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# REFUGEES TRAVEL ON A TOURIST ROAD

Balkan refugee routes



# **REFUGEES TRAVELLING ON A TOURIST ROAD - BALKAN REFUGEE ROUTES**

**A SCIENTIFIC MONOGRAPH**

**Editors: Mladen Knežević, Boštjan Brumen &  
Mitja Gorenak**

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Author of photos of refugees on the cover is Slovenian reporter and photographer Jure Eržen.

*I confirm that I am the author of the pictures that show refugees and have been used in the book cover. The production of the cover was done with an agreement with assoc. prof. Mladen Knežević Ph.D. from Faculty of tourism, University of Maribor.*

*Jure Eržen*

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## INTRODUCTION

***Mladen Knežević, Editor***

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One of the most commonly cited thoughts of Karl Marx written in his famous article *The Eighteenth Brumaire of Louis Bonaparte* could very well apply to the current situation in the Balkans, associated with the refugee crisis. That is the idea according to which history repeats itself, once as tragedy and the second time as farce. The real tragedy was during the war in the former Yugoslavia (1991-1995), which not only destroyed the economy of national countries, but also killed hundreds of thousands, and millions have become refugees. Hardly describable as a farce was the process of transporting refugees from Greece via Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia to Austria, Germany and the Scandinavian countries, which happened during the so-called Balkan migrant route that was active in the second half of last year.

The dramatic fear of the politicians from these countries that some poor refugee from Afghanistan or Syria could remain in that territory was just a farcical communication event. Politicians have begun to invent political and law terminology to determine as precisely as possible the status of people who they are simply refusing to accept in their territories. Particularly humorous was term «illegal migrants» at a time when the bombs were falling on Syrian towns and villages, as if there is any possibility that any of the warring parties give some kind of internationally recognised legal status to people on whom they drop bombs. The most important arguments of those who are overreacting against receiving refugees and assuring us that the problem needs to be solved there where it originated (probably in Syria and Afghanistan) are the economic conditions under which our country cannot withstand the pressure of economic refugees. In the years of war in the Balkans, 1991, 1992, 1993, Croatia and Slovenia had far greater economic difficulties than they have now. In one and in the other country GDP is increasing between 2 and 3 percent per year. In Slovenia, in those war years, it was in decline and that was 7.5, 8.9 and 5.5 percent. In Croatia, which had on its territory



military operations, the situation was still far worse. GDP fell by 21.1, 11.7 and 8 percent in the same period. Both countries in those years were faced with hyperinflation. Thus, in those years, Slovenian inflation was 550%, 118% and 201%, and in Croatia it was 124.20%, 633.99% and then 1486.30%. In such economic conditions both countries received refugees and cared adequately about them.

The recent tragedy of the war in the Balkans in the nineties has produced more than two million refugees who have sought and received accommodations in the neighbouring countries that have emerged from the Yugoslav Republics, but also in many European and non-European countries. During the war on the Croatian territory about 25,000 people had to escape to neighbouring Slovenia. Slovenia organised and accepted perfectly all who had to leave their homes. This then left about 600,000 people in their homes in Croatia. Around 300,000 remained on Croatian territory, and the rest have fled to the fullest extent in European countries. In Bosnia and Herzegovina the tragedy was far greater. More than 2.2 million people had to leave their homes. Of these, around 250,000 of them found accommodation in Croatia. Croatia was, although it was attacked, able to accommodate all who sought shelter in Croatia, in a relatively acceptable way, at least in most cases. Slovenia accepted 7,000 Bosnians. It was estimated that more than 25,000 people from Bosnia and Herzegovina came to live with relatives in Slovenia and were not registered as refugees. Slovenia organised for the reception of refugees quickly after the war broke out. They established 64 Collection Centres, mainly in vacant buildings of the former joint army JNA. The humanitarian community moved in very quickly, which provided very efficient and well organised assistance both in collective centres, as well as in the homes of those who received their loved ones. Many international humanitarian organisations stepped in to help.

Tourism at the time of the war in 1990 experienced a dramatic decline in all countries that were affected by the war directly, as well as in neighbouring countries, such as Slovenia was. In Bosnia and Herzegovina and in Croatia, tourist activity almost ceased in those years. In Croatia, most of the hotel capacity was filled with refugees and displaced persons from the occupied Croatian

territory. In Dalmatia, which was, due to military operations cut off from the rest of Croatia there was no possibility for the arrival of tourists, except perhaps, in theory, by sea but, of course, tourists were not coming. Thus, paradoxically, refugees and displaced persons made use of hotel facilities in times of war. Employed hotel staff could work, except of course those who were recruited in armed units of the Croatian army. That was the case in the region of Istria, the most developed tourist region of Croatia, where hotels were also filled with people who, because of the war, had to flee from their homes. The State was predicted to pay the sum of the then 25 German Marks for any refugee or displaced person placed in hotel accommodation. The amount was later reduced to 15 German Marks, but a large part of the hotel companies never received that amount. After many years of residence the hotels where the refugees and displaced persons were staying were devastated. Most had to be restored completely after the refugees left them.

In addition to housing the people who had to flee from their homes, the hotels were in operation. These hotels normally would not work because, due to the war operations, most of the tourist areas were inaccessible. Thus the government, although at a relatively low level, maintained the hotel industry at a time when it otherwise would not have survived. Therefore, this activity recovered relatively quickly after the war.

Refugees were housed in some of the most elite Croatian hotels, but these hotels mainly housed people from the upper strata of the population who were able to pay for their accommodation. They were housed in those hotels until their departure to some countries of Europe or outside Europe where they found more permanent accommodation. Thus, for example, a large community from the upper social strata of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina spent a good part of the war in exile in Australia. Some of the prominent University Professors from Bosnia and Herzegovina have been working in some Australian universities. Members of the Croatian upper social strata had far greater opportunities to remain in the territory which was not occupied (in the capital Zagreb) but, despite that, the social elite spent a good part of the war in Germany.

In one small village on the sea members of the social elite of Bosnia and Herzegovina organised accommodation for their children. Besides the accommodation, they organised a tennis school, a sport that befits the social elite. The children had at their disposal, other than a teacher of tennis, complete support staff such as the nurses, psychologists and teachers who taught them in the regular school. Thus, the local Tourist Board gained money from the tourism industry, which otherwise would not have happened because of the war.

Unlike these years of war in the Balkans, the Balkan refugee route that has been most active just in the time of the intensive tourist season, did not affect tourism in the area at all. The two most developed countries on the Balkan refugee route in the sense of tourism, Slovenia and Croatia, had in 2015 a record figure of tourist visits. Thus, in Croatia, in the year 2015, 14,150,000 people stayed, which is an increase on the previous year of about 8.3%. In the same year in Slovenia there were 3,927,530 tourists, an increase compared to a year earlier of 7.8%. In transportation, admission, registration of tourists there were almost no problems. The tourism industry did their job done highly professionally and most of the guests were satisfied with their stay in both countries.

So, of course, the treatment of refugees was not so satisfactory. All countries in the Balkan Route sought to transport refugees as soon as possible through their territory to Austria, the first of the countries that was the final destination of some of these people. Most often they used trains and buses for mass transit, where there were frequent misunderstandings between the countries. Trains and buses are often late, often do not come at the appointed time. Sometimes migrants had to wait for hours for buses even without the possibility of the use of toilets. It is very interesting that such logistical errors occurred in countries that have managed to accept millions of tourists, but, during the entire duration of British migrant routes around 764,000 migrants passed through this area. There were some funny and tragic situations. Thus, for example, the Hungarian police arrested a group of Croatian policemen who wanted to take one group of migrants from Croatian territory to the territory of Hungary as



soon as possible. In their zeal they forgot that they had to be careful not to cross the boundary line.

In addition to transport of migrants, there has been a significant mobilization of other resources that are supposed to prevent the arrival of new ones. Croatia or Slovenia employed their military forces to protect their territory in a special way, which has brought to both countries high costs for maintenance. Slovenia set razor wire on its southern border in which, apart from a few animals, they could not catch even one migrant. Such is the wire set by Hungary on its southern limits before Slovenia, which has prevented the passage of refugees through the territory of Hungary completely. The wire was of, course, a very good product for its producers who, due to the political decisions, procured a very good job. It is very interesting that wire and walls at the borders are becoming popular in Europe, who decided to bring down its most famous wall, the one in Berlin. Apart from Slovenia, walls or wire are placed in Greece Bulgaria and Hungary. They are not uncommon, even in other countries with highly developed tourism industries. Walls were built in the United States, Cyprus, and Israel, countries that highlight their tourist image. One of the most developed countries in the world in terms of tourism development, France, plans to build a high and impenetrable wall in front of the tunnel that connects France with the United Kingdom. And so, in a strange interconnectedness of wires and walls on one side and the millions of tourists on the other, it is a coexistence that keeps alive income.

It seems that we live in a world that never was marked so far by contradictions and contrasts of every kind. Throughout the countries with a highly developed tourism business people pass, which is the last hope for a train that will take them away from the tragic events of war, hunger, poverty and death. In doing so, both of them (people from the tourism business and refugees) are trying to pass it all in a less visible way, so they can both accomplish their goals and, actually, almost all did not know each other. We might almost say that almost all did not know each other and one does not care for the other. The world of business and the world of sadness and tragedy avoid each other until they meet in the same task. When, for example, refugees (in that case, formally, former

refugees) find jobs in the tourism industry they, in their work, bring parts of their experience from the cultural environment from which they came, but hardly anyone is aware of this, shows the study from the group of researchers whose results are presented here.

# CHAPTER 1

## MIGRATIONS AND TOURISM

*Marjetka Rangus*

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At the end of the 20th century, Social Science has become aware of the importance of people's movement in the impact of these movements on society. Numbers of scholars, including the very influential Giddens, have stressed how new technologies and political arrangements have changed the world and everyday life. The inventions in transport, industrial production and communication have fastened almost every process in our lives: From cooking to decision-making and globalization have been put at the top of the political, economic, social and scientific agendas. On the other hand, the interconnection and interdependence of different parts of the world have become evident, news and goods from all parts of the world more accessible, experiences shared and cultures melted to the point of a global culture. In this paper, we are addressing the issue of different types of mobility in the 21st century and the relationships among three very actual and present mobile groups in Europe, namely the tourists, the (economic) migrants and the refugees.

In his book *Sociology Beyond Societies* John Urry is seeking to »develop the categories that will be relevant for Sociology as a 'discipline' as we enter the new century« (Urry 2000, p. 1). He is arguing that the mobility of the 20th century has transformed the historic subject-matter of the 'west' from 'social as society' to 'social as mobility' (Urry 2000, p. 1-2). The shifts in technological and social development in the second part of the 20th century have made the whole world more mobile, faster and changeable in many aspects. Nowadays, everything is mobile: People by organised public and private transport, phones, data, even houses. Distance is relative, measured often in time instead of miles or kilometres. In a time span of two hours an average person could walk approximately 8 kilometres or travel approx. 100 kilometres by a train powered by steam. Today, a person can reach practically every corner of the continent by plane from an airport in the



middle of Europe. Free movement has become the postulate of the 20th century: Free movement of people, goods, services and capital was set as one of the cornerstones of the European Economic Community, the constitutional part of the European Union and its internal market, and border checks among the member signatories were abolished with the Schengen Treaty in 1985. In 2015, 25 Member States out of 28 EU Member States were participating, thus leaving outside only Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania, the youngest Member States, which are also obliged to participate, but do not yet comply fully with the *Acquis Communautaire*. In spite of this policy, the four freedoms were always in question before every enlargement of the EU. Some old Member States were afraid of the mass of potential economic migrants from new Member States, thus imposing restrictions on the already won freedoms (see EU business for example).

In accordance with all of the changes, the need for rethinking basic concepts is also evident in academic and everyday writing (Cresswell 2010), but the temptation to create some new paradigm to grasp the contemporary situation can sometimes be misleading. First, because it would require for an 'old' paradigm of the phenomenon, although perhaps in a different context and second, because it can imply that what existed before was something opposite to the contemporary phenomenon (Cresswell 2010, p. 18). Mobility isn't something new, but its meaning has multiplied and the impacts have risen in the last decades. Mobility has taken many forms, as mentioned earlier. If we take a look only at the mobility of people, we can talk about different forms of migration – from everyday migration to work and errands, to weekend migration, tourist migrations, economic or political migration, or even migrations of groups of people, etc... A big part of sociological research of the 20th century was also occupied by social mobility.

In order to be able to analyse mobility, Cresswell identifies 3 aspects of mobility which are practically inseparable: The fact of physical movement, the representation of movement and the experience of movement (Cresswell 2010, p. 19). On the other hand, Urry is posing mobility as a prism through which we can understand modern society. In Urry's concept, society itself is mobile and, necessarily, a hybrid. Traditional understanding of

society depends strongly on the notion of Nation-State, which is undermined by the processes of globalization. Nation-States set the territorial boundaries of society through social structuring of the economy, politics, culture, classes, gender etc... This social structure is not just material, but cultural, so that the members believe they share some common identity (Urry 2000, p. 8). Opposite to Anderson (2006), Urry argues that the fundament of society thus still lies in the Nation-States-society based system (Urry 2000, p. 11), in spite of globalization processes and the perceived decline of the Nation-State.

Economic and political migrations do represent only a part of contemporary mobility flows, but the daily political situation and political and media representation of the phenomenon supports the impression that mobility is all about migrations and migrants. In the last seven years, Europe has been confronted with big migration flows, pressing on the southern border of Europe and the European Union. News were constantly full with numbers of people coming from the north African coast in poor fishing boats and small ships, always too crowded, in poor conditions and often under enormous risk of drowning (see BBC 1 for example). Not seldom did we witness news on numbers of migrants drowning on the open sea and those numbers were sometimes big, reaching several hundreds of people (The Guardian 1). The 'shame counter' in Barcelona shows that, only in 2016 (by the end of July), 3034 refugees have drowned in the Mediterranean Sea trying to get to Europe (The Guardian 2).

Italy was one of the European countries with the biggest number of illegal border-crossings as a consequence of forced migration, reaching 140,000 only in the year 2013 (BBC1). On the central Mediterranean Route saving and accepting migrants is an everyday situation, taking place just nearby the most visited summer beaches by the European tourist in Sicily. In 2014, the number on the Central Mediterranean Route, together with Apulia and Calabria, reached 170,760 (Frontex 1), which accounts for more than 460 migrants per day: People seeking for better lives and protection for their families, some running away from war zones, others hoping to find jobs and support those who were left back home.

In 2015, another route towards central and northern Europe has emerged. Frontex, the European Union 'Agency for operation in the areas of migration, asylum and security, reports on the route for the year 2015: »The record number of migrants arriving in Greece had a direct knock-on effect on the Western Balkan Route, as the people who entered the EU in Greece tried to make their way via the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Serbia into Hungary and Croatia and then towards western Europe. This led to unprecedented numbers of migrants seeking to re-enter the EU through Hungary's borders with Serbia. After Hungary completed the construction of a fence on its border with Serbia in September, the flow of migrants shifted to Croatia. In all of 2015, the region recorded 764,000 detections of illegal border crossings by migrants, a 16-fold rise from 2014. The top-ranking nationality was Syrians, followed by Iraqis and Afghans (Frontex 2).«

People living in the countries on the Western Balkan Route and their politicians thus found themselves confronted with some basic humanist and anthropological questions. While many expressed xenophobia and reacted with arms, fences and constitutional changes (see BBC 2 for example), the others reacted with compassion and empathy (see CBS for example), but not for long. Soon after the numbers of immigrants have risen, the fear of the unknown has also strengthened. Europe seemed challenged once again by the ability to act in a manner of common policy and politics towards immense numbers of immigrants.

The statistics show that, globally, the world is facing the biggest migration flows after World War II. Just after World war II there were more than 40 million people displaced from their homes just in Europe (Lowe, 2012). Compared to app. 75 million international migrants in 1960 (UNO 1), nearly 250 million people lived outside their countries in 2015, which represents 3.4 percent of the world population (KNOMAD, 2016, p. V). Although the number of migrants rose from 175 million in 2000, the share of migrants has remained just above 3 % of the world population for the last 15 years and, according to the UNO data, the share of migrants in 1960 was app. 2,5 % (own calculation), which accounts for less than a 1 % rise in the timespan of 55 years.



The numbers represented above stand only for economic and political migrants and refugees. In the statistical data of UNO and The World Bank they are represented mainly as persons leaving their country of birth to improve their lives by finding work or, in some cases, for education, family reunion, or other reasons (UNHCR), and refugees are defined as persons fleeing armed conflict or persecution who cannot return home (UNHCR). Their number reached 19.5 million in 2014 (UNO 2).

But flows of previously presented migrations are not the reason, at least not the only one or the most important one, that would require Urry's transformation of notion of sociology. Migrations of this form have always been present in a certain volume. Another book, first published in 2005, wears a title relevant to the subject. Michel Hall's book is titled *Tourism*, with the subtitle *Rethinking the Social Science of Mobility*.

Tourism has become a major factor of global economic and political development in the last 50 years. The latest data on tourist mobility from the United Nations World Tourism Organization shows another record year and 4,6% growth in the sector on the global level (UNWTO 1). The phenomenon of tourist travel, that rose from 25 million in 1950 to 1,186 million in 2016, has become a key driver in social-economic progress through the creation of jobs and enterprises, export revenues and infrastructure development (UNWTO 1). The tourism industry represents 10 % of global GDP and creates one in 11 jobs on the planet (UNWTO 1). Forecasts for tourism in the long-term point to continuing growth by 3,5 % to 4,5%, reaching 1,8 billion tourism arrivals in 2030. The number of tourist arrivals has thus multiplied 47-times in 65 years and is expected to increase to the 75th multiplier of the number from 1950. Presented the other way around, the number of tourist arrivals in 1950 presents only 2,1 % of the tourist arrivals in 2015.

But comparison of the numbers of tourist and migrants is neither simple nor definite. The exact number of people travelling for pleasure is not easy to calculate, since we can assume that a relatively small number of people do the bulk of travel, e.g.

businessmen, journalists, politicians, etc. Instead of comparing the numbers, we should compare their societal role.

Both migrants and tourists are persons on the move, leaving their country of birth in pursuit of a certain goal. They both meet different cultures and people and are both understood as strangers to hosting societies. Looking from the tourist point of view, his role has been described by six dimensions (Cohen 1974). Cohen in his study points to 6 characteristics to discern a tourist from other societal roles. A tourist is a temporary traveller, possessing a fixed place of living (Cohen 1974, p. 531). This differentiates him from a permanent traveller, such as a nomad, wanderer or hobo, but not from an (economic) migrant. He too has a fixed place to live, often leaving behind his family or parts of his family, who he is then supporting from abroad.

A tourist is, next to a temporary also a voluntary traveller, who goes on a trip out of his free will (Cohen 1974, p. 531). A migrant's decision to travel may not be totally out of free will, since a poor economic situation can be pressing hard on everyday life. The choice of emigration may be free, but the motivation for this decision is low on the ladder of human need and low in the hierarchy of human motivation (Maslow 1943) and, according to the UNCHR definition, this is the dimension that discerns a refugee from both a migrant and a tourist.

A tourist's travel is circular, he is on a tour and is planning to return to the place of departure (Cohen 1974, p. 352). Migrant's travel is also a round-trip, at least in assumption. It is assumed that he return back home after some time and, also, there is no one preventing him from returning. His stay may be relatively long, but this is the same with a tourist. To separate a tourist from other migrants, the statistical limitation for the duration of a stay is put between one-night and 365 nights (1 year stay) (Wall and Mathieson 2006, p. 14.). A migrant's stay may last for several years or even decades and some of them never return home.

A tourist's trip is one that he undertakes rarely (Cohen 1974, p. 532) or at least not too often. Also migrant travel, is in most cases, exclusive – only once in a lifetime or, maybe, a few times. But a

migrant's travel is most definitely instrumental. Unlike tourists, whose trip is an end in itself (Cohen 1974, p. 352), migrants are looking for a better economic and social situation which will enable them a decent life and support for their families.

Cohen's study represents one of the fundamental theoretical analyses on the sociology of tourism and this fact is also the shortcoming of our case. His dimensions might be useful to discern a tourist from other migrants, but cannot help us understand the differences among different groups of migrants and the differences in the relations against them.

In his study, Cresswell is analysing mobility in social relations towards mobility. In his argument, he presents the development of mobility through the ages and emphasises the importance of philosophical and societal changes, not just technological for the extension of mobility. He points to the importance of social relations towards mobility and presents also six constituent parts of politics towards mobility. Cresswell understands the importance of politics of mobility as both productive of social relations and as produced by them (Cresswell 2010, p 21).

The first aspect exposed by Cresswell is the motive force for movement. A major distinction is, thus, between being compelled to move or choosing to move (Cresswell 2010, p.22). This is also the criterion to discern an (economic) migrant from a refugee. Of course, in reality, there is often a very thin line and it is hard to say what were the circumstances that forced someone to leave their home. Videmšek in his book brings many real-life stories, which can help us understand the motive forces behind the decision to move better (Videmšek 2016).

The next three aspects of mobility are also very relevant and we can relate them to our previously mentioned case of migrant flows in Europe in 2015. How fast does a person or a thing move, in what rhythm does a person or a thing move and what route does it take (Cresswell 2010, p. 23-25) are all important dimensions with very specific consequences, but we will not elaborate further on them, since they are secondary to our case but, the aspect of the experience of the movement, how does it feel, is the aspect very



related to the first one, to the motive to move, and it defines a qualitative difference (Cresswell, 2010, p. 25). On one hand, as pointed out already by Cresswell, the processes of travel take different forms and they were perceived differently in different historical periods. If walking was long understood as a characteristic of the poor, criminal, young, etc. ... it is now perceived as a highly appreciated form of recreation, which is sustainable, enables a connection to nature, is good for health and something that people do for leisure. It became an end in itself (Cresswell) and a non-instrumental activity, if we borrow Cohen's dimension again (Cohen 1974, p. 532). On the other hand, the experience of travel depends on the motive force of the travel; there is a big difference between running for your life or exploring new cultures and countries and between the struggle for economic survival of your family and spending money on tourist attractions. In the tourism industry the experience (with the travel) is at the centre of every tourism product and the whole tourism system, so all the activities are directed toward a satisfactory level of each experience, the opposite to some other forms of mobility. The act of movement can, thus, represent hard work or pampering.

The last aspect stressed by Cresswell is about when and how does the mobility stop (Cresswell 2010, p. 26). The end point of a tourist travel is clearly defined. According to the already presented Cohen's definition, his travel is circular (Cohen 1974, p. 352), so it stops at the same point as it started. Some travels, on the other hand, may not have a definite ending point or are stopped by force, by State borders or societal boundaries (Cresswell 2010, p. 26). The experiences of the latter are common to all groups of people who are coming anew to the society, from tourist to economic migrants and refugees. Special host-guest relations are formed, resulting in cultural interactions, conflicts and differentiations of social groups.

Using the dimensions of a tourist's social role by Cohen and the aspects of mobility by Cresswell, we were able to draw some parallels among the three groups of mobility. Russell, in her field research, brings further findings about their interconnection and relations. In her field study on tourist and host community relations in Africa she was able to compare the relations towards

two new communities in the environment: Tourists in their resorts and the refugees in their camps. First, she recognised the importance of planning proactively both the tourist and refugee migrations before they begin (Russell 2003, p. 840). She also noticed that the situation attracted the concern of a wider range of actors, ranging from political groups, security organisations, financial institutions and regional agencies and last, but definitely not least important, both groups, tourists and refugees, were organised similarly. Tourists in their enclaves or resorts, with almost no uncontrolled and restricted interactions with locals and refugees in their camp were both treated as separate cultures to the hosting community (Russell 2003, p. 841). Both groups of guests are understood as undesirable because of their possible negative impact on cultural diversity (tourists) and national unity (refugees). Related to this point is Cresswells comment on a sort of skepticism towards all forms of mobility, which is sometimes perceived as dysfunctional, unauthentic and rootless (Cresswell 2010, p. 20). Another interesting point made by Russell is also about the management of both groups. While refugees are considered as a vulnerable group, the Relief Agencies focus on protecting them from the harm they fled and providing the food and health assistance they lack. The same protection and assistance policy may also be used to define the policies to manage the tourist (Russell 2003, p. 841). As reported by Russell, separate facilities and services were established for tourists and there is a separate industry that cares for them, so there is no need for them to make any contact with the host community.

To conclude the comparison, the tourist, the economic migrant and the refugee have three things in common. First, they are all looking for a new social centre for their lives: for tourist this might be the search for authenticity, as explained by MacCannell, or a motive force to escape everyday routine and existential distress (Cohen 2010); for the economic migrant this might be financial concern for the family; for a refugee this might be fear for their own life. Second, all groups engage in intercultural communication with their hosting society and form special host-guest relationships. They are often characterised as different to the hosting culture and treated separately. Third, their presence in the

hosting community might be understood as unauthentic to the common way of life, which is related to a certain piece of soil.

These three common characteristics bring us to another important aspect of the mobility issue, pointed out already by Cresswell. The importance of social representation of mobility and the politics of representation. The case of the migrant situation in Europe in 2015 is a good case to explore the narratives which accompany the political treatment of the situation and co-create media representation of it. From the European or Western point of view, the three forms of mobility cannot be put in the same basket. Opposite to economic migrants and refugees, tourists are desirable guests, while the others are not. Tourists bring money, even the UNWTO Reports express the efforts to increase the numbers of tourists and travel. Economic migrants and refugees, on the other hand, are understood as a threat to the way of life, as people who are only using the budget and taking »our jobs«, overrunning the nationality, culture, religion etc. (see BBC 3 for example). Anti-migration rhetoric played a big part in the Brexit vote, thus changing the structure and political map of the European Union itself (see VOX for example), and the designation of migration flows with certain words and phrases influences the negative perception of the situation directly. Neutral expressions such as »migrants« were substituted by some politicians, media and even formal agencies with »illegal border crossings« or »illegal immigration« (see Frontex 1 and 2; Trump; Daily Mail for example), or, the other way around, notions with negative connotation were substituted by neutral or strictly technical expressions as in the Slovenian case, where the »fence« at the border was called a »technical obstacle« (see Večer for example). On the other hand, the data of the World bank prove that the economic effect of migrant work is decisive for their home countries and for their hosting communities. Their earnings, sent back to their families in developing countries, are now at a level above 441 US dollars, a figure three times the volumes of official aid flows, and these inflows of cash constitute more than 10 % of GDP in some 25 developing countries and lead to increased investments in health, education and small businesses in various countries (KNOMAD, 2016). The migration flows also contributed to 42 % of the population growth in Northern America and 32 % in Oceania between 2000 and 2015.



In Europe, the size of the population would have fallen between 2000 and 2015 in the absence of positive net migration (UNO 2). It is true that the number of international migrants increased in most of the European countries, but the United States of America still represent the country hosting the largest number of international migrants (19 % of all int. migrants). Germany, as the second largest host, has app. 12 million international migrants and 5 European countries with the largest migrant community host app. 33 million, or 15 %, of all international migrants on the world (UNO 2). On the other hand, Europe didn't have any trouble hosting and managing more than 600 million tourist arrivals in 2015 only (UNWTO 1) and is still striving for more.

From the other perspective, again, tourism is also understood as a countering force to xenophobia and a force for cross-cultural understanding, empathy and peace (Tucker 2016). If experiences in tourism services can be used for managing refugee (and migrant) camps, then also experiences in social relationships and empathy are a potential peace force of the world. According to Tucker (2016) and Gibson (2010), Europe should be a forerunner for this process. As argued by Tucker (2016) and Gibson (2010), tourism experiences enable us constructive cross-cultural communication and empathy, thus contributing to less host-guest conflicts and better understanding of different needs and cultural backgrounds.

To conclude the discussion, there are certain parallels among the three groups of migrants, presented in the paper but, more important, there are good practice examples of how to manage groups and even large masses of newcomers to the society already present in the society, and also ethical norms and practices are developed and in use for certain groups. There is no need to invent new management operations, integration systems, modes of intercultural communication and ethical norms, but to put those already existing and practiced in the tourism sector in use also when approaching economic migrants and refugees.

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## CHAPTER 2

# BALKAN MIGRATION CRISIS AND THE IMPACT ON TOURISM

*Tony O'Rourke & Marko Koščak*

### INTRODUCTION

Refugee movements towards Europe are not a new phenomenon. Depending on the areas of conflict from which they have sought to escape, refugees have reached Europe via different routes. In 2005, thousands of sub-Saharan African refugees used the Spanish enclaves of Ceuta and Melilla as their major entry point to the EU via the western Mediterranean. In 2011, civil unrest in Tunisia and the fall of the Gaddafi regime in Libya spurred massive movements on the Central Mediterranean Route to the Italian island of Lampedusa. In 2014, refugee numbers reached a staggering level, marking a record for the EU.

The 2015 the Fragile States Index<sup>1</sup> places countries such as South Sudan, Somalia, the Central African Republic, Syria and Afghanistan atop the global list of humanitarian emergencies. Having started in 2011, the Syrian conflict is now among the strongest drivers for refugees coming to Europe (according to Eurostat<sup>2</sup> around 29% of all refugees are Syrian). Around 4 million Syrians have fled to Jordan, Lebanon, Turkey and Egypt, facing dire living conditions, restricted movement and no right to work. Poor governance and lack of political accountability are yet other reasons why people – ‘economic migrants’ – flee. Thus, a mix of violence, dysfunctional political systems, decreasing international aid and globalisation in general, are all triggers that push more and more people to cross borders. Migrants certainly have different

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<sup>1</sup> <http://foreignpolicy.com/2015/06/17/fragile-states-2015-islamic-state-ebola-ukraine-russia-ferguson/>

<sup>2</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-datasets/-/MIGR\\_ASYAPPCTZM](http://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/en/web/products-datasets/-/MIGR_ASYAPPCTZM)

reasons, backgrounds, pressures on their society and themselves as individuals, which places them in the situation to migrate.

‘Mixed migration’ is not a new problem for the EU. The term applies to migration flows that confound the EU’s distinction between forced (political asylum, protection) and voluntary (economically-motivated) migration (UNHCR 2007) – economic migrants try to gain access to the EU by pointing to human rights problems at home for instance, or refugees use irregular modes of accessing the EU associated with economic migrants. But now a new kind of mixed migration flow is both experienced and predicted, comprising terrorists and radicals. EU officials worry about individuals who are implacably opposed to the EU, gaining entry hidden amongst the economic migrants and refugees.

A simple illustration of the EU’s political decline: Fifteen years ago at Tampere, EU leaders bound themselves to a rather ambitious goal. They pledged to treat immigrants from outside the EU as they would the EU citizens working in their country or, to put it another way, they would, as far as possible, extend to ‘third-country-nationals’ the generous economic and political rights enjoyed by their own migrant nationals under EU law. Up until that point, EU leaders had focused their efforts on trying to exempt intra-EU workers from the general stigma attached to the term ‘migrant’ in Europe. Citizens of one EU Member State working in another were referred to first as »free movers« and then as »European citizens«. At Tampere, EU leaders were thus going a significant step further – they were trying to apply this liberal terminology to immigrants who had entered the EU and to exempt them also from stigma. Today, 15 years later, the reverse is the norm: Mobile EU citizens are now treated like workers from outside the bloc, and face hostility and protectionism (Ghimis et al. 2014 in Parkes, 2015).

The Balkan migrant route – running through Macedonia and Serbia to Hungary, or Croatia, Slovenia and Austria – became the main entry point for refugees making their way to northern Europe in 2015. Since 2014, the number of migrants crossing this route has increased 16-fold, with close to 800,000 migrants, mostly from Syria, Afghanistan, and Iraq, taking it to date. Between October 2015 and March 2016, more than 500,000 migrants arrived in

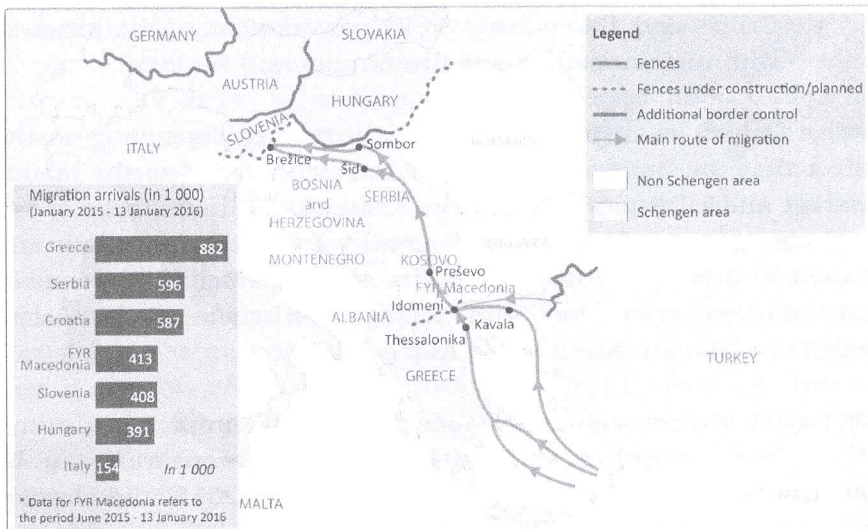


Serbia and Macedonia. Importantly, the crisis has also strengthened the illicit economic sectors that hamper the region's democratic and rule of law development. The profits to be gained from human trafficking have resurrected mafia networks from the time of the embargo against Yugoslavia.

Despite these pressures, the Western Balkan countries have been largely cooperative in responding to the crisis – at least in the early stages, as long as the migrants continued northward. However, this cooperation has rested on the condition that the borders to the north remain open and that the Western Balkans do not become Europe's dumping ground for refugees. When Hungary fortified its southern border, and Croatia and Slovenia restricted entry in September 2015, acrimony followed quickly. Bilateral relations in the Western Balkans deteriorated quickly, and regional leaders traded insults and accusations, drawing on tensions dating back to the Yugoslav wars.

Figure 2.1: Migration arrivals in the EU in 2015

Figure 1 – Migration arrivals in the EU in 2015



Map by Giulio Sabbati, EPRS; Data source: International Organization for Migration (IOM), 2015.

## **BACKGROUND, DESCRIPTION OF THE PROBLEM, AIM AND METHODOLOGY**

### **Background and description of the problem**

The financial impact of immigration to or migration through a country is dependent upon a number of factors. These include the characterisation of the migrants (e.g. economic migrants, or asylum seekers from war and persecution), the level of skills and education of the migrants, the countries of origin, which affects the prioritisation of migrants seeking legal residency, and the extent of the immigration or migration. The next factors are also:

- The ability or inability of the host country to organise, process and assimilate, transfer or deport the immigrants effectively,
- The extent to which the remaining immigrants become legally documented or remain undocumented and go »underground« and the degree of resulting socio-economic isolation or assimilation of immigrants into their new host societies which will affect levels of social harmony or dissent,
- Crime and the underground grey economy that expands with undocumented and disenfranchised workers.

These factors, in turn, impact economic growth depending on the effect that the immigration has on it: Such factors as the labour market and GDP productivity, the amount of various types of tax revenues generated for the host country by the consumption and economic activity of the immigrants and the level of government expenditures associated with immigration such as for social welfare, administrative and security services.

One type of financial impact on the Balkans from the autumn 2015 wave of asylum seekers from war-torn countries can be illustrated by the case of Germany where, in 2015, the country was expected to face a total influx of around 800,000 refugees mainly from the Middle East and Africa that was estimated to cost Germany up to €10 billion. Germany currently has a population of 81 million people of whom 10 million are immigrants as reported by the 18 September, 2015 Financial Times.

These estimations may, to an extent, have minimised the social and financial impact which immigration has created on economic sectors such as tourism, but has this impact been significant? Different tourism crises, including natural disasters such as diseases, economic downturns, political instability and war, recently also terrorism, violence and crime, have been examined in the growing stream of research work (e.g. Hall, 2010; Ritchie, 2004; Wang and Ritchie, 2012). The phenomenon of migration and its effect on an economy such as tourism in the Western Balkans has not been researched widely to a significant extent in recent years. Our research found very little comparative or topical material – primarily due to the fact that this is a relatively new phenomenon, which emerged in the second part of 2015 in terms of the West Balkan Corridor and the connected regions.

Certainly, the refugee crisis has forced Europe to put the Western Balkans back on the agenda. As we have already mentioned, the West Balkan migrant route – running through Macedonia and Serbia to Hungary, or Croatia, Slovenia and Austria – became the main entry point for refugees making their way to northern Europe in 2015. The crisis has placed tremendous pressure on the region and stretched institutional capacities to breaking point.

In November 2015, Slovenia and Croatia closed their borders to economic migrants and restricted entry to Syrians, Afghans, and Iraqis. Macedonia and Serbia immediately followed suit. In February 2016, pressures to close the Balkan Route gained traction in Austria and the Western Balkans, leaving thousands of refugees stranded in Greece. The EU–Turkey Summit of March 2016 announced that the Balkan Route had »come to an end« but focused on the urgency of the situation in Greece, failing to adopt any groundbreaking measure for the non-EU Western Balkan countries. As a result, thousands of migrants were stranded at the Greek-Macedonian border in a makeshift refugee camp near the village of Idomeni, following a three-week standoff between Greece and Macedonia, along with other Balkan countries, such as Serbia, Croatia and Slovenia, which opposed adamantly allowing refugees to continue their journey to the prosperous north. Having become a buffer zone or, worse, a dumping ground for refugees, the countries on the Western Balkan Route found it hard to cope



with the humanitarian, security, and administrative burden. In a sense they became the guardians of the Schengen space, without even being close to EU membership.

### **Aim and methodology**

The aim of our chapter is, therefore, to consider the effect of the West Balkan migratory route from the Middle East through to Central and Northern Europe and the extent to which this may affect and impact on tourism in those countries immediately concerned with the migrant flows. Namely, parallel to the development of migration events in Western Balkan countries, some speculation began on how this migrant flow would affect the economy and, in particular, the tourism sector in the countries of the Western Balkans. In the text following this chapter, we address this situation, we believe as a kind of trail-blazers given the low level of research in this area. In the detail and data presented below, we attempt to provide some conclusions and follow-up points.

Primarily, the methodology we applied was to access information on migrant flows through the West Balkan Corridor and then to relate the timing of those flows to any perceived changes in tourism flows in those regions. Our main limitation has been the lack of comprehensive and relevant tourism data for the 2016 season as a whole, in comparison with 2015. However, we were able to access data for the last quarter of 2015 when the migration crisis was most intensive, as well as for first half 2016.

It is evident that the situation with migrant inflows only emerged during the latter half of 2015 as the Syrian crisis intensified. Therefore, there is simply no significantly topical past research or appropriate data dealing with these issues. In our opinion, this paper represents a pioneer work and provides a potential impetus to future more detailed research on this topic.

We also have to address the issue of terminology regarding the use of the term »migrant«. We are using this term through this paper to describe those entering the EU from non-EU States, irrespective of

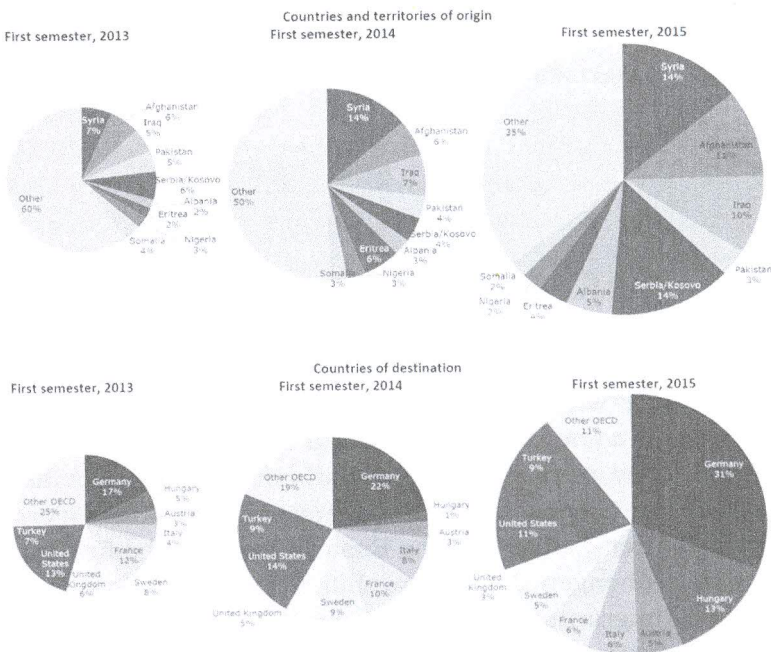
whether they may potentially have refugee status or are economic migrants<sup>3</sup>.

## MIGRATION THROUGH THE WEST BALKAN CORRIDOR

### Migration flow overview

The non-regional<sup>4</sup> flows transiting the West Balkan Corridor in 2015 amounted to some 2 million individuals; according to FRONTEX data (FRONTEX, 2016) this was approximately 30 times greater than in 2014. In 2013, illegal border crossings on the West Balkan Corridor amounted to 40,027; in 2014 this rose to 66,079 and in 2015 to 2,081,366.

Figure 2.2: Evolution of the distribution of asylum seekers in the EU by main countries and territories of origin and by destination countries, 2013 - 2015

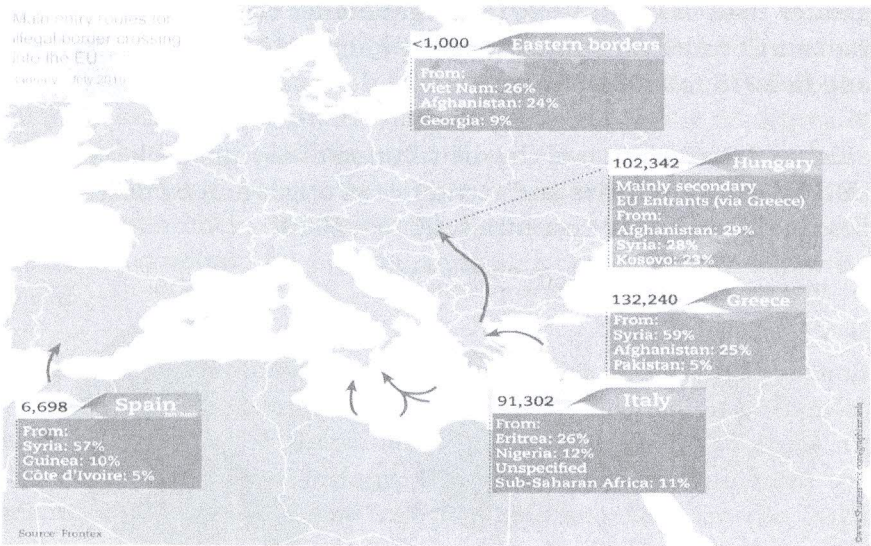


<sup>3</sup> please see APPENDIX 1

<sup>4</sup> »non-regional« is a term to represent migrants from outside the West Balkan region - Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, Kosovo, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. NOTE: The use of the term Kosovo is a geographic territorial description and without any comment on the sovereign or political status of that territory

The main transit route has been Turkey-Greece-Macedonia-Serbia and, initially, via Hungary and latterly via Croatia following the Hungarian border closing. An alternative, but lower flow level route has been Turkey-Bulgaria-Serbia then Hungary or Croatia. Also some smaller flows have been detected through Greece-Albania-Montenegro-Bosnia & Hercegovina-Serbia.

Figure 2.3: Main entry routes to Europe by irregular migrants and refugees, January – July 2015



Source: OECD, Migration Policy Debates, No 7, September, 2015

A primary issue was that, because the majority of migrants had Germany (or in some cases Austria and Sweden) as their ultimate destination, they were unwilling to submit to refugee or asylum registration in Greece or, indeed, any of the other »corridor« countries. Border controls on the Eastern Aegean, the first landing point in the Schengen Zone, were difficult to maintain due to the high flow of migrants. Decisions to restrict transfer through the Greece-Serbia-Austria-Germany corridor to Syrian, Iraqi or Afghan refugees proved difficult to manage given the lack of secure, valid documentation presented by migrants at the point of entry into Greece.



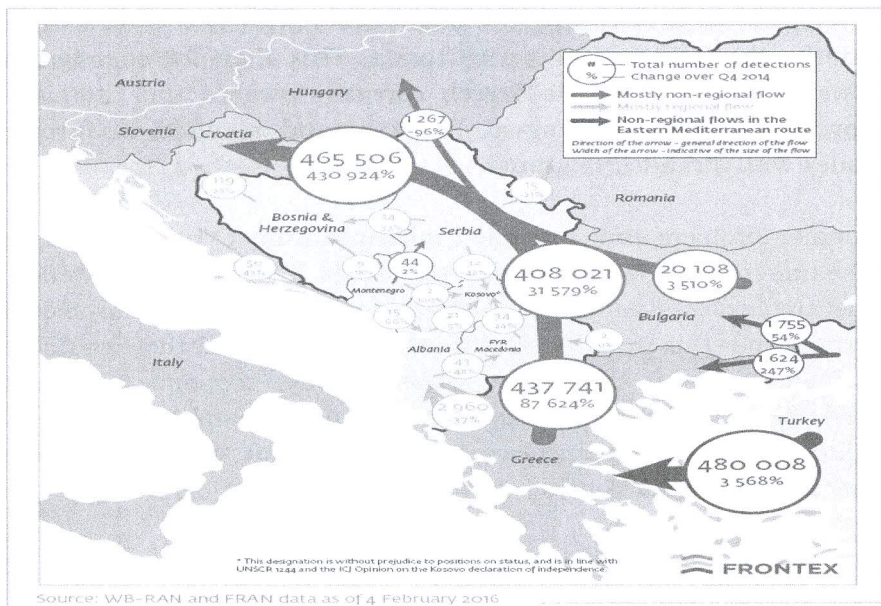
Certainly, the situation improved towards the latter part of 2015, as EU and West Balkan countries adopted higher levels of co-operation to manage the migrant flows but, at the same time, the degree of co-operation was imposed effectively through the action of Hungary in first closing the land border with Serbia and then, latterly, the land border with Croatia. This then forced migrant flows along the Belgrade-Zagreb corridor towards the Croatian-Slovenian border crossing at Bregana, and resulted in further issues with stranded migrants.

A major problem that propelled migrants from Syria and Iraq to take this land route from Turkey to Austria, Germany and Sweden, was the expectation from a variety of news and social media sources that this was the most direct route and that they would be assisted to travel through it. Subsequently, economic migrants from Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan and some African countries, saw value in attaching themselves to these migrant flows - given the poor level of border controls and identification.

### **The primary route and the connection to tourism**

During 2015, the primary route for the migrant flows was from Turkey, across to the East Aegean islands, then via the Greek mainland to join Pan-European Transport Corridor X at Thessaloniki. This route then transits via Macedonia and South and Central Serbia; at Belgrade, one route diverges north through Vojvodina to cross the Serbia/Hungary road border at Horgoš/Röszke or at the rail border Kelebija/Kelebia. The other route, which became the most common route after the Serbia/Hungary border closure, was then on the road route crossing the border into Croatia at Batrovci/Bajakovo or the rail route crossing at Šid/Tovarnik.

Figure 2.4: Changes in detections of illegal border crossing between BCPs between Q4 2014 and Q4 2015 at particular border sections and main directions of the flow



Source: FRONTEX, e-Balkans Quarterly, October – December 2015

However, if we look at the flow routes (see Figure 2.4 above), we can see that the main flow components are from the Turkish Aegean coast towards the Greek Aegean islands and onwards to mainland Greece. This flow represented a 1,915% increase in 2015 over 2014. The only significant impact could, therefore, be speculated as being on the Greek Aegean islands; the reason for this comment is that the majority of those then transiting from Greece through Serbia northwards moved as swiftly as transport and border controls allowed. For example, flows of migrants from Albania into Montenegro actually fell by 22% in 2015 over 2014, indicating that this previous route had been generally abandoned in favour of Corridor X. The only significant growth in migrant flows in 2015 over 2014 outside the flows from Turkey-Greece-

Serbia etc., was of regional migrants<sup>5</sup> from Montenegro into Croatia who appeared to be travelling northwards, rather than remaining on the Dalmatian littoral.

So, we come back to the fact that the most important impact on tourism needs to be based on the effect of migrant flows through the Greek islands northwards, given the sheer size of those flows.

### **Slovenian data on migrant flows**

During the period from 16 October to 31 December, 2015, the number of migrants entering Slovenia (mainly via the Bregana road crossing or the Dobovo rail crossing) from Croatia, amounted to over 377,000 individuals. Yet, in effect, the same numbers left Slovenia; this indicates that, as with Serbia and Croatia, Slovenia was simply a transit corridor to the perceived wonders of Germany and Sweden. The data provided by the Slovenian Police<sup>6</sup> would tend to indicate that, generally, the migrants spent between 1-4 days in transiting Slovenia between the crossing from Croatia and their entry into Austrian territory at the Karavanke road/rail interchange. Indeed, the total number of refugees and asylum seekers on Slovenian territory as at 15 July, 2016 amounted to 289 (256 asylum seekers, 19 refugees and 14 displaced persons); these numbers do of course include inter-regional migrants from Albania, Bosnia & Hercegovina, and Kosovo as well as refugees from Africa/ the Middle East.

## **THE TOURISM OVERVIEW**

### **Overall issues**

As an example of the potential shifts of tourism sentiment, we may quote data for 2015 (Greek National Tourism Office, 2016), indicating that 2.3m UK visitors travelled to Greece for vacations despite the well and widely-reported incidence of migrant inflows to the Greek islands bordering the Turkish coast. Across Greece,

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<sup>5</sup> those migrants originating from within the West Balkan region and travelling to other countries within that region (i.e. Albania to Bosnia & Hercegovina) or to countries outside the region (i.e. Montenegro to Croatia)

<sup>6</sup> [www.policija.si](http://www.policija.si)



the year-on-year increase from the UK at the end of 2015 was around 15%. Due to the non-availability of exact data, the following information may not be completely verifiable. However, the authors estimate that the Greek islands mainly affected (which also tend to be those most visited by tourists) are:

- Lesbos - estimated 50% of migrant flows and, during December 2015, around 2,000 per day
- Samos - nearest to the Turkish coast (less than 2km)
- Leros – 1,500 refugees arrived in September 2015 (Local tourism officials reported that there had been a decline in tourism reservations)
- Rhodes - 32km from the Turkish coast, the size of the island and the strong tourism market does not appear to have been dampened.

### **Market for 2017**

Whilst airline forward planning data is not empirically reliable, it does, however, provide a strong level of evidence of tourism sentiment and tourism destination flows. Data collected from Jet2, a major UK low cost airline<sup>7</sup> flying to holiday destinations, indicates the number of flights predicted for the summer of 2017 from their bases in the two major Scottish airports (Glasgow and Edinburgh), where there has been a strong growth in traffic capacity. If we take flights operated by Jet2 (and its partner Jet2 Holidays) from Edinburgh, the 2016 destinations were Corfu, Crete, Kefalonia, Kos, Rhodes and Zante. For 2017, the airline is adding Halkidiki and Thessaloniki (whilst dropping a number of SW Turkish resorts. Jet2's 2017 programme from other UK gateway airports (Birmingham, East Midlands, Leeds/Bradford, Manchester) suggests greater capacity on routes to Greece over previous routes to Turkey, Egypt and Tunisia.

The chronic state of the Greek economy may undoubtedly result in action to lower prices, to provide infrastructural aid to tourism and to offer incentives to European low-cost carriers flying into Greek regional airports. Tourism is now one of the few vibrant elements of the Greek economy and, together with concerns from North-west

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<sup>7</sup> [www.jet2.com](http://www.jet2.com)

Europeans about the safety issues of vacations in Turkey, Egypt or Maghreb countries (Algeria, Morocco, Tunisia), the flow of travellers towards Greek holiday destinations - with a fairly lengthy holiday season (February-November) - may result in a significant boost towards Greece.

But, one other factor, as yet not clearly evident or researched, is the effect of the UK exit from the EU. This has already triggered a significant reduction in the value of the GBP against the EUR and the USD - affecting holiday spending in Eurozone countries as well as Florida. Whether this may see an adjustment of holiday tourism flows away from Eurozone countries is difficult to predict. On the other hand, airline costs (including fuel) are based on the USD, so any shifts of UK tourism outflows are likely to be unpredictable.

We can perhaps see that that the possibility of migrant flows having a significant structural effect on Greek tourism as a whole are possibly limited. There may certainly be island destinations where migrant flows may have a limited, albeit transitory, effect. But against this is the effect of tourism flows switching towards Greece and away from potentially volatile regions in the southern and eastern Mediterranean littoral.

There is also the view that, whilst the evidence of severe human dislocation arising from the massive flow of people through the West Balkan Corridor seems very evident to us in terms of the sheer size of the refugee support operations at the main blockage points, at the same time, we have no significant knowledge that this has created major concerns among tourists planning holidays in the affected regions.

### **Slovenia and Croatia situation development – reflection on tourism**

It is interesting to review contemporary newspaper reporting on the evolution of the migration crisis in Croatia and Slovenia in terms of the concerns expressed about the people flows whilst, at the same time, the general line was that tourism was in no way affected. This material is included in Appendix B, and covers the period from 18 September, 2015 (Croatia closes border with

Serbia) to 19 March, 2016 (the main concerns are the potential opening of a subsidiary migrant route via Albania-BiH-Montenegro-Croatia). Without all relevant data it is difficult to evaluate and comment on this material fully, but it is, in general, interesting to include this as evidence of contemporary perceptions.

### **Overall EU data**

According to tourism arrivals data (European Tourism Commission, 2016), the international tourism market continues to expand. There was robust growth in the Icelandic market (+35%), Slovakia (+30%), Serbia (24%) and Romania (+18%). Of these countries, we may have expected some impact from the migrant flow crisis on Serbian tourism, but this clearly has not occurred. It should also be noted that Croatia and Montenegro both saw 6% increases in tourism arrivals in the first quarter of 2016.

On the other hand, tourism arrivals into Turkey declined by 10% - the first three months of the year are normally a period of off-season activity for the Turkish tourism market, with low prices attracting Western and Northern European travellers in the 60+ market, as well as golfers. According to Eurostat data (Flash Barometer 432), 50% of respondents to their survey had maintained 2016 vacation plans, 10% had deferred/cancelled vacation plans, 33% had shifted to short-trips and 7% had downscaled vacation spending. The EU Member States with the highest propensity to maintain vacation plans were Germany (80%) and Netherlands (60%).

Account should be taken of the re-instatement of border controls in a number of Schengen countries, which could affect the flows of cross-border traffic. We may estimate that 75% of EU travel involves intra-Schengen cross border journeys. Greater delays in tourism traffic flows tend to have a negative effect on tourists; we may suggest that delays at new border crossings may create negative effects for the overall tourism experience for those who previously experienced the frontier free informality of inter-Schengen travel.



Equally, we should look at the latest Eurostat tourism data produced in June, 2016<sup>8</sup>, which provides information on EU tourism outbound activity for 2014; this material is illustrative in indicating the situation prior to the significant migrant flows that occurred in 2015. Primarily, the data indicates that 75.2% of EU citizens travelled for their holiday activities to EU Member States (including their own country - the aptly described »staycation« market). A further 3.7% visited the EFTA countries (Iceland, Norway, Liechtenstein and Switzerland) and 6.6% visited countries outwith the EU/EFTA (this would include the West Balkans, Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan).

The 2014 data is useful in looking at some key areas of pre-migrant flow tourism. For example German tourists travelling to Turkey generated some EUR 4.3bn of tourism income for that country. Austrian tourists generated EUR 478m for the Greek tourist economy and EUR 710m for the Croatian tourist economy. Any moderation in tourism flows into these three countries as a result of the migrant channelling via the West Balkan Route would, therefore, have a strong economic impact.

### **The Turkish situation**

As the main launch point into the European Union for Syrian, Iraqi and Afghan migrants, Turkey has been affected by the issues of coping with the migrant flows and, at the same time, reaching some degree of accommodation with the European Union. Clearly, the departure of migrants through the Turkish Aegean coast may not necessarily have disturbed Turkish tourism on that coast; the arrival of the migrants on the Greek Aegean coast appears to have had an insignificant impact on tourism in the Greek Aegean islands.

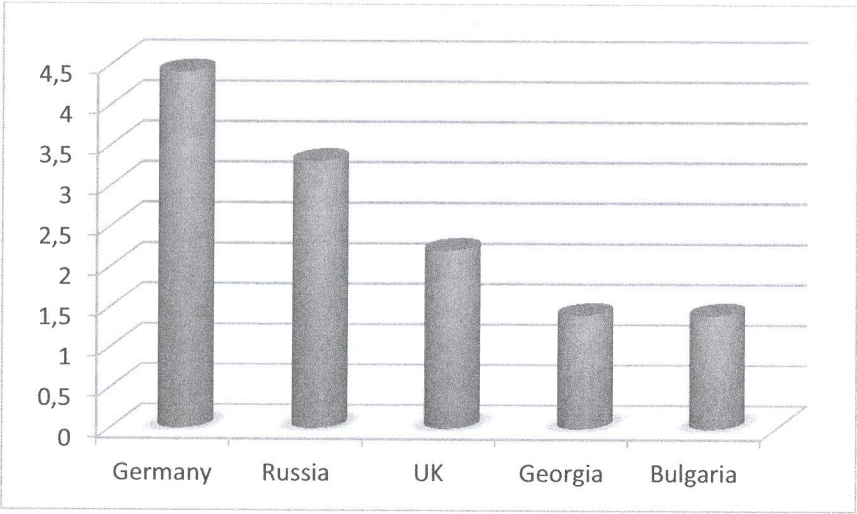
However, through the latter part of 2015, terrorist attacks in Ankara and Istanbul created concerns about the stability of Turkey as a tourism destination. The country had already lost a major part of the Russian market as a result of Turkish actions in late November 2015 against Russian aircraft supporting the Syrian

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<sup>8</sup> [www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat](http://www.ec.europa.eu/eurostat)

government. The following figure indicates the tourism inflows into Turkey for the first 9 months of 2015 from the highest five tourism origins:

Figure 2.5: Origins of the five largest inbound tourism flows into Turkey (in millions of visitors) for the first 9 months of 2015



Source: [www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,153028/researches-and-surveys.htm](http://www.kultur.gov.tr/EN,153028/researches-and-surveys.htm)

Given that we may estimate that tourism accounts for around USD 28bn income for Turkey and has had a profound effect on reducing the current account deficit, it is clear that any changes in a market dominated by Germany and Russia would have a profoundly negative effect. We may therefore predicate that any variation in Russian inflows – for example – would have a major effect on Turkish tourism. The decline already manifest of 10% in the first quarter of 2016 may well be ascribed to a rapid drop in Russian tourism inflows. Added to this are the effects of the state of emergency following on the attempted coup by some groups within the Turkish defence forces in July 2016; this has resulted in a major clampdown by the Erdogan regime, which has resulted in public expressions of concerns by the European Union and many of Turkey’s NATO partners. Whilst having an effect again on tourism inflows, it also raised the potential of affecting the rather

delicate state of negotiations between the EU and Turkey on the processes of managing the migrant flows from Turkey through Greece and then via the West Balkan Corridor. Erdogan's major assault on domestic critics may totally undermine the recent tacit agreements with the EU on the restriction of migrant flows through the Greek Islands-West Balkan Corridor. EU Foreign Ministers have already criticised the potential attack on human rights in Turkey, and this has been supported further by NATO's political structures. Given the latent animosity from Russia and Russian allies towards Turkey, it is conceivable that Turkey will turn for greater support to the Sunni powerhouse of the Gulf States. This could then stimulate further unrest in the region, especially from Syria and Syrian allies in Lebanon

Is it possible to assume a trade-off between diminishing tourist flows from North-Western Europe into Greece instead of Turkey? Clearly, the security situation in Turkey, with terrorist attacks in Ankara and Istanbul, has had an effect on tourism flows to the Turkish seaside resorts - albeit that they are located away from areas of such conflict. Nonetheless, it is a fact that the coastal regions have supported the secularist centre-left parties regularly against President Erdogan's hardly suppressed and latent Islamist tendencies. Recent events in Turkey would, therefore, indicate the possibility of stronger and harsher crackdowns on the coastal regions which, in general, display greater secular and liberal tendencies in regard to such areas as consumption of alcohol and standards of female attire. Again, it may be useful to see what effect this has on the availability of low-cost and tourist charter flights into the Marmaris-Izmir-Dalaman-Antalya coastal corridor.

## **DISCUSSION & CONCLUSIONS**

### **The funnel concept**

We may propose that this crisis of migration and the unresolved effects on tourism is based on the concept of a funnel that has transmitted (and continues to transmit) refugees, asylum seekers and economic migrants from the Aegean Sea through the West Balkans to North-West Europe. Clearly, the »welcoming countries« - primarily Germany and Sweden - have an open door policy



towards Syrian and Iraqi migrants who have fled conflict due to ethnic/religious reasons (i.e. they are Christians, Zoroastrians or adherents to Muslim beliefs inconsistent with strict Sunni Islam - Azeris, Sufis, Alavi and Alawites), but we have to realise that the West Balkan Corridor has also been a method of transit for economic migrants. Importantly, the funnel crisis points are in Greece (the beginning) and in Germany (the end); the intermediate problem areas (Macedonia, Serbia, Croatia, Slovenia) have been in the throughput of the migrants through the funnel.

This presents a rather harsh assessment of what is clearly a socio-economic and deeply humanitarian problem; it is unfortunate to reduce analytically what is clearly a deeply disturbing human problem into an analysis of »people-flows« through a transit corridor, but our task in this paper has been to attempt to quantify, understand and analyse what the effect of the migrant flows has been upon tourism destinations at the beginning of the funnel, through the funnel and at the end of the funnel.

Our initial conclusion, at this moment, would be that the migratory flows have had a significantly low impact; tourism data would tend to indicate that Greece is benefitting from the situation in Turkey, Egypt and North Africa, which has led to a diminution of tourism inflows into the S and E Mediterranean regions. Currently available data also indicates that Croatia and Slovenia have been quite unaffected by the migrant crisis in October-December 2015. Frankly, the most important impacts on European tourism activity over 2015-2016 have been in Paris, Brussels and Istanbul - issues which are not related to migrant flows, but rather concerns about the effects of terrorism actions in tourism destinations.

### **Some key questions**

By posing the following questions we may be able to illustrate some of the provisional conclusions we have reached, based on the intermediate evidence which we are in possession of:

*1. How important is tourism in economic terms to countries in the West Balkan Corridor?*

According to our provisional analysis<sup>9</sup> of tourism, net receipts against GDP (net receipts are gross tourism income indicated on Balance of Payments statistics less domestic outward tourism payments on Balance of Payments statistics for 2014), for the countries in the West Balkan migration corridor, the highest level of net earnings is in Croatia (15.7% of GDP). This is followed by Greece (6.4%), Bulgaria (4.9%), Macedonia (1.3%) and Serbia (0.7%). On this basis, Croatia has the highest potential sensitivity towards shifts in tourism revenue.

*2. How important is tourism as an intensive activity in these countries?*

According to Eurostat<sup>10</sup> tourism intensity (number of tourism nights per 1,000 inhabitants) amounts to 5.3% across the 28 Member States. In Croatia it amounts to 15.6%, in Greece 8.7% and in Bulgaria 3.0%.

*3. What estimates can we make of the share of foreign tourists in EU28 Members?*

According to our provisional analysis<sup>11</sup>, we would suggest that the Top 10 destinations for tourism in the EU28 for 2016 are likely to be as per the following table:

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<sup>9</sup> Authors data (2016) based on national accounts and personal projections

<sup>10</sup> [www.ec.eu/eurostat](http://www.ec.eu/eurostat)

<sup>11</sup> Authors data (2016) based on a selection of Eurostat data and personal growth projections

Table 2.1: Top 10 destinations for tourism in the EU for 2016

Country	Estimates of total EU28 share
Spain	23%
Italy	18%
France	10%
UK	10%
Croatia	9%
Greece	8%
Austria	7%
Germany	6%
Portugal	5%
Netherlands	3%

Source: Authors (2016)<sup>12</sup>

This would indicate that the two important tourism components of the West Balkan »funnel« are unlikely to have suffered any serious damage to tourism flows as a result of the events of October-December 2015.

#### 4. The effect on Slovenia

As the EU Member State at the end of the »funnel«, we may observe that the transfer of the migrants routing during the period October/November 2015 from the Serbia-Hungary transit towards the Serbia-Croatia-Slovenia transit does not appear to have created any significant harm to Slovenian tourism. According to Slovenian Government data<sup>13</sup> in December 2015, foreign tourist arrivals into Slovenia increased by 14% year-on-year over December 2015 and foreign tourist overnight stays increased by 12%; foreign tourists comprised 58% of all overnight stays. The largest group of foreign tourists came from Italy (37%) during December 2015, followed by Austrians (13%), Croatians (8%) and Germans (7%). Clearly, the well publicised news events of large

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<sup>12</sup> Please note: This information is based on 2014-2015 data, which has been modelled to include potential growth based on preliminary 2016 data. It displays the total percentage of foreign tourists visiting the named countries as a share of the EU28 total in inbound tourists, and excludes domestic visitors.

<sup>13</sup> Ministry of Interior, 2016



numbers of migrants on the Croatia/Slovenia and Slovenia/Austria borders failed to deter visitors.

Nonetheless, it could be suggested that the tourists arriving in December had pre-booked accommodation prior to the events surrounding the migrant flow crisis; on this basis, we may consider that those tourists arriving in June 2016 would have had sufficient time to alter, defer or otherwise vary their travel plans. However, this has clearly not been the case; data from the same Slovenian sources<sup>14</sup> indicate further year-on-year growth for June 2016 over June 2015. Foreign tourists comprised some 2/3rds of all overnight stays, some 3% up year-on-year and 4% up on tourism arrivals. The largest groups came from neighbouring countries (Italy 12%, Austria 10%), but this was boosted with 12% from Germany and 7% from the UK. As the effective end of the »migrant funnel« we may suggest that Slovenia has not suffered any diminution in tourism flows.

### **Situation in Croatia & Slovenia**

Almost 400,000 migrants and refugees passed through Croatia at the peak of the migration crisis in the autumn and early winter of 2015. Despite such a huge number of temporary visitors, the effect on everyday life appears to have been minimal, particularly in the tourist areas. There are two reasons supporting this assertion:

It was winter and, as 99% of Croatian tourism is based on the summer and shoulder seasons, the crisis had not really impacted the tourist season in terms of timing. As indicated previously, the migrant crisis was an issue affecting the EU as a whole - not simply the countries on the frontier of the migrant problem. The migrant crisis, therefore, had a direct impact on the concept of the Schengen Agreement – but, in the case of Croatia, that country is currently outside the Schengen zone, which begins on the borders with Slovenia and Hungary

The bulk of Croatian tourism takes place on the Adriatic coast and islands, a world distinctive from the West Balkan Corridor migrant

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<sup>14</sup> Ministry of Interior, 2016

route, which was focused on an inland transport corridor. Therefore, our immediate conclusion to the situation in Croatia is that the migration crisis has had almost no significant effect on Croatian tourism. Indeed, we may add that a more favourable situation developed for Croatian tourism as a result of the impact of the political crisis and terrorist attacks in Turkey, Egypt, Tunisia, France and Belgium. Consequently, the Croatian tourism season has been forecast as reaching one of the potentially highest levels in the last decade. It is, however, important to await the publication of official data and statistics which will be available after the end of 2016 and to research further the underlying reality of these views.

As we have already elaborated in the previous section, in Slovenia a similar situation exists to that we have described for Croatia. Slovenia, having a smaller tourism industry and related capacities, appears to have had an extremely positive tourist season in the first half of 2016. Thermal/Spa tourism, as probably the first and best visited product, is doing well, the city of Ljubljana (almost 60% of foreign visitors are visiting Ljubljana during their visit to Slovenia) is also registering an encouraging volume of foreign visitors during the summer season to date. Coastal tourism in Portorož, Piran and Koper is also positive in terms of its current impact. After the West Balkan Corridor was closed in early spring 2016, there appears to have been no single negative reaction in the Slovenian media about migrants and their possible impact on tourism in the country. Indeed, in part, this may well be ascribed to the very well managed migrant flows for those entering Slovenia at Bregana, who were then transferred by buses to the Austrian border, so literally did not appear in the public domain.

### **Situation in Turkey**

The number of tourist arrivals in Turkey decreased by 40.9% year-on-year to 2.44 million in June 2016 compared to 4.12 million in the same month of the previous year. It was the biggest drop since the series of tourism data began in 1993; this appears to be due to tensions with Russia, as well as domestic security concerns. Visitors from Russia slumped 93% and accounted for only a 1.9% share, compared to a 15.8% share a year earlier. In the first half of

the year, the number of foreigners visiting Turkey decreased by 27.9% to 10.74 million compared to 14.89 million in the same period of 2015, with tourist arrivals from Russia dropping 87%. Tourist arrivals in Turkey averaged 1,600,143 from 1993 until 2016, reaching an all time high of 5,480,502 in July of 2015 and a record low of 213,998 in January of 1993.

It is probably likely that the continuing political and security situation unrest in Syria will have a major impact on migration flows; this situation will undoubtedly tend to affect Turkey and Europe as well. However, it is almost likely that another reason for the decline of tourism for the year 2016 to date in Turkey, must relate to the huge uncertainties in the domestic political environment and as a consequence of terrorism attacks on the Turkish mainland. Further, the impact of poor Turkish – Russian relations at a geo-political level adds a further complicating factor and may well be reflected in the above figures.

### **Situation in Greece**

Conservative estimates, based on press releases from the Greek Tourism Federation (SETE<sup>15</sup>), and the authors' evaluation of data produced by the Greek Central Bank, would indicate a 6% year-on-year increase in tourism numbers for 2016, and a potential increase of 6.5% for 2017 taking account of forward bookings deriving from the German, UK and Scandinavian markets (TUI Press Office, 2016). On that basis, it is possible to estimate that Greek tourism receipts may reach EUR 15bn for 2016 and EUR 16bn for 2017. This would indicate (authors' calculations) that net tourism receipts would be equivalent to 8.5% of Greek GDP in 2016 and 9.1% of GDP in 2017.

In addition, although unsubstantiated by available data, there is some evidence of a shift of Russian tourists towards Greece from Turkey and Egypt. The migrant crisis, and its economic effects, appears to have had little concrete effect on the growth of Greek holiday destinations. Indeed, it may be suggested that late bookings during the latter part of 2016 for the 2017 holiday

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<sup>15</sup> [www.news.gtp.gr](http://www.news.gtp.gr)



season may encounter upwards price pressures, as capacity reaches saturation levels.

What is obvious, as mentioned before in this chapter, is that the existence of a parallel migrant flow corridor fails to deter the tourism flows into Greece and, especially, the Eastern Aegean islands, although these are the main destination for the migrant flows from Syria, Iraq and Afghanistan.

### **Some economic consequences and factors**

The data collected to date may not imply that the tourism economies of the countries in the West Balkan migrant transit route have been affected by the migrant flows; as we have already concluded, this has not affected the predicted tourism growth levels in Greece and Slovenia significantly. However, there are wider costs to the individual countries macro-economies from having to handle the migrant issue. In the case of Slovenia, whilst the throughput of migrants even at the height of the crisis was relatively rapid, there was a large scale mobilisation of the national police force as well as deployment of the Slovenian Army to manage the situation on the border with Croatia. The Slovenian Ministry of Interior reported in a press release<sup>16</sup> that, up to the end of January 2016, the »total costs connected to the arrival, care, and managing of the refugees has amounted to around EUR 26m«. Given a figure of 442,105 refugees entering Slovenia, the Ministry statement indicated that »each refugee costs the state EUR 59.15«.

For Greece, the beginning of what we have described as the »funnel«, the costs have been significantly higher. HSBC Bank (HSBC Global Research Flashnote, 2016) estimated that the cost to Greece of managing the migrant inflows would reach EUR 4bn by the end of August 2016. We would suggest that this would be equivalent to around 2% of current Greek GDP. In addition, the closure of the West Balkan Corridor has resulted in around 50,000 refugees being stranded in Greece, although the EU has so far promised some EUR 700m in funding which may help support

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<sup>16</sup> <http://www.rtvsl.si/news-in-english/slovenia-has-spent-26-million-euros-so-far-in-managing-the-migrant-crisis/386513>

maintenance of this number of refugees and deal with ongoing issues<sup>17</sup>.

At the same time, we have been able to detect indications that Western European tourists are shifting focus towards the Northern Mediterranean regions (e.g. Portugal, Spain, Italy, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece) as well as medium-haul destinations (e.g. the Caribbean, Mexico, Florida) from the Southern and Eastern Mediterranean (Morocco, Tunisia, Egypt, Turkey). This appears to be due to concerns with terrorist attacks yet, over the longer term, a rapid decline in tourism inflows into the Maghreb countries and Turkey is likely to have a significant macro-economic impact on those economies. The potential for the replacement of Western European tourists is limited. It is likely, we would suggest, to lead to unemployment, lack of investment and infrastructural decay; this, in turn, could lead to the economic alienation of those individuals whose livelihoods were based on tourism and, thus, potentially generate a shift towards emigration to Europe (for those able to afford it) or a shift to radical tendencies (for those unable to afford migration). The probability for such a scenario is arguably limited, but it is potentially possible, and it is a situation we should bear in mind.

Finally, we should also mention the wider view of what can be described as the future development of the European Union's near-neighbourhood. In the past, the EU has devoted significant resources to closer economic relations with the near-neighbours in North Africa, the Eastern Mediterranean, the Caucasus, Belarus and the Ukraine. Effectively, that long-term policy goal from the 1990's is now in tatters - undermined by a more aggressive stance of Russia in its near-neighbourhood, by instability in Syria, Egypt, Libya and Tunisia, as well as the developing problems in Turkey. These problems all have the potential to create further northwards migrant flows and a resulting impact on the economies of those countries affected by such flows.

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<sup>17</sup> [http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20160412/factsheet\\_managing\\_refugee\\_crisis\\_eu\\_financial\\_support\\_greece\\_en.pdf](http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/home-affairs/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/background-information/docs/20160412/factsheet_managing_refugee_crisis_eu_financial_support_greece_en.pdf)

### **Further research**

Whilst the findings of this research support the theory that the migration crisis in West Balkans countries and countries connected to the migrant corridor have so far had impacted marginally on tourism as an economic sector, this view is based on current and partly undeveloped data.

We are of the view that further data requires to be gathered so that the real and potential medium-to-long term effects of the migration crisis of 2015-2016 may be recognised fully. In addition, we would suggest that future studies should attempt to understand the varying psychological and behavioural effects on tourism destination groups (both domestic and international) in relation to migration flows.



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TUI Press Office, Media Centre UK & Ireland - telephone discussion (July 2016)  
 Jet2/Jet2 Holidays, Press Office - telephone discussion (June 2016)

## **APPENDIX 1**

### **TERMINOLOGY**

In the public debate the terms 'asylum seeker', 'refugee' and 'migrant' are often used synonymously. However, it is important to distinguish the three terms.

The term 'migrant' corresponds to a generic term for anyone moving to another country with the intention to stay for a minimum period of time (i.e. it excludes tourists and business visitors). It includes both permanent and temporary migrants with a valid Residence Permit or Visa, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants who do not belong to any of the three mentioned groups.

According to the UN definition, a long-term migrant is a person who moves to a country other than that of his or her usual residence for a period of at least a year (12 months), so that the country of destination effectively becomes his or her new country of usual residence. OECD Reports usually define permanent migrants as people who have a status that enables them to stay in the country under prevailing circumstances. Among this group one can distinguish between four broad categories: Long-term migrants within a free mobility zone; labour migrants; family migrants; and humanitarian migrants.

'Asylum seekers' are persons who have formally submitted a request for asylum but have not yet completed the asylum procedure, i.e. whose request for asylum is pending. They are still candidates for humanitarian migrant status. In practice, only a minority of asylum seekers obtain some form of humanitarian migrant status and the others have the obligation to leave the country. If people remain after being denied such status they become undocumented migrants.

The term 'humanitarian migrant' refers to persons who have completed the asylum procedure with a positive outcome and have been granted some sort of protection (refugee status or another form of protection) or have been resettled through programmes outside the asylum procedure. For the sake of simplicity, this brief



considers all recipients of protection – whether refugee status, temporary protection, subsidiary protection, etc. – to be humanitarian migrants.

In addition to migrants formally filing an asylum request, there are many people who have not filed an asylum request, either because they do not want to file it in the country through which they are transiting, or because there is a long wait to apply for asylum (either due to large inflows, as in Germany, or understaffed asylum systems) or, because they know their prospects for obtaining humanitarian migrant status are slim. These people are also considered as undocumented migrants.

The term migrant can, therefore, be used as a generic term to describe a situation where flows are mixed. Clearly, not all people who currently enter the EU illegally will claim asylum and, among those who will do, only a fraction will be granted refugee status. This is why this brief uses the term migrant. However, it would not be entirely correct to refer to this crisis as a 'migration crisis'. Legal migration systems that enable people to enter with a valid Visa/Permit are in place and tend to be managed adequately. What is currently observed would, therefore, be better described as a 'refugee' or 'asylum crisis' because it concerns specifically the European asylum system.

## **APPENDIX 2**

### **INFORMATION FROM NEWSPAPERS**

#### **Newspaper reports on 18 September, 2015 <sup>18</sup>**

##### **Croatia**

Land borders are closed with Serbia and train stations in the country are crowded as large groups of migrants try to get to Zagreb by train or bus. Croatia has shut most of its road border crossings with Serbia, claiming it is unable to cope with the migrant influx of more than 11,000 people.

On Friday, railway stations at Tovarnik, on the Croatian side of the border, Beli Manastir, close to the border with Hungary, saw hundreds waiting for trains to Zagreb. In and around Zagreb, Reception and Registration Centres have been set up, including one at Zagreb Fair, an Exhibition Centre. Authorities have been shuttling some of the migrants to these centres.

»The situation can change quickly. Air traffic has not been affected so far. The Croatian coast is also unaffected.« The Croatian Tourist Board said that organised accommodation at seven different locations within the country is being provided for a »significant wave« of refugees.

»Therefore, in Croatian cities including Zagreb, tourist resorts and Croatian tourist destinations things will continue to function as normal. We are aware, however, that some border crossings may be delayed or limited due to the continued efforts to manage the situation.«

##### **Slovenia**

The country's Interior Ministry has said that it expects around 1,000 migrants to arrive by Saturday, mainly from Zagreb. Trains to Ljubljana from Zagreb may be affected as it is unclear how long the border with Croatia will remain open. Around 100 people were

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<sup>18</sup> <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/travel/destinations/europe/articles/Migrant-crisis-advice-for-tourists-in-Europe/>

being held on Friday at a makeshift Processing Centre in the border town of Brežice.

### **Newspaper report on 16 Nov, 2015 <sup>19</sup>**

#### **Croatia**

Almost 400,000 migrants and refugees have now passed through Croatia in recent weeks. Just 10 (including two Cubans and a Russian) have applied for asylum, meaning 399,990 or so have - or are in the process of - passing through. There have been two refugee births and one death from natural causes, and no major incidents of crime or violence. Migrants and refugees enter the country from Serbia, pass by a transit camp, and they are then escorted to the Slovenian border and onwards. What tensions occur tend to happen at border crossings, far away from the beaches of Dalmatia.

What does this have to do with Croatian tourism? Absolutely nothing, apart from one thing – if one might consider vacationing here to find out more about the country's exceptional hospitality.

### **Newspaper report on March 19th, 2016 <sup>20</sup>**

#### **Croatia**

The whole coastal region of Dalmatia, with its intact beaches, beautiful islands and unpolluted sea, which is the generator of Croatian tourism, accounts for over 17 per cent of annual GDP. While visiting Berlin on Wednesday, Croatian Tourism Minister Anton Kliman said that there »won't be a new refugee wave through Dalmatia«, as some German and Austrian media reported.

»There's no fear for the opening of new routes but, if something unplanned happens, although I think it won't, I assure you that we will know how to put an end to this problem,« he concluded.

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<sup>19</sup> <http://www.total-croatia-news.com/editorial/1490-croatian-tourism-and-the-migrant-crisis-what-you-need-to-know>

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.balkaninsight.com/en/article/croatia-s-tourism-not-influenced-by-refugee-crisis-03-10-2016>



According to tourist agencies and hotels in Croatia, bookings for accommodation for summer, peak of the country's touristic season, is going better than in recent years. Since on Tuesday at midnight, when Slovenia introduced stricter measures on its border with Croatia, events have unfolded which led to effective closing down of the so-called »Balkan Route« for Middle Eastern refugees.

Though Albania has not been part of the »Balkan Route« so far, it fears that of tens of thousands of refugees now stuck in Greece - likely to reach a hundred thousand soon - may head towards the Albanian border. From Albania, refugees would cross into Montenegro and from there enter Croatia's south. Also, there is a possibility that from Albania refugees would take boats and ships towards Italy, the route that functioned before the actual refugee crisis.

## CHAPTER 3

# THE CRISIS WORLD AND A JOURNEY INTO THE TRANSFORMATIVE POTENTIAL OF TOURISM: AN ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH\*

*Irena Ateljević & Renata Tomljenović*

## INTRODUCTION

Saturday July 9th, 2016 - We are curious how the fire that has ignited something precious and something potent in many people since The Journey at Embercombe, can be rekindled. A fire will go out if not kept an eye on and given space, air and fuel - and a spark!

We intend to create a space for reconnection with ourselves, each other and given airtime to be heard, whatever the inner voices maybe thinking, its a place that intends to move past any limiting fears by listening and learning from each other, moving above and beyond our expectations and allowing transformation to be brought about, however small and simple, big and complex.

(Post 1, at the social media wall for the closed group members who went through the Transformational Journey at Embercombe Valley, Devon area, the UK).

As our deeply connected global world is facing ever increasing forced migration caused by war conflicts and environmental disasters, another occurrence of voluntary movements parallels the involuntary. Namely, the 'transformative travel and tourism' has become a new phenomenon recognised within tourism studies discourse in the last few years. Proposed as a potential means of

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making the world a better place, it has been claimed to create conditions conducive to the personal and social transformation necessary for radical perspective change (Ross, 2010; Reisinger, 2013a; 2015) While it is obvious that this phenomenon is a predominant privilege of people who live in economically advanced countries, many of its triggers lie in the fact that the increasing numbers are troubled by the current unjust and unsustainable practices that prevail the world while fully aware of their own privileges to move freely around the globe. Namely, in the recognition that our world is going through a major environmental, economic and socio-cultural crisis, a great deal of academic and industry-based research points to the trends of socially and environmentally conscious hosts and travellers, who increasingly employ travel and tourism as a transformative medium to re-invent themselves and the current unsustainable world we live in. Through the empirical investigation of one transformational 'Journey' Programme set up at Embercombe Village in England, this chapter will display the complexity of such a claim.

Firstly, we briefly set up the broader context of the planetary crisis that explains why transformative travel and tourism is becoming an increasingly popular subject. Next, we provide a broad overview of the recent transformative tourism discourses in which we reveal different concepts and terminologies that point in the same direction of tourism's transformative potential. We then provide a research context of our longitudinal Trans-tourism research project that explores the transformative potential of tourism over the period of four years and by employing a whole variety of multiple methods. In doing so, we discuss the methodological complexity of our endeavour and focus particularly on the ethnographic approach, led by one of the key researchers in the project. Through the researcher's longitudinal engagement with the subject, as well as the conversations and participant observations collected at the Embercombe Programme, the chapter will expose the intricacy of the transformational journeys and give us some psychological insights into the processes involved. In doing so, it will also show how involuntary, forced migrations of the world in crisis uncomfortably yet provokingly motivate people to engage in more meaningful transformative travel experiences.



## **THE WORLD CRISIS, FORCED MIGRATIONS AND THE CALL FOR TRANSFORMATION**

At the dawn of the Third Millennium, the human civilization finds itself in a seeming paradox of gargantuan proportions. On the one hand, industrial and technological growth is destroying much of Nature, endangering ourselves and threatening our descendants. On the other hand, we must accelerate our industrial and technological development, or the forces we have already unleashed will wreak even greater havoc on the world for generations to come. We cannot go on, and we cannot stop. We must transform (Atkisson, 2006, p. 233).

The structure of the world's ecosystems has transformed more rapidly in the second half of the 20th century than at any time in recorded human history (Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, 2005). In fact, in 2007, leading scientists announced that industrial humanity has pushed the earth's biosphere into a new human-driven geological era known as the Anthropocene (Crutzen, Steffen, and McNeil, 2007). In the same year, the reality of climate change broke decisively into the global mainstream consciousness as UN Secretary General Ban Ki Moon had stated: 'This year, through the IPCC, the world's scientists have spoken, clearly and in one voice. Not some scientists, not leading scientists, but the world's scientists – united' (Scott, 2008). The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report (2007) confirmed this by announcing that there is over 90% probability that the burning of fossil fuel emissions has caused warming since the 1950s. The global consensus agreed upon at the Copenhagen Accord in 2010 is that global warming should not increase beyond 2° Celsius from preindustrial levels (UNFCCC, 2009). However, as climate scientist Kevin Anderson warns – if we do not make drastic cuts in emissions we will be seeing a 4° Celsius rise this century, and this potential future 'is incompatible with any reasonable characterisation of an organised, equitable and civilised global community' (Anderson, 2012). Furthermore, in the last two centuries, the dramatic changes of land use have transformed the biosphere, with the clearing or the conversion of 70% of the grassland, 50% of the savannah, 45% of the temperate deciduous

forest, and 27% of the tropical forest biome for agriculture (FAO, 2011).

These detrimental impacts on the body of the earth are inevitably reflected in the state of our collective and individual human bodies. For example, according to the 2013 OECD edition of 'Health at a Glance' the human consumption of anti-depressants is rising in developed countries (OECD, 2013). Furthermore, since 2000, depression has increased significantly in most (Western) countries with Iceland reporting the highest prescription rates in 2011, while depression, as well as cancer, have been claimed to be the primary cause behind the steady increase in the global suicide rate since 1950 (World Health Organization, 2002).

Coincidentally, this period also accords with the global consumption boom, which seems also to produce a continuous gap between the rich and the poor; as Thomas Piketty has shown in his latest groundbreaking study, we live in a world of continuously growing inequality (Piketty, 2014). While the poorest 40% of the world's population account for 5% of global income, the richest 20% account for three-quarters of world income. Similarly, a recent Oxfam study has shown that 85 men control as much wealth as half of the world's population (Shiva, Lockhart and Schroff, 2015). The 2008 global economic crisis, which affected the world economy as well as broadening the gap between the rich and poor, are evidence of the planet's economic and social fragility (Shiva, 2012, Shiva, Lockhart and Schroff, 2015). A recent Credit Suisse Report provides further evidence of this claim by confirming that 1% of the global population 'owns half of global wealth.' Yet, longitudinal studies in rich countries of the West show that increasing income (beyond basic needs) does not increase happiness (Layard, 2005), which explains clearly the increasing consumption of antidepressants. Furthermore, while 1 in 5 of the world's population (800 million) go hungry everyday and 27–28% of all children in developing countries are estimated to be underweight or starving, more than 1.9 billion adults were overweight. Of these, over 600 million in 2014 were obese (13% of the world's adult population), as the worldwide prevalence of obesity more than doubled between 1980 and 2014 (World Health Organization, 2015).

The detrimental transformations of the Earth's ecosystems and the increasing global gap between poverty and wealth cause many sociopolitical tensions and, ultimately, lead to conflicts and wars over resources, as has been recognised recently in relation to Syria's conflict (e.g. Worth, 2010, Gleick, 2014). Gleick (2014), for example, describes specifically how Syria experienced the worst long-term multi-season period of extreme drought since 2006, that contributed to agricultural failures, water mismanagement, economic dislocations, and population displacement. Consequently, these have played an important role in contributing to the deterioration of social structures and spurring violence (Femia and Werrell 2013; FAO 2012; Mhanna 2013). In particular, the combination of very severe drought, persistent multiyear crop failures, and the related economic deterioration, led to very significant dislocation and migration of rural communities to the cities. These factors further contributed to urban unemployment and economic dislocations and social unrest and, eventually, to the increase of extreme violence that has hitherto caused millions to flee their own country. The example of Syria is just one of many for which acclaimed scientists evidence the connections between unsustainability of the current economic paradigm exported from 'the West to the rest' and its global implications in causing social inequality, violence and ecological disasters (e.g. Aguilar, 2009; Shiva, 2005, 2013). More specifically, the global north has caused 75 to 80 percent of historical emissions, while these advanced capitalist societies represent only 20 percent of the global population. Inversely, 75-80 percent of the damage caused by climate change will be suffered by the developing world (Klein, 2010).

Consequently, these processes have raised a whole range of futurist scenarios from the »softer« questions of environmental sustainability to the radical argument that humanity is in danger of a collective death (e.g. Brown, 2006; Lovelock, 2010). The questions of (the earth's) sustainability that have penetrated public discourse only recently are speeding ahead faster than we can comprehend. The problem is that we still frame it within the existing Eurocentric economic and political framework that continues to use rationality, money and technology as the most dominant measurements of progress and human development



(Dussel, 2002; Gare, 1995; Grosfoguel, Saldivar, and Torres, 2007). In the same vein, Thomas Friedman (2009), until recently a supporter of globalisation and the ideology of limitless growth, asked this question:

Let's today step out of the normal boundaries of analysis of our economic crisis and ask a radical question – What if the crisis of 2008 represents something much more fundamental than a deep recession? What is it telling us, that the whole growth model we created over the last fifty years is simply unsustainable, economically and ecologically, and that 2008 was when we hit the wall – when Mother Nature and the market both said »no more«?

The call for transformation opposes endless economic progress and obsession with material wealth and instead promotes the concept of the quality of life as a measure of progress. As Milani neatly captures:

During the early period of industrialism, progressive social movements were concerned primarily with the distribution of society's wealth. In the current period - marked by postindustrial potentials - the new social movements are more concerned, at least implicitly, with the redefinition of wealth: From quantity to quality, from accumulation to regeneration. (Milani, 2002, p.47 italics by author).

It is in this pressing context that transformative travel and tourism discourses have emerged.

### **TRANSFORMATIVE TRAVEL AND TOURISM DISCOURSES**

While the first writings in tourism studies with the explicit claims that tourism has the potential to transform the world for the better have emerged fairly recently, it was in the counseling discipline where Kottler (1997) first introduced the term transformative travel into scholarly discourse. In his psychotherapeutic practice Kottler helped his clients (as well as himself) to engage in therapeutic transformative travel and claimed that there is 'no other human activity that has greater potential to alter your perceptions or the ways you choose your life' (Kottler, 1997, p. 14). Yet, he stayed

focused on an individual point of view, without looking at the wider implications for the world. It was Ateljevic (2009) and Lean (2009) who firstly introduced the notion of the transformative potential power of travel and tourism into the interdisciplinary field of Tourism Studies. Lean (2009) did so by exploring the potential of transformative travel experiences to alter long-term thinking and behaviour. He suggested that the primary goal of sustainable tourism should be to create, nurture and inspire individuals/travellers as 'sustainability ambassadors' who can bring about social change and deliver ideals like sustainable development. On the other hand, Ateljevic (2009), in her new paradigmatic explorations of transmodernity, has offered possibilities of hope for new transmodern tourism (studies) to be remade and to remake the world. She particularly pushed forward the notion of so-called 'cultural creatives' who have been claimed to lead the necessary paradigm shift towards the world that works for all. Elsewhere, Pritchard, Morgan and Ateljevic (2011) have reformulated this transmodern perspective further into the concept of hopeful tourism scholarship. It is described as a values-led, humanist perspective that strives for the transformation of our way of seeing, being, doing and relating in tourism worlds and for the creation of a less unequal, more sustainable planet through action-oriented, participant-driven learnings and acts.

While both Lean (e.g. 2015; 2016) and Ateljevic (e.g. 2011, 2013) have continued to write on the subject with a whole array of theoretical and paradigmatic questions, Reisinger (2013; 2015) has recently edited significant volumes of empirical investigations on the potentials of transformational tourism from both tourist (2013a) and host perspectives (2015). In both editions, multi-authors explore the issues of how travel and tourism can change human behaviour and have a positive impact on the world. Investigating various types of tourism such as educational, volunteer, survival, community-based, eco, farm, extreme, religious, spiritual, wellness, and mission tourism, the authors provide empirical evidence of how these specific forms of travel, as well as hosting, provide conditions that foster the process of transformation. As Reisinger (2013b) in her own chapter on connections between travel, tourism and transformation explains, in contrast to mass or business tourism, these alternative tourism

forms have a deeper purpose and are undertaken for specific educational, religious, spiritual, moral or ethical purposes rather than merely 'being a tourist' (Morgan, 2010). She argues that they involve interaction that is 'participatory, humane, and sustainable' (Biallas, 2002) and driven by a motivation for exploration, self-realization, self-improvement, development and growth.

In a similar vein, Pollock (2015), an experienced practitioner and change agent herself, in her book on social entrepreneurship in tourism, has put forward the new 'conscious travel' model based on six paradigmatic observations:

1. »Business as Usual« is neither possible nor desirable and transformation is inevitable;
2. Humanity must shift its focus from addressing symptoms to addressing root causes;
3. Tourism is not an industrial assembly line, but a living, dynamic system and systems-thinking capacity will be essential;
4. Tourism can shift from being part of an outdated, unsustainable Extractive Economy to help build a life affirming Regenerative Economy;
5. This shift will involve a redefinition of success from a focus on volume growth and profitability for a few to the flourishing of all stakeholders;
6. The Regenerative Economy is »place-based« and will be built from the ground up – community by community.

In her fairly pragmatic yet poetic approach she puts forward the conscious travel model as a 'fresh Perspective on tourism's role and mode of operation that's suited to the current period of transition and transformation' (2015, p. 6). In the next section, we explore how these questions and propositions have been investigated in our longitudinal research project on the transformative role of tourism.

## **RESEARCH CONTEXT: TRANS-TOURISM PROJECT**

In September of 2014, the Croatian Science Foundation had awarded funding to a research team of the Institute for Tourism in Zagreb, for a 4-year long research project entitled: 'Trans-tourism: An integrated approach for the study of the transformative role of tourism in the 21st century'. The overall aim of the project is to investigate critically the role of tourism in attaining the vision for a sustainable world of peace and harmony, and to develop tools and



options in order to provide practical models to harness the transformative power of tourism. Being currently at the end of the second year of the project, it goes beyond the scope of this chapter to provide a full overview of the project and its hitherto key findings. Yet, certain aspects of our methodological journey are important to bring forward for the reason of exposing the complexity when one tries to capture the elusive, unpredictable and extremely personal processes of individual transformation. Moreover, the existing studies point to the issues of studying tourists before and after transformative travel experiences, whereby the pre-trip test influences the response to the post-test. The immediacy of the post-test also does not allow the monitoring of the long-term change. The surveys of travellers and tourists only also prevent identifying the size and importance of the general population in the search for transformative travel experiences. The long-term nature of our project has enabled implementation of a research design that attempts to overcome many of these issues.

We have used a mixed methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies. Firstly, after extensive in-depth literature research, we have identified that the so-called 'culture creatives' represent the group that leads the world paradigm shift and makes up approx. 25% of European and American populations (Ghisi, 2008). Hence, we began with a survey of the general European population (2,000 sample size) to identify 500 cultural creatives for an in-depth inquiry into their transformational experience that aimed to uncover the extent to which the past transformative events have shaped their value system, lifestyles and world view and the role of travel in this process. While the survey in its own right produced many important insights into the size and importance of these types of travellers, their values and travel patterns, we failed to recruit further travellers for in-depth interviews (planned to be done via Skype/telephone and 'Transtourism web forum' discussions). Despite the fact that many of the survey respondents were intrigued by our research and left their emails for further enquiries and our potential invitations for web forum discussions, the reality of their busy lives and overwhelming presence of too much Internet exposure has proven to impinge on their preparedness to participate in our research any further. While we sent many

personal email invitations (chosen randomly), we only managed to receive a few comments on the web forum and two email confirmations for Skype/telephone interviews.

However, given that part of the research design included on-site visits for in-depth face-to-face interviews with the transformative travel providers, we have managed to gain their trust, which allowed us more personal access to their guests, as well as to the nature of their hosting and programmes. In doing so, our ethnographic approach was enabled of planned on-site participant observation, informal conversations with travellers and transfer of research diaries. The geographic scope of on-site research has covered four European countries, Germany, the UK, Croatia and Hungary. Europe was selected for 4 key reasons: A) After the USA, the largest proportion of culture creatives (20 – 25%) have been identified to live in Europe (for a review see the UNWTO and Institute for Tourism Report, 2016); B) Europe is still a continent where the largest proportion of international trips (departures and arrivals) are recorded; C) To overcome the limitations of the existing studies in the field which focus dominantly on the travel from developed to developing countries where transformational travel experiences (due to the cultural differences) might be overrepresented and, D) For very pragmatic reasons of conducting the research economically, within the available budget. UK and Germany have been chosen for the fact they represent the biggest outbound markets, while Croatia and Hungary represent countries in transition that rely heavily on tourism.

### **THE RESEARCH SITE OF EMBERCOMBE, ENGLAND**

In order to identify transformative travel providers in the 4 case countries for our on-sites visits, two key steps were taken. Firstly, on the basis of the comprehensive literature review, we have developed a working definition of transformative tourism as: ‘a type of tourism where tourists participate in travel that offers a high level of immersion with the host culture through backpacking, volunteer, educational/study abroad, ecological/nature based and cultural/creative programmes. Their key foundation is the engagement in activities designed for personal and spiritual development – through particular forms of

primarily spiritual/religious travel; wellness/health tourism; and/or immersion in nature through rural tourism and extreme sports. This operational definition of transtourism attempts to capture perspectives of tourists as well as travel providers who intentionally seek and create sustainable travel experiences that assist and lead the process of transformation at both personal and societal levels. This definition assisted us then to do a web-based search of four country case study sites in order to produce the mapping of tourism providers who potentially fall into this category. The typologies of their tourism provision were divided into the following forms: Spiritual, wellness, farm tourism and WWOOF-ing, educational, extreme sports, creative, volunteering and ecotourism.

Once identified, the usual methodological process of selecting, accessing, consenting, trust-building and organising the field visits was undertaken. In the process, 12 cases of sites were organised and researched (four in Germany, three in the UK, three in Croatia and two in Hungary). Important for the reporting in this paper, only one key finding will be highlighted here. While some of the operations fitted into a specific special interest form (i.e. adventure and extreme sports tourism), some seem to be integrating holistically most of the qualities and features that the special interest tourism concept separates artificially on the basis of the activities or settings (ie. ecotourism or educational tourism). Hence, in the course of our research, we have identified a new form of transtourism operations - so-called transformative education and leadership centres and retreats, which provide a holistic approach of adult education and personal growth opportunities, enjoyment of nature, wellness of body, mind and spirit that ultimately facilitate transformative inner journey processes. One of those centres in England that particularly stood out in our research was the Embercombe Centre, based in a natural valley on the edge of the Haldon Forest, in Devon, the south-western part of the UK (<http://embercombe.org/>).

The accommodation is organised into two Yurt villages and they have a central dining hall and kitchen as well as a large building called 'Centrefire' in which they can accommodate events for up to 200 people. The estate itself provides many different facilities and



activities for their guests, volunteers and staff. The natural environment is lush with a lake, woods and gardens. In terms of activities, they cultivate food through a medicinal garden, fruit trees and vegetable gardens. They practice natural beekeeping for pollination and have ponies, horses and free-range chickens. All food is organic and only with vegan and vegetarian options. Embercombe also provides various workshop spaces for Blacksmithing, Woodwork, Beekeeping, Gardening, and so on. They embrace people from all generations and cater their programmes for each specific group through their 2-12 day Residential Programmes.

Embercombe represents the empirical focus of this chapter as it has proven to be the most striking research site that has generously offered us an ethnographic opportunity for exploring the Centre's dedication and facilitation of transformative experiences. In their own words: 'Our mission is to inspire a new generation of leaders and change makers to take courageous action for a just, peaceful and sustainable world'. While a whole range of programmes and experiences for different markets are offered (for business and corporate; parental weekends; leadership intensives for ages 18-25, etc.), it is important to note that they do not see themselves as part of the tourism phenomenon, but rather providing the opportunities for personal development and meaningful ways to spend one's free time.

In the range of possibilities for our participant observations, we have chosen the 5-day Residential Programme called Journey which 'draws together people from all walks of life. Journey participants are people of all ages, social groups and experience. Wealthy, impoverished, the frantically busy and those with plenty of time. The common ground they share is a deep desire to make a powerful contribution to the world – one that is aligned with their gifts, passion and experience. The Journey will connect you with the source of your power and strength. You will be encouraged to take a step towards a more fulfilling, meaningful and authentic life. To discover that you can contribute uniquely in this time of huge environmental, social and economic change. The Journey is a call to action. You will be both challenged and encouraged, while guided to explore the 'Twin Trail'. Two paths of leadership – the

inner path of self-development, and the outer path of action (<http://embercombe.org/explore-our-programmes/personal-development/the-journey/>).

The Journey Programme was undertaken in May 2016, together with another 22 participants over the course of 6 days (from Sunday to Friday). The participants covered all ages from 25 to 65 and all walks of life and professions (business people, students, professional consultants, musicians, therapists, teachers, etc). We were sharing yurts between 3 people, although the option of sleeping under the stars in sleeping bags was also offered and which many people accepted, at least for one night, so to experience the nature more closely.

### **ETHNOGRAPHIC APPROACH**

Ethnography is a qualitative design, where the researcher explains about collective learned patterns of values, behaviour, beliefs, and language of a culture shared by a group of people. While much can be said of the elements common to qualitative research methods and ethnography, for the present exploration it suffices to note that the qualitative method involves: 'An interpretative, naturalistic approach to the world. This means that qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them'. . . to describe routine and problematic moments and meanings in individuals' lives' (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000: 3). In a broader context, the view that social settings are settings that can be quantified and categorised is being challenged increasingly by social scientists (Lincoln, 1990; Ellis & Bochner, 2000; Holliday, 2002) not least tourism researchers (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004; Westwood, 2004; Wilson, 2004). What is now suggested is that such an objective approach to the study of peopled fields is undesirable in terms of gaining an accurate view of that field and many recognise the value of alternative methodologies (Jamal & Hollinshead, 2001; Wilson, 2004; Westwood et al., 2006 Ateljevic, Pritchard and Morgan, 2007). Ignorance and suppression of the fact that fieldwork is peopled by both the researcher and the researched may lead to the possibility of disregarding information which

provides valuable insight into the lives of participants. Therefore, we must recognise that 'fieldwork is itself a »social setting« inhabited by embodied, emotional, physical selves' (Coffey, 1999: 6). As Botterill and Crompton (1987: 154) argue, there is a need to pursue 'a more emic, or actor-centered approach towards understanding tourist behaviour' and there is a necessity to position the researcher within the research texts which she constructs. Following this trait, one of the researchers immersed herself deeply into the Embercombe research setting and participated fully in the transformational Journey programme. Given that the programme was very emotionally charged and extremely personal, the researcher could not distance herself, but rather had to become a fully engaged participant if she was to gain the trust of the group. As researchers we will never observe what would have occurred had we not 'been there' (Behar, 1996) and there is merit in recognising our own presence within the research setting. The full engagement has also allowed the researcher to pass the research diaries to four people aimed at monitoring long-term impact change as the next step of our project.

The following discussion gives an account of what has been gained from 'being there' - observing, writing, interacting and conversing with participants, supported by auto-ethnographic accounts, in order to provide the 'thick descriptions' of situations, which Geertz (1973) refers to. Yet, it is important to note that, all Journey participants have to vow they will not reveal the exact details of all activities once they step back into the 'outside world', but rather only describe how the programme has impacted them. Hence, the following discussion will give only general contours that help to extract the key issues, questions and challenges that emerged from the process, while most of the quotes were either taken from the written evaluations that all participants got to share by email or from the posts on the joint Facebook wall for the closed group of Journey alumni. All respondents' identities had to be kept confidential.



### **EMBERCOMBE JOURNEY(S) OF TRANSFORMATION**

The point of arrival: In pain for oneself and for the world

The Journey experience begins with a 'Circle of Fire' in which Journey participants, together with facilitators and volunteers/helpers, speak in the community circle about how they feel, why they have come and where they are at this point of their lives. It is a heartening experience to sit around an open fire at the start of the day with no other purpose than to tell the truth about how you are feeling to a group of people who are gathered with a similar intention. Most people are moved to tears more than once to hear what was really going on in people's (often very dramatic) life stories. From deep and important transitions and synchronicities to the most basic of grateful sentiments, I also relish the feeling of openly and warmly receiving people's truths in this way. I am able to hold the spaces that each person presents as their own compassionately and take a moment to honour them for sharing it. One common emotion that kept emerging for us all was the profound sense of restlessness, albeit manifested differently – through either deep discontent with one's job or lifestyle, broken relationships and families, serious health problems but, above all, the sense of lack of purpose and life's meaning.

The confidential circle of personal story sharing that happens three times a day (morning, after lunch and evening) reveals that the feeling of restlessness and lost direction in life has deep roots in the awareness that the world keeps rising in its alienation, pointless consuming and career ladder climbing and, above all, continuous destruction of all life forms (species, forests, seas, soils, etc). From news reports and life around us we are bombarded with signals of distress – of job layoffs and homeless families, of nearby toxic wastes and distant famines, of arms sales and wars or preparations for wars. The recent Syrian crisis, suffering and migration of refugees with images of drowned children on Greek shores are particularly mentioned as simultaneous sources of distress and compassion for human suffering. These stir within us feelings of fear, anger, and sorrow, even though we may never express them to others. Facilitators tell

us that systems thinking born out of new sciences (like evolutionary biology and quantum physics) reveal that we are not closed off from the world, but integral components of it, like cells in a larger body. When that body is traumatised, we sense that trauma too. When it falters and sickens, we feel its pain, whether we pay attention to it or not.

It is in this context of increasing awareness that many participants spoke about the deep calling to act and participate in these crucial times for the evolution of humanity, the era that many scientists describe as the Great Turning Point of the human evolutionary leap to planetary consciousness of interdependence (e.g. Russel, 1983; Capra, 1996). As one of the participants expressed in his reflection feedback: 'After another false start, I wondered if the Universe might have thrown me a bone in the form of the book 'Heat': George Monbiot's climate change call to action. I couldn't put it down and was helpless to resist its implications. I simply had to make some contribution to what I felt must be the defining challenge of our era so, I brushed off a recent promotion, quit my second job and moved in with my parents to volunteer in the environmental sector in London'.

On the other hand, some spoke about the repression of the pain and the fear of despair, of stepping forward, of expressing openly the overwhelming emotions, the fear of powerlessness, of 'losing the balance or, worse, losing the security of existence that is, notwithstanding, maintained artificially by our jobs and social performance or what is even presented to us as meaningful jobs, despite the fact that many who repress the pain eventually get sick, chronically fatigued or simply lose the joy of living. In the words of one participant: »I threw myself into the superficially satisfying world of environmental politics and policy. Immediately, I relished the intellectual challenge of the work, which I convinced myself would make some kind of impact. Trying in vain to influence the wrong people in the wrong way, the intensity of the work let me ignore gaping holes in my 'theory of change', yet, if I'm honest, I can recall a little voice questioning »will this change anything?« as I researched yet another policy report destined to gather electronic dust in the forgotten recesses of some government IT server. I hushed the unwelcome voice and threw

myself into my first paid 'meaningful' job, working for the Department of Energy and Climate Change. The work was demanding and going well, but the voice was getting louder. Ignoring it once more, I soon became ill; bed-bound for a fortnight with some mystery bug. Fearing for my job, I dragged myself back to work. I knew something was wrong.«

This dulling of response to the condition of our world is called psychic numbing, which operates on the collective level as well as within the individual; it gives rise to a whole list of common ailments in our modern culture: Fragmentation and alienation, escapist pursuits, addiction, random violence, political passivity, blaming and scapegoating, a sense of powerlessness, and burnout (Macy, 2008). Yet, on the other hand, it is not easy to respond critically and act either, as one of the participants explains her 'burnout life story' as a UN professional working with refugees. In her dedication to work she had become physically exhausted and emotionally drained with hardly any space for her private life. In her most recent assignment in Greece with Syrian migrants she describes: 'Surrounded by so much suffering and despair from people who, until recently, were living 'normal' lives like me I feel overwhelmed... they lost their loved ones... they are waiting for months in those camps to move on...I feel guilty for my own privilege that I can come and go as I wish, but I also feel disoriented...I want to help but I am also very tired, I need to rest and to reconnect with myself and that is why I am here in Embercombe.... After all our personal confessions shared in the circle it quickly became clear that the earlier set context of the world in crisis and pain is what propels people to search for transformative experiences that will assist them to reconnect with their own selves as well as the world.

The point of immersion: In the safe space of community

As the Journey continues from the early morning hours of bodywork exercises and walks in nature to various daily activities as well as communal work, we all gradually relax and the group's intimacy deepens. Mentored by professional facilitators and therapists, the feelings of fragmentation, alienation, powerlessness and burnout get released and the sense of life sacredness and joy



of living within each individual and the group awakens, bursting open. We move from the feelings of fear and pain into the field of healing, trust and love. As our days get filled with the beats of Celtic music, poetry, storytelling, bodywork and music improvisations, the energy of the mutual trust keeps on rising. At this point, Mac (the founder and visionary of Embercombe) ask us three questions that are central to the whole Journey:

What do you love most deeply and profoundly?

What are your deepest and most profound gifts?

What are your deepest and most profound responsibilities?

I observed how these profound questions make people uncomfortable at first. Yet, as we go through various well-guided exercises, they helped us progressively break free from our repression and denial. The sensation of communion was building up. It brought us to be more open, caring and vulnerable as we all rejoiced in the growing feeling of belonging to a community. In the words of one participant: 'Things seem more possible and this fascinates me, that a change in context, contact with nature and circles of sharing can shift our perspectives so much. These shifts are reinforced powerfully when combined with an intention to collaborate as a temporary community, with its own rules and routines. A community in which there is a concern for one another and a communal reliance to get the meals cooked, the bathrooms cleaned and shoulders provided when tears keep on bursting out'.

We gradually moved into the field of courage, confidence, dreams and possibilities - for ourselves and for the world around us. As expressed by one participant in a high position in his business world: 'I am not ashamed to say that, at times, tears came to my eyes, and I found myself knowing that anything, even everything was possible. In business we always remind ourselves that there is only one constant and that is change. However, we should also remind ourselves that there is another constant and that is our need to love and belong. We have to integrate our need to be human as well as business beings at the same time'. The explorations of the key questions given to us by Mac led many to

their answers and the final pledge for our personal commitments to what happens after we walk out of the soothing community of the Embercombe Valley. While some promised to live more authentic and courageous lives from this point on, others were more specific in their commitment to action for a world that works for all.

The point of departure: Thrilled, enthusiastic yet apprehensive

It is our last day and we all sit around the circle of fire. The energy of the group is strong, connected, heartening. We all speak about the thrilling effect of the Journey, of its deep empowering impacts. Statements that were given later in our evaluations capture powerfully the expressed sentiment and mighty trace of the Journey:

'The Journey awoke a fire in me that was, at first, painful to touch, but has become a source of new energy, enthusiasm and creativity';

'The journey has been a rediscovery of the person I once was. The wonderful realisation that she still exists. I now feel ready to bring her to the world';

'The Journey represents a safe space for transformation and transition';

'The feelings of beauty, community and connection that arose from speaking our truths with courage and vulnerability has formed a rich soil for my personal growth and transformation'.

'Mac Macartney founded Embercombe as a 'garden to grow people'. Yet, in the five days of profound transition, connection and healing that comprised my Journey, to me Embercombe felt more like a chrysalis'.

'I feel empowered to dissolve old constraints and find freedom from fears that for so long had held me back from living life fully'.

'The embodiment of how changing ourselves changes the world. Hugely powerful personal journeying and change. Held beautifully and safely by people who live by their truths'.

'It is incredibly heartening to see the people that run Embercombe striving to provide people with an alternative, another way of existing – one which involves truth, connection with the land, and connection with each other. I am able to bring kernels of that experience into my life at home and enjoy a sense that these ideas and experiences are more accessible than we are often aware'.

'It was the hardest and best 5 days of my life. It has inspired me to push on and follow my dream of opening a business that supports artisans to work in an ethical and sustainable way'.

Yet, for some who felt healed and safe within the strong embrace of a caring community, the sense of apprehension about re-entering the 'world out there' soon becomes apparent. Quite a few expressed the concern that the spark, which Embercombe has created, will go off quickly once back into the 'harshness' of the system in which we need to live and operate. Being deeply aware of that, facilitators give us many options to stay in touch with the Embercombe 'spark' in order to continue our 'twin trail' work (as they describe it) – the inner path of self-development, and the outer path of action. Hence, we all joined the Facebook closed group for all Journeymen to continue inspiring each other and organise various events and circles of support in their area; advertise jobs and various entrepreneurial opportunities. We also chose our own journey buddy with whom we stay in regular contact; we got a list of Life Coaches who are committed to the Embercombe mission; we are offered volunteer opportunities for any future Journey Programmes, etc.

The mixed feelings of coming back home or for some even further continuing their journeys and travels was captured nicely by one of the participants who wrote a piece of poetry on the Journey FB wall:

I know I walk in the footsteps of those who have fallen,  
And if it requires of me to fall then I will  
The ground is a good friend of mine



It's held me when all else has failed  
This trodden path will not slow me now as I feel a force begin to  
stir  
I will have resolve and throw my tired body in once again,  
Freedom is my goal and I will not stop for anything.  
From Bangkok - thank you to everyone who has given support,  
hugs and encouragement.

### CONCLUSION

This chapter has teased out the questions of the transformative role of travel that are rising increasingly in the tourism studies literature. Through a comprehensive literature review we have juxtapositioned the world in crisis and forced migrations that seem intriguingly to elicit the voluntary movements (of those who are privileged to do so) to seek transformational experiences through travel in order to reinvent themselves and the unsustainable world in which they live. We then displayed the methodological complexities of our longitudinal research project 'Trans-tourism' that aims, over a period of four years, to gain deeper insights into this phenomenon. Subsequently, we presented our ethnographic insights into one of the transformational Journeys that are designed specifically to provide meaningful stays in nature and, in doing so, to facilitate the process of transformation and inspire people to take courageous action for a just, peaceful and sustainable world.

While, on the basis of our findings, we obviously cannot fully claim that travel and tourism transforms people, we can argue that places which intentionally design transformative experiences, can assist our processes of individual and collective transition in these critical times of change. To paraphrase renowned speaker and philosopher Charles Eisenstein, who claims that we live today at a moment of transition between worlds, a transition that, internally, is nothing less than a transformation in the experience of being alive. Externally, it is nothing less than a transformation of humanity's role on planet Earth... At a certain moment it will become necessary for you to go on a journey...to find yourself outside of whomever your conditioning trained you to be. You

must put yourself in a situation where...who you were becomes inoperative; then, who you will be can emerge.

Hence, we find it appropriate to finish here by quoting Mac Macartney, who described his own inner and outer transitions and transformations that led him to the vision of founding Embercombe, in his book: *Finding Earth, Finding Soul* (2007:175). 'What is it that brings us to a point of change? The kind of change when we no longer accept being spoon-fed lies and vacuous trivia, but root out the information we need and take action. 'What could I do anyway?' is never spoken by someone who intends action. There are countless things that we can do, if we take the time to inform ourselves, and if we are prepared to accept that doing more of one thing means less of something else. Feeling helpless gets us off the hook. People find the energy, find the resources, and find the inspiration, when they reach a point of choice and make a decision to live a life that is bigger than their own self-interest or that of their families. We may not be able to alter the circumstances of our birth, and we may have to carry the scars of battles lost or won throughout our lives, but almost all of us can transform our own lives, and the lives of others, if we choose to do so.'

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## CHAPTER 4

### OMNIA MEA ME CUM PORTO - ALL THAT'S MINE I CARRY WITH ME

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#### INTRODUCTION

Refugees are, in many ways, one of the most extraordinary facts of the time in which we live. They are today a general worldwide phenomenon found in all societies. There is no such isolated State that would not be able to find someone who was there her/his place, for very different reasons. In many ways, the traditional legal and political definitions of refugees are outdated. The ways in which political structures are trying to redefine them are much more motivated by the fear and opposition towards acceptance of refugees, but attempts to use logic meant that this process needs to be understood politically and socially. Despite all this, the refugees come, stay or go, travel to their refugee routes and leave traces in the societies from which they fled, in societies that they are just passing through and, of course, in the societies in which they find a place for their permanent residence. Commercial areas that are labour intensive are usually found in many countries in which they find permanent accommodation. One such area is tourism and hospitality areas that are extremely labour intensive and with a relatively low level of education of employees. In these areas, working conditions are extremely unfavourable as far as working hours, promotion opportunities and a number of other circumstances related to employment are concerned. There is often in these areas an extremely unfavourable attitude of employers to employees. Therefore, refugees are entering the area because they have to accept a greater degree of risk than the local population. In order to be effective in their work they must master quickly the basic communication patterns that exist in the field. One of the important areas that should be adopted by all who enter a work zone are the stereotypes that exist in this area and are used by

most. An important stereotype refers to the physical appearance of guests. In adopting this stereotype, however, cultural patterns that refugees bring from their cultural backgrounds play a strong role. Most employers are not aware of this fact. Sometimes difficulties arise but, neither employers or employees are aware of their sources. Sometimes these problems are associated with the facial appearance of a guest or employee. Often, in this respect, none of them is aware of the causes of these problems.

The key service carried by a hospitality organisation is the service encounter (Pizam & Ellis, 1999). Sirakaya-Turk, Nyaupane, and Uysal (2013) suggest that tourism providers should consider the quality of the guest-host relationship and, thus, enable a positive experience environment. The same was suggested in a study by Magnini, Baker and Karande (2013), who identified the effects of facial attributes on hotel guests' assurance perceptions, implying that facial attractiveness should be taken seriously in the hospitality industry. Both studies confirmed the results of Griffin and Langlois (2006), who investigated the »beauty-is-good« stereotype directionality, suggesting that unattractiveness is a disadvantage. Thus, hotel firms should pay enough attention to the facial attractiveness of their employees.

However, during the encounter between frontline employee and guest, another perception is being made in the opposite direction that should not be overlooked: The frontline employee also perceives the guest at the very first moment and on a non-verbal level. The social information gathered on a non-verbal level influences reactions unconsciously by, according to Chartrand (2005), triggering automatic responses, the formation of judgments, and choices or behaviour. A frontline employee's decision-making is often the result of automatic thought processing, which enables rapid processing of information and decision-making. In the social cognition theory, there is evidence that automatic perception of characteristics induces categorisation and automatic activation of stereotypes which, in turn, influences impression formation, implying behavioural consequences (Bargh 1994).

Dotsch (2011) noted that stereotypes also represent visual information, such as the configuration of the face, which is a meaningful stimulus with great social and biological implications (Ro, Russell, and Lavie 2001; Sui and Liu 2009). Facial appearance is significant within social interaction, and the ability to process facial information facilitates social communication (Haxby, Hoffman, and Gobbini 2000). It is, thus, a wonder that many scholars regard facial perception as one of the most highly developed visual perceptual skills. The very first information a hotel frontline employee gathers in the interaction with the guest is usually the guest's face and its traits. Thus, the perceived face triggers automatic association with the category and, in turn, the stereotype.

Even though stereotypes are associated mostly with negative attributions, they can also be positive and very helpful during the course of brief encounters. In their research, Čivre, Knežević, Zabukovec Baruca and Fabjan (2013) investigated the frontline employees' perception of guests based on their physical appearance. They confirmed that stereotypes are strongly connected to, and their construction is based on, facial attractiveness. In the process of interpersonal communication, frontline employees can fulfil their professional functions and meet the expectations of their guests more easily when providing for the course of interaction based on stereotypes. In this context, stereotypes should be considered a useful »tool« for hotel frontline service providers. However, is it possible to generalise this for all tourist destinations with different environments?

For centuries, scholars have studied what makes a face attractive and whether our preferences are a result of culture or biology. Several studies have proven that both infants and adults respond more positively to attractive rather than unattractive individuals (e.g., Langlois 1986; Berscheid & Walster 1974), as well as that people from different cultures demonstrate considerable agreement about which faces are attractive (e.g., Jones and Hill 1993). Thus, taken together, the cross-cultural data suggest that there may be universal stimulus dimensions of faces that are viewed as attractive regardless of the age or culture of the perceiver. Reflecting this view, Crouch (2013), suggests taking an



evolutionary perspective to understand better how perception influences the interaction between guests and service providers in tourism, especially in the context of different cultures.

This chapter is the first to research the potential differences in stereotype construction in tourist destinations with different traditional, cultural, educational, and professional backgrounds.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

The social interaction in service encounters creates intimacies within a destination which influence tourists' affective responses and emotional attachment to the destination (Trauer and Ryan 2005). Mattila and Enz (2002) note that the emotional content of service encounters has been argued to have an impact on guests' perceptions, satisfaction and repeat visitation; thus, most Tourism Managers follow the principle of coherence and mutual harmony with tourists (Kolar and Žabkar 2010). This is attained through service encounters that can either be viewed as a value-delivery occurrence or represent a dynamic interaction between guests and frontline employees that co-creates value (Harris 2012). Especially from the sociopsychological perspective, it is important to understand the guest-host relationship (Yu and Lee 2013), whereas tourism from the host's point of view affects life satisfaction (Nawijn and Mitas 2012). Additionally, Chen (2003) states that frontline employees may have an impact on customer satisfaction and fair pricing. Additionally, the host-guest relationship in tourism is maintained and enhanced by offering a »human touch« (Vogt 2011), due to the intangibility of services (Úbeda-García et al., 2014).

Yeh (2013) highlights the need e.g. for hotel management, in order to serve their customers as well as possible, to understand the attitudes and values that frontline employees should have in their jobs. Specifically, interpersonal attributes such as attentiveness, politeness, generosity, care, friendliness, and commitment of service providers have been found to affect encounter experiences positively (Juwaheer 2004; Grandey, Fisk, Mattila, Jansen, and Sideman 2005).

Pucik and Katz (1986) suggested that, since culture provides the framework for social interactions and social rules, customer expectations related to service encounters are likely to vary from culture to culture. There is intensive social interaction under the influence of culture present in every tourist destination, so one should expect that cultural norms also have an impact on employees' perceptions and guests' expectations of service quality. Service encounters in tourism take place in the context of a culture that is formed by the national or even regional origins of the tourist, by the host region, the tourists' various subcultures, and by the organisational culture of tourism enterprises in the tourist destination (Weiermair 2000).

The initial phase of the service encounter involves the first social information relayed to the frontline employee by the physical appearance of the guest. This is one of the most important elements of non-verbal communication (Peracchio and Luna 2006), initiating an almost non-conscious process of thinking and perception based on the guest's attractiveness. Several research findings suggest that the perception of beauty may be innate, or at least acquired much earlier than believed previously (Thornhill and Gangestad 1999; Langlois and Roggman 1990), and culturally universal (Perrett, May and Yoshikawa 1994). Also, Rhodes, Proffitt, Grady, and Sumich (1998) highlighted the fact that some standards of beauty may be set by nature rather than culture. Moreover, Langlois and Roggman (1990) explained how the study conducted by Strauss (1979), in which infants responded to the average face, as highly familiar without ever seeing it before, is consistent with both evolutionary and cognitive theory and could help explain why people of all ages and from diverse cultures prefer attractive faces.

Upon perception of people with more or less attractive faces, those seeing the face associate it with certain characteristics and start making judgements and impressions based on stereotypes. Also, Hack (2014), in her recent research, explored the influence of facial expressions and gender stereotypes on impressions. Professionals such as frontline employees with a limited amount of time in which to conduct the service encounter may have a stronger judgment of the guest; on the other hand, they can be

aware of the advantages of stereotyping and make good use of these to predict (to a certain degree) the likely course of a service encounter. The existence of stereotyping according to facial attractiveness among hotel frontline employees has already been confirmed in a study conducted by Čivre et al. (2013). However, to understand what causes or influences the stereotyping, the findings of several studies suggest the need to analyse the conditions of the surroundings. Thus, we will review the key elements of these conditions in an attempt to ascertain whether there are differences in frontline employees' perceptions among four tourist destinations with different backgrounds.

### **Tourist destinations and their backgrounds**

There is plenty of literature regarding tourist destinations, which can be regarded as well-defined geographical areas (Davidson and Maitland 1997; Hall 2000; Buhalis 2000) or defined as an amalgam of tourism products and services that are usually presented under the same brand name and give consumers an opportunity to experience the destination integrally (Buhalis 2000; Fuchs and Weiermair 2003; Leiper 1995). From the latter perspective, the destination is a complex network consisting of a number of co-producing actors (Gunn 1994; Hu and Brent Ritchie 1993; Buhalis 2000). While individual actors produce the experience, tourists perceive the destination as an integrated experience, or a destination product (Buhalis 2000). The more successful the individual actors are, the more successful the entire destination will be; however, success also depends on coordination and integration of individual actors' resources as well as their outcomes (Beritelli, Bieger, and Laesser 2007). Thus, the destination's competitiveness depends on and can be improved by such actors as government and tourism industry managers (Gomezelj and Mihalič 2007).

Ritchie and Zins (1978) demonstrated that, besides natural beauty and climate, culture and social characteristics determine the tourist destination's attractiveness. Kotler, Bowen, and Makens (1996) confirmed that it is crucial for tourist professionals to consider several aspects of their product's background in addition to the accessibility and physical environment of the destination;



they also ought to keep in mind the educational and professional level of employees in the industry, as well as interaction with customers and customer participation.

There are numerous studies in the areas of psychology and consumer behaviour on differences between cultural concepts that are said to influence individual perception and interaction between people, as well as emotion, cognition, and motivation (Markus and Kitayama 1991). Schneider (2005) states that people often employ perceptual representations of members of one nation based on cultural differences. On the basis of at least some direct and indirect experience with relevant national groups, people make associations that bear on the nature of encounters with people from those groups. In many service encounters, however, the nationality of the service provider is of a hybrid nature (Chattalas 2008), such as, for example, a Croatian Receptionist interacting with a German tourist in a Slovenian owner's hotel at Opatija, Croatia.

A primary challenge to tourism providers within the destination is to satisfy the guests' needs by providing quality service. In an industry that emphasises quality customer service, characteristics such as the availability, skills, costs, work ethics, and standard working conditions of Tourism Managers and employees are critical. These characteristics shape the destination's competitiveness and help to distinguish between old, traditional and emerging destinations. Destination management can play a key role in Human Resource development by further encouraging and stimulating education and training programmes designed to meet the specific needs of the tourism and hospitality industry.

It is obvious that each tourist destination has a different traditional, cultural, professional, and educational background. Thus, the question of whether differences can also be seen in the field of interpersonal perception arises. In addition, in Sheldon's (1989) analysis of professionalism perception in five tourism sectors, the accommodation sector was perceived as the most professional. Following these considerations, the present study investigated the first impressions of hotel frontline employees

during their encounters with guests and tried to test the differences in perception among four tourist destinations.

### **Employees' perceptions and stereotyping in the service encounter**

The primary task in the hospitality industry is to provide a guest with quality service, which can only be done through the service encounter (Chapman and Lovell 2006), especially with emphasis on positive outcomes of services (Chen, Raab and Tanford, 2015). During this encounter, the employee and guest develop a relationship, which is the key distinguishing characteristic of hospitality and a source of several other emerging dimensions (Pritchard 1981). Comparing the relationship between the employee and guests to that between the Manager and guests, the difference is fundamental, as the former is defined much more socially and culturally (Hemmington 2007). Also, when considering the level of contact between service provider and customer, the hotel services can be characterised as high-contact service interactions with a relatively high level of emotional intensity and intimacy between employee and guest (Kellogg and Chase 1995). Beside this, the amount of interaction time, and the reciprocal services characterise the relationship between employee and guest as proved in the study by Granovetter (1973).

Due to the lack of time to react, a frontline employee will most likely develop an impression of guests based on conscious or non-conscious judgments and, therefore, rely on assumptions. As Wegener, Clark and Petty (2006, p. 44) noted, »one of the most consistent and prominent insights has been that there is often greater impact of stereotypes on judgments at lower levels of information processing«.

Karlins, Coffman and Walters (1969) set the social stereotypes in the context of interpersonal perception; additionally, more authors defined these as characteristics that are associated with members of social categories (Kunda 1999). Reflecting this view, McGarty (1999) defined categorisation as »the process of understanding what something is by knowing what other things it is equivalent to, and what other things it is different from«. Several studies

confirmed that social categories can activate, without intention, rudimentary evaluative responses associated with the category (Kawakami, Young, and Dovidio 2002). Consequently, people activate stereotypes automatically in response to the presence of physical features associated with the stereotyped group (Pratto and Bargh 1991) and categorise behaviour in terms of personality traits (Carlston and Showronski 1994). Besides personality traits, stereotypes also consist of physical characteristics, expectations, attitudes, and feelings about social groups (Brewer 1988; Kunda 1999; Fiske and Taylor 1991).

Stereotypes tend to be negative attributions, but they may also be positive and may help to guide brief encounters by injecting a degree of predictability into interactions, with each person attempting to meet the assumed needs of the other (Čivre et al., 2013). As Kay (1994) noted, stereotypes represent a special form of knowledge-based reasoning that is very useful when reasoning about people. Thus, they can help the frontline employee to react quickly upon the guest's arrival and to the guest's satisfaction, or they can serve to achieve mutual understanding in the working process. Employees can formulate ideas and effective solutions for interacting with different categories of guests, and they can exchange important information about guests and ways to approach guests during encounters. From the destination development perspective, one can expect the presence of more defined/detailed stereotypes and a higher degree of stereotypical characteristics' consideration for professional purposes in a more developed destination.

Based on the above discussion, a question arises as to whether or not the hotel frontline employees in different tourist destinations categorise and stereotype guests to the same degree. Thus, this study conducted experiments in four destinations to test the frontline employees' expectations of two guest characteristics according to their facial attractiveness.

### **Facial attractiveness**

Olson and Marshuetz (2005) argued that there is still little known about why beauty affects our behaviour and about the perceptual



or cognitive processing that is affected by aesthetic judgments of faces. In fact, our brain has a complete neural network dedicated to processing and representing faces (Haxby et al. 2000). It has also been found that facial expressions and gaze direction play a very important role in attracting attention (e.g., Langton and Bruce 1999; Mack and Rock 1998; Driver et al. 1999). Thus, it is not insignificant, as Haxby et al. (2000) stated, that in a lifetime most people spend more time looking at faces than at any other type of object. Even infants at a very early age prefer to look at faces rather than other objects.

When taking the cross-cultural perspective into account, Langlois and Roggman (1990) established that certain structural facial features were perceived as attractive irrespective of the racial and cultural background of the perceiver. Rhodes et al. (1998) stated that our perceptions of facial attractiveness are subject to evolutionary, as well as cultural pressures. However, compared to older children and adults, young infants behave as if they react to some basic judgments and show preferences for attractive faces even before any substantial exposure to cultural standards of beauty (Langlois and Roggman 1990).

Several researchers of feature-based stereotyping have confirmed a direct link between stereotypical facial features and trait inferences or evaluative judgments (e.g., Blair, Judd, Sadler, and Jenkins 2002; Livingston and Brewer 2002). Čivre et al. (2013) found the same result when investigating frontline employees' perception of guests based on their physical appearance. It turned out that stereotypes were connected strongly to facial appearance which, in turn, played an important role in stereotype constructions.

### **The context for the experiment**

In light of the above discussion, this study focuses on finding out whether there are differences in stereotyping of guests among frontline employees in four tourist destinations that differ in their traditional, cultural, and professional backgrounds. Therefore, we decided to explore this phenomenon in four cities of four countries in the western Balkans, which differ greatly in many dimensions. The differences can be observed primarily in the history of the city

as a tourist destination, the level of hospitality staff education and availability of an adequate educational system, the population values and culture (ethnicity, religious affiliation) and, finally, the economic role of the city in its region or whether tourism is the primary industry or just one of many industries in the city.

Our experimental research was conducted in the following cities: Portorož in Slovenia, Opatija in Croatia, Bihać in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Novi Sad in Serbia (in the autonomous province of Vojvodina).

### *Portorož*

As a part of Slovenian Istria, Portorož is a traditional tourist destination located on the Slovenian coast, belongs geographically and culturally to the Adriatic region and, hence, the Mediterranean. Portorož started to develop as a modern tourist centre at the end of the 19th century; 1885 is considered to be the official year of the beginning of its tourism. During the Austro-Hungarian monarchy, it was considered one of the most important European seaside resorts and spas, along with Grado, the Venice Lido and Opatija. Today, the tourist offering consists mainly of classic seasonal holiday tourism, which is associated with various sports/recreation facilities and Wellness/Spa Centres, as well as business and congress tourism, gambling, and nautical tourism. Accommodation facilities dominate, with 44% of beds in mainly four- and five-star hotels. Apart from tourism, industry in the region is practically nonexistent.

Portorož is not an administrative centre; it belongs to the Municipality of Piran, where the population consists primarily of Slovenes who belong to the Roman Catholic religion. Apart from these, a rather significant proportion of the hospitality employees tend to be assimilated individuals with family roots in various regions in the western Balkans. In the hotel and hospitality industry is a particularly large proportion of employees who are originally from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Some of them arrived as a refugee 25 years ago during the war in the former Yugoslavia. Since in Bosnia and Herzegovina after that war, continued in economic decline for a number of internal and external factors, a

strong process of economic migration arose to the countries of Western Europe, but also to Slovenia. There is, therefore, among the staff in the tourism and hospitality, a relatively large proportion of the population of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Hospitality employees have had the possibility to obtain their secondary, undergraduate, and graduate education in the last 20 years or so.

### *Opatija*

Opatija is a traditional tourist destination in Croatia, located on the eastern coast of Istria at the foot of the mountain Učka. It represents the centre of the Kvarner area, which has an attractive tourist offering in the summer as well as in the winter season. Opatija is a pioneer of tourism on the east coast of the Adriatic. Its first hotel was built in 1884, while the beginnings of tourism in the area date back an additional 40 years. Today, Opatija is the leading tourist destination in Croatia for the organisation of Congresses, Seminars and consultations. In recent years, it has developed a wide range of Wellness products with a very positive impact on extending the season. Opatija is the host of many renowned Festivals, popular music concerts, exhibitions, and sporting events.

Accommodation facilities account for 54% of all beds located in the hotels of different categories. No significant industries exist in the area apart from tourism; however, Opatija is the administrative seat of the municipality. Most inhabitants are Croats belonging to the Roman Catholic religion, working as hospitality employees. They have had the opportunity to gain a secondary, undergraduate, and graduate education in hospitality for more than 50 years.

### *Bihać*

Bihać is a city located in the northwestern part of Bosnia and Herzegovina; it is also the administrative centre of this area. Even before the war in the Balkans, it was a cultural and administrative centre of this part of Bosnia and Herzegovina and shared its fate as one of the least developed regions of the former Yugoslavia.



Before the war, it was also an economic centre, but its industry was mostly destroyed during almost four years of siege. One part of the population, who could organise themselves, fled into exile during this four-year siege. Some of them fled to Slovenia, where they previously lived with their relatives, and others throughout Europe, but also in some non-European countries. Thus, a part of the population from these regions reached the tourism industry as a Slovenian workforce.

Today, it has rather limited industrial resources that are based mainly on crafts. The main economic sectors are agriculture and farming, but they are underdeveloped and have rather primitive forms of production. The development of tourism is just beginning, with having 523 permanent hotel beds (the approximate equivalent of a single large hotel in Portorož or Opatija). There is no tradition in education for the tourism industry. The level and field of education of hospitality employees is mostly not adequate, and managerial positions are usually held by individuals educated in Croatia or educated individuals from Croatia. Most of the population are Bosniacs of Islamic religious belief.

### *Novi Sad*

The oldest hotel of Novi Sad was built in 1854 and named »Empress Yelizaveta« (today »Vojvodina«). At that time, the main reasons for people to come to the city were business and trade, and this has not changed significantly. In the second half of the 20th century, Novi Sad grew into a spacious, quiet town of the Pannonian Plain, playing the role of an administrative, cultural, educational, and business centre for the Serbian autonomous province of Vojvodina.

Novi Sad has become well-known throughout Europe and elsewhere for one of the largest European Music Festivals, EXIT, which is held in an 18th-century Fortress by the Danube river. The town organises several musical and similar festivals, as well as sporting events and venues. Fairs attract a large number of domestic and foreign tourists, as well as a large number of Non-Governmental Organisations in the fields of Culture, Ecology and Sustainable Development. Novi Sad is also gaining importance as

an intermediate stop on the Danube river cruises. Since the year 2000, when accommodation was limited to five old hotels, the tourist offering has developed substantially, reaching a total of more than forty specialised accommodation facilities of all categories. Most of the population are Serbs who belong to the Orthodox denomination. Recently, more and more individuals have decided to embark on a hospitality career; they can obtain the appropriate education in a High School for Tourism and at two Faculties for Tourism and Hospitality.

In this experimental study, the existence of stereotypes was investigated among frontline employees at each destination, who were expected to make automatic associations of guests' characteristics, such as their propensity to spend and their kindness, based on their facial attractiveness at the very first contact in service encounters.

### **METHODOLOGY**

This experimental study sought to determine whether there are similarities in stereotype construction based on facial attractiveness of guests between hotel frontline employees in tourist destinations that differ significantly in many dimensions. Therefore, we chose to explore four locations in four very different countries in the Balkans: Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia.

The main characteristics chosen for this research were guests' propensity to spend and guests' kindness. In our previous study conducted in Slovenia, these two characteristics – together with a third characteristic, guests' demandingness – were shown to be the most typical characteristics elicited through intense interviews with hotel employees. Guests' demandingness was excluded from this research since the translation from Slovenian into the Croatian or Serbian language proved questionable, leading to different possible interpretations of the term due to different cultural environments.

## **Instrument**

The instrument used to conduct the experiment consisted of two elements, one set of photographs in a projection format, and one testing protocol on paper.

Since Caucasians comprise the largest majority of hotel guests by far in the Balkan region, where this research was organised, we were able to use the same instrument as in the study by Čivre et al. (2013), which included Caucasian people's faces of average attractiveness and had a fairly high internal consistency, with the achieved Crombach's Alpha coefficient exceeding 0.90 in the process of standardization of the instrument.

The projection set consisted of 29 photographs of human faces, 15 male and 14 female, distributed evenly into three age groups: Young, middle-aged and older. Three sets of differently ordered photographs were projected, along with the testing protocol, which consisted of three sets of adjectives. These represented characteristics of guests such as guest's kindness, propensity to spend, and facial attractiveness, to be evaluated on a 5-point assessment scale for each photograph.

The instrument was applied in groups. Frontline employees in hotels volunteered to engage in this experiment. They were told that this was a scientific study with the purpose of improving the work and education of employees in tourism enterprises.

At the beginning of the experiment, employees were instructed on how to carry out the test on neutral material (short projection and protocol). Thereafter, the projection showed the characteristics of the guests and asked the employees to rate the extent to which a person on the photograph that followed could be considered to be a good or bad consumer. The same procedure was repeated rating the degree of kindness of the person. Finally, employees were asked to rate how beautiful the people in the photographs looked to them.

As Olson and Marshuetz (2005) proved that facial attractiveness is assessed rapidly and that facial beauty is appraised even when



facial images are presented for less than 200 ms, each photograph was displayed for 300 ms. Respondents had 2 seconds to check their rating in the protocol.

**Participants**

The study included a total of 271 frontline employees (123 male, 147 female, one gender unknown) from hotels in the region. Gender structure shows the prevalence of women in the hospitality industry of the study area. The distribution of participating frontline employees per destination is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: Distribution of participants per destination

Destination	Number of employees	%
Portorož (Slovenia)	100	36.9
Bihać (Bosnia and Herzegovina)	54	19.9
Opatija (Croatia)	61	22.5
Novi Sad (Serbia)	56	20.7

Source: authors

Participating employees perform different roles in the hotels. Table 4.2 shows the distribution of the employees' job positions.

Table 4.2: Participants according to their job position

Job	Number	%
Restaurant	79	29.2
Reception	64	23.6
Housekeeping	68	25.1
Management	57	21.0
Not known	3	1.1
Total	271	100.00

Source: authors

As can be seen in Table 4.2, the job positions of participants are represented equally in our sample. The representation of

individual job positions shows no statistically significant differences ( $p=0.285$ ).

The average age of employees who participated in the study was 39.06 years. The youngest were employed in Bihać (BiH), where the average age was 34.33 years, and the oldest employees were in Opatija (Croatia), where the average was 45.85 years. This difference of more than 10 years in average age is, clearly, statistically significant.

The length of work experience is in line with the age of employees. The least work experience was seen in Novi Sad (Serbia) with 6.30 years, followed by employees in Bihać (BiH) with 8.74 years, employees in Portorož (Slovenia) with 12.41 years, and employees in Opatija (Croatia), the oldest employees, with an average work experience of 22.93 years.

Table 4.3: Employees according to the education level

Destination	Elementary School		Professional education (High School)		College education		University education	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Portorož	3	3.03	64	64.65	16	16.16	16	16.16
Bihać	11	20.37	37	68.52	3	5.56	3	5.56
Opatija	1	1.64	35	57.38	11	18.03	14	22.95
Novi Sad	2	3.57	33	58.93	5	8.93	16	28.57
Total	17	6.30	169	62.59	35	12.96	49	18.15

Source: authors

Table 4.3 shows that the least educated employees were those of the youngest and least touristically developed destination of Bihać (BiH). The most educated at the college level could be found in hotels of the two oldest destinations, Opatija (Croatia) and Portorož (Slovenia). Differences among the destinations were statistically significant ( $p=0.000$ ). The relatively highest university education was seen in the employees in Novi Sad (Serbia).

As can be seen, the employees at various destinations had very different levels of education, were very different in age, and had a different length of working experience. These differences are somewhat in line with the differences in the levels of touristic prosperity and development of the tourist destinations.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The basic hypothesis of the research was that the correspondence between stereotypes and physical appearance should be the same for frontline employees in all tourist destinations, regardless of the phase of tourist destination development, economy structure of destination, employees' education, and so on. Special attention was paid to the differences in cultural patterns of different backgrounds. It was assumed that there could be differences between the older tourist destinations such as Portoroz and Opatija on the one hand and Bihac as young and new tourist destinations. On the other hand, we have areas that are distinctly Catholic (Opatija and Portorož), then the area of the Orthodox faith (Novi Sad) and the area most affected by Islam, with all the consequences of these differences in cultural terms. We assume, namely, that in these different cultural and religious patterns stereotypes are developed and socialized in different ways. While on a public level in all environments there were almost identical policies towards tourists, stereotypes that are conditioned culturally all over probably work in different ways and are themselves different.

### **Guests' propensity to spend and facial appearance**

The overall Pearson correlation coefficient between the attractiveness of the faces in the photographs and the perceived propensity to spend was calculated for all participants in our study.

The overall correlation between propensity to spend and facial attractiveness for all participants proved to be statistically significant and rather high, with a value of 0.426. This can also be seen in Table 5. By the nature of the Pearson coefficient, we can



say that almost 20% of variance was defined by the employee's assessment of the guest's physical appearance.

When we controlled for the variable of gender, there is still a statistically significant Pearson correlation, with a value of 0.357 when attractiveness is assessed by men and 0.469 when assessed by women. That means that female frontline employees were more likely to link the guests' appearance with their propensity to spend.

Table 4.4: Age groups and correlation coefficients between propensity to spend and facial attractiveness

Age group	Number of employees	Pearson's correlation coefficient
19 - 27	44	0.395**
28 - 36	76	0.433**
37 - 45	71	0.281*
46 - 54	51	0.688**
54 and more	28	0.400*

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

\*Correlation was significant at the 0.05 level

Respondents were divided into groups according to age. As can be seen from Table 4.4, in all age groups there was a statistically significant association between appearance and positive consumption expectations.

Table 4.5: Propensity to spend and facial attractiveness according to destinations

Destination	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Portorož	0.426**
Bihać	0.497**
Opatija	0.366**
Novi Sad	0.310**
Total	0.426**

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

In Table 4.5, the Pearson's correlation coefficients show that there was a statistically significant correlation between the expectation of propensity to spend and the appearance of hotel guests. The direction of the correlation was the same for all locations. For Opatija (Croatia) and Novi Sad (Serbia), correlations were somewhat weaker, though still within the limits of statistical significance at the 0.01 level.

As can be seen, all correlated trends were very similar. However, there were still differences between different locations in the assessment of individual elements which were measured here. We performed the analysis of variance (ANOVA) to compare the mean values of the individual locations and results were somehow surprising.

When it comes to stereotypes about men as good consumers in hotels, then between the various groups there was no statistically significant difference ( $p = .543$ ). However, the hotel staff showed statistically significant differences in the perception of women as consumers of goods in hotels ( $p = .049$ ). Groups in Bihać and Portorož were statistically significantly different from the groups in Opatija and Novi Sad, probably for the same reason, and that is that a large part of employees in the hotel industry of Portorož comes from Bosnia and Herzegovina and that is why these stereotypes are similar to those measured in staff in Bihać. It is very interesting that the mean value for women as consumers is higher in Bihac and Portoroz ( $M = 49.24$ ), than those in Novi Sad and Opatija ( $M = 47.65$ ), which perhaps says much more about the stereotype of researchers (!) on the population in Bosnia and Herzegovina, but on the population itself.

Table 4.6: Correlation coefficients between propensity to spend and facial attractiveness according to job position

Sector	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Restaurant	0.490**
Reception	0.452**
Housekeeping	0.365**
Management	0.319**

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

As shown in Table 4.6, it is consistent for all job positions that the association between propensity to spend and appearance of guests was statistically significant. Particularly interesting in this Table is that the correlations were much stronger in frontline employees with a higher level of contact with guests, such as Waiters and Receptionists, compared to those with lower contact like Housekeeping and Management.

When it comes to assessing the facial attractiveness, there was a statistically significant difference between some locations. Statistically significant difference between the locations Novi Sad and Opatija on the one hand, and the locations of Portorož and Bihać on the other ( $p=.006$ ). Portorož and Opatija are old tourist locations and it was assumed that their results would be similar. On the other hand it was expected that distance should be greater between Bihać on the one hand and Opatija, Portorož and Novi Sad on the other because they are culturally different environments. Employees in Portorož and Bihać gave more similar ratings of guest's facial attractiveness than employees in the hotels of Novi Sad and Opatija. The main reason we see that it is that in Portorož in hotels there is a lot of manpower which is originally from Bosnia, the environment to which the town of Bihać belongs. Although some of these employees arrived as refugees before 20 and more years, it is obvious that some of the stereotypes that are conditioned culturally maintain to this day.

### **Guests' kindness and facial attractiveness**

Kindness is another typical stereotype for the frontline employees in hotels. We expected that this characteristic would be, compared to propensity to spend, associated more strongly with the assessment of the guests' facial attractiveness due to its nature. The overall correlation coefficient is 0.543 and was significant at the 0.01 level, which is a strong correlation.

When we analysed the assessment of men, the coefficient was 0.553 while, with women, it was slightly lower, at 0.540. Thus, we can deduce that the employees of both genders linked the kindness of their guests with their facial attractiveness in the same way.



Table 4.7: Kindness and facial attractiveness according to destinations

Destination	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Portorož	0.563**
Bihać	0.600**
Opatija	0.441**
Novi Sad	0.546**
Total	0.543**

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

Table 4.8: Kindness and facial attractiveness according to age groups

Age group	Number of employees	Pearson's correlation coefficient
19 - 27	44	0.515**
28 - 36	76	0.586**
37 - 45	71	0.440**
46 - 54	51	0.633**
54 and more	28	0.629**

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

When analysing the correlation by age groups, these showed a very similar direction and strength. Only the age group from 37 to 45 deviated (the difference was statistically significant). A large proportion of this age group consists of managers where the correspondence was also expressed the least; this fact is almost certainly reflected in the coefficient of the age group.

Table 4.9: Kindness and facial attractiveness according to job position

Sector	Pearson's correlation coefficient
Restaurant	0.743**
Reception	0.480**
Housekeeping	0.430**
Management	0.422**

\*\*Correlation was significant at the 0.01 level

Considering the job position of frontline employees, the situation was very similar: Correlation between facial attractiveness and the kindness of guests was strong and positive. However, we can note that the correlation in the group of employees from restaurants deviates significantly, which is most likely due to the specificity of their higher-level contact experience. Among the staff of the restaurant in Portoroz by far the most employees were originally from Bosnia and Herzegovina and the correlation in the group has contributed to such a high level of correlation. Thus, referring to the experiment findings, we can conclude that stereotyping is a process that happens almost naturally in human beings and is characterised by primary socialization.

Following Cronin (2000), who pointed out that every encounter is highly personalised and that the personality of the tourist service provider is an integral part of the tourism product, and given the importance of quality services and guest satisfaction in the hotel industry, our results suggest that Managers should be concerned explicitly with frontline employee's perceptions and stereotyping and should incorporate these topics in their Customer Service training. It is a fact that the service encounter between the frontline employee and the guest is under the influence of stereotypes; since these can lead to either negative or positive experiences, it is important to understand the nature of the encounter itself, employees' behaviour and, particularly, their perceptions of guests' characteristics. Namely, it is very important that employees address diverse customer needs effectively, which can be achieved with training.

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## ABOUT THE ORGANISATION

### International Society of Political Psychology

*Barbara Pavlakovič*

The International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP) is an interdisciplinary organisation representing all fields of inquiry concerned with exploring the relationships between political and psychological processes (ISPP, 2012). Among members there are Psychologists, Political Scientists, Psychiatrists, Historians, Sociologists, Economists, Anthropologists, as well as Journalists, government officials and others. The Society is international with members coming from all regions of the world: the Americas, Europe, Asia, the Middle East and Africa.

As written in the Constitution of the International Society of Political Psychology (ISPP, 2015), the Society is a non-profit scientific, educational, and non-partisan organisation. The Constitution was ratified in August 1985 and amended in 2007, 2012 and 2015. The Society pursues the following purposes (ISPP, 2015):

- A. To establish a community of scholars and concerned individuals in universities, government, the communications media, and elsewhere, who have scientific and practical interests in examining the relationship between political and psychological phenomena.
- B. To facilitate communication of scientific research, theory, and practice across disciplinary, national, and ideological boundaries, both among members of the Society and those outside the Society.
- C. To increase the theoretical and practical significance of political psychology both inside and outside academia. Practical significance shall be guided by the principles of universal human rights.
- D. To provide mutual support among members of their freedom to generate and disseminate their findings and ideas.



## **History of ISPP**

The International Society of Political Psychology was founded in 1978 by Jeanne N. Knutson of the Department of Psychiatry and Biobehavioral Sciences, University of California, Los Angeles (ISPP, 2016a). Since that time, the Society has grown and now it brings together over 800 members who share this area of scholarly interest.

ISPP has established a tradition of scholarly excellence at its annual meetings (ISPP, 2016a). The first meeting took place in New York City in September of 1978 and each meeting since has hosted hundreds of conferees in a multi-day programme of workshops, panel discussions, invited addresses, and special events. At the Society meetings there are generally over 100 panels, round tables, and workshops, with over 300 presentations. The locations of annual meetings are changed every year between Europe, North America and other locations around the globe.

## **Organisational facts**

The International Society of Political Psychology is managed by different governing bodies. The Chief Executive Officer of the Society is the President. Others are the Governing Council, the Executive Committee, the President-Elect, the Past-President, three Vice-Presidents, the annual Business Meeting of members, and Society members who vote in official ballots (ISPP, 2015). The current Committee and Officers were elected to serve between July 17, 2016 and July 3, 2017. The President is Kate Reynolds from the Australian National University, Australia. The President-Elect is Eva G. T. Green from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland and the Past-President is John T. Jost from New York University, USA. Vice-Presidents are Nicholas Valentino (VP - Internationalization) from the University of Michigan, USA, Eva G. T. Green (VP - Publications) from the University of Lausanne, Switzerland and David P. Redlawsk (VP - Conferences) from the University of Delaware, USA (ISPP, 2016b).

The central headquarters of the Society is located in North Carolina, USA. The Executive Director of the Society is Severine

Bennett, CGMP, PMP. The Assistant to the Executive Director is Heather Schlabach. The Central Office processes all memberships, informs members and the public about important events, news and announcements, plans and organises the Annual Meetings in conjunction with the Programme Chairs and assists ISPP Officers and Governing Council members (ISPP, 2016c). The contact information of the Central Office is:

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Mail: [info@ispp.org](mailto:info@ispp.org)

### **Becoming a Member**

Among committed members of the Society there are many excellent scholars and eminent individuals. Throughout its history, the ISPP has offered encouragement to those who are engaged actively in a wide spectrum of disciplinary approaches to Political Psychology (ISPP, 2016a). The Society pursues bringing together all who share common interest in the field from all regions of the world.

To join the ISPP, a Membership Form can be found on the ISPP web- site, or members can join by the online registration portal. Members receive reduced registration fees at annual scientific meetings; six issues per year of the Society's Journal, Political Psychology; free online access to both Political Psychology and Advances in Political Psychology, the Annual Journal Supplement; ISPPNews, the Society's newsletter; the ability to apply for funding opportunities, such as ISPP Small Grants and Early Career Scholars Travel Grants; and voting privileges for the Society's elected officers (ISPP, 2016d).

### **ISPP Activities**

The International Society of Political Psychology organises diverse sponsored events like Conferences, Meetings, Symposiums, Consortiums etc. (ISPP, 2016e). A central event is the Annual

Meeting, a multi-day Conference that each year takes place in different part of the world. Talks and presentations made by ISPP members at the conferences and other international meetings are available through video clips, posted on the ISPP web site.

The ISPP offers various political psychology or related courses available around the world in academic institutions. Furthermore, the ISPP also provides an overview of all complete Political Psychology Programmes available around the world in academic institutions.

Additional knowledge can be obtained at Summer Courses (ISPP, 2016e). The Summer Institute in Political Psychology (SIPP) is a three-week intensive training programme that presents the world of Political Psychology to graduate students, Faculty members and professionals. A shorter course is ISPP's Summer Academy, which is a 3-day workshop in Political Psychology and takes place prior to the ISPP's Annual Scientific Meeting.

As a society dedicated to the promotion and furthering of the field of Political Psychology, ISPP maintains a number of limited funding opportunities for students and Professors who are in need of assistance while furthering those aims (ISPP, 2016f). One of these opportunities is a small Travel Grants Programme that helps junior scholars to attend the Society's Conferences, where they can both present their work and learn more about the field of Political Psychology. The Junior Scholars Committee awards a number of junior scholars up to \$500 each year to spend on travel to the ISPP Annual Meeting.

Another funding opportunity is the Small Grants Programme, which is aimed specifically at projects that strengthen the organisation, expand international membership, and promote excellence in Political Psychology (ISPP, 2016f). The Small Grants Programme started in 2008, when the ISPP Governing Council decided to use a share of the income from ISPP investment funds for small grants that further the goals of the ISPP. Priority is given to events or activities that include participants from various geographic locations, promote membership and heighten the visibility of ISPP, and increase awareness of the Society's Journal.



The Allocations Committee welcomes any proposal related to Political Psychology; however, they are more disposed to favour proposals for organising Political Psychology mini-conferences in locations where there are no such gatherings. In this manner, the events can provide networking opportunities for Political Psychologists in distant regions and beyond. The Committee has also underwritten conferences on Genocide, on the development of democracy in the former communist countries of Eastern Europe, and on development of democratic understanding in the South Caucasus (ISPP, 2016g). The Committee is not inclined to support proposals for research funding or for travel or for paying invited speakers. Nonetheless, the Committee will consider every proposal.

Among previous awardees of the ISPP Small Grants Programme for 2016 is also Mladen Knežević from the Faculty of Tourism, University of Maribor, Slovenia. He was awarded for the Seminar: Personnel in the Hotel Industry in Western Balkans Countries and the Refugee Crisis.

### **ISPP Journals**

The International Society of Political Psychology publishes two Journals – Political Psychology and Advances in Political Psychology.

Political Psychology is dedicated to the analysis of the interrelationships between psychological and political processes (ISPP, 2016h). International contributors write about a diverse range of topics – from Cognitive Psychology, Political Science, Economics, History, International Relations, Philosophy, Political Theory, Sociology, and Social and Clinical Psychology.

Political Psychology has a 2-year Impact Factor of 2.384. It is ranked 8th amongst Political Science Journals, and 12th amongst Social Psychology Journals (ISPP, 2016h). Political Psychology is accessible in over 4,000 institutions worldwide and, in 2013, there were over 605,000 downloads of manuscripts published in the Journal. The Journal Political Psychology base is at The European Centre for Political Psychology (ECP) at Lund University, Sweden. Its Editor-in-Chief is Catarina Kinnvall, Editorial Manager is Sarah

Scuzzarello, and Co-Editors are John Cash, Caroline Howarth, Orla Muldoon, Martin Rosema and Thomas Rudolph. Associate Editors are Hanna Bäck, Jacob Sohlberg, Martin Bäckström, and Emma Bäck.

Subscriptions for individuals that are not members of ISPP are available directly through Political Psychology's publisher, Wiley-Blackwell.

The second publication of the International Society of Political Psychology is *Advances in Political Psychology*. Given the continued growth and explosion of information and interest in Political Psychology, there is an increasing need for a place where cumulative research findings and theoretical developments are synthesized and integrated in a form accessible to the scholar, student, and practitioner (ISPP, 2016i).

The *Advances in Political Psychology* annual series is intended to fill this need by recording the state of the field and highlighting innovative developments, so that those who are interested can keep abreast of what is happening in Political Psychology (ISPP, 2016i). Each annual volume includes a selection of articles that capture the diversity of subject matter studied by Political Psychologists.

The Editor of the *Advances in Political Psychology* is Howard Lavine from the University of Minnesota. Editorial Board Members come from various universities from all over the globe.

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## **SCIENTIFIC REVIEWS**

***Violeta Zubanov, Ph.D. Assistant Professor  
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Refugee travel on a tourist road/Balkan refugee routes, Editors: Mladen Knežević, Boštjan Brumen and Mitja Gorenak, University of Maribor, Faculty of Tourism Brežice, Slovenia

The monograph was published by Pearson in the year 2016 under a heading which equates tourist paths with the famous Balkan refugee route that was closed completely by the most important European political players, Germany and Austria, and so stopped the river of unfortunates who were trying to escape their fate but, as can be seen in this monograph, you cannot escape fate. The only question is where your way lies.

The monograph is the work of the three Editors of the Faculty of Tourism in Brežice, who called for cooperation 13 co-authors from universities in Slovenia, Croatia, Serbia and the United Kingdom. The Faculty of Tourism in Brežice is part of the University of Maribor. When a team of authors is composed like this it could sometimes lead to some inconsistencies in the approach to texts but, on the other hand, it contributes to a wide range of different views which exceeds the possible difficulties. This book led to differences in approaches toward the same goal, which has expanded the horizon of the book significantly, which would not have happened if it had been written by only one author.

At the outset, we engaged Marjetka Rangus and political scientists to investigate the conceptual similarities between the three phenomena of a globalized world, tourism, economic migration and refugees. If the first form of migration decisions in individuals is their own willingness to change their own world, the other two are making the (globalized) world change the fate of individuals. In a very interesting way, the author has found a conceptual basis for comparison in Cohen's idea of the 6 characteristics to discern a tourist from other societal roles. At the end of the development of the concept, the author found similarities in three aspects of the life of refugees and tourists. In all this, it is not so important how

many common aspects were found in the process of comparing, it is important that they found similarities linking forms of social life that we normally make infinitely distant. This comparison led us to a common definition: To human beings.

The next topic was written by two authors dealing with destination management. One was Slovenian and the other come from the UK, and, for years, they have been cooperating successfully in various forms of scientific, as well as practical work. They accepted the highly sensitive job and, in fact, showed great courage. They undertook a study that was very difficult to classify with the usual classification means. The study used econometric methods, but also sociological, political, geographical and, in some sense, psychological methods. It was a complex study which corresponds exactly to the nature of tourism activities. The political dimension reminded us of the very advanced positions the politicians of the EU had at the meeting in Tampere 15 years ago, and, on the other hand, the deterioration of these principles in the existing refugee drama that we perceive in Europe. Perhaps the best proof of the hypocrisy of the situation is that, with a detailed description of refugee flows, the authors assumed that those will have not a big impact on the tourism industry. In this way, the authors probably confirm the thesis of the first Chapter, written by Marjetka Rangus, in which she tried somehow to compare tourism and refugees conceptually, and it is this similarity that allows them both to exist simultaneously in almost the same area without touching and without mutual influence. The authors used multiple and independent secondary sources and these data connected and compared in a very interesting way. Everything indicates that the refugee columns and tourism grow and pass each other without touching and without affecting each other.

Irena Ateljević and Renata Tomljenović, Researcher from the Zagreb Institute for Tourism, adopted a very modern topic in the study of tourism, its transformative potential. One of the authors of this Chapter, Irena Ateljević, is the person that first introduced the concept of the transformative potential power of travel and tourism in Tourism studies in 2009, so the concept can be considered very young.



Lean, according to the authors in this book Irema Ateljević and Renata Tomljenović, wrote »that the primary goal of sustainable tourism should be to create, nurture and inspire individuals/travellers as 'sustainability ambassadors who can bring about social change and deliver ideals like sustainable development«. If this is the transformative role when it comes to tourists, people who come to a destination voluntarily, we could argue that the same process is characteristic but also an opportunity for free survival for people who, for profoundly different reasons, came to a territory.

This Chapter is virtuously refreshing and brings a new concept in tourism which has not yet been elaborated sufficiently scientifically, as well as its possible width of one thread depth. It may soon be possible for the adaptation, assimilation concepts related to the staff, the people, can replace the transformative concept of tourism that refers to a social process.

The last Chapter of this interesting book presents interesting experimental research that includes identifying the physical appearance of the people in the tourist scene. The study has been done in four cities of four countries in the western Balkans, which differ greatly in many dimensions. Two destinations are the old elite destinations with the Royal Courts (Opatija and Portorož), and the third one is the old urban destination, almost as old as the two royal destinations in terms of tourism development (Novi Sad). The third destination is a completely new tourist destination damaged heavily in the war in the Balkans in the nineties. Because of the war, especially the long period of siege that led to the severe suffering of the people who lived under siege, many residents who could fled from the city. Many fled the city after the war, due to the difficult economic conditions caused by the long war. Some of these people found their salvation in Slovenia and succeeded in gaining employment in the tourism and hospitality industry, both in Slovenia and in other countries to which they fled from the war. The researchers found that they brought their stereotypes into new environments that have accepted them and given them employment. There is no difference of the stereotype to the physical appearance of the guest to the hotel employees during the 19th century, Portorož on one side, and people employed in the

new tourist destination of Bihać on the other. The people who had to leave Bihać also »carried« with them a stereotype that they have adopted in their primary social environment.

In tourism, this is an important finding, because this knowledge must adjust their work with employees. Employees are not automatons who know how to do their jobs at the Reception. They bring to these places all its development history. This book is a very interesting project in which the authors are trying to connect, or to confront and integrate, the two social processes that usually look totally incompatible or, often, are consistent only in conflict. Readers will be able to look and find many points on which they are associated, however. I strongly suggest the publication of this book.

***Professor Dušan Pavlović, Ph.D.***

***President of Libertas International University***

***Zagreb – Croatia***

Refugee travel on a tourist road /Balkan refugee routes, published by Pearson, Editors: Mladen Knežević, Boštjan Brumen and Mitja Gorenak, University of Maribor, Faculty of Tourism Brežice, Slovenia; the manuscript contains 137 pages, 5 Figures and 10 Tables. A subject index has been generated. The manuscript is divided into 4 Chapters with subchapters which correspond to the internal structure of the individual Chapters.

The book has clearly been created as the reaction of a group of experts and scholars on the crisis that has provoked the opening of the so-called Balkan refugee route that was active from the middle to the end of the year in 2015 and was shut down due to a political agreement between the countries that were on this route. The group of experts which has been involved in this book were trying to find a view of the phenomenon of the Balkan refugee routes from the perspective of tourism science and tourism as important economic and social activities. In doing so, the book raises a number of possible discourses, such as the socio-political, economic and tourism, socio psychological and sociological in the narrower sense. All these discourses are connected into a whole that is directed in the same direction, and that is the analysis of the impact of the Balkan refugee route on tourism, on the one hand, and the possible consequences of this drama on the people who take part in it on the other. Some authors have used the earlier tragic experiences in this area.

Editorial text that introduces the reader to the book points to the fact that this area has very close historical memories of the drama of exile. The inhabitants of the area took part in the drama that took place just over 20 years ago, both as refugees and as those who receive the refugees and were their caregivers. The Editor, in some way, concludes that development of interests might lead somehow to collective oblivion, and this collective forgetfulness is, in an especially cruel manner, visible in everyday political practice. On the other hand, the editorial points to some globalization



processes that make up the universal problem of refugees. It focuses on the raising of physical barriers between States, which is not just a local phenomenon due to the so-called Balkan refugee route, but a global phenomenon that can be found in some of the most developed countries in the world outside the European environment (USA, Israel).

Socio-political discourse is presented in the first Chapter, in which the concept of refugee is linked vividly with the concept of tourism. The author's starting point for a parallel analysis of these two phenomena is in the general notion that the society of mobility is contemporary as seen by one of the most important contemporary theorists of tourism, John Urry. After analysing the concepts that they apparently are not similar to each other, the author finds that there are at least three contact points: 1. Migrants are all looking for a new social centre for their lives; 2. All groups engage in intercultural communication with their hosting society and form special host-guest relationships; 3. Their presence in the hosting community might be understood as inauthentic to the common way of life which is related to a certain piece of soil. No matter how categorized the mutual similarities and differences, the fact is that modern societies must begin to understand such phenomena with which they should deal, and not fight against them with wire or some other, perhaps more dangerous means.

The next Chapter justifies the book depicting the social and economic statistics of individual dimensions of migration across the Balkan route. The authors of the chapters use secondary data to show, on the one hand, many dimensions of migration trends in various countries of the region and, on the other hand, show some of the most important facts about tourism development in the same area. The authors showed clearly that the movements of refugees do not have an impact on the tourism industry in the Western Balkans and that the exaggerated warnings of many current politicians were neither accurate nor necessary. The refugees are not impeding the growth of tourist flows with their journeys.

The third Chapter is very innovative when it comes to tourism. The authors focus their attention on the transformative potential of



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Employees are not automatons who know how to do their jobs at the Reception. They bring to these places all its development history. This book is a very interesting project in which the authors are trying to connect, or to confront and integrate, the two social processes that usually look totally incompatible or, often, are consistent only in conflict. Readers will be able to look and find many points on which they are associated, however. I strongly suggest the publication of this book.

Assistant Professor **Violeta Zubanov**

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