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**THE GOVERNMENT MEASURES  
AND THEIR TREATMENT OF THE DECISIONS FOR THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF THE TOURISM OF KOSOVO**

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*// a self-assessment of the doctoral thesis //*

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Today, tourism is one of the most important sectors of the world economy in general, i.e. a very important branch for the development of many countries. Countries that are in the early stages of development, such as Kosovo, have great potential to benefit from tourism, especially in terms of reducing poverty and increasing economic development.

In order for tourism to thrive in a sustainable way, all public institutions in a country must provide appropriate legislation, i.e. an institutional framework that will be conducive to the development of the private sector and guarantee high quality products and services used by tourists.

In terms of this doctoral dissertation, we need to consider the construction of appropriate tourism infrastructure, promoting tourism potentials, solid transport structure, visa facilitation and appropriate policies to stimulate demand.

In the context of our research, the Government of Kosovo should take certain measures and implement certain decisions that are important for the development of tourism in Kosovo. For example, efficient taxation can be presented as an additional condition that can help increase investment in tourism, without imposing too much burden on the private sector, because otherwise it can lead to informality and / or rising prices, which in turn could lead to the country's inability to compete with other countries in the region.

Then, the education of staff in tourism and catering has a direct impact on the competitiveness of tourism products. Currently, universities in Kosovo do not offer comprehensive studies in tourism and hospitality.

Although government institutions understand the importance of the economic impact of tourism, we know that the tourism sector suffers from a lack of coordination mechanism to develop dialogue between stakeholders, including various ministries, departments, agencies, the private sector, civil society and the donor community.

The ongoing decision-making process in Kosovo could result in conflicting policy decisions, such as the visa regime for Kosovo, taxation of outgoing travelers, and a lack of strategic goals.

At the moment, Kosovo does not have a comprehensive tourism strategy and the current Tourism Law has not been fully implemented. The mandate for tourism development in Kosovo is divided between local and central level.

However, the central government has real authority, as it has the largest budget and authority to draft laws and develop strategies. The central government has the authority, among

other things, to create a favorable legal and institutional framework, to facilitate and assist strategic investment, and to coordinate the dialogue of stakeholders.

The research conducted in this paper should provide certain results for the development of tourism in Kosovo, which arises from the implementation of certain government measures and decisions. Tourism entities (government, institutions, organizations, the private sector and NGOs) should expect and help reach a consensus that tourism must become a priority sector in the country's economy, where the development and impact of tourism will help raise the level of overall development of the country.

This research is expected to show the most significant measures and decisions that have helped and / or will help in the future, which have arisen from government institutions or the private sector. It is these measures and decisions that should help to occupy and strengthen the more competitive tourist position in the region, i.e. to rank Kosovo higher in the list of tourist destinations compared to those in this region, due to its tourist attractions and values.

However, it should be noted that there are many factors (spatial characteristics, biodiversity, geo-communication position, climate and other natural features) as a basis for creating a good tourist offer for Kosovo, and on the other hand those resources are not sufficiently valorized.

Namely, the measures, decisions, legal and sub-legal solutions must be a starting point that will help build new or strengthen existing facilities (infrastructure, human resources, financial capital, domestic and foreign investment, international cooperation, membership in international organizations and similarly) in the direction of utilization and sustainable development of tourism in Kosovo.

The **main purpose of this research** is to show the government's measures and the ways in which decisions related to the development of tourism in Kosovo are treated. Namely, during this research, the most important measures and decisions taken by the Government of the Republic of Kosovo in the field of tourism development in this country will be explained and presented.

The **subject of this research** is to explain whether and to what extent measures and decisions are implemented in the field of tourism in Kosovo (conducting research with more important entities in the field of tourism in Kosovo). Finally, we will try to draw some conclusions from this research.

The purpose and subject of the research have their own spatial and time framework. The **sample of this research** is in accordance with the subject being researched, and depending

on the data available. The population that is the subject of this research are: ministries, municipalities, the private sector (hotels, travel agencies, travel companies and associations and other organizations in the field of tourism).

In this manner, the population being subject to this research are: 21 ministries, 38 municipalities, 468 private sector entities (254 hotels, 209 travel agencies, 5 travel associations).

Accordingly, 21 interviews were prepared with representatives of the ministries and 38 interviews with the municipalities, and a total of 468 questionnaires were submitted to the private sector entities, which were submitted in electronic form to their e-mail addresses.

The first part of the research, which refers to the interview of the ministries and municipalities, was realized in the terrain, while the other part is the survey questionnaire, and these two parts were realized in the **time frame** from 25.11.2018 to 25.12.2018, where the respondents were pleased to answer questions in person and online.

The research was conducted with the help of a **personal interview** and submission of an **online questionnaire**, especially for each group of respondents (interview with managers in ministries and municipalities), and with directors or managers of hotels, travel agencies and other organizations in the field of tourism, and descriptive data processing (numbers, percentages, tables) is used as a way of displaying data.

The methodology of this paper is based on the study of literature and empirical research. The study of literature refers to the use of secondary data such as: books, scientific journals, official publications, websites and the like.

On the other hand, empirical research consists of treating Kosovo as a tourist destination, whose development model should result from the implementation of all measures and provisions adopted or adopted by government institutions, institutions, organizations and other entities from non-governmental and private.

In the analysis, i.e. the research on our topic, a combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods has been used. Primary data is based on qualitative and quantitative research.

Accordingly, our research uses various techniques and tools that result from coordinating the literature review, creating and submitting questionnaires and in-depth analysis, i.e. interpretation of the results obtained from the field research.

When researching our topic, **certain research methods** will be used, and the following are considered the most important:

- Method of analysis and synthesis. Analysis is the initial stage in a research, so in our paper, which will allow us to identify the parts and basic characteristics of their constituent elements based on the division, i.e. division of basic concepts. On the other hand, synthesis is the final stage of research, through which the whole is recognized and an appropriate conclusion is reached.
- The inductive method (research of the special against the general, where conclusions are obtained according to the existing facts and premises, in order to verify the data and operationalization of the concepts) and the deductive method (research of the general to the special).
- Descriptive method. In order to collect, process, present and describe the phenomena themselves and to get acquainted with their characteristics and constituent elements, as well as to draw a conclusion in this paper, the descriptive method will be applied.
- Comparative method. This is a method or principle of comparability, will be applied in terms of data processing for phenomena and relationships and to be placed in a comparative relationship with other countries.
- Quantitative method. The quantitative method will also be used in the research, because the collected data is more structured, the research includes more respondents compared to the qualitative method, as well as due to the fact that the data can be easily replicated and compared directly with other data.

In the development of this topic, primary and secondary data are used and we will try to construct appropriate conclusions and recommendations. The research of this paper is based on desk research and field research with the help of surveys of the most important entities in the field of tourism in Kosovo.

In the research of this paper we start from the setting of the **general hypothesis**:

**H<sub>0</sub>:** Implementing government measures and decisions is an important factor in the development of tourism in Kosovo.

The following hypotheses will be used as **special hypotheses** in the research of this paper:

**H<sub>1</sub>:** Measures and decisions for the development of tourism in Kosovo are aimed at improving the working conditions of entities working in this area.

**H<sub>2</sub>:** The proposed measures and decisions for tourism development are correlated with the mutual cooperation between the government institutions and the private sector and the non-governmental organizations.

**H<sub>3</sub>:** The government and the municipalities work transparently, informing and preparing the private entities for the regulation they bring.

This paper consists of three parts:

**Part One**, “Theoretical-Methodological Approach in Research”, firstly explains the context and significance of this research, and then the subject and purpose of this paper, the methods used in the research, and the methodological approach to study. An integral element of this section is the presentation of the basic and specific hypotheses, which during the work and in the end should be confirmed or rejected. This section also contains a presentation of the expected results and briefly shows the structure of this paper.

**Part Two**, entitled "Review of Literature", is the basic framework, which from a theoretical point of view, shows the overall picture of the measures and decisions made by government (central and / or local) institutions for tourism development in Kosovo. This section consists of three-point items.

The first point refers to the general review of the development of tourism in Kosovo, by explaining some of the important factors or indicators, such as: geographical position of Kosovo, local, regional and international infrastructural connection of Kosovo with other countries, statistics on tourism in Kosovo (number of domestic and foreign tourists, overnight stays, country of origin of tourists, accommodation facilities for tourists, degree of utilization of accommodation facilities), number and types of tourist entities o Kosovo, employment in tourism in the Kosovo capital, technology and investment, business environment, law enforcement in the field of tourism incentives for tourism development, international cooperation and international assistance.

The second point of this section refers to the institutional, organizational and structural set-up of tourism in Kosovo, which explains and demonstrates the role of institutions responsible for tourism (ministries, municipalities, government agencies and sectors and departments).

On the other hand, in order to get a clearer picture of the institutional aspect of tourism development, the experience and knowledge of non-governmental organizations, tourism associations and other types of participants in tourism, which do not fall within the government, will be used.

The third point of this section is the core of this paper, because it will show and explain in more detail all possible and well-known government measures and decisions that have been made in the direction of tourism development in Kosovo. Due to the fact that these are government measures, we will first try to show what measures and decisions have been taken or will be taken in the future, which arise from the program of the Government of Kosovo, and then certain measures and decisions will be explained. which are individual and adopted by different ministries.

At this point we should mention the most important measures and decisions made by the local self-government throughout the country, which are important, first for the development of tourism in specific municipalities and then at the national level as a tourist destination.

However, according to our field research, we have also seen certain joint measures and decisions made by the central and local government, as well as certain strategic documents, guidelines and policies. In this section, special importance should be given to international projects in the field of tourism.

Part Three is entitled "Analysis of the results of the conducted field and online research" and aims to explain the conducted field research, with the help of interviews and online questionnaires, i.e. to analyze the obtained data and results.

This part consists of six points, and first of all we will try to explain in detail the overall methodology of the preparation of the questionnaire, especially for the ministries, municipalities and private sector entities. In addition, we must explain the limitations that arose during the field research.

In fact, the pre-prepared questionnaire was used to conduct a personal interview with representatives of ministries and municipalities, and in the meantime that questionnaire was submitted online to private sector entities (hotels, travel agencies, associations and other tourism entities).

In the next point of this section we try to analyze the obtained data and research results, especially for ministries, municipalities and private entities, but such analysis is more specific and refers to the descriptive aspect and regression explanation.

After such an analysis and the obtained findings and facts, certain recommendations arise, which in turn will apply to the government and municipalities, as well as to private sector entities. Recommendations for further research should not be left out, as this topic is not closed and is constantly undergoing changes and innovations.

At the end of the paper, the concluding observations from the conducted theoretical and empirical research on this topic will be presented. Namely, the government measures and decisions should be an incentive and a motive for all stakeholders in tourism to work towards the development of tourism in Kosovo. This will not only achieve economic goals, but also many other social goals that will create a strong foundation for the overall development of the country.

Previous research on the development opportunities of Kosovo tourism shows that there are natural resources or factors for the development of tourism according to international standards, but it is the lack of infrastructure and capital investment that has prevented the use of those resources for tourism development.

Kosovo's recent investment in road infrastructure gives hope that tourism can be developed (especially the completion of the Prizren highway). It is worth mentioning the investment in the National Highway that connects Kosovo with Albania and the Pristina-Skopje highway that can contribute to the development of tourism in that part of Kosovo.

Kosovo's geographical location in terms of regional road infrastructure, with a special emphasis on Corridors 8 and 10, can create good conditions for increasing tourism demand for certain types of tourism in Kosovo.

With its cultural and historical values, Kosovo is an attractive country for domestic and foreign tourists and visitors, due to the fact that Kosovo's cultural heritage has been created and exists in every city and every village in Kosovo, in parks, galleries and museums, in film archives, in towers and fortresses, religious monuments and old buildings.

The development of tourism in Kosovo has been and still is a very complex process, due to the large number of entities involved, on the one hand, and the various, and sometimes completely opposing, interests on the other. The harmonization of their actions and activities is one of the key preconditions for the realization of the future development of tourism in Kosovo.

Therefore, the synchronization of the actions of key actors in the development process, ie their mutual cooperation and coordination, is imperative in the implementation of activities

for revitalization of the entire tourism sector, as well as initiating increased success in overall operations.

All relevant parties involved in the development of tourism and hospitality should engage all available potentials (personnel and material) in the direction of promoting tourism in Kosovo. Opportunities for revitalization of this sector exist, but it should be seen only as a long-term process.

Tourism in Kosovo needs urgent joint measures at all levels. These measures should be directed towards the full, if not partial overcoming of the causes that contributed to the creation of such a situation.

The Republic of Kosovo pays special attention to tourism and catering due to the climatic conditions and nature that can be used for the development and promotion of tourism. Exactly tourism and catering are in mutual relationship, because where there is a tourist product there should be a hotel or other type of accommodation for guests.

What is a real problem in the development of tourism in general in our country is the lack of official data and information from a statistical point of view? This is especially a problem due to the lack of cooperation or misunderstanding between several government institutions and agencies, because in some cases not all entities in the field of tourism are taken into account, which have an economic effect, such as cultural activities (festivals and events). This is exactly what happened during our entire research, which we have already mentioned in the section on restrictions on research.

Namely, within this research, 21 ministries of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo were included (submitted an online questionnaire consisting of 15 questions, but we received a return answer regarding the questionnaire from 16 ministries), then 38 municipalities on the entire territory of the Republic of Kosovo (an online questionnaire consisting of 20 questions was submitted, but we received a feedback from 31 municipalities) and 468 entities from the private sector (254 hotels, 209 travel agencies and 5 travel associations) and an online questionnaire was submitted to these private entities, 26 questions, but we received feedback from 143 hotels, 112 travel agencies and 2 travel associations.

Regarding the research at the ministries, we came to the following conclusions:

- only one surveyed ministry has legal competence in the field of tourism and catering, and that is the Ministry of Trade and Industry,

- this ministry has a certain structure of organizing work in the field of tourism, and the name is "Tourism Division",
- the largest percentage of ministries would like to have certain competencies in the field of tourism (75% answered in the affirmative),
- within that competent ministry there are 2 to 10 employees working in tourism (according to the data from the Ministry of Trade and Industry, the Tourism Division employs 4 people),
- only 2 ministries did not participate in projects in the field of tourism, while 14 ministries were involved in such activity,
- in terms of mutual cooperation between the ministries, almost 2/3 of them cooperate, and most of the surveyed ministries evaluate the degree of mutual cooperation with the highest grade,
- over 87% of the surveyed ministries proposed certain measures for tourism development in Kosovo, but in terms of decision-making, almost such a percentage of responses were given in the direction of the fact that they did not propose decisions for tourism development in this country,
- the measures taken and / or the decisions taken arose from the laws and / or bylaws only for a few ministries, assuming that they have some competence in tourism, directly or indirectly,
- regarding the measures and decisions adopted by the ministries, it is noted that most of them refer to the protection and preservation of the environment, and then to information technology and trade and security and safety. Other more important areas are lagging behind in taking measures and decisions such as: marketing and promotion, domestic and foreign investment, traffic infrastructure and education and science,
- all ministries implement the proposed measures and decisions according to a predetermined plan of realization, and the level of realization is usually assessed with a score of "6", which we consider to be satisfactory and the answers are really honest and responsible.

Regarding the research in the municipalities, we came to the following conclusions:

- all municipalities have certain legal competencies in the field of tourism and catering,

- only seven municipalities have a tourism sector, while 4 municipalities have departments in their structure of organizing work in the field of tourism, and the largest percentage of municipalities have one employee who has competencies in the field of tourism and / or catering, while 7 municipalities have up to ten employees in the sector or department of tourism,
- over 1/3 of the surveyed municipalities have a strategy for tourism development or a similar document in the field of tourism, while about 2/3 of them do not have a tourism strategy,
- only 7 municipalities have a special budget for tourism development, while the rest of the municipalities do not have such a budget, and over 77% of municipalities have less than 1% financial resources that are reserved for tourism development and only 7 municipalities have a budget of up to 5% of the total budget of the municipality,
- most of the municipalities, the funds intended for tourism are spent on improving and promoting ICT, marketing, promotion and human resources, and less for infrastructure, subsidies and other purposes,
- more than 2/3 of the municipalities cooperate with the central government institutions for tourism projects, and over 45% of the surveyed municipalities cooperate with each other. The percentage of cooperation between municipalities and private entities in the field of tourism is very high and is 90%, and about 71% of the surveyed municipalities cooperate with international organizations in the field of tourism.
- about 1/3 of the surveyed municipalities have proposed measures and have made certain decisions for the development of tourism in the municipality, and 80% of those municipalities believe that their proposals for taking measures and decision-making were not accepted by the central government.
- all municipalities claim that the councils of those municipalities take measures and decisions, most of the municipalities have involved the local community in making measures and decisions for tourism and have taken into account the proposals of the local community,
- only 45% of the surveyed municipalities implement the measures and decisions they make and 35% of these municipalities believe that the measures and decisions they make have a positive effect on the development of tourism, and the assessment of the level of implementation of measures / decisions is " 6 ".

Regarding the research with the private entities in the field of tourism and catering, we came to the following conclusions:

- the largest number of respondents are aged 26 to 40 years (about 40% of respondents), dominated by the number of males (about 66%) over females (over 34%), and 11 % of the respondents have primary education, over 13% have completed secondary education, and the remaining 75% of the respondents have completed higher education,
- up to 10 years of work experience have about 71% of all respondents, and 21% of respondents have more work experience, while 60% of respondents have 2 to 10 employees in their company,
- over 11% of the surveyed companies work during the season, but most of them, about 89%, work throughout the year, and 74% do not say whether they are categorized, i.e. licensed by law and even 64% did not answer whether meet the minimum technical requirements and standards in the operation of the company,
- about 2/3 of these entities consider that there are up to 5 laws that regulate their activity, and 49% of them are familiar with the measures and / or decisions adopted by government institutions, while 61% of the surveyed entities answered that are familiar with the measures and decisions adopted by the municipality,
- about 22% of the respondents think that the measures and decisions of the government have a positive effect on the performance of their companies, and about 28% of the respondents answered negatively, while the remaining 51% answered that they have neither positive nor negative effects.
- over 80% of the surveyees answered that the proposed measures and decisions have a positive impact, and such impact can be assessed with a score of "4", and over 70% of the surveyed entities answered that the proposed measures and decisions have a negative impact and are assessed with highest grade "5",
- The aspect that most influences the work of these entities, as measures and decisions adopted by the government, is the inspection, then the financial operations, employment contracts, the application of laws and taxes and fees,
- Only 10% of the surveyees answered that the central authorities help to improve the working conditions of their companies, and 49% of them think that the municipal authorities help in improving the working conditions,

- over 86% of the respondents did not participate in the preparation or adoption of a certain measure for tourism development, while 56% of them cooperated with other entities in making measures and decisions in the field of tourism, about 74% of these entities assess such cooperation with a score of "7",
- 34% of the surveyees agree for the fact that the measures and decisions can help in the development of tourism, 25% of the respondents are for "need to change" and over 20% believe that these measures can not help in the development of tourism,
- the measures that need to be amended, supplemented or new to be adopted, refer to the part of the tourism and catering activity, such as: obligations of the municipal bodies responsible for tourism, tax relief, penal provisions and traffic infrastructure,
- almost 51% of the surveyees are determined to expand their business, if the measures and decisions that would help in the development of tourism will affect or will help to improve the quality of their products and services,
- almost 1/3 of the surveyed entities have a strategy for improving and advancing the performance of their company, and 2/3 answered this question negatively.

According to the research, we can say that government measures and decisions do not help enough in the direction of tourism development, those measures and decisions are insufficient due to the fact that only one ministry is responsible for tourism, and other ministries do not take such measures and do not make such decisions.

The measures and decisions of the government are not created in cooperation with the municipalities and private entities from the tourism sector, and the mutual cooperation between the ministries is not at a satisfactory level and they are not coordinated in that direction.

However, the implementation of government measures and decisions that will help solve certain problems and / or improve certain conditions in tourism, and where all stakeholders will be involved, is indeed an important factor in the development of tourism in Kosovo, and the country, as a tourist destination, will be able to enter the international tourist markets more competitively.

Government measures and decisions should arise, above all, from the vision for tourism development, and then from plans with specific activities and time frames for the realization of those plans and activities. Such a vision, along with plans and activities, is the basis for creating a long-term strategy.

Namely, according to the research, we could notice that there is no national strategy for tourism development, only a small part of the municipalities have such a strategy or similar document, the number of private entities in the field of tourism is even smaller.

From the conducted research we learned that there is a relatively good cooperation between all parties involved in the tourism sector, the level of cooperation must grow even more so that better quality measures and decisions can be made, prepared by all participants, and which can then be realized more effectively and more successfully.

The measures and decisions taken by government institutions, as well as by local authorities, are in accordance with the legal provisions and other rules and standards in the field of tourism, as they must derive from the legal provisions of the specific laws governing this matter, and in fact both the ministries and the municipalities work in accordance with the laws.

The survey found out that the measures and decisions were in line with the law, but the parties involved in the study proposed changes, additions, corrections, and even new measures and decisions that are better than the previous ones, which will help in the development and improvement of work, especially private entities.

In order for Kosovo, as a tourist destination, to provide a more competitive place in the tourist market, especially in the regional market, as a country, it must share a vision, goals and values, which will be guaranteed by measures, decisions, solutions, project proposals or in general, through legal and bylaws, in accordance with the principles of sustainable development of tourism, because the path to world trends in tourism should be based on commitment, enthusiasm, efficiency for better business, respect for the law and better enabling sharing and sharing good practices, especially with those in neighboring countries.

The model we want to create should be a model where a new culture is presented, the application of social responsibility and achieving a recognizable tourist image and gaining a competitive advantage in the market. That model should contain all the positive experiences, practices and recommendations from neighboring and countries in the region. All this should be a factor for growth and development of tourism in the country, as all citizens want.

Kosovo's place as a tourist destination is in the region, along with neighboring countries and other European countries as the most important tourist region in the world. Kosovo is a small country, but with great natural and historical-cultural resources and values that can help raise the level of tourism development. The future of Kosovo's tourism development is in Europe.