Influence of Tourism on the Employment in Vojvodina

Andelija Ivković, Aleksandra Dragin, Tamara Kovačević, Branislav Đurđev, Ljubica Ivanović

Abstract

Certain changes in the economic structure happen as part of the economic development of a country or a region. Thus, the analysis of the distribution of labour force according to the type of activity is found very interesting. Job market in AP Vojvodina is characterised by high unemployment, high hidden unemployment and insufficient mobility of the labour force. Tourism and hotel industry belong to those types of activities that have a rather elastic and complex approach towards population categories that are in possibilities to find employment in them. Different population structures are included in them. The development of tourism and hotel industry is an important precondition for lessening unemployment problems in these areas. That is because tourism and hotel industry, with their own development, activate the whole system of other complementary activities, thus solving this problem on a level of a larger spatial unity. First of all, a larger number of young people, and all those who are capable of working, should be included in the development of tourism in Vojvodina. Even older categories of population should be included as they could contribute to the development as much as they are able to. Organize different courses for domicile population from smaller places in a municipality that has certain tourist potentials (foreign language courses, computer courses, etc.), create spatial conditions, provide technical equipment and appliances, etc.

Key words: tourism, employment, demographic transition, Vojvodina, Serbia.

Distribution of Labour Force According to the Type of Activity

Almost as a rule, agriculture is the main activity in economically weakly developed countries and regions. Later, parallel with economic development, the share of agriculture in forming national or regional product declines, whereas the share of industry increases. After the phase of industry expansion, its importance gradually declines, while tertiary activities gain larger importance (Kicosëv, Bubalo, 1999). Currently, underdeveloped countries anticipate tourism as the initiator of their development (increase of employment, development of economy, income increase – especially foreign tourism, increase in national income, etc.).

During the period observed (1975-2000), the number of people engaged in agriculture in Vojvodina fell from 75,000 to 44,106, i.e. from 15.3% to 10.6%; a fact that indicates a large economic transformation of this area. However, there are still some settlements in Vojvodina dominated by people actively employed in agriculture. For example, these are in western and southeastern parts of Srem.

The share of persons employed in industry and mining constantly grows during the almost whole period and according to data from 1998, it represents 40.1% of all the activities, while from the beginning of the 1990s, it represents 39.7%.

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Financial and other services experience similar tendencies, where a share of those employed in all activities grew from 1.8% to 3.7%. The same applies to education and culture where it grew from 6.6% to 9.2%, whereas in healthcare and social protection it almost doubled from 5.0% to 9.7%.

Since 1987, traffic, trade, civil engineering, tourism and hotel industry experience the growth in a number of employed people, while from the beginning of the 1990s the share of these activities in a total economy of Vojvodina decreased. A negative trend of persons employed in tourism in Vojvodina is worrying since it is necessary that a much larger number of people is included in the development of tourism.

Handicraft is an economic activity that experienced negative development in a period observed. The number and share of persons employed in handicraft constantly declined and is the result of a more dynamic development of industry. This is where the downward progress is most obvious because since 1975, from 5.9% it fell to 1.2% (year 2000).

The number and share of persons employed in administration and civil services, as well as in waterpower engineering, and also in forestry and housing-municipal activities changed only a bit during the period observed.

Influence of Tourism

Tourism and hotel industry belong to activities that basically have a rather elastic and complex approach towards population categories that are in a possibility to find employment in them. Different population structures are included in them.

The development of tourism and hotel industry is a necessary precondition for lessening employment problems in this region. That is because tourism and hotel industry, with their own development, activate the whole system of other complementary activities, thus solving this problem on a level of a larger spatial unity.

The relation between the share of persons employed in tourism and hotel industry and the total number of persons employed in economy reflects the way how we actually treat tourism and hotel industry. That is why the share of those employed in hotel industry is much higher and in certain years it is almost the only bearer of the employed labour force, while in tourism it goes up to a maximum of 0.11 and the minimum is 0.06%.

It is noticeable that a number of persons employed in economy gradually grows from 1972 until the end of 1980s, for that number to start constantly to fall from 1990s.

The change in the number of people employed in economy reflected upon the change in the number of people employed in tourism and hotel industry. The share of people employed in that activity was 2.46% at the beginning of the period, in order to reach 3.02% until the mid 1980s. After that, its share constantly falls and in 2000, it represents 1.58%. In 2001, it is 1.68%; fact that indicates a certain growth in a number of people employed in hotel industry and
tourism, which gives a certain hope for the development of tourism in Vojvodina.

If we separately look at hotel industry and tourism, it is noticeable that hotel industry experiences a constant fall of people employed (from 2.41% in 1972 to 1.62% in 2000). This decline directly results from closing down a large number of objects in the public sector that are of much larger capacities and opening of smaller objects in the private sector.

The share of those employed in tourism from 0.05% at the beginning of the period grows to 0.11% at the end of 1980s; for it to start falling again and in the last 10 years it has well-balanced values of 0.06-0.07%. If this share continues to grow, tourism and hotel industry will represent an important economic activity, where a lot of people unemployed will find employment.

**What to do Next?**

Deficiency of strong economy, especially in rural areas, needs to be substituted by proper alternatives – employment and income as the preconditions for the survival of the community, as well as the support of the community, individuals and institutions. Rural regions, bearing the historical and traditional signs, created by the hard work of generations, provide wealthy heritage of a strong cultural identity. Local cultures stand for the source of activities, i.e. beneficial factor of the economic development of the areas (AEIDL, 1994).

Cultural routes (textile and crafts – everyday products) may support the community existence (employment and income), for example, the women employed in textile production in Rethymno (Crete) in 30 independent, individual manufacturers, 2 smaller factories and co-operative, where embroidery, weaving and sewing skills are used in production of embroidered items, handkerchiefs, bed covers, curtains, altar covers in various materials such as wool, cotton, silk and linen (Tzanakaki, 1999:80). The textile route confirms that each manufacturer belongs to a certain community. The local manufacturers, conscious of the lack of possibility for their individual promotion (or individual product promotion), distribute the advertising material on “Textile Routes” as a part of Eurotext Project. The programmes included in the cultural routes and offered by tour operators and tourist agencies have received positive opinion from the tourists (Roberts and Hall, 2003: 165).

The examples of such cooperation in Vojvodina with the aim of promoting cultural identity of a nation are the galleries in Kovačica. “Gallery of Naive Art” in Kovačica, founded in 1959 was the first rural gallery in the former Yugoslavia. Moreover, there is a privately owned gallery “Babka” by Pavel Babka that was proclaimed the world publishing centre for naive painting by UNESCO in 2001 (Ivkov, 2006). Ethno-centre “Babka”, art galleries and houses of famous naive artists have been included in itineraries of international cruises on the Danube by tour operator Vantage Deluxe World Travel (half a day excursion within a fortnight package “Eastern Europe and the Black Sea”, i.e. Danube cruise through Hungary, Croatia, Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania) (Vantage Deluxe World Travel, 2005).

Manifestation “Banat’s precious hands”, founded by the local Tourist Organization, comprises the tourist offer of the municipality of Zrenjanin highlighting the cultural heritage of the Banat population. Also the event is based on exhibitions and auctions of ethno items and various competitions concerning cultural issues:

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**Table 1 The number of people employed according to the type of activity in 1975, 1987, 1998, and 2000.**

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Dolja - Crni šor, Elemir, Centar) and independent exhibitors take part in competitions. The manifestation is held annually in June as a part of tourist event “Beer days” and lasts three days. (http://www.danipiva.co.yu/vest.asp?k=276).

"MIRK" – International exhibition of handicrafts and collections has taken part about thirty times at various locations in Vojvodina. Over 100 domestic and foreign exhibitors (from Hungary, Germany, Japan, Canada, Indonesia, and Bangladesh) participate every year. The exhibition comprises arts and crafts from all over the world, though the past and present handicrafts made by women make the blending of the old and new. The paintings, making wreaths, straw items, and precise arts such as ornaments made of goose egg shells are also found at exhibitions.

There are numerous ethno houses in Vojvodina Province, built either for special purposes or spontaneously by individuals or groups of individuals with the wish to cherish the remembrance and the spirit of the old times. Also, a significant number of those objects has been built for tourism purposes.

*Ethno house in Jazak (Srem)* was reconstructed by the Homeland Society “Teočin”. It was opened for public in 2003. The ethno house Jazak is furnished with the 19th century furniture items and houses the collections of national costumes from Srem, tapestry and embroidered bed sheets. The object renders traditional food and lodging dating back to the end of 19th century and beginning of 20th century. Special attraction is the opportunity to organize traditional wedding feast as celebrated one hundred years ago. The wedding ceremony takes place in the Jazak monastery and the traditional feast is organized in the ambience of the ethno house (Ivkov, 2006).

*Ethno house in Maradik (Inđija)* was designed pursuing the initiative of Armida tours tourist agency. The house is over 200 years old and comprises the yard, adjacent objects, archaeological exhibition and ethno restaurant. It is of primary importance for the tourism of the municipality. The house is envisaged to enable visitors to learn about tradition, culture and ethnic heritage. It was built of mud and straw with all the necessary premises for a single household (rooms, kitchen, basement, storage room, barns and stables...). In all rooms and the house yard there are authentic objects; 50 to 200 years old. Within the ethno house, there is a mini ethno green market, where tourist can buy local products (honey products, various wines, seasonal fruit, milk products...) and try the authentic dishes and desserts of Srem (http://www.dnevnik.co.yu/arhiva/28-07-2004).

*Colorful ethno house in Belo Blato (Zrenjanin)*. The project has been started under the name colourful ethno house. Apart from preserving the cultural heritage of numerous nations in this village, the project has been contributing to tour-
Carska bara and the lakes of fishing could be a part of the tourist offer of the area. (http://www.dnevnik.co.yu)

Romanian ethno house in Torak (Zitište) was opened in 2002. Its adaptation was financed by the Fund for ethno-rapy and folklore of Romanians, Provin-
cial and Municipal authorities, numerous donors and the Embassy of Romania.

Homeland ethno house “Delibab” in Sajan (Kikinda) was founded on the pro-
posal of the group of individuals. In 1993, the association “Delibab” from Sajan com-
enced the project of collecting the objects used in households of their grandparents and great-grandparents in this village. The ethno house now comprises about 1,000 objects, the oldest of which dates back to 1876. The female members of the “Delibab” association gather regularly in the house, especially on the occasion of holidays, con-
ducting various activities (knitting, weav-
ing, embroidery, etc.) and exhibiting their work (Varga, 2004).

Promotional activities for ethno houses in Vojvodina are inadequately conduct-
ed, thus the potential tourists lack the in-
formation on the houses, their position, accessibility, working hours, etc. Further-
more, the curators have not been employed in the houses and the promotional materi-
al has not been prepared yet.

Souvenirs, as the part of tourist prod-
uct, may increase the employment oppor-
tunities for the local population. Souvenirs comprise various items that tourist pur-
chase as the reminder of the place and at-
tractions visited, i.e. to establish a connec-
tion between “here” (place of residence) and “there” (tourist destination). Souve-
nirs is the proof of personal experience that connects us with acquired experience or different ways of life during the travel. However, souvenirs as the significant ele-
ment of the tourist product in Vojvodina have not been properly recognized yet. It has been confirmed by the fact that the of-
fer of ethno houses, the museums of na-
tional masonry and material and cultural heritage of the nation, lacks the souvenirs for sale (in most of the cases they have not been designed yet).

Within the framework of rural land changes and agricultural diversifica-
tion, certain segments of tourism demand should focus on rural areas. The new form of rural tourism has developed from the continental, domestic or eco-tourism in rural areas. Out of the total tourist turn-
over in France the share of rural tourism was 370 million of tourist days in 1994 (or 27% of the global tourist travels) and 20% of the national tourism in France (Roberts and Hall, 2003:115). Thus, it was a step for-
ward from wine tourism to general stays in rural areas. It also gave way to the new ru-
ral immigration attracted by the nature, by search for the authentic local community, or obsession with the past (the structure of collective imagination and urban pop-
ulation)

Gastronomy occupies the central po-
sition in the authenticity of the local cul-
ture, which is observable not only within the fact that national cuisine stands in the focus of tourist experience, but also through its source role in forming the na-
tional identity in most of the post industri-
al societies (Richards, 2001). National cui-
sine as a part of tourist product has grown into a contemporary and striking means of attracting tourist. It is a symbol of re-

gional and local identities and the symbol of product quality.

National cuisine is a significant link be-
tween tourism and other economy branch-
es, especially agrarian rural economy. It may also serve as an appropriate tool of ru-
ral development. As such, national cuisine needs to be integrated into other aspects of rural developments through complemen-
tary activities:

- Encouraging (initiation) innovations and complementing the reconstructed local agrarian economy (e.g. produc-
tion and advertising of offer based on specialized meals including non-standard meals and organic food) (Bowen et al., 1993);

- Strengthening the cooperation of local small and medium enterprises orient-
ed towards production and/or sale of food;

- Generating the welfare that would in-
crease the value of the local communi-
ity, obtained by production and devel-
opment of retail (e.g. Sylvander, 1993);

- Increasing the food quality, creating positive attitude towards improvement and maintenance do the quality lev-
el in gastronomic tourist chain – both within production and consumer sec-
tors (e.g. Gilg and Battershill, 1998; Il-
bery and Kneafsey, 1998, 2000a,b);

- Strengthening the local and regional identities through the development and promotion of specific food brands at certain localities (settlements, regions, etc.) This enables the promotion of the local culture and heritage, for instance the food and wine routes. (e.g. Bessière, 1998)

The examples of successful revival and initiation of gastronomic offer within the present cultural offer of rural areas in Voj-
vodina certainly are authentic farms (salaš). (“Cvejin salaš”, “Perkov salaš”, “Majkin i Cvetni salaš”, “Salaš 137”, “Salaš 84”, “Katin salaš”, etc.).

Conclusions

The fact that population of Vojvodina be-
comes older faces tourist workers with a completely new task.

First of all, a larger number of young people, and of all those who are capable of working, should be included in the de-
velopment of tourism in Vojvodina. Even older categories of population should be included as they could contribute to the development as much as they are able to (above all, taking care and nourishing of tradition). For instance, they could make national garbs, souvenirs (and other things of folk arts and crafts), or could be includ-
ed in selling souvenirs and entrance tick-
ets for tourist objects, or could be hosts (dressed in national garbs) who guests could take pictures with.

They can participate in the following services: car rent, taxi services, recreation-
al services (horses, boats, bicycles, etc.) producers and retailers of craft products, food and drinks of geographical origin, etc. Those types of services are most frequently rendered by the local population, who oc-
cupies a significant role in creating a suc-
cessful tourist product and deriving profit for the local community. In a large number of cases these jobs are of small capacity and owners need support and small amount of capital funds in order to start their own business (Wood Epler Megan, 2002).

That is a reason why we should, on a municipal level, develop tourist centers and make long-term plans connected with the development of tourism. Organize dif-
cerent courses for domicile population from smaller places in a municipality that has certain tourist potentialities (foreign language courses, computer courses, etc.), create spatial conditions, provide techni-
cal equipment and appliances, etc.

An additional income that enlarges earnings of a village household is achieved through old crafts and handicraft, thus producing different things made of wool, wood, reed, straw etc. that could be sold to tourists. In that way, a part of young popu-
lation could earn in a village and thus indi-
certly prevent demographic discharging.

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