *The Cluster Approach 1999. Innovative Clusters 2001*, www.klastry.pl, 2011-08-01.

- The managerial and procedural innovations, that aim to improve the process of tourist services and managerial procedures in tourist companies and clusters;
- The information innovations – used in the latest information and promotional channels, innovations of the information system within a cluster;
- The institutional innovations – new branches of law public relations and support of public system for tourist companies ¹.

P. Drucker emphasizes that every national economy should be stimulated by innovations, and economic society is the precondition for the high level of development. He claims that innovation and enterprise should be something normal and continuous. When there is a lack of enterprise in universal economy, in low and middle field, the high technology enterprise is impossible to exist ².

Due to the meaning of innovation and competitiveness included in the Strategy of Lisbon and distinguished in the report of European Commission, “progress and innovation are based on the adaptation of new knowledge for better new processes and products (including the constant improvement of existing processes and products), performed on the innovative models of companies and proper methods of management. Thus, it concerns the innovative enterprise and business initiatives. The progress and innovation are also based on innovative services (...) and generally on the better solution of social issues, within the economic restriction”³.

One can point out that there are organizational, technical, marketing, cultural or psychological innovations. The term ‘innovation’ is closely related to the terms such as changes, novelty or reforms. In common understanding, the innovation refers to the new solution of different issues, problems, which are connected with a change of the present state of business and it plays a crucial role in a development of concrete branch, for example technology, organization, management or ecology ⁴.

There are unique models of innovative formation and stimulation in the field of tourism. A tourist company which prospects for possibilities of introducing new solutions, both productive and procedural ones, can be referred to as ‘innovative’. The tourist companies that create new innovative products should define the effects which can be made by deliberate actions in the planning stage:

- new or improved products/services
- new or modernized creative methods/process of the customer service,
- organizational changes?

¹ Novelli M., Schmitz B., Spencer T., Networks, clusters and innovation In tourism: A UK experience, „Tourism Management” 2006, Nr 27, p.1143-1144.

² Drucker P., *Innowacje i przedsiębiorczość. Praktyka i zasady*, PWE, Warszawa 1992, p.272-274.

³ Opinia Europejskiego Komitetu Ekonomiczno-Społecznego w sprawie inwestycji w wiedzę i innowacje (strategia lizbońska), (2007/C 256/04), pkt. 2.18, <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/>, 2011-07-10.

⁴ Stróżyński M., *Małe i średnie przedsiębiorstwa w świetle Strategii Lizbońskiej*, Szkoła Główna Handlowa w Warszawie, Warszawa 2008, p.128.

The realization of an idea should activate the whole range of scientific actions: organizational, technological, financial and commercial ones. The creation of innovative tourist products can include simple modifications of existing products, processes and practices (which can be new for a company, but not necessarily for the tourist business) from one hand, and fundamentally new products and processes from the other hand (which are new both for business and tourist company). The detailed definition of innovation was published by OECD in the series of handbooks called Oslo Manual ¹. The core of the problem is putting the novelty into practice, which comes down to offering of a new product or service on the market, and in relation to a new process, organization or marketing methods, to their usage in the current activity of a businessman. The innovation can be a result of one's own empiric and developmental business, cooperation with other businessmen or institutions, or a result of the know-how purchase.

However, one should assume that the innovation of tourist companies is gradated, used with different intensity and scale. The innovation of tourist companies is also dependent on the type of business and location in the tourist field. Therefore, it is reasonable to point out the definitions, where the innovation of tourist companies is defined as the ability and motivation for a research and commercial usage of any scientific results of studies, new concepts, ideas that result in an increase of the level of modernity and reinforcement of the competitive position of a company, or the realization of entrepreneur's ambitions.

The processes of creating tourist innovative products less and less often restricts to a single company. It is conditioned both by the specification of tourist sector (companies are distinguished by a narrow specialisation) and a size of companies (the majority of companies in the sector are micro and small ones). The lodging objects activities are a good example for tourist business, including hotels, boarding houses, which rarely possess the products and services that support or complete an activity, for example sport and recreation objects, services, services of free time arrangement. The companies have to cooperate with other ones in order to satisfy a customer.

There are not only tourist companies which should apply the innovative strategies. The subjects of regional politics should also pay a special attention on the RSI applying (Regional Strategies of Innovations). The Regional Strategies of Innovations can be considered from three different points of view, as:

- The process of building inter regional agreement as far as formation and expansion of innovation is concerned.
- The strategic document which should be formed in accordance with demanded standards.
- A series of action undertaken while putting the strategy into practice ².

¹ Oslo Manual. Proposed Guidelines for Collecting and Interpreting Technological Innovation Data, OECD, Paris, 1992, p. 47.

² Gorzelak G., Bakowski A., Kozak M., Olechnicka A., przy współpracy Płoszaja A., Polskie Regionalne Strategie Innowacji: ocena i wnioski dla dalszych działań, Regional Studies Association – Sekcja Polska, Warszawa 2006, p.4.

The most important source of knowledge on the innovation of companies in Western European countries is: Community Innovation Survey (CIS) - the international programme of statistical innovations research, put into practice and initiated by the European Commission. European Innovation Scoreboard – it contains 17 parameters referring to such issues as human resources for science and technology or expenditure for B+R and innovative business. The European Commission is working out on the ‘complex parameter of innovation’ on the basis of the given parameters, which intends to assess the innovative effectiveness of membership countries. The European Report on innovation aims to indicate in a simple way what each EU membership country need to do so as to improve the innovative effectiveness¹.

4. Selected results of studies – rates and possibilities of innovative processes stimulation in the tourist services sector.

The WTTC analyses and studies (World Travel & Tourism Council) refer to an assessment of situation and contain the worth of demand in tourist business and economy when one considers basic parameters of the tourist market assessment such as private expenditure, expenditure for business travels, expenditure of foreign tourists and relations to the labour market and share of tourism in PKB.

Tab. 1.

Changing the industry and key indicators for the Polish tourist economy in 2009 by
World Travel & Tourism Council

No.	Indicator assessment of the tourism market	Change in % to 2008	Change in bln PLN
1	Private expenditure on tourism	-0,1	-0,05
2	Expenditure on business travels	-4,1	-0,50
3	Equity investments	2,9	0,70
4	Foreign arrivals	9,3	2,90
5	Government spending	-4,3	-0,25
Employment rates		in thousands	in % to 2008
1	Employment in the tourism industry	250,6	-1,5
2	Employment in the tourism economy	1117,3	-1,8

Source: Travel & Tourist Economic Impact Poland 2009, WTTC, London 2009, Summary tables, http://www.wttc.org/bin/pdf/original_pdf_file/poland.pdf, (2011-03-18).

The data inform indirectly about the innovation of a given country. The study in 2009 shows the fall of the part of basic rates for Poland, however it indicates the rise for the others. Generally speaking, the situation of Poland is positive in comparison with the

¹ Doświadczenia europejskie. Jak w Unii finansuje się innowacje?, <http://www.fundusze-europejskie.pl/index.php> (2011-07-26).

assessment of tourist economy in Europe. The WTTC emphasized the fall of expenditure for business travels and expenditure of government for tourism in Poland in 2009. On the other hand, one can observe an increase of foreign arrivals (foreign tourists await products of high standard and innovation) and capital investments – which enables the applying of innovative actions.

One may present the study conducted for small and middle companies in Poland in order to identify the concrete barriers connected with the innovative activity of tourist companies. Although, the study does not refer strictly to tourist companies, it shows the situation in the area. The study was conducted by the Ipsos–Demoskop, as the freelance work of Polish Agency of Enterprise Development.

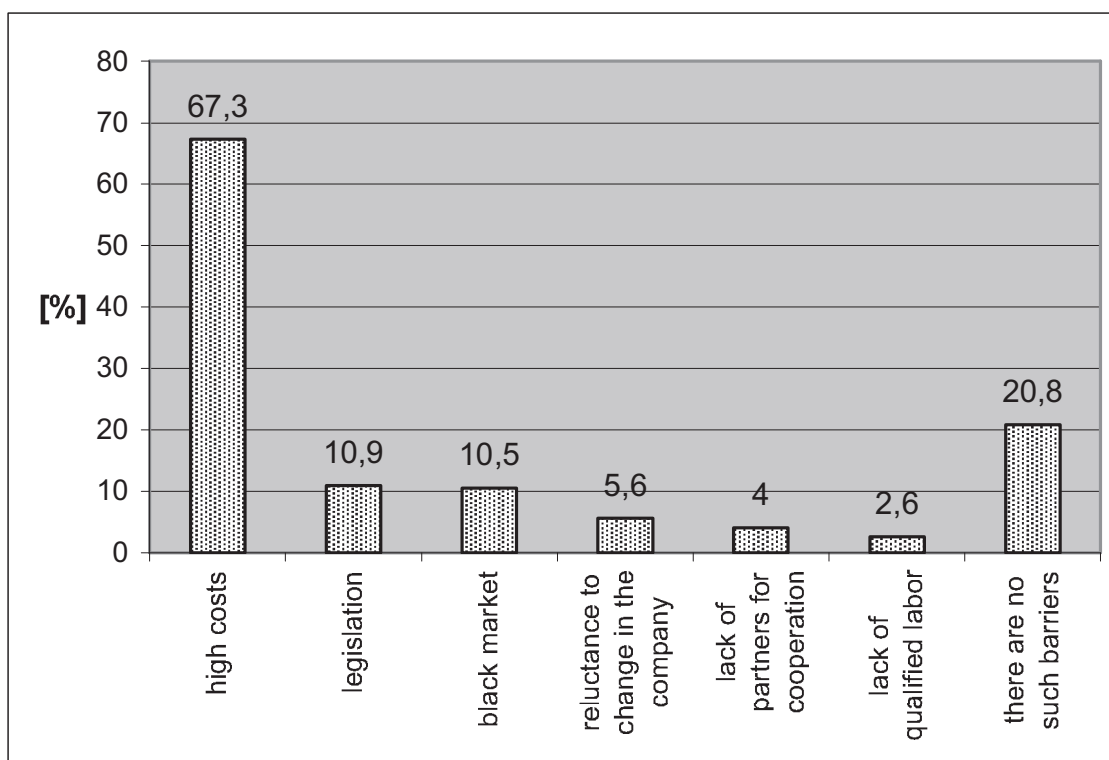


Fig. 1. Barriers limiting introduction innovation
Source: Polish Agency of Enterprise Development

The aim of the study was to assess the level of innovation of Polish companies. There were 831 companies that took part in the research, especially from the small and medium firms sector in the whole country. One should emphasize that the barriers in applying the innovations, declared by researchers, are very similar regardless of the size of a company. According to businessmen, the most substantial barriers in applying innovations include high expenses connected with putting innovation into practice, as well as complicated and unstable legal articles.

Summary

The aim of this article is to indicate the directions of the development of tourist sector innovativeness in the region. In the article was self-characterized the essence of the innovation strategies, used both by tourist enterprises and institutions supporting the development of tourism. It was showed, that tourist enterprises seeking possibilities of introducing new solutions, both products as process, deserve on the name of innovative. There were presented these international organizations, which favour the co-operation in the field of tourism and creating innovative actions. There were also showed the chosen results of research in Poland with special pressure on the indexes of trade and the economy of tourist.

The article has pointed out that innovation is the key to the competitive advantage of tourist companies. One can conclude that the turbulent surrounding of tourist companies, the rate of changes in information technologies or organization systems cause the economic subjects, which are able to introduce the innovations, to remain on the market. The conducted analyses indicate that it is difficult for tourist companies to apply innovations by themselves, therefore it is the cooperation of subjects that seems to be crucial to become the shape of cluster. In the era of constant changes and increasing globalization, every company can feel the strong pressure of innovation, however the companies point to actual barriers such as high expenses, complicated legal articles or grey area. According to Ch. Freeman "not to introduce an innovation means to die"¹. The ability of a company to introduce an innovation is one of the most important stimuli that determine the competitive contest, which aims to gain an advantage over a competitor. Thus, one should indicate that it is crucial to introduce further studies and encourage tourist companies to undertake the innovative action.

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СПІВРОБІТНИЦТВО З МЕТОЮ РОЗВИТКУ ТУРИЗМУ В РЕГІОНІ ЯК ПРИКЛАД ІННОВАЦІЙНОЇ СТРАТЕГІЇ

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Розглянуто використання інноваційних стратегій для туристичних підприємств та установ. Підкреслено, що впровадження інновацій повинно ґрунтуватись на активній співпраці суб'єктів туристичного ринку, в тому числі у формі інновацій. Наголошено, що активне впровадження інновацій забезпечує конкурентоздатність туристичних підприємств.

Ключові слова: співпраця, розвиток, туризм, регіон, інноваційна стратегія.

СОТРУДНИЧЕСТВО В ЦЕЛЯХ РАЗВИТИЯ ТУРИЗМА В РЕГИОНЕ КАК ПРИМЕР ИННОВАЦИОННОЙ СТРАТЕГИИ

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Рассмотрено использование инновационных стратегий для туристических предприятий и учреждений. Подчёркнуто, что введение инноваций должно опираться на активное сотрудничество субъектов туристического рынка, в том числе и в форме инноваций. Акцентируется, что активное введение инноваций обеспечивает конкурентоспособность туристических предприятий.

Ключевые слова: сотрудничество, развитие, туризм, регион, инновационная стратегия.