



POLICY STATEMENT ON TOURISM

Statement: **10/2004**
Issue: **No: 1**
Date: **June 2004**
Subject: **Tourism**

Summary: This document seeks to identify Kosovo's prospects as a future tourism destination and explores the role that the Association of Kosovo Municipalities should play regarding tourism development. It states that:

- Cooperation between the Municipalities and the central government, the public and private sector, and with neighbouring countries is the key-issue for a successful development of tourism in Kosovo.
- Municipalities and the central government of Kosovo are essential stakeholders and should supplement and complement each other in their joint mission to build up and promote Kosovo as a future tourism destination.
- A master plan including marketing concept and action plan should be established as soon as possible in close cooperation with all stakeholders.



Principal References:

The European Charter of Local Self-Government
UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 – on the Self-Government of Municipalities
UNMIK Regulation 2002/12 – on the Kosovo Trust Agency
Ministry of Trade and Industry draft Law on Tourism
AMK Policy Statement on Local Economic Development

The Association of Kosovo Municipalities is established in accordance with the European Charter of Local Self-Government to promote the interests of the people of Kosovo through strengthening the work of Municipalities. The Association is supported by IFES Ltd. funded by the European Agency for Reconstruction.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PREFACE BY THE PRESIDENT OF THE ASSOCIATION OF KOSOVO MUNICIPALITIES

Kosovo needs strong local government. Policies for the development of Kosovo can only succeed if the local level is involved and informed. The Association of Kosovo Municipalities has a strong role to play to help the Government to deliver good governance, and also, to inform the Government of the concerns and difficulties of the municipalities.

This Policy Statement is one of a series of statements prepared by the Association of Kosovo Municipalities. There are three aims to the policy statements:

- To demonstrate that municipalities are achieving success when they are given the freedom to work.
- To highlight the policy conflicts experienced at the municipal level and to propose solutions to better meet the needs of citizens.
- To communicate European practice in local government, and to encourage the adoption of that practice in Kosovo.

The work of the Association of Kosovo Municipalities is based on the European Charter of Local Self-Government. Meeting this Charter is an important requirement for Kosovo to take its place in Europe.

We are seeking constructive consultation and debate from the Policy Statements and ultimately to take good steps forward for the benefit of the citizens of Kosovo. Your observations and comment will be appreciated.

Lutfi Haziri

President of the Association of Kosovo Municipalities

FOREWARD BY THE PROJECT TEAM LEADER

This statement is part of a series of 13 policy documents prepared by the Association of Kosovo Municipalities with the support of IFES Ltd. The work is part of a European Agency for Reconstruction project supporting the development of municipal governance.

The aim of the series is to explore the responsibilities given to municipalities by UNMIK Regulation 2000/45 on the Self Government of Municipalities in Kosovo. The municipalities see this regulation as defining their responsibilities and they expect the freedom to do what they have been established to do. Underpinning their position is the European Charter of Local Self Government that gives a strong mandate to the local level of governance throughout Europe.

The project has brought together municipal analysis groups, comprising elected officials and civil servants, to explore the current situation and to present the municipal perspective for the development of legislation and practice in each area of responsibility. The character of the work has been to facilitate expression of the municipal concerns using the knowledge and professionalism of the personnel that are engaged in practical local governance on a daily basis, 'to tell it as it is'.

The results are challenging and provide a serious set of propositions to help set government policy and spending priorities. Inevitably this challenges some aspects of central government policy but it is to be hoped in a healthy way that is normal in a democracy.

I commend the policy statement to you and hope that you will have time both to read, to criticise, and to listen to the municipal perspective.

Alan Packer
Team Leader

1. INTRODUCTION

This Policy Statement on Tourism has been prepared by AMK's Analysis Group 10 that met in June and July 2004.

Tourism, through its complex system of impact on the lives of many people and many economic branches, ranks among the most important tools to boost a territory's economy and shape up its overall image. Rebuilding tourism should be given priority as part of the future social and economic development of Kosovo. This includes the joint commitment of all stakeholders: Kosovo as a whole, the Municipalities and AMK, NGOs and the private sector.

This statement tackles some of the key issues faced by the Municipalities and attempts to make a positive contribution to developing the tourism sector.

1.1 Strategy of the Association of Kosovo Municipalities (AMK)

The overall strategy of the AMK is to work with all municipalities throughout Kosovo to promote better municipal governance. The objectives of the Association are:

- To improve the legislative structure for self-government plus the practical effectiveness of its implementation;
- To promote decentralisation of governance, through practical support and co-participation, on an equal basis, between Central and Local Authorities;
- To broaden public support for Local Democracy including citizens and businessmen; to increase confidence in their self-organisation and willingness to participate in local governance;
- To increase the competencies, knowledge and capacity of the Municipalities to ensure high quality and effectiveness in local services;
- To raise additional financial resources for Municipalities;
- To demonstrate that the Municipalities of Kosovo are equal and have competitive partnership with other Local Authorities in Europe and the World;
- To support the development of the Association in response to changes in the internal and external situation.

In addition it is specifically stated in the Associations Statute the aim "to organise and co-ordinate the activities of its members in the field of education, social issues, culture, fight against crime and improving services for its citizens".

1.2 Scope of the Tourism Policy Statement

Following intense discussion, Analysis Group 10 came to the consensus that the most relevant issues facing municipalities in regard to tourism and to be considered in this draft policy statement, should be grouped as follows:

- Potential for the development of tourism
- The requirements of different categories of tourism
- Recommendations for the future

1.3 Format of Policy Statement

The format of this Policy Statement is as follows:-

1. Introduction
2. Existing legislation
3. Current Situation and Recommendations
4. Municipal Case Studies

To support the content of the policy statement there are references to key relevant legislation and regulations.

2. EXISTING LEGISLATION AND COMMENTARY

2.1 Overview

Two pieces of legislation have been identified that specifically refer to Tourism, the basic regulation establishing the municipalities (UNMIK Regulation 2000/45) and the Law on Tourism. Other pieces of legislation have an indirect bearing on tourism activities.

The Law on Tourism has been approved by the Kosovo Assembly but it is yet to be promulgated by the SRSG. This law is the first piece of legislation focussing entirely on the tourism sector.

2.2 Tourism at the Municipal Level

UNMIK Regulation No. 2000/45 on the Self-Government of Municipalities in Kosovo sets out in section 3 the responsibilities and powers of Municipalities. In addition to specified functions the municipalities may take action within their territories in relation to other matters of concern to the municipality. These include tourism, cultural activities and civic promotion.

Commentary

As regulation 2000/45 does not specify in detail what actions are implied by this regulation it is useful to note typical actions of European municipalities:

(a) Tourism

- Acting as a “one-stop shop” for travellers
- Cooperating with Tourism/Promotion Boards on destination management and destination marketing (i.e. external issues)
- Emphasising Municipality-focused civic issues on tourism awareness, covering hospitality, ecology services and education and training (i.e. internal issues)
- Opening up and managing Tourist Information Offices (TIOs), operated and financed by the Municipalities, in close cooperation (including co-financing) with local (private tourism sector) Tourism Associations. TIO responsibilities include: Influencing on-site behaviour (visitor orientation centres, handling tourist complaints, signage, information posts, marked routes, only permitting guiding in groups, regulating (temporary) access to sensitive areas, booking and reservation, managing car-parks, installing on-site transport systems; conducting tourism statistics for further use at the Tourism / Promotion Board
- Encouraging the provision of tourist information, quality controls and other means of securing visitor satisfaction
- Inspiring, assisting and working with other organizations, institutions or private companies, schools and academies/universities, in order to coordinate activities of mutual interest

(b) Cultural activities

- Sustaining and promoting local culture (local customs, food etc.)
- Programming festivals, events and tours
- Encouraging greater community involvement (i.e. cultural / sports / religious associations and communities)
- Organizing contests aiming to improving the local tourism product
- Responding to ecological on-site issues

2.3 Assembly of Kosovo – Law No. 2004/16 on hotel and tourist activities

Key extracts of this law are given in Anex A, the full text can be found at www.assembly-kosova.org

Commentary

The law, as formulated, is difficult to understand, and seems to regulate at too low a level of detail. At the same time it seems to lack a comprehensive ‘high-level’ framework and is therefore incomplete in its description of business activities. It also includes too much Government intervention into private-sector business, and it is confusing in its glossary of tourism-related terms (as there are commonly adopted terms in use across Europe).

It would be helpful if the proposed Law on Tourism emphasized a) the “subsidiary” principle in defining the relationship between the central Government and the Municipalities and the resulting tasks, and, b) the supplier-client/provider-traveller relationship.

The Law could also provide an opportunity to introduce World Tourism Organisation (WTO) categories and quality standards.

3. CURRENT SITUATION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

3.1 Current situation

The Ministry of Trade and industry (MTI) established a division dealing with tourism last year. This division has prepared a strategy paper analysing the situation and the potential of the tourism sector in Kosovo. Although this is a very good initiative from the central level, it is unfortunate that the municipalities have not been much involved in the process.

3.1.1 General Summary

The MTI Tourism Division goes back to a June 1999 initiative, but has only been formed as an MTI-incorporated unit in March 2002. Today it is one of 7 departments within MTI, so far with only 3 or 4 offices at the Municipal level dealing with tourism. In January 2003 the MTI published an "Analysis of unfavourable tendencies in development of tourism in Kosovo after the war". This pinpoints deficiencies, from an institutional and legal level to packaging and service, with a strong focus on improving the investment climate – a key-task of the Ministry – and a better education system with curricula in accordance with international standards – a key-task of the Ministry of Education.

Finally, the Kosovo Draft Law on Tourism has been elaborated. It considers three divisions: handicrafts, hotels and tourism, with a clear priority to tourism and an emphasis on legislation, development of strategy and marketing/promotion. The draft was presented to Parliament; its implementation will be left over to project groups, whose results are to be put together "in the framework of a strategy for developing the economy". A precondition, however, is ratification by UNMIK, which has not been done so far. – As to promotion, opening tourist information offices, issuing a map, a brochure and leaflets – and putting Kosovo onto the Internet are envisaged.

The MTI Tourism Division is still in the phase of consolidation. MTI is of the view that the Municipal presidents cannot manage the tourism-related questions. It is intended therefore to develop cooperation with other authorities in order to start collecting tourism data: 7,000 tourism-relevant businesses are said to exist not including the "social sector" where KTA is in charge. So far tour agencies and hotels have only cared for the registration of visitors, but there has been virtually no contact with the Ministry. Regional cooperation is not yet on the agenda, for example with Albania and Montenegro.

3.1.2 Cooperation of Municipalities, AMK and Central Government of Kosovo

Cooperation is currently weak but is essential for the future. A Kosovo Tourism Promotion Board will focus mainly on destination management and destination marketing (external issues), whilst Municipalities will emphasise their share of implementing civic issues of tourism awareness/consciousness, hospitality, ecology, services and education / training. It is hoped that this policy statement will help to develop a co-operative relationship.

3.2 Potential for the Development of Tourism

3.2.1 Possibilities

Kosovo is rich in historic and cultural monuments, so far mostly frequented by school classes. Buildings go back to Illyrian, Byzantine and Austrian times, structures in Kulla-style are typical. There was much destruction during the war, but thanks to the EU some outstanding architectural examples have been rehabilitated. Hammams (traditional baths) and weekly exhibitions (artists from Kosovo and its neighbourhood) are visited by local people; folklore is displayed in some Municipalities.

The mixture of different religions plays an important role for the development of tourism. Religious celebrations attract a large number of visitors.

Possibilities are seen in mountain, water, health, rural, leisure, cultural, winter sport, family, nature/eco-tourism, hunting/fishing, horse riding and transit tourism. Tourism can be a thriving force for local development. There is a priority for rehabilitating historic monuments, revitalizing traditional folklore and opening tourist information offices in the Municipalities. There is also a need to create awareness/consciousness of tourism among the local population, to improve communication facilities and cooperate with central and municipal authorities as well as with NGOs and Kosovo's neighbours.

"Eco-tourism" is regarded above all as a tool of nature conservation – with a special attention to endemic animals and plants that are without commercial purposes. There are cottages for foresters, hunters and forest-workers, making excursions, picnics, camping, horse riding, bird watching, watching wild animals all possible – indeed all the requirements for "Robinson Crusoe" tourism could be offered.

Other possibilities but for which no programmes are being offered so far include: animal/game hunting and rural tourism. Spa tourism is a potential highlight in the west and the south of the country and remains to be discovered anew.

Tourism is regarded as having a positive impact on jobs and will also lead to maintenance of the landscape and protection of handicrafts. Following a study back in the seventies, Kosovo counts for 35 % of the whole of ex-Yugoslavia in assets for winter sports activities, and the country abounds with scenic points and natural sights. It then had capacity to house up to 200,000 sports people during season, and a calculated 1,500 to 2,000 beds could generate €25M to €30M of income. Potential foreign investors, mainly from Italy, have allegedly expressed their interest in the area.

Kosovo's so far undetected feature is as a component in regional tourism linking tourism-related towns and places in the region. Face-lifting Pristina International Airport, opening it for charter flights and revitalization of railways are creating new possibilities to invigorate tourism.

Altogether, there are good opportunities for domestic and inbound tourism. Tourism agencies, almost all of whom focus on outbound tourism, should have a second thought on their target location.

3.2.2 Obstacles

Among the major problems participants identified are the general economic situation, poor infrastructure, lack of legislation, unclear responsibilities, unclear property situation, no guarantee of ownership; poor management (i.e. of natural resources), bad investment climate, growing pollution, and a weak banking system. In addition a considerable number of places are being held by KTA as they are part of socially and publicly owned enterprises. These obviously pose an obstacle in the development of any potential tourist site, also some tourism places are held by KFOR. Furthermore there is a lack of awareness of tourism potential, lack of educated staff, missing tourism management and marketing, little promotion/information material, or website exposure. Buildings, although existing in parts, are run down, dilapidated, or even severely affected by the war.

Telecommunication and other public utilities are under the responsibility of KTA and are very expensive and/or of poor quality. It is crucial that public utilities work properly if Kosovo is to attract foreign investment.

Foreign investors will be attracted to providing resources only when Kosovo is politically stable. Therefore the pending definition of final status will play a role in determining the development of the tourism sector. Moreover, Kosovo will be in a position to apply for international loans.

Ecological conditions are also at stake: there is pollution from old industries, from waste water and solid waste; and from current industry and individuals – establishing of efficient waste management as well as air filtering systems are badly required.

3.2.3 Development

Although burdened with the aftermath of war, a largely war-biased image abroad and a pending political status, Kosovo has rich potential rich in nature, history and culture to become a promising tourism destination, particularly in a Balkan regional context.

Since tourism implies local government functions, tourism development is directly involved with

- ownership of real estate,
- on-site regulation of business investments,
- cooperation between the public and private sector,
- cultural and civic tasks
- community / municipality-based tourism
- other local and national functions in destination management and destination marketing.

Development obviously requires investment. Following a feasibility analysis (which may be included in a future master-plan on tourism development), domestic funding should be considered prior to seeking international sources of financing. Public-private partnership funding may be a way out of a potential deadlock. Fiscal, legislative and administrative bodies should support projects. Incentives to attract (foreign/domestic) investments should be given.

3.3 Requirements according to Categories of Tourism

3.3.1 Transit Tourism

Improving road infrastructure, opening borders for free travel to Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia; improving the quality of roadside restaurants, etc., all these steps will increase travel through Kosovo. Required: good roads, public security, individual safety; heavy goods vehicles transit fees, etc.. Tourism sights and establishments situated along the route would profit from transit tourism.

3.3.2 Nature Tourism

In the mountains huts should be repaired or built to provide adequate accommodation; 70 beds in one mountain hut – one room – cannot be sold. Trekking paths and signage need to be installed/updated, reliable maps should be issued (e.g. in Prizren, which boasts a tourism association, the names of places/roads and their indications in maps are said to be correct and compatible). Promotion can be based on: emphasising the climatic/health assets of mountain air; camping opportunities from June through August, possibilities of horse riding, etc. ,

Water tourism includes swimming, jumping from bridges, fishing in lakes or rivers – assets for week-end pastimes; there are good opportunities, but the installation of parking lots should be kept in mind.

3.3.3 Health Tourism

Refurbishing facilities and buildings, buying new equipment for spas like Banjan, Peja/Pec, Kllokot/Klokot, Mitrovicë/Mitrovica, Shakovica/Sakovica, Gjilan/Gnjilane-Dovercan/Dobërçan, Malishevë/Malisevo and Deçan/Decane mineral water springs. Nowadays only 20 % of all capacities are used. –

Some hotels have the capacity to accommodate many people but they all need a great deal of investment.

3.3.4 Winter Tourism

Winter tourism takes place in the Bjeshkët e Nemuna (Albanian Alps), Sharr Mountains and Shala Mountains. Some of them have ski lifts, but in most cases there is a lack of infrastructure for the development of winter sports. The number of hotels and restaurants will need to increase.

Fortunately, winter-sports facilities have been revitalized immediately after the war, lifts are running, but hotels are dilapidated (except Rugova). There is snow from October to later June; ski slopes are generally located near the towns. In the Swiss-instigated snow-analysis of 1984, Kosovo was awarded the first place of the Balkans in snow-stability. –

3.3.5 Cultural Tourism

Kosovo boasts many cultural monuments, which are highly frequented by school trips. Old hammams are used for exhibitions in different places. Other cultural events, e.g. folklore festivals are recommended.

Historic buildings from centuries ago represent different cultures that have existed in Kosovo, such as Illyrian, Byzantine and Ottoman.

Kullas are traditional houses for the entire Albanian nation. They are located in Dukagjin Plain, mainly in Peja/Pec and Deçan/Decane.

3.3.6 Adventure Tourism

Due to its topography, history and relatively “exotic” Balkan image, Kosovo has all ingredients for adventure tourism – and use should be made of it. A reference to historical dates, events and persons of regional fame, as well as to West European explorers/travellers and their literature is recommended, thus laying the basis for “theme” travel packages.

4. WAYS FORWARD

4.1 Introduction

AMK knows that there are many barriers to the development of tourism in Kosovo. However, it also knows that it is a fundamental mistake to neglect the sector. Promotion of tourism is already late and many opportunities to use the 'international community tourists' have already been missed.

Success in attracting investment depends on the co-operation between the public and private sector and their willingness to exchange information continuously. Contrary to purely commercial marketing, investment marketing and tourism promotion require the support of private and public institutions, associations, and citizens. Any territory's potential is determined less by its geographic location, its climate, or its natural resources than by its people, their commitment, capability, energy, values and organisations. If a country wants to become a destination for investors and travellers alike, it has to fulfil the following fundamental tasks:

- (1) to analyse what happens inside the country and in the whole region;
- (2) to understand the needs, wishes and behaviour of its target groups;
- (3) to draft a realistic perspective (vision, mission, guidelines) of the country;
- (4) to elaborate strategy and action plan, which indicate how to reach this vision;
- (5) to assess the progress gained in each phase.

The municipalities of Kosovo want to be involved in such exercises and this statement is a first such step to promote Kosovo as a tourist destination and to improve the economic possibilities for municipal citizens.

4.2 Identified Goals

The following goals are identified as guiding the tourism agenda:

1. Becoming "a respectable competitor in the region and beyond";
2. Introducing a legal and organisational framework according to international practice;
3. Introducing a long-term strategy on tourism development (for example, following the GTZ-inspired models of Montenegro and Croatia);
4. Establishing an information and marketing centre;
5. Creating an attractive environment for tourism;
6. Boosting the privatisation process of hotels, which are still being run as "social companies";
7. Stronger support of private initiatives; i.e. establishing centres for summer and winter tourism;
8. Reform of tourism education and training;
9. Striving for a competent management at the local level;

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10. Guaranteeing security at the local and national levels;
 11. Obtaining support for tourism from central and local governments.

4.3 Recommendations

To guide the municipalities and Kosovo towards these goals the following recommendations are made:

- Opening a dialogue between Municipalities, AMK and Central Government in an effort to harmonize UNMIK regulations 2000/45 and 2002/12 to the extent that Municipalities obtain their right to decide on their own issues;
- Boosting cooperation between AMK, Municipalities and Central Government, the public and private sector, with neighbouring countries – and between different ministries, i.e. education, agriculture, environment, trade and industry -- for the benefit of all stakeholders;
- Establishing a master plan including marketing concept and action plan on tourism in Kosovo
- Implementing first steps as formulated in the AMK Implementation Guidelines on Tourism (published by AMK as a separate document).

5. MUNICIPAL CASE STUDIES

5.1 Deçan/Deçane Municipality

Background



Village Isniq/Iznić, with 5,000 to 6,000 inhabitants is the second largest village of Deçan/Decane Municipality, it is situated in the Eastern part of the Municipality. The village is reputed for its traditional hospitality and characteristic Albanian “Kulla” (= tower) buildings.

Their unique architecture served people as their home places and protected them against enemies. Today once again they are used as private accommodation, or, for example, to house an Internet café [at Isniq, the building is over 100 years old] or serve as a war memorial [in Gllogjan village / South-East], or to be opened to provide visitors with traditional food.



One of the shiniest examples is a Kulla at Osdautaj: over 200 years old, it was burned down during the war in 1998 and left in very bad condition until 2002, when it was rebuilt by the

European Agency for Reconstruction (EAR). Today it shelters a museum.

Junik is in many ways unique: located in the North-Western part of Deçan/Deçane Municipality, Junik – Kosovo’s largest village (over 8,000 inhabitants) – is considered the “birthplace” of Kulla architecture. There you can see a private Kulla, more than 400 years old, restored by EAR, fully equipped according to modern standards.

Proactive Approach of Municipality

Promoting investments in building Kullas is one of the Deçan/Deçane Municipality’s key-responsibilities. However, for this purpose, the Municipality must have the authority over zoning and land use.

Conclusions

In the end as initiative such as development of kullas could turn out as one of Kosovo's suggested 'Unique Marketing Proposition' assets, defying the faceless and uniform "motels", which are mushrooming alongside the thoroughfares.

The Kulla style could well serve as an architectural model for accommodation and eating out in a historical atmosphere – with Spain's "Paradores" or Portugal's "Pousadas" to be referred to as best practices, successfully copied for a long time in many countries. However, "Kullas" should enjoy an appropriate environment (nice village or town), since they may hardly be profitable standing alone – perhaps with the exception of "romantic Kulla lodges" for honeymooners!

5.2 Prizren/Prizren Municipality

Background

In the South West of Kosovo lies Prizren/Prizren – one of the oldest cities throughout the span of Albanian culture, and temporarily Albania’s capital – with its panorama of the Sharr mountains and its historic, war-damaged, yet so vivid living quarters, crowned by the ruins of the old Ottoman fortress, a strategic stronghold which dates back to Illyrian times – this city with its houses creeping up the hill and at the same time harmoniously integrating the river, to which numerous densely-visited street-restaurants go – this cornerstone of Albanian and Kosovar identity is a full-day tourist highlight. Wandering the streets can be supplemented by explanations given by museum guides, local people, and explanations given at the restored League of Prizren Compound or the characteristic Cafés. –



First successful steps to reconstruction have been done, as can be seen at the building of the Albanian League of Prizren. Here on June 10 1878, all Albanian leaders gathered under the banner of the Albanian League, in order to liberate Albania from Ottoman oppression. The building had been burned down during the war together with its exhibits. However in 2000 it was reconstructed, and is now a museum although only a few of the original exhibits remain and copies are shown of lost items.

Prizren/Prizren has other cultural and historic monuments, such as the Mosque of Sinan Pasha, the Hamam of Gazi Mehmet Pasha, the Church of St. Premte, the Archeological Museum and water mills.

Proactive Approach of Municipality

The fortress, which even in ruined condition looks run-down for lack of maintenance, deserves profound facelifting, and therefore the City of Prizren has been seeking investors for a long time. Local inhabitants’ visible diligence and sense of business could make Prizren one of Kosovo’s outstanding centres of small and medium enterprise entrepreneurship.

Conclusions

Location/Destination Management aiming to boost investment and new jobs is best being conducted at the Municipal level, in cooperation with local associations and chambers of commerce, for they live on-site and know best. Prizren’s inhabitants’ pride of their wonderful city would certainly guarantee that important civic tasks are being done, like creating local tourism awareness and consciousness, ensuring hospitality and visitor services, and facilitating Prizren’s municipal landmarks and sights.

5.3 Peja/Peć Municipality

Background

A road through a beautiful landscape leads to the old town of Peja/Peć behind which lay craggy mountains – known as the Albanian Alps – whereas the scenic gorge with the river Lumbardh coursing through it brings - apart from attractiveness - freshness and complements to the beauty of the town.

As part of the cultural heritage Peja/Peć Monastery is located just at the left side of the entrance to Rugova Gorge. However, at present KFOR is in charge of securing sensitive objects and unfortunately some of the outstanding cultural sights of Kosovo are consequently closed and visitors without KFOR ID card are usually rejected.



A sign indicates that bears are living in the area of magnificent Ruvoga gorge. The 13 villages hidden in the gorge, of which 6 to 7 are inhabited throughout the year (the others only in summer), are accessible on rough roads which connect Kosovo and Montenegro (border currently closed) and lead to one of the popular ski slopes of the upper valley at Boge, reconstructed after the war and equipped with new lift and new motel/restaurant. It is worth the two-hour car ride from downtown Peja/Peć. The area, where reconstruction is under way and refurbished or new motels/restaurants have sprung up after the war, is said to have formerly received many travellers from other Yugoslav provinces, but also from Italy and Germany, on round-trips to the mountains and back to the Adriatic Sea. The area provides mountain walking, village settlements, remote lakes and is rich in flora and fauna.



The city of Peja/Peć is not only culturally and historically of high value, its mountains are certainly a tourism asset – for lovers of nature generally speaking, but also for mountaineers, trekkers, skiers, and rock climbers, with Rugova Gorge as the fabulous gateway to Montenegro and an ancient route, which boasts, besides its tremendous nature, a particularly historic and cultural asset as a valuable addition – the perfect destination for community-based (eco) tourism.

Conclusions

The International Ecotourism Society defines “ecotourism as responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and sustains the well-being of local people”. This definition implies also that there is a necessary social dimension to ecotourism, which is taken even a stage further by the term “community-based ecotourism”. This is a form of ecotourism, where the local community – in our case the Municipality – has substantial control over, and involvement in, its development and management. The definition implies some kind of collective responsibility and approval by representative bodies. Thus, community-based tourism in Peja/Peć is by itself the Municipality’s matter, as are – like in other villages, towns and cities in Kosovo – human services and environmental issues, water, power, sewage, garbage collection and disposal, and telecommunications infrastructure sectors.

ANEX A

For the purpose of creating the legal basis for regulation, improvement and advancing hotelier and tourist activities in Kosovo [the Assembly of Kosovo] adopts the following:

1. BASIC PROVISIONS

Article 4

4.1. The tourist activities may be exercised by the enterprises and other legal entities and entrepreneurs, who meet the requirements for developing such activities as set forth by the legal provisions of this law, and duly registered subjects for development of the said activity.

4.2. Individuals may also perform specific services, in accordance with the provisions of this Law and by-laws issued thereof.

4.3. The scope of the activities of the entities developing the tourist activity from the first paragraph of this Article shall be defined in the act of establishment, in accordance with this Law.

4.4. Foreign Legal entities and natural persons (individuals) can exercise tourism business according to this Law and respective by-laws and specific provisions approved.

10. TOURIST SERVICES IN THE RURAL TOURISM

Article 42

42.1. Rural tourism, in view of this law, shall be considered the stay of tourists in home businesses (households), which is organized as a rural tourism for vacations and recreational purposes.

42.2. Rural Tourist services shall be deemed: fruit harvest, harvest of fruits and vegetables, harvest of various crops, leasing horses for riding purposes and other home business services in the village.

42.3. Tourist services under Paragraph 1 above may be conducted by a member of the home business in the village, subject to provision of license for development of such activities in the village, in line with Article 43 of this law.

42.4. The Ministry in charge of tourism shall define the minimal applicable requirements for conduct of the said activities.

Article 43

43.1. In the home businesses, organized as household tourist business (hereafter: rural home businesses), a member of such business may, in addition to leasing houses for vacation under Article 77, Paragraph 1 item (a), perform the services.

43.2. In addition to services detailed in the paragraph above, the rural home businesses may also prepare and serve hot and cold meals, beverages, mainly from their own produce, for no more than 50 persons (excursionists) simultaneously.

43.3. Rural home businesses may also conduct the sale of wine, brandy and meat specialties of its own products in a regulated part of the living place or business facility, either as a covered setting or as an open tent, for no more than 50 persons (excursionists) simultaneously.

43.4. The Ministry in charge of tourism shall more closely determine the definition of rural home businesses, minimal requirements, conditions related to categories and the manner of categorizing the facilities operating under this article.

43.5. For proper delivery of services in rural home tourism business the provisions of Article 77 to 85 herein must be complied with.

43.6. The Ministry in charge of tourism shall consult the Ministry of Agriculture about the products deemed as self-products, and types of products that should not necessary be used, in view of Paragraph 2 of this Article.

15. TOURIST SERVICES AND OTHER FORMS OF TOURISM

Article 50

50.1. Tourist services may be performed through other forms of tourism such as health tourism, sports, religious, etc.

55.2. Legal entities and individuals under Paragraph 1 herein, shall report such hotel services to the appropriate authority of the local administration, detailing the location of the establishment, thus the place in which the services are performed, in order to enable the authority to proceed with inclusion in the registry of hotel services for legal entities and individuals, under Paragraph 1 above.

55.4. The appropriate authority of the local administration shall ensure compliance with the legal acts issued pursuant to Paragraph 3 herein.

55.6. Juridical and natural persons from Paragraph 1 and 2 of this Article, will make request to the local administrative body, will be completed the service that way to insure are fulfilled mentioned condition.

58.2. The hotel establishment may also operate periodically (during the duration of manifestations, fairs, anniversaries, etc.), provided that an appropriate license has been issued to that effect by the competent authority of the local administration.

Article 59

The competent authority of the local administration shall define the working hours in the hotel establishment, at the territory of its jurisdiction.

5. CAMPING

Article 76

76.1. Camping, in view of this law, shall be accommodation under tent, camp-house, camp-trailer and under other equipment for lodging in the open area, the location of which shall be define by the appropriate authority of the local administration.

Article 84

84.1. The decision allowing the conduct of services physical person in home businesses, shall be entered in the registry of hotel services performed by physical person in their home businesses, which is maintained by the competent authority of local administration.

Commentary

The law, as formulated, is difficult to understand, and regulatory at too low a level of detail. At the same time it seems to lack a comprehensive 'high-level' framework and is therefore incomplete in its description of business activities. It also includes too much Government intervention into private-sector business, and it is confusing in its glossary of tourism-related terms (as there are commonly adopted terms in use across Europe).

It would be helpful if the proposed Law on Tourism emphasized a) the "subsidiary" principle in defining the relationship between the central Government and the Municipalities and the resulting tasks, and, b) the supplier-client/provider-traveller relationship.

The Law could also provide an opportunity to introduce World Tourism Organisation (WTO) categories and quality standards.

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