

RUSSIAN TOURIST IN HÉVÍZ: FOLLOWING THE WAY OF KARLOVY VARY?

Ádam Köbli

University of Pécs, Faculty of Sciences, Institute of Geography, Department of Human Geography and Urban Studies, e-mail: kobli@gamma.ttk.pte.hu

Abstract: Hévíz is world famous of its medical lake and traditions of medical tourism. The protection of the unique natural resources of the town has to be taken into consideration by all future development plans. Due to the uniqueness of the spa town the economic crisis could not negatively affect its economy. However the tourism industry of Hévíz should also accommodate itself to the global changes since there were some major alterations taking place in the last couple of years. The ratio of the Russian and Ukrainian guests is continuously increasing which has a significant impact on the economic, social and cultural life of the settlement. In this paper it is demonstrated that thanks to the unique natural endowments, significant marketing techniques, the favourable geographical allocation of Hévíz and the exclusive, quality services more and more Russians are arriving to Hévíz. The Russian tourists are characterised by long stays and higher spending activity, and they also frequently by real estates in the area so they effect the local population and economy as well. The realignment of the services is characteristic in the town and the Russian language knowledge becomes an advantage of the labour force. Hévíz becomes a more colourful and unique target destination due to its new guest flow in the Hungarian tourism market.

Key words: Hévíz, spa town, Russian tourist, quality services, impacts

1 INTRODUCTION

Hévíz is a traditional Hungarian spa town possessing a touristic tradition of great value. The present structure has come into being as a result of a process lasting several decades. During the previous years, however, serious changes occurred in the spa town resulting from the transformation of its clientele.

As a result of globalization, world economy has been rearranged, the consequences of which appear in tourism in Hungary, too. The role of certain sending countries has increased in the tourism market; to these countries belongs Russia, where the middle class has gained strength. Russian tourists have become determining factors in the field of medical tourism in Europe.

Their proportion is ever increasing also in Hungary, and the striking example of the process can be observed the most in the best known Hungarian spa town, Hévíz.

On the one hand, the interest of Russian guests is due to their geographical vicinity, and on the other, to the above average mobility of Russians. They truly value and look for spa resorts where they are provided with high quality complex medical tourism services and treatments. This study introduces the causes and the process of the appearance of Russian and Ukrainian clientele in great numbers. The reasons why Hévíz is so successful among Russian tourists are examined, as well as what characterizes the guests during their stay in Hévíz. The transformation of the clientele of Hévíz brings about a serious economic, social and cultural impact in the life of the spa town, the examination of which has become necessary. The issue is important also because it introduces a current, ongoing process, and the changes influence the future of Hévíz.

2 ANALYSING THE TOURISM OF HÉVÍZ

From the tourism services of Hungary, medical and wellness tourism are areas of paramount importance; the best known spa town attracting the most guests and providing the best quality is Hévíz. The town is situated in the western basin of Lake Balaton in Zala county, in the West Transdanubian Region.

In Hévíz the basis of tourism is provided by the world-famous and unique Lake Hévíz, and the medical tourism services built on it. "Hévíz owes its fame to its medicinal lake, which is the largest biologically active natural thermal lake in the world with its 44,400 square metre water surface. The medicinal water gushes out from the 38 metre deep spring crater, its average temperature in summer is 33-35 °C which does not go below 23 °C neither in winter, and thus outdoor bathing is possible throughout the year. The water contains sulphurous, alkaline hydrogen carbonated, slightly radioactive active ingredients, having a curative effect primarily on various rheumatic, locomotor, muscular and nervous system disorders, as well as some gynaecological problems. A cure in Hévíz is applicable not only for rehabilitation, but it may also function as prevention, relaxation and recreation. The positive impacts of the water were discovered as early as the Roman times; however, the first medicinal bath was built in commission of the owner Count György Festetics in 1795" (Hévízi kistérség, 2008). Today the number of guests entering the lake spa is more than one million a year (2010 data).

2.1 Accommodation offers, the number of guest nights

Hévíz primarily builds on medical service, although the number of guests arriving for beauty, wellness and medical tourism (especially dental and anti-rheumatic treatments) is ever increasing. Because of the demands of tourists, quality accommodations are required, which have been built mainly in the form of hotels in Hévíz. In 2011, there were 23 hotels, 5 guest houses and 1 campsite ready for guests in the spa town (HCSO/KSH, 2013). During the last decades, 3, 4, and 5 star quality hotels

have been constantly built on the medical tourism of Hévíz, and in the bigger hotels most of the known forms of medical treatments are available for guests. In 2012, the commercial accommodation establishments of Hévíz received 207,992 guests in all, nearly half of which, exactly 104,619 were foreign guests; the number of guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments was 1,005,231, from this 670,471 nights were spent by foreign guests (Tab. 1). Due to this, the town of Hévíz is currently the second most popular Hungarian town regarding the total number tourist traffic, only Budapest is in a better position on the list.

Table 1 The most visited Hungarian cities, number of guests nights at commercial accommodation units 2012

The most visited Hungarian cities 2012						
	Total		Domestic		International	
	City	Number of guest nights	City	Number of guest nights	City	Number of guest nights
1.	Budapest	7 300 022	Budapest	876 714	Budapest	6 423 308
2.	Hévíz	1 005 231	Hajdúszoboszló	464 073	Hévíz	670 471
3.	Hajdúszoboszló	715 732	Siófok	409 502	Bük	368 083
4.	Bük	635 046	Hévíz	334 760	Sárvár	269 407
5.	Siófok	581 712	Zalakaros	291 331	Hajdúszoboszló	251 659

Source: HCSO/KSH, preliminary data, February 2013

The Hévíz-Balaton Airport of Sármellék is an international airport of outstanding importance, since foreign tourists can get to the area very easily; one can reach Hévíz as well as the shore of Lake Balaton from the airport in fifteen minutes. Air charters constantly arrive, but the service might be broadened by scheduled flights, too. On the one hand, the airport depends on the region, but on the other, it is the engine of the area's development. Flights mostly arrive from Germany, but operating Russian air charters are more and more frequent, too. Another development goal is establishing permanent scheduled flights between Russia and Sármellék.

2.2 The characteristics of the clientele of Hévíz

The complex medical tourism services are based on historical therapeutic traditions and bathing culture. The remains of a Roman villa explored prove the presence of Romans in the area. A significant improvement can be seen in the field from 1857-1858 and by 1871 seven houses were built by the lake with medical tourism purposes. "Due to the constructions, the bathing site became more and more frequented. The first sanatorium of Hévíz was built in 1907: the „Sanatorium and Medical Hotel of Hévíz” (Hévíz Város IVS, 2008). In 1800 there were 500, and in 1912 already 5,500 bathers mentioned in contemporary documents.

Great changes occurred in the years of socialism; in 1948 the Hévíz spa was nationalised, and old hotels were altered into trade union resorts. At the beginning, the

number of foreigners was decreasing, and the majority of guests were referred by trade unions. After 1968, Hungary became popularly known as “the happiest bar-rack”, and the number of foreign guests also in Hévíz started to increase. Eastern as well as Western tourists arrived to the spa town, and being a meeting point for East and West German tourists, Hévíz fulfilled a role similar to that of Lake Balaton. This area was the place where relatives and friends separated from one another could reunite. Many of them return today with a sense of nostalgia, since beside family re-unions new friendships, loves and marriages were born on the shore of Lake Balaton. In this period campsites, being associated with a sense of freedom, were very popular, especially among Dutch and East German tourists. By now, the demand for campsites has almost completely disappeared from the area. In the 1990s, during the period after the change of the regime, the main foreign clientele came from Germany and Austria. During this period, private accommodations were also very popular; there were many returning guests and also lots of new guests, who were interested in Hungary, an inviting, till then cut off destination.

Since the 2000s the number of Hungarian guests has been increasing. This is due to the fact that in this period health tourism was becoming more and more popular, and as a result of introducing various kinds of travel allowances, wellness and medical tourism became available for a wider section of society. Great spa development projects also took place around this time. Following 2008, the economic crisis resulted in a decline also in tourism, in revenues as well as in the number of guests. However, after a short period of stagnation, some increase can be seen in Hévíz, which is on the one hand due to the high quality complex medical tourism services and the uniqueness of Hévíz, and on the other, to the appearance of new markets, primarily the Russian and Ukrainian clientele. In the last years, the number of Chinese tourists has also increased significantly; however, it is typical of Chinese guests that they participate in travels around the whole country or even more countries, thus spending just a very short time in the spa town, in many cases only one night, then they continue their journey.

2.3 The tourist traffic of the most important sending countries to Hungary

In 2012 in Hungary the number of foreign guests (4,133,118 guests) increased by 8.1%, and the number of foreign guest nights (11,299,804 nights) by 8.5%, compared to 2011 (HCSO/KSH, 2013).

Based on the final data of the Hungarian Central Statistical Office/ KSH, in 2012 Germany was still leading the list of the number of guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments (Fig. 1).

German tourists spent more than 2.1 million guest nights in Hungary. In 2012, Russia already came fourth on the list of the most important sending countries; Russian guests spent all in all 600,492 nights in Hungary (this means a 30% increase compared to the figures of 2011). 96.9% of the nights that Russians spent in Hungary were guest nights at hotels; they almost exclusively look for quality accommodations.

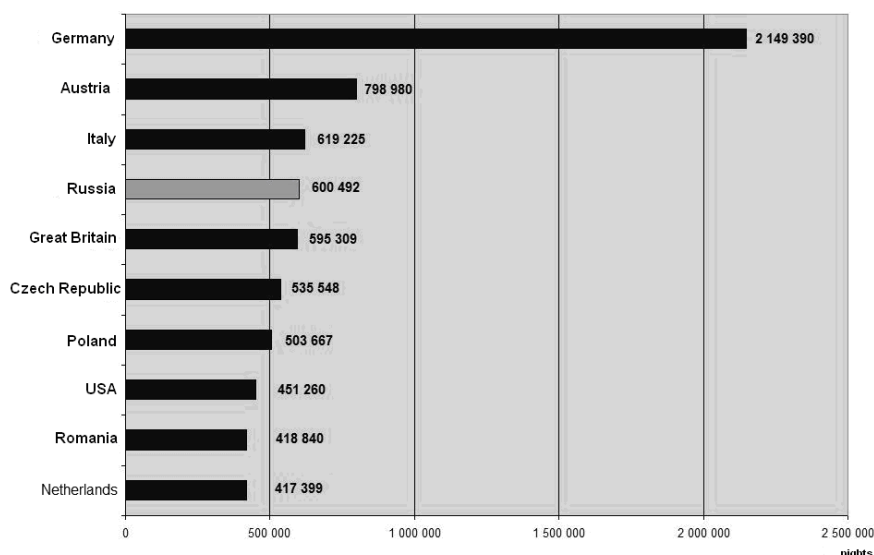


Figure 1 The 10 most important sending countries to Hungary (number of guest nights), 2012. Edited by Köbli, Á. (Source: HCSO/KSH)

As Fig. 2 demonstrates, more than 30% of the number of guest nights (181,232 nights) were spent in Hévíz, thus in 2012 Russia was already the second most important sending country of the spa town following Germany and coming before Austria, which occupied the second place for many years (HCSO/KSH, 2013). 54% of Russian guest nights were spent in Budapest. The number of Russian tourists is outstanding in Hévíz compared to their number in the other significant medical baths of provincial Hungary: Hajdúszoboszló, Sárovar and Bükk.

Medical tourism plays an important role in the tourism of Hungary. The significance of medical hotels is shown by the fact that in 2012, 10.4% of guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments (2.2 million nights) were registered in medical hotels (HCSO/KSH, 2013). Due to Russian tourists, the number of guests at medical hotels has increased.

The rise in Russian inbound tourism in Hungary is significant even on an international scale. Based on the data of the European Travel Commission, Russian tourists took 26.8 million travels worldwide in 2011. From this, 21.2 million travels (79.3%) took place in Europe, while the destinations of 5 million travels were outside of Europe. In 2011, all in all 12 million Russian tourists arrived to East-Central Europe, which is the 56.6% of the total number of travels that Russians took in Europe (European tourism, 2012a).

In the period from January to March 2012, compared to the previous year, from the destinations examined in the study, Hungary showed the most prominent increase in the number of guests (a nearly 50% increase) as well as in the number of guest nights (a nearly 56% increase). It is important to note that in nearly all of the countries examined there was a more than 10% increase in the number of Russian

travels. This shows the increasing significance of Russia, a major tourist sending country, in the global tourism market (European tourism, 2012b).

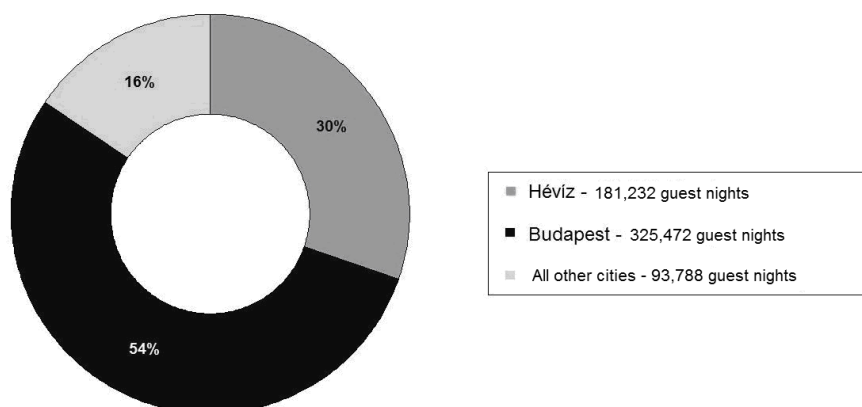


Figure 2 The number of guest nights spent by Russians in Hévíz compared to the total number of guest nights spent by Russians (%), 2012. Source: HCSO/KSH

Fig. 3 demonstrates how the number of Russian guests arriving to Hungary has increased in the last ten years. 2008 was the first year when the number of guest nights spent in Hungary by Russians reached 300 thousand; however, this number has been doubled in the previous years. Currently this increase is dynamic, but it would be important to examine in long term, till when this tendency might continue.

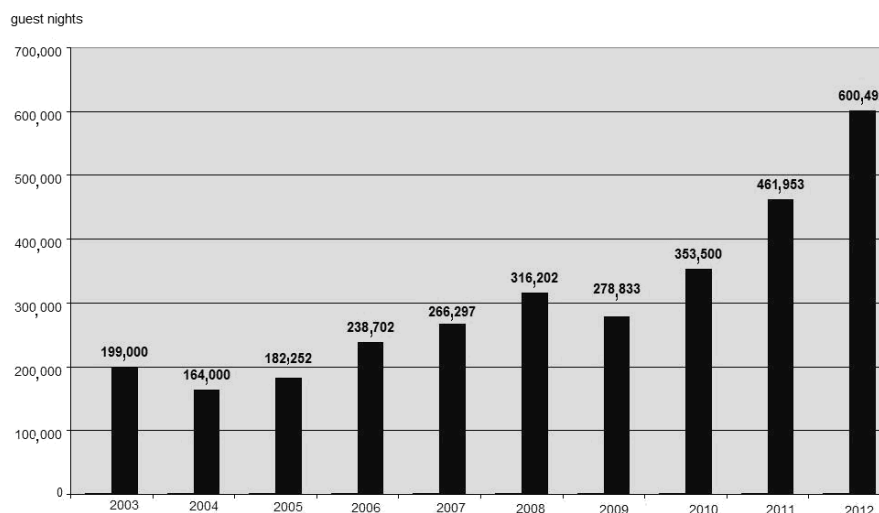


Figure 3 The number of guest nights spent by Russians in Hungarian commercial accommodation establishments (2003-2012). Source: HCSO, 2012

3 ANALYSING THE SUCCESS OF HÉVÍZ AMONG RUSSIAN TOURISTS

The increase in the number of Russian guests in Hévíz started at the beginning of the 2000s, and hotel professionals from Hévíz provided information that the process can be divided into three distinct phases. The first phase ended in 2005. At that time the hotels of Hévíz spent huge amounts of money on advertising in order to get known in the Russian market, still, the number of guests in the spa town remained relatively low. In the next phase, approximately between 2005 and 2010, Hévíz started to become increasingly popular and well known in the Russian market. A positive opinion was formed about the town and the quality of services, more and more returning and new tourists arrived, and the effective marketing job was also carried on. The third, still ongoing phase of the last couple of years started in 2010, when the number of Russian guests increased significantly, thus currently in Hévíz they make up for nearly 20% of the number of foreign guest nights, and this increasing tendency continues.

3.1 International tendencies

The Russian clientele has started to be interested in medical tourism in the last couple of years. A similar phenomenon has taken place in several traditional spa towns of Europe in the past ten years. This is especially true for the Czech spa towns, such as Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně (Fig. 4). Russian guests have a “disease awareness”, which results in them wanting to participate in as many treatments as possible, thus they tend to look for baths where complex medical tourism services are available.

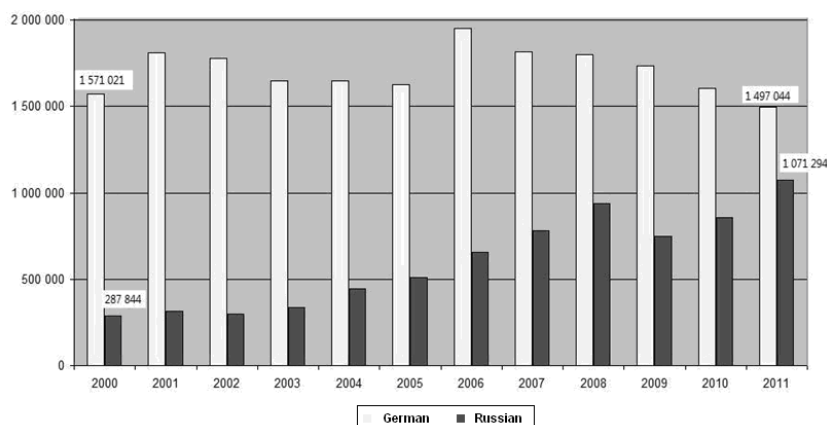


Figure 4 The number of guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments in the Karlovy Vary region, German and Russian guests (2000-2011). Source: Czech Statistical Office, 2012

Based on the data of the Czech Statistical Office, the transformation of the number of guest nights at commercial accommodation establishments in the Czech Karlovy Vary region (this is where the spa towns of Karlovy Vary and Mariánské Lázně belong) in the previous twelve years have been examined, with a special attention devoted to the two main sending countries, Germany and Russia. It can be observed that in 2000 the number of guest nights spent there by Germans was nearly seven times as much as the number of guest nights spent there by Russians. However, in the last twelve years – except for a few outstanding years – the number of guest nights spent by Germans stagnated, while the number of guest nights spent by Russians has become five times as much as it used to be, the reason for which is the elegant rural environment and the fact that Czech baths are well known. Examining the statistics about Hévíz, it can be observed that a very similar process is happening there now, where the major clientele is also German, but in the previous years the number of Russian guests has increased significantly, and if this tendency goes on, figures similar to that of the Czech spa town are to be expected.

It is important to learn from these foreign examples in Hévíz and try to filter out negative impacts, for example in the case of Russian acquisition. For this, a certain amount of wariness and attention is needed from the side of those working in the field of tourism, in order that short-term economic interests do not override long-term purposes that might affect local society.

3.2 The geographical situation of Hévíz

The location of Hévíz is a great advantage for Russian tourists, since it is situated in a central, easily accessible part of Western Transdanubia; due to the good road network it is easily approachable from the Alps as well as the Adriatic Sea.

There is a huge significance of the vicinity of three capital cities, Budapest, Vienna and Bratislava, and other big cities, such as Graz, which are important for Russian tourists because of shopping and cultural tourism. They can be reached relatively fast by car (in about 2-3 hours) and the car hire companies and travel agencies of Hévíz offer 1- or 2-day-long quality journeys for Russian tourists, who are easily mobilized for such journeys during their nearly two-week-long holidays in average. In these cities they can participate in cultural programmes that Hévíz and the towns nearby cannot provide yet; and the quality and vast offers of the stores of the capital cities are also appealing for Russians, who especially like shopping and spending their money during their travels.

The Hungarian Tourism Plc. seriously aims at appearing in the Russian market. One of the main lines leads towards the popularisation of not only Budapest, but also of health tourism, within which medical baths and especially Hévíz would appear as a special offer. The advocacy of Hungarian Tourism Plc. in Moscow has also made a serious marketing job. It has been highlighted that the centuries-old bathing culture of Hungary and our thermal water supplies have values that Russian guests might appreciate.

3.3 Quality services, uniqueness, tranquillity

For Russian tourists it is not only extremely important, but they also expect that in the town where they recover and relax there should be services and products with exclusive quality content. An exclusive product does not mean luxury or extravagance. They offer a peculiar speciality characteristic of the given area, which usually appears in its originality and many times in its naturality and simplicity. These are authentic attractions built on traditions and unique products (Lengyel, 2000). In Hungary they are many times connected to local gastronomy; we are starting to achieve good results in this field even in the European level. The original agricultural products are to be particularly highlighted: wine, cheese and various local products that are present in the area of Hévíz in an outstanding quantity and quality. The proof for this are the three farmers' markets to be found in the area, from which the one in Hévíz is open throughout the year, offering vast seasonal products for the customers (Fig. 5). Russian guests do look for and buy these quality products, and they taste and try new dishes and products that they had not been familiar with.

These markets have a significant tourism role; local sights are visited by many tourists, moreover, due to the quality products displayed in the markets, local residents also like doing their shopping there. "The specialities of the local economy, real and fresh food, as well as gastronomic specialities are spreading more and more. The consumer culture of sustainability prefers the products of local economy by all means." (Hajnal, 2010).

Tranquillity is another important factor when Russian guests make their choice. Hévíz is a small town with a population of 4,375 residents (HCSO/KSH 2012), where a wide range of programmes is offered for the guests in a peaceful local environment throughout the year. Russian guests highlight that they consider the town safe, where even ladies can walk alone on the streets after sunset.

3.4 Length of stay and expenses

Fig. 6 demonstrates the average length of stay of guests spending four or more nights in Hungary. Guests participating in medical tourism, who receive longer therapies, belong to this category, such as Russian tourists arriving to Hévíz. Also in this chart Russia reached the second place; Russian guests spent an average of nearly fourteen days, that is two weeks in Hungary. The longer time a tourist spends in a given destination, the more comfortable he feels, and the more he takes care of his environment. With regard to sustainability, considerate behaviour is very important.

The lengthy stay is also essential because of the expenditure of guests staying for four or more nights, which is shown in Fig. 7 per day per person. Russian guests reached an outstanding number in this category. During their average two-week stay, they spend an average of more than 17 thousand forints a day. Not only hotels and those providing medical tourism services benefit from this, but also smaller local companies, restaurants, stores, and local merchants.



Figure 5 Farmers' Market of Hévíz. Source Á. Köbli 2013

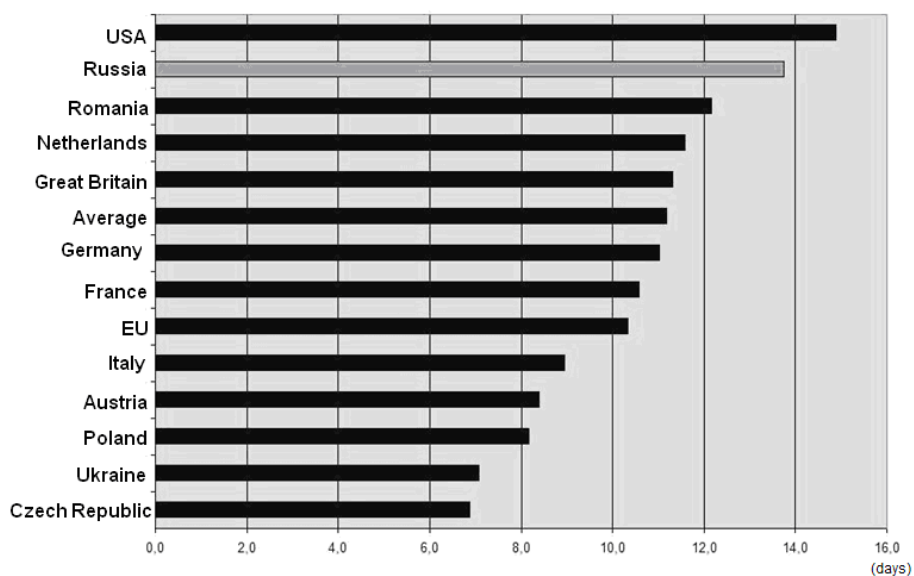


Figure 6 The length of stay of foreigners spending four or more nights in Hungary, average length of stay (days). Edited by Á. Köbli. Source: HCSO/KSH, 2009

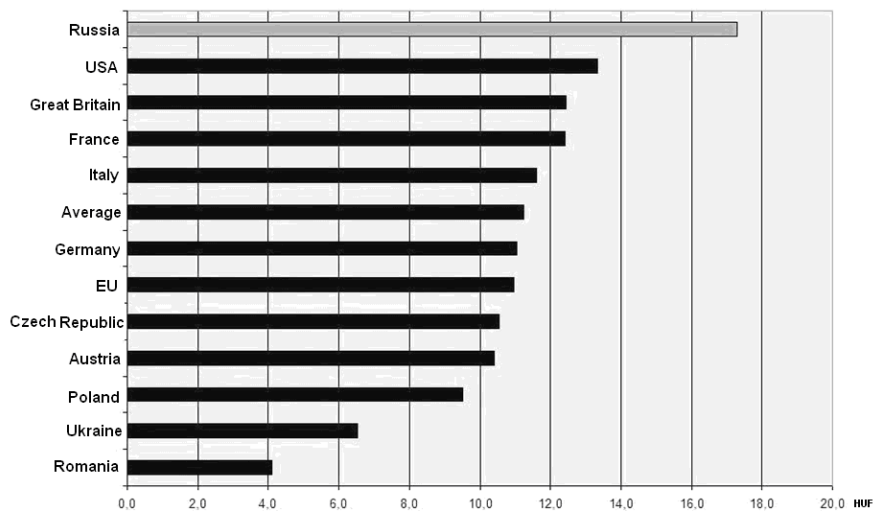


Figure 7 The expenditure of foreign guests staying for four or more nights, per day per person (one person/day/thousand HUF). Edited by Á. Köbli. Source: HCSO/KSH, 2009

4 EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF RUSSIAN GUESTS

4.1 Economic impact

Russian tourists tend to look for high standard, high class, usually 3, 4, or 5 star hotels. They prefer hotels where they can receive quality medical and wellness services. Therefore, hotels have a crucial role in maintaining Russian guests. At the beginning there was some doubt in Hévíz regarding Russian tourists, because they have a negative reputation across Europe. Another question was to what degree they can adapt to the circumstances in Hévíz, what their relationship will be like with other guests. Not all of the hotels had a positive attitude towards the issue, but as time and the success of innovators proved, Russians arriving to Hévíz are not mass tourists, there is no problem with their behaviour and they could easily fit into the group of other tourists.

They choose private accommodations and guest houses very rarely, they rather look for high standard, quality guest houses, and this way, at the former type of accommodation Hungarian and German tourists are in majority even today.

The restructuring of services can be observed in the town; there are more and more providers taking aim at the Russian clientele exclusively with various types of luxury products and treatments. In Hévíz, these new providers taking aim at Russians occurred mostly in the fields of fashion (an exclusive boutique with unique offers in the area), cosmetics (hairstylists, too), various types of cosmetic surgeries (plastic surgeries), as well as the field of quality gastronomy.

Speaking Russian has become a great advantage in the labour market of Hévíz in recent years. Especially restaurants and hotels seek waiters and receptionists who can sufficiently communicate with Russian guests.

4.2 Impact on the real estate market

It is characteristic of Russian guests that after returning to Hévíz several times to relax and heal, they get to like the area so much that they decide to buy real estate. Local real estate agencies take advantage of this, and they have special offers designed for Russian guests, they advertise their offers in Russian with the help of Russian interpreters. Furthermore, several new real estate agencies appeared in Hévíz in the last three years specialised particularly in Russian guests (for example the “1000 Út Utazási Iroda”) belongs to this category, which is a real estate agency at the same time). Since the demands of Russian and Ukrainian guests are high, as opposed to national tendencies, prices of real estate have not decreased in the local real estate market, rather, they have increased. Quite a few locals see a great opportunity in Russians to whom they might sell their houses or holiday dwellings finally for a good price, which in several cases only meant an additional burden for the owners because of the economic crisis.

Russians look for expensive, high standard real estates. Properties situated closer to Lake Hévíz are more expensive, but they can be sold faster than those located further from the lake, which are, however, cheaper. New properties are also

sought after; this is why new condominiums are constantly built in Hévíz. Besides real estate purchases, involvement in services connected to real estates are also very important, since these mean permanent job opportunities for local providers. Nearly 60% of the local real estate market is maintained by Russian and Ukrainian customers (Hévízi Forrás, 2013).

There is another reason why Russian and Ukrainian guests like purchasing real estate in Hévíz: “The purchases are not only motivated by the positive features of Hévíz, but also by the special visa coming with buying real estate in Hungary, because nowhere in Europe could they obtain real property for such a low price.” (Napi, 2013).

4.3 Social impact

“The social impacts of tourism can be defined as changes occurring in the life quality of residents living in tourist destinations, resulting from the development in the tourism sector and the presence of tourists.” (Puczkó and Rátz, 2001). When examining the impacts, it is important to analyse the relationship between Russians settling here and local residents. There had been a previous case in the area, that is the case of German and Austrian guests, when citizens of the same nation started to buy real estate in great numbers.

The relationship between local residents and Russian property owners is different than the one with Germans, since German is spoken by relatively many people in the area, while Russian is spoken by far less locals. This way, locals and newcomers find it harder to understand each other. Otherwise, Russians are not noisy, and there is no tension between them and their neighbours.

It is important to examine the relationship of Russians with other tourists. As far as German guests are concerned, it is increasingly the elderly who come to Hévíz, who feel a certain degree of resentment towards Russian guests, which can be explained by historical reasons; while the same cannot be observed from the side of Russians. In the long run Hévíz needs to avoid the phenomena occurring in several Western European destinations, where the massive appearance of Russians resulted in German guests arriving in lower numbers. However, some Russian families are permanently settled here, this way more and more Russian children study at Hungarian schools, and this is where they start getting familiar with Hungarian language. Children have a crucial role in terms of cultural approach and acceptance, with the help of which newcomers and locals together can constitute a real community.

4.4 Cultural impact

In connection with the appearance of the large Russian clientele, culture plays a significant role, since high quality social programmes help the rapprochement of cultures. This way, local residents and Hungarian as well as other foreign guests can get more familiar with Russian guests, their customs and traditions. Tolerance is crucial in the field of tourism, in order that locals can leave behind old, historical prejudices and trust in Russian guests, too.

The peak period of Russian and Ukrainian visits is the time of the Orthodox Christmas and New Year, when in recent years there has been a series of events organised especially for them by the Count I. Festetics György Cultural Centre of Hévíz. During the Russian cultural week, programmes aim at the extensive introduction of Russian culture and traditions. Among the programmes appears the Orthodox Christmas Mass, locals can get familiar with Russian cuisine, and they can participate in language courses. Guests can find entertainment at Russian dance sessions, in the Russian teahouse, and in the cinema where Russian movies are on screen. The regular high quality introduction of Russian culture might represent a great value for the local audience as well as the vast clientele. A perfect example for the rapprochement of cultures is the town twinning of Hévíz and the Russian city of Pyatigorsk in 2012.

T. Rátz (1999) examined in her research whether locals prefer tourists of a given nationality to others, who come to the town. She was attempting to find an answer for the question, whether stereotypes based on the nationality of tourists exist in Hévíz. Because of the clientele altering in terms of nationality, the re-examination of the problem is very relevant. The study questioned which nationality is the most welcome by the locals of Hévíz. Twelve the most important sending countries of Hévíz today as possible answers are listed, but there was an opportunity to add other nations as well. When responding, the participants could choose more nations, too.

It can be observed that the guests most welcome have been the same for the last twenty years: German, Austrian, Swiss and Hungarian tourists are the most preferred by locals (Tab. 2). It is interesting to note that the few Swedish guests were assessed very positively; and although Russian guests economically dominate the tourism of Hévíz, still, only 17.5% of the locals highlighted them. It can also be discovered that certain nations (Dutch, Italian, French) have completely disappeared from the area in the last decades. The reasons provided show that the locals of Hévíz prefer guests who are cultivated, well-behaved and spend a lot. Many highlighted communication and the differences in mentality as preferable features, while according to others, German, Austrian and Swiss guests are generous and prosperous, moreover, they are good consumers.

Table 2 The tourists of which nationality do you welcome the most?

	Nationality (1995)	%	Nationality (2013)	%
1.	German	56,8	German	57,5
2.	Austrian	43,2	Hungarien	55,0
3.	Hungarien	33,7	Austrian	47,5
4.	Swiss, Dutch	25,3	Swiss	35,0
5.	British	18,9	Swedish, Polish	25,0
6.	Italien, French	14,7	Russian	17,5
7.	Belgian	11,6	Czech, Slovak, British	15,0
8.	American, Greece, Finnish	10,5	Ukrainian	7,5
9.	Australien	10,5	Belgian	2,5

Source: T. Rátz (1995), Á. Köbli (2013)

Of course, due to the sample size an overall conclusion valid for the attitude of all locals cannot be drawn, but it can be seen that the opinions formed about the new clientele currently still vary on a great scale. Social attitudes and communication difficulties occurred as problematic factors, and that the new clientele is less able to adjust to the local culture, for instance in the case of the catering industry.

5 SUMMARY

Russian guests have a huge impact on the life of the town and the area, and not only from an economic point of view. Many see in them only new economic partners, who have become the main characters in the local real estate market, replacing German customers. As opposed to the initial antipathy and prejudices, they constitute a sophisticated, solvent clientele, the presence of whom affects the real estate sales of not only Hévíz. They have a great impact on the life of the local community; with their purchases they influence the structure of local society, too.

In the long run, the future of the area should be ensured by always implementing developments with respect of local traditions and in accordance with the local community. The basic goal of developing tourism is improving and expanding local society and economy as much as possible. Besides local initiations, collaboration and the common will are extremely important, because these might change the viewpoint of people. It is important for the locals of Hévíz to learn from the foreign examples, for instance from the situation of the Czech spa towns, and filter out negative impacts, such as Russian acquisitions.

Russian guests appreciate the diversity and aesthetics of the natural and built environment, and they find exclusive products and services in the area that they do require. They can be characterised by lengthy stays, which is important, since the longer time a tourist spends in a given destination, the more comfortable he feels, and the more he takes care of his environment. With regard to sustainability, considerate behaviour is very important.

Furthermore, Russian guests spend outstandingly much money; this is why long-term plans should definitely be built on their presence, too. However, it is important to keep in mind that local tourism should be multifaceted, and the traditional German and Hungarian clientele should also be maintained. This way Hévíz might become a multifarious and unique place in all respects, which means great value in the Hungarian tourism market. With regard to a secure future for the town, adaptation based on flexible conformability and sustainability is necessary.

References

- CZECH STATISTICAL OFFICE - *Statistical Yearbook of the Karlovarsky Region* 2011. [online] [cit. 2013-06-04]. Available at: <http://www.czso.cz/csu/2011edicniplan.nsf/en-gkapitola/411011-11-eng_r_2011-16>
- EUROPEAN TOURISM, 2012a. *European tourism in 2012: trends & prospects*. Quarterly Report (Q1/2012), European Travel Commission, Brussels, April 2012.

- EUROPEAN TOURISM, 2012b. *European tourism in 2012: trends & prospects*. Quarterly Report (Q3/2012) European Travel Commission, Brussels, October 2012
- HAJNAL, K. 2010. *Itt és most: helyi megoldások a globális válságra – Zöld Völgyért Egyesület, Bükkösd*. 105 s.
- HÉVÍZI FORRÁS – 2013. január 16. II. évfolyam 1. szám
- HÉVÍZI KISTÉRSÉG, 2008. *Területfejlesztési Koncepciója 2008-2018*. Szombathely: Pannon Projekt Kft, s. 228.
- Hévíz Város IVS, 2008. *HÉVÍZ VÁROS INTEGRÁLT VÁROSFEJLESZTÉSI STRATÉGIÁJA* (2008), 166 p.
- LENGYEL, M. 2000. *A turizmus fejlesztésének stratégiája és középtávú programja*. A Gazdasági Minisztérium megbízásából készült, kormányelőterjesztést megalapozó tanulmány, Budapest, (részlet).
- PUCZKÓ, L., RÁTZ, T. 2001. *A turizmus hatásai, 2. átdolgozott kiadás*. Budapest: Aula Kiadó, 482 s.
- RÁTZ, T. 1999. *A turizmus társadalmi-kulturális hatásai*. Ph. D. disszertáció. Budapesti Közgazdaságtudományi és Államigazgatási Egyetem, Budapest, 264 s.
- STADAT, 2014a. *STADAT – 4.5.5 AA Magyarországra látogató külföldiek száma korcsoport és az utazás célja szerint*. [online] [cit. 2013-06-04]. Available at: <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_evkozi/e_ogt006.html>
- STADAT, 2014b. *STADAT – 4.5.2. A Magyarországra érkező külföldi látogatók száma és kiadásai országok szerint*. [online] [cit. 2013-06-04]. Available at: <http://www.ksh.hu/docs/hun/xstadat/xstadat_evkozi/e_ogt003a.html>
- NAPI, 2013. Oroszok viszik Hévízen az ingatlanokat. *Napi.hu*. [online] [cit. 2013-06-04]. Available at: <http://www.napi.hu/magyar_gazdasag/oroszok_viszik_hevizen_az_ingatlanokat.512324.html>
- HCSO/KSH, 2013. *Hungarian Central Statistical Office/KSH*. Available at: <statinfo.ksh.hu/Stainfo/haViewer.jsp>

Ruský turista v meste Hévíz: nasleduje príklad Karlových Varov?

Resumé

Hévíz je tradičným maďarským kúpeľným mestom, ktoré má vzhľadom na rozvoj cestovného ruchu veľký potenciál. Súčasná štruktúra ponuky cestovného ruchu v meste je výsledkom niekoľko desaťročí prebiehajúcich procesov. Závažné zmeny v tomto kúpeľnom meste však prinieslo obdobie posledných rokov, okrem iného, aj v dôsledku transformácie klientely.

Obrovský vplyv na život mesta a jeho okolia majú v súčasnosti hostia z Ruska, a to nielen z hľadiska ekonomického. Viacerí ľudia ich vidia výlučne len ako nových ekonomických partnerov v oblasti miestneho trhu s nehnuteľnosťami, pričom ako klienti cestovného ruchu v súčasnosti svojim počtom a solventnosťou nahrádzajú zákazníkov z Nemecka. Napriek počiatočnej antipatii a predsudkom k nim, títo hostia v súčasnosti tvoria sofistikovanú, solventnú klientelu, ktorej prítomnosť má dopad na predaj nehnuteľností nielen v meste Hévíz, ale aj v širšom okolí. Majú pozoruhodný vplyv na život domácej komunity; svojou nákupnou aktivitou tiež pôsobia na štruktúru miestneho podnikateľského prostredia.

V dlhodobom horizonte by sa budúcnosť mesta z hľadiska rozvojových projektov mala vždy opierať o implementáciu takých krokov, ktoré rešpektujú miestne tradície a miestnu komunitu. Hlavným cieľom rozvoja turizmu v meste je teda predovšetkým zlepšovať a rozširovať miestnu spoločnosť a ekonomiku tak veľmi, ako je to len možné. Popri miestnych iniciatívach, kľúčovú úlohu zohráva vzájomná spolupráca s domácimi i zahraničnými partnermi a spoločná vôľa, pretože toto môže zmeniť pohľad a stanovisko ľudí na smerovanie mesta. Pre miestnych obyvateľov mesta Hévíz je dôležité učiť sa na cudzích príkladoch, akými sú napríklad

české kúpeľné mestá a následne odfiltrovať možné negatívne dopady, ako napríklad preexponované ruské akvizície.

Ruskí hostia veľmi oceňujú diverzitu a estetiku prírodného prostredia a urbánneho kultúrneho prostredia a požadujú pochopiteľne aj vysokú úroveň exkluzívnosti produktov a služieb. Týchto hostí môžeme charakterizovať pomerne dlhými pobytmi, čo je v kontexte rozvoja cestovného ruchu dôležitým prvkom, pretože čím viac času turista strávi v danej lokalite, tým lepšie sa dajú využiť potenciál mesta a investície do cestovného ruchu. Vzhľadom na dlhé pobyty hostí sa dá usudzovať, že sú tu spokojní a do určitej miery im záleží na prostredí mesta a jeho okolia.

Okrem spomínaných skutočností, ruských turistov charakterizuje tiež aj mňanie mimoriadne vysokých finančných prostriedkov, aj z tohto dôvodu by dlhodobé rozvojové vízie a plány mali byť vybudované na akceptovaní ich prítomnosti, ako jednej z podmienok. Nesmieme však zabúdať na skutočnosť, že miestny turizmus by mal byť mnohotvárný a tradície založené nemeckou a maďarskou klientelou udržiavané. Takýmto spôsobom sa Hévíz môže stať pestrým a jedinečným miestom vo všetkých relevantných ohľadoch a znamenať veľkú hodnotu pre maďarský i medzinárodný trh cestovného ruchu. Pokiaľ ide o otázky budúcej prosperity mesta, adaptácia založená na pružnej prispôsobivosti a udržateľnosti je nutnosťou.