



EUROPEAN UNION

# Conference

## Conference

**in support  
of tourism  
development  
in Bosnia  
and Herzegovina**



Lessons learned  
and new perspectives

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# **Conference in support of tourism development in BiH**

*Sarajevo 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2008*

**LESSONS LEARNED AND NEW PERSPECTIVES**

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*A few introductory words...*

It goes without saying that **Tourism** is a major source of income for millions of people in Europe and abroad. Nevertheless, it is much more than just an economic sector as it connects people, 'erases' boundaries by improving understanding between nations and cultures thus contributing to their unity in diversity – a signpost to follow on the path to European Union.

When talking about sustainability of **Tourism**, it means preserving and enriching the cultural and natural heritage of our world-wide community, reinforcing contributions of this dynamic industry to economic growth and jobs creation, improving local development by investing in infrastructure for the development of tourism. For all these and many other reasons, tourism merits our care and attention as well as political support.

As we can see in practice, **Tourism** has taken a leading role in sustainable economic development for entire regions. In order to maintain and support such trends, this year's World Tourism Day was celebrated in Europe in line with the slogan "tourism enriches", calling for reinforced partnerships amongst all **Tourism** stakeholders by promoting competitiveness and growth.

These days, **Tourism** perspectives and demands in Europe and world wide are vast and challenging with growing external competition, increasing consumer needs for more specialised tourism and calls for more viable and environmentally friendly practices.

Bosnia and Herzegovina, *a land of breath-taking natural beauties and ever lasting historical and cultural heritage*, committed to the *EU family* accession, celebrated the World Tourism Day by organising a *Conference to support tourism development in Bosnia and Herzegovina*. This was a result of an initiative of local authorities of Bosnia and Herzegovina from the state, entity and Brčko District levels, led by the Ministry of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations of BiH and the European Commission Delegation to Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The European Commission Delegation to BiH supported organisation of this Conference with technical assistance mobilised under the EU funded project - *EU Training and Consultancy (EU TAC)*, worth 1.5 million € that has been working for more than 2.5 years on increasing competitiveness and capacity building of the SME sector in BiH. It is, therefore, to express gratitude to the project staff that worked on implementation of this project and provided professional and high-quality support in organisation of this Conference.



This Conference gathered stakeholders from all over the country and a variety of local and international counterparts who disseminated a strong message:

- *what this country possesses* - impressive opportunities and resources which this country has in abundance,
- *what needs to be improved* - more consolidated legal, policy planning and strategic framework, to ensure more harmonised marketing and promotion of BiH's tourism assets, systematic development of appropriate tourism infrastructure, upgraded statistics and education in the sector,
- *what is possible to make sustainable in the current milieu* - best practices, witnessing how an idea can be transformed into a project, implemented in practice and maintained as a viable structure,
- *what needs to be done* – all the relevant authorities need to agree on a common approach to address identified weaknesses that hinder the development of the sector
- As Bosnia and Herzegovina moves closer to EU integration, it is of crucial importance that BiH accelerate legislative and policy reform in-line with EU requirements and best practices. This would also ensure a positive impact on the country's tourism industry development, competitiveness and economic growth.
- In days to come, there is no doubt that all stakeholders will continue supporting this country in addressing the identified priorities, but the engine key needs to be 'turned on' by a strong, decisive move of all the government stakeholders of this country and fuelled by the private sector and civil society.
- The EC Delegation expects some concrete actions to be taken after the Conference that are *progress-oriented and action plan-backed up measures*, that will lay the foundations for future progress related initiatives in the BiH tourism sector as it moves towards the EU entrance gate...

## 1. “EXTRACTS FROM OPENING SPEECHES .....”



**“Let’s grab the opportunity for the development of Bosnia and Herzegovina together!”**

*Tarik Sadović, Deputy Chairman of the Council of Ministers BiH/ BiH Minister of civil affairs*

“... I sincerely hope that we shall overcome the estimations of the World Trade Organisation (it is expected that travel and tourism in BiH in the period 2006-2015 will have a realistic annual growth of 5.2%) by higher quality of organisation, legal and institutional building of the tourism sector.

On the occasion of celebrating the World Tourism Day, the Tourism Working Group in Bosnia and Herzegovina has for the second consecutive year mobilised and organised the entire tourism structure pursuing the advancement of tourism and generation of positive effects on the overall economic trends in BiH.

This Conference shows the desire for united action of the tourism structure in BiH, and identifies key needs for tourism improvement, aiming at building a more efficient system of action.

The today's conference is an example of a positive approach and joint action of all stakeholders in tourism, and it deserves recognition and support of the BiH Council of Ministers.

I wish a happy World Tourism Day to all tourism workers and organisations, wishing them to achieve even better results in the upcoming period.

### *Short report Priorities:*

- *Initiating the process of drafting the Tourism Development Strategy;*
- *Legal and institutional building of BiH tourism and its harmonisation with European standards;*
- *Establishing a more favourable environment for the private sector development within tourism;*
- *Internationalisation of BiH tourism and overcoming partial actions which restrict tourism on the local scale;*
- *Improving the image of Bosnia and Herzegovina by representative tourism presentation in international tourism markets.*

***“What makes BiH unique as tourist destination is this mixture between the cultural and natural heritage of the country”***

***Dimitris Kourkoulas, Ambassador and Head of Delegation of the European Commission to Bosnia and Herzegovina***



*„It is indeed pleasure to witness this gathering of relevant local and international stakeholders in their efforts to find more effective measures to promote tourism in BiH.*

*Our support has so far resulted in 60 projects in support of SME and tourism development with a total value of over 10 million €. Out of these, there were 19 tourism projects worth approximately 3 million €, aiming at creating employment in tourism sector by improving competitiveness of the sector by developing new tourism offers and improving human resources skills. All 60 projects were implemented by local NGO's and/or tourism associations.*

*The official statistics confirm that tourism is one of the fastest growing sectors in BiH. Given that importance of tourism sector in the overall economic development, we, the European Commission intend to continue to target priorities to support the development of the sector.*

*What makes BiH unique as tourist destination is this mixture between the cultural and natural heritage of the country. Also, the extensive natural resources of the country give it a clear competitive advantage in the area of eco-tourism.*

*For us, the European Commission, this Conference is an excellent example that this country in spite of problems and differences, can nevertheless progress and build a better future and we are here to assist you in this endeavour.”*



**“Enjoy what the nature gave us and what we inherited from our ancestors”**

**Mladen Zirojević**, Minister of Foreign Trade and Economic Relations BiH

*“Tourism has been recognised as a promising economic activity and is rightfully seen as a development opportunity of BiH. Our plan is to point out the key priorities and needs for this sector improvement. This is definitely a chance to emphasise positive achievements in tourist industry and define the guidelines for actions in the future.*

*We will try to improve the organisation and regulations in the tourism sector in line with the current legal framework, and to coordinate the level of joint activities respecting the current legal framework, in accordance with our commitment to the European Union.*

[www.mvteo.gov.ba](http://www.mvteo.gov.ba)

**“BiH – a beautiful country with rich history, built on the tradition of various cultures”**

**Nevenko Herceg**, FBiH Minister of Environment and Tourism

*“... The overall impact on the entire economic system of a country depends on the supply, content and quality of the tourism product itself and direct touristic services on one hand, and to what extent the remaining economy of the country is able to ensure the products and services within tourism consumption, on the other.”*

*Our goal is to protect our natural and cultural heritage through the distinctive tourism product on one hand, and provide controlled use of the total economic benefits, on the other.”*

*Creating a positive image of Bosnia and Herzegovina is a task for all levels of authority, non-governmental sector, experts and each citizen.”*

[www.fmoit.gov.ba](http://www.fmoit.gov.ba)



*Basic tourism resources in Bosnia and Herzegovina:*

- *affluent and highly valued environmental space*
- *rich historic heritage and*
- *co-existence of cultures*



***"Tourism has to hold the second or third place in the list of economic potential of BiH"***

**Predrag Gluhaković**, RS Minister of Trade and Tourism

*"In the year 2009, we expect to have the Tourism Development Strategy in the Republic of Srpska, which should form the so-called constitution in tourism, and we have to draft three master plans. I have witnessed at several international fairs that we have ample capacities, plenty beautiful things to show the world, but we are afraid to show what we have. We are shy when it comes to playing on the international scene."*

*We have to talk about the institution called tourism at the highest level. Unless we launch this machinery to have the tourism hold the second or third place on the list of economic potentials, that wheel will turn slowly.*

*We want BiH, the entities and the Brčko District to be distinguishable. For what we have, we must admit no one in our region has. That is why I want this conference to work, and its conclusions to be binding."*

[www.vladars.net](http://www.vladars.net)



***"Our natural heritage is potential for tourism"***

**Đuro Tankosić**, Chief Coordinator of the Brčko District Government

*The fact is that we, in Brčko District, don't have impressive historic heritage, but we have natural heritage that constitutes the potential for tourism. We are aware that a long way is ahead of us, that it will take extensive funding to become a tourist destination. That's why it is most important to protect our resource at this stage.*

*Unless we protect the resources, once we get the opportunity to work in that area, it will be impossible to develop anything if our resources aren't protected, as is the case in some regions in Bosnia and Herzegovina. That's why we are taking the conclusions of this Conference as a very serious basis for what we intend to do in the future.*

[www.bdcentral.net](http://www.bdcentral.net)

## 2. TOURISM IN BiH – INTERDISCIPLINARY ANALYSIS

### 2.1. *Needs Assessment Report in tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina*

The European Commission has invested considerable funding into development and improvement of the tourism sector through co-financing grants for regional economic development projects proposed and implemented by local partners in this area.

In order to tailor its support in accordance with the priorities of the country, last year the European Commission committed 50,000 € for an assessment to identify the needs in the tourism sector. This resulted in a mapping report that provided EC with strategic guidelines and recommendations for channelling EU assistance, through the new financial instrument IPA.

Report was completed and approved by the appropriate BiH and international stakeholders and counterparts in December 2007.

*The challenges faced were vast as:*

- The statistics understate the money spent directly in the tourism sector and the many cross sectors that it supports;
- Country's multiple layers of administration and legislation, and the lack of reinforced state level coordination;
- Lack of a coordinated national tourism policy and strategy;
- Effectiveness and productivity of institutional relationships;
- Fragmented regulatory framework and approach to tourism development and control;
- An inconsistent approach to classification and grading of tourism operations, particularly accommodation establishments;
- A relatively narrow product base with comparatively few drivers of demand;
- Inadequate promotion and levels of investment in the tourism product;
- Lack of an overall marketing and promotion strategy for BiH as a whole;
- Need to harmonize existing legislation with EU tourism-related rules and regulations;

*However, there were much impressive potential identified in the sector:*

- Synergy between the cultural and natural heritage of the country;
- The country's extensive natural resources give it a clear competitive advantage in the eco-tourism sector. This combination, and the fact that 65 percent of the population is rural, gives BiH the potential to become the region's leading eco-tourism destination.
- The marks left by the various cultures, make BiH a unique cultural heritage destination. People need to see the strengths in this diversity and not the differences in order to avoid possible negative effects on tourism;

***"Your country must really be admired for its beauty and its rich cultural heritage."***

*Dr. Johan Hesse, First Secretary and Head of Operational Section for Economic Reform and Natural Resources of the Delegation of the European Commission to BiH*

- Further developing a Bosnian identity that embraces the idea of a multi-ethnic society whilst still preserving and respecting the various ethnic groups that call BiH their homeland;
- Highland culture that continues to maintain traditional shepherd lifestyles is a great asset for further developing rural/village tourism as well as adding value to BiH's great potential as an exclusive eco-tourism destination;
- Film and music both have received international recognition for their quality and appeal. The creative industry in BiH should be used not only as a branding tool, but as a catalyst to providing quality content whilst visiting the country.

*In the end, what has become evident is that:*

- Capabilities of the BiH tourism support structure need to be strengthened in order to be better able to meet the demands of tourists and international tour operators and to lay the foundations for the development of a sustainable tourism industry in preparation for EU membership.
- This contribution will be expressed in terms of increased visitor expenditure, increased foreign exchange earnings from tourism, increased direct and indirect tourism-related employment, higher tax revenues for government, an increased level of investment in the tourism sector and an increase in the tourism sector's contribution to GDP. These economic benefits will also contribute to poverty reduction.
- There are other anticipated benefits include improved integration of tourism with general development plans, increased investment in infrastructure and facilities, the opportunity to acquire higher skills, closer co-operation and integration between the public and private sectors, communities and civil society, enhanced environmental awareness and protection, and increased opportunities for community-based economic development.

*"The European Commission intends to continue supporting this country in meeting the requirements and priorities identified, but the engine key needs to be 'turned on' by a strong, decisive move of all the stakeholders in this country and then it needs to be fuelled by the private sector and civil society."*

## **2.2. LEGAL FRAMEWORK IN BiH TOURISM**

*John Doves, Legal Expert – International Travel Law Consultant*

If the rule of law is the foundation of a democratic society, then each segment of life should be regulated in an efficient and progressive way and reflect the actual needs of the society, and at the same time lean on the actual capacities, in order to be regulated in the best possible way, and in order to provide the best for all its users.

That is why it is extremely important to revise the legal framework which defines the tourism sector in BiH, inspired by the EU policies, in order to have the process of bringing it in line with the European standards develop as simply as possible.

This section provides a short overview of weaknesses of the current legal framework in BiH and tourism sector, as well as the relevant recommendations that should be taken into account in passing new legal provisions in this sector.

***Current legal framework is obsolete, incomplete, and does not stimulate tourism development or promote partnership.***

Analysing the legal framework regulating the field of tourism in BiH, several key conclusions emerge, among them being the one referring to the need of forming a stronger institutional framework. All the more so, given that the current legal framework is undefined and leaves ample space for non-transparency. Furthermore, this legal framework abounds in inadequate regulations for quality management and development. Apart from this, tourist boards do not reflect popular trends as is defined by the Report of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation on the role of the National Tourism Administrations.

It can be concluded from the aforementioned that the new Act should offer the opportunity to the new National Tourism Administration to have a strategic and facilitating role. Regulating the field of tourism service providers and tourism transactions must also be defined in an adequate manner.

***The new Tourism Act should be based on the National Tourism Strategy***

Analysing the current legal framework in tourism, and considering the necessity of defining new legal regulations that would regulate this field in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the new Tourism Act is to reflect not only the requirements of the private sector, but also to regulate public-private sector relationships, so as to enable their development in a harmonious correlation.

It is further necessary for the new Tourism Act, within the complex structure, to find a simpler way of communication and system of relationships linking various levels of authorities responsible for the field of tourism, as well as to coordinate the relationships between state and local tourism institutions.

**Applicable legal framework DOES NOT:**

- Provide the institutional and regulatory framework for sound government and for the creation of a positive investment environment.
- Comply with the principles of natural justice.
- Reflect current practice.
- Reflect international standards.
- Provide the framework necessary for the pursuit of a national strategy for tourism.
- Provide a sound framework for public-private sector cooperation.

**Drafting the new Tourism Act – Basic Principles**

Starting from the fact that the new Act should be in line with the constitutional and legal framework in Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as that it should lay foundation and support to tourism development in BiH, while drafting the new Act, one must be guided by the following principles:

- Form the structures to support the private sector
- Clearly define the tourism industry
- Update the legal procedures for entrepreneurship in tourism
- Stimulate the development of professional standards
- Bring it in line with the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism of the UN World Tourism Organisation

### 2.3. Figures serving the development of tourism in BiH

*Maida Hasanbegović, Statistics Agency of Bosnia and Herzegovina*

Statistics provide the foundation in each sector for a clear, objective analysis of specific problems, further giving a picture based on facts, illustrated with figures. Only on the basis of such data can one have a full insight into the situation of a specific area, and accordingly create reasonable, meaningful strategies and action plans in order to improve the situation.

The main goal and subject of the research in tourism statistics

- Tourism as the means of stimulating the development of national economy
- Capacity and occupancy rate of tourism accommodation
- Tourism demand
- Satellite tourism as the subject of research in tourism statistics

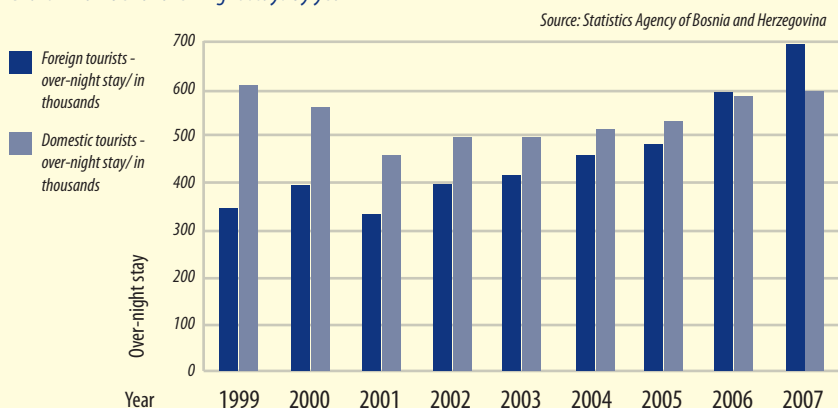
As it was mentioned in the Needs Assessment Report in tourism sector in BiH, the lack of inadequate statistics in tourism provides for an unrealistic picture of the amount of money spent directly in the tourism sector, as well as in many other sectors it is linked to. This is why it is not possible to define with great reliability the key problems in this area, or have an insight into all positive developments that happen after certain affirmative actions.

Having this in mind, it becomes necessary to regulate the field of statistics in tourism through legal frameworks that will be in compliance with international regulations, as well as to have regulations both at the state and entity levels.

The notion of “*accommodation statistics*” in this field is also very important, whose main goal and subject of research is to provide information required for measuring seasonal impact of supply and demand of tourism accommodation capacity.

Generally, it is necessary to insist on defining the mechanisms that will facilitate the collection of most precise qualitative and quantitative data based on which it will be possible to further develop the specific segments in the field of tourism. It is also necessary to make further adjustments with the recommendations of EUROSTAT (*EUROSTAT is the Statistical Office of the European Communities. Its task is to provide the European Union with statistics at European level.*).

*Chart – number of over-night stays by year*



## 2.4. Commission to preserve national monuments of Bosnia and Herzegovina

**Mirela Mulalić-Handan**, Executive Officer of the Commission to Preserve National Monuments of BiH

The Commission to Preserve National Monuments in BiH has been working diligently to promote the beauty of its rich historic heritage, and nominate those properties for the World Heritage List.

Acting in accordance with its mission and mandate, the Commission has implemented projects such as the **Herzegovina** project (EU RED –

*Integrated and active sustainable protection of heritage in Bosnia and Herzegovina and preservation of identity of the state of Bosnia and Herzegovina.*

Implementation of Annex 8 of the General Framework for Peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina



Protection, Presentation and Integration of the Cultural, Historical and Natural Heritage into the Tourism Sector of Herzegovina) and **Blagaj** (Support to Tourism Development in Blagaj via Sustainable Management of Natural, Historic and Cultural Heritage There).

The project of nominating the cultural property – historic urban area of Jajce for the World Heritage List bears specific importance.

**Cultural heritage encompasses delicate properties, whose decay can go slowly or quickly, which is the result of the action of human and natural factors.**

*The old town nucleus surrounding the Old Bridge of Mostar and the Mehmed Pasha Sokolović Bridge of Višegrad are the sights which proudly represent Bosnia and Herzegovina on the UNESCO World Heritage List.*



***How can you contribute to the preservation of this heritage for the future generations?***

- Accept certain bans (don't touch, don't take photos, don't run) or restrictions (closing up certain places, obligatory direction of movement, presenting the works of art in rotation, limited number of visitors, etc.).
- Bear in mind that any touching, be it even the most harmless one, or gentle shaking can cause damage if repeated by 1000, 10,000 or 100,000 people.
- When you are in a closed and filled up space, such as a tomb, chapel with frescoes or *turbe* (tomb-tower), pay attention to your rucksack: you might brush against the walls and damage the frescoes.
- Statues, monuments and old walls are not rocky surfaces for climbing on. They have worn out through centuries, they are old and fragile; they could collapse under the weight of your body. Avoid climbing up to their tops to take photos or be taken photos of.
- Resist the temptation of carving your name or expressing your emotions on pillars, monuments, frescoes or *painted walls* at the sites you visit.
- Anyone who removes a cultural property of any kind (a piece of marble, a coin, etc.) opens the window for systemic theft and illicit trade in the works of art. Avoid buying objects of unknown origin and don't try to take them out of the country; you would risk being severely punished in the majority of countries.
- Historic and archaeological sites are not garbage cans. Take your garbage with you!
- Respect the environment of the places that inspire meditation and silence, avoid making noise (shouting, honking, radio noise, mobile telephones, etc.).

***The protection of cultural heritage depends on each and every one of us and concerns us all.***

[www.aneks8komisija.com.ba](http://www.aneks8komisija.com.ba)





## 2.5. BiH as the top brand – everyone pursuing the promotion

*David T. King, Ph.D., Emerging Markets Group*

How many of us know about Coca-Cola, Nike or McDonalds? But, those are brands and it is natural that they are promoted through marketing around the world. But, when you think of, say, Italy, you instantly get the picture of spaghetti, and women would probably think of supreme leather shoes. Or when you think of France, you think of art or sophisticated cuisine. This is not a coincidence. Creating a brand out of a country has long been a serious segment of marketing, and that is why our country should catch up with the world trends.

The USAID Cluster Competitiveness Activity project created the campaign “Enjoy Life”, which presented Bosnia and Herzegovina to the world as the country desirable to live in, in the broadest sense possible. Although this was a praiseworthy project presented to the global public on CNN, we must not and should not stop there.

Defining our country as a top brand, and strategically implementing the target promotion campaigns, is the task of all parts of the society, but above all of the state that should recognise the necessity and importance of such projects and the need for them to be implemented by marketing experts. Only then can we become competitive in the world tourism market where every country has its own specialty offered as the key recipe for an unforgettable experience.

Branding BiH is the process of creating the country *identity* – its *unique personality*, its “*permanent substance*”

Marketing BiH is the process of *promoting* the country and its products for the purpose of *attracting investments and increasing the sale*

*Brand is in the eye of the beholder – it must be **truthful and realistic***

Research made by foreign agencies says that not all is so positive. It shows that there are positive and negative aspects of the Bosnia and Herzegovina brand, such as the current mine problem, political situation, and mediocre quality of services/products. But, more importantly, the awareness of all the things BiH can offer is lacking.

*Hence, positive branding of BiH can be aided by a sound marketing strategy.*

### **Key values of the Bosnia and Herzegovina brand**

#### **Nature**

- Pristine mountains, clean rivers, sea
- Rafting, hiking, skiing, the sun

#### **Culture**

- Archaeology, religion, history
- Architecture

#### **Hospitality**

- Food
- Cafes
- Warmth, humour, charm

### **Strategic marketing framework**

- Identify the main marketing opportunities of BiH tourism
- Plan the way and timeline to use the opportunities in terms of priorities
- Make comparisons to other countries and their best practice
- Assess and select the adequate budget for marketing



### Combination of marketing

For all marketing endeavours to be successful, it is necessary to intensively and continuously use the key support materials at a number of various levels, such as the *Bosnia and Herzegovina web page*, which contains the links to make accommodation or package tour reservations on the Internet, as well as the *online photo gallery* for travel writers and foreign tour operators who would need their trips organised in order to introduce them to the country.

It is necessary to establish good rapport with key foreign media and ensure continuous source of information for them in newsletters and public announcements on current events offered in tourism in our country. Also, it would be advisable to organise a visit of travel writers from various parts of the world to our country, who would serve as a relevant source of information on our country by writing about their experience in their own countries. It would be necessary to engage a *PR agency* to maintain the full picture and positive image of BiH in key foreign markets.

Increasing the number of places and the way of showing the "*Enjoy Life*" video would be some of the activities that would have to be carried out, as well as their distribution at world fairs, like WTM London, ITB Berlin, in addition to the *regional* industrial and consumer fairs.

**It can be concluded from the aforesaid that all segments of the society should take part in the promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina as a brand, in order for the brand to truly be in the eye of the beholder truthful and realistic.**

### 3. TOURISM IN BIH – SUCCESS STORIES

#### 3.1. Towns

Paris – the Eiffel Tower, Rome – the Colosseum, New York – the Empire State Building, these are the first things one thinks of when these cities are mentioned. In order to present the beauty of our country to the world in the manner attractive to the potential tourists and investors, we should take a proud look at our towns and answer the question: What is it that singles this town out from the others?

##### 3.1.1. SARAJEVO – the Eastern Tip of the West – the Western Tip of the East

A number of various notions undoubtedly remind one of the capital of Bosnia and Herzegovina, each of them linked to the specific features of Sarajevo, well known around the world. Apart from its religious and multi-cultural life concept, which is certainly the greatest pride of Sarajevo, you do make a mistake if you also mention the Olympics, and if you like history, you may say that the World War I started here, with the assassination of the Austro-Hungarian heir to the throne Franz Ferdinand by Gavrilo Princip.



If you prefer modern history, you may tell an inquisitive tourist a story of how every August this town becomes the regional centre of film industry because that is the time that, nowadays an extremely influential Sarajevo Film Festival, is held. This festival is the classical example of how an important event can fashion the city's image, producing not only the positive energy, but also bringing in more tourists year in year out. That is the way the popular SFF, not only makes the city the centre of the "seventh art" during the festival days, but also the place where young people want to come, feel the charms of night life, have fun at the festival events and have an unforgettable experience, and most importantly – wish to come back!



The fact is that the city authorities, together with other relevant administrative bodies, should continuously work on profiling Sarajevo as a desirable tourist destination, taking into account, as said in the chapter on branding the country, that whatever projects itself as an image, corresponds to the real picture, because *the brand is in the eye of the beholder – it must be **truthful and realistic***.

### 3.1.2. BIHAĆ – initiator of tourism development within small and medium enterprises

*Amarildo Mulić, Advisor to the Mayor of Bihać Municipality*



Plan for the upcoming period:

- Building a tourist airport in Bihać
- Building the sport and recreation and ski resort Duga Luka on Mt. Plješevica
- Building a thermal continental Riviera based on the facilities of the Banja Gata Spa
- The gas pipeline project in Bihać

The Bihać Municipality has in the past four years created key prerequisites for tourism development, especially its selective forms such as sport and recreation, eco-tourism, hunting tourism, cultural and historic tourism, on the basis of obvious natural and other potentials.

By expert planning and consistent implementation, the Bihać Municipality has in a short period grown from a static and average tourist destination into one of the top tourist destinations in BiH, distinguished by the Una River – a brand of BiH tourism, having increased investments and employment rate in the tourism sector.

The Bihać Municipality has made and now implements the project of forming a unique tourism supply and joint marketing strategy implemented together by all key tourism service providers in Bihać. This municipality has directly supported several business plans in the area of tourism, implemented by young people.

Presently, Bihać is one of the most popular destinations of continental tourism in BiH, with especially developed selective forms such as: sport and recreation dominated by rafting, gliding, parachute jumping, cycling, fishing and hunting, eco-tourism, and cultural and historic tourism.

This example of Bihać municipality can indeed witness how positive can be an impact of a local governance for which tourism, as a strategic guideline, has not just remained at the level of a declarative statement. On the contrary – by creating formal preconditions in a way of improving local infrastructure, building and rehabilitating tourist destinations, Bihać municipality has much contributed to tourism promotion and raising of public awareness of importance of tourism while in case of entrepreneurs, it has raised their interest in new investments.

Amongst results that further support this positive involvement of the local governance and other actors in the tourism sector in Bihać, there is the adoption of the law on the National "Una" Park that is worth of being singled out as such, as by this act, a positive image of the River of Una has been developed, 'imposing' this river as one of tourism brands. All the aforementioned represents the results of well managed action planning in the sector of tourism, being aware of the fact that separate, ad hoc activities can never result in as much of an effect as the synergy of all segments of society can. In order not to remain at this point of achievements made and actions realised so far, Bihać municipality has adopted a clear action plan of further development of tourism including the list of capital projects, which may be taken as an extraordinary positive example to other municipalities in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

[www.bihac.org](http://www.bihac.org)

### 3.1.3. TUZLA – Tourism as the main axis of further town development

**Maid Porobić**, Director of Public Utility Pannonica

Only in the past several years, specific projects implemented in Tuzla have changed its image of the mining and energy centre into an important tourist destination. The future tourism development in the Tuzla Municipality is defined by the document on strategic development of this municipality in the next 10 years through the "Culture" Project, which basically identifies recreation and health, culture and congress tourism as the main directions of developing the tourism of the Tuzla Municipality.



The story of the beginnings of the significant tourism development in Tuzla has started in 2003. The town administration came up with the idea to use its natural resources in the near vicinity of the complex – salty water, aiming at building a water reservoir in the form of a salt lake including medicinal features of the water, functioning as the city's open bathing place. This is how the combination of the natural resources, a human idea and a human hand has created the complex of Pannonic Lakes as the top environmental project unique in South East Europe, the project that will serve for the benefit of the citizens of entire Tuzla, our region and our country.

The capacities of the complex have significantly increased by building the second salt lake, and in late September 2008, salt waterfalls were built too. Next year the tourism supply of the Pannonic Lakes will include the Museum of the Pannonic Sea, Children's Amusement Park and Fitness Facility in the open.

The tourist supply of the city has been broadened by the development of the city nucleus through the implementation of projects regarding pedestrian zones, reconstruction of facades and building city squares.

The complex of Pannonic Lakes with its tourism activities has made a decisive impact on rendering the decision on rewarding the Tuzla Municipality in the selection of the best tourist town in BiH – Golden Rose for the past three seasons, as well as the award Golden Hospitality Crown in the category of nurturing the relationship towards the traditional cultural and historic values of BiH.

Constant increase of the number of local guests and guests from all over our country, developing new facilities in infrastructure and services, responsible management of the Pannonic Lakes and constant support of the wider community, are key objective indicators of successful implementation of the said overall project goal.

### 3.2. Sport – a driving force for tourism

It is not a mystery that sport lovers spend their annual leaves at destinations where they can exercise active holidays, enjoying the wide variety of activities at the chosen destination. In that respect, there are numerous locations that combine sports, climate and other advantages and can be attractive even to the most demanding tourists. The selection of success stories in this field are given below is.

#### 3.2.1. Winter tourism at Kupres - Čajuša

**Zvonko Bagarić**, Director, SKI Centre Čajuša



The sports and recreational centre Čajuša lies at the south-western slopes of Kupres plateau, half way between Sarajevo (150 km) and Split (140 km), at 1250 m altitude. With the mountain and alpine climate of this area dictated by the high altitude, and average annual temperature of 5.7°C, Čajuša has evolved into an attractive touristic and recreational destination.

All contingencies covered, Čajuša offers the complete package for tourists demanding an active winter vacation, who have the opportunity to ski on one of the four ski paths (total length of

13 km) which can be reached by the four ski lifts in the total capacity of 5000 skiers per hour. A ski school has been organised for snow beginners, which completes the winter sports programme. Also, a step further in wishing to find as many as possible advantages at one place, a football field that has been built, with grass maintenance throughout the year, along with the other arrangements, makes Čajuša a desirable destination for preparations of professional sportsmen.

Apart from the complete catering and recreational package, Čajuša offers arrangements that make it prominent in the area of congress tourism, considering the adequate accommodation capacities, that apart from suitable conditions for organisation of seminars and conventions alike, can offer great conditions for the increasingly popular team-building events for organisations wishing to organise informal get-togethers for their employees at attractive locations.

Consequently, Čajuša represents a positive example of transforming an anonymous destination into an attractive touristic environment by means of a well-planned tourist and catering vision, through exploitation of natural strengths and favourable geographic location, thus contributing to the local community development.

[www.adriaski.net](http://www.adriaski.net)



### 3.2.2. Nature-triggered adrenalin– rafting

**Aleksandar Pastir**, *President of the BiH Rafting Association*

Water sport lovers in Bosnia and Herzegovina will, for sure, have places where to enjoy the ideal combination of their favourite sport and the unique natural environment. Having recognised the potential for development of sports tourism, the enthusiasts of the Rafting Club Canyon from Banja Luka will organise the 2009 World Rafting Championship, which will be the greatest sporting event in our country for that year. This event will make a threefold effect for promotion of Bosnia and Herzegovina in sports, environmental and tourism aspect.



Sports aspect lies in the fact that the preparations and competition would be attended by teams from 50 countries, which, as for this sport, will make Bosnia and Herzegovina the most renowned destination in Europe in the concentrated period of time. Environmental aspect naturally ensues from the promotion of healthy living, the concept of “active” holiday, as well as preservation of the environment. This event will present the tourism aspect with the special dimension through the fact that along with competitors, Bosnia and Herzegovina would be visited by sponsor representatives, that BiH would find place on the maps of touristic and adventure guides, whereas tour operator owners and representatives would include our country into their packages.

The entire organisation of the 2009 World Rafting Championship represents the actual platform for development of adventure travel in our country. Although this form of tourism only started developing in the world, it becomes increasingly popular, which is supported by the fact that it does not require large initial investments. Also, the natural resources of BiH speak in favour of the diversity of potentials for development of this interesting sports and tourism industry. Therefore, adventure travel fair would be organised in Banja Luka in order to exchange experiences and create positive energy for exploitation of the opportunity for tourism development in Bosnia and Herzegovina through this sector.

[www.2009wrc.com](http://www.2009wrc.com)

### 3.3. Authentic places

Being different, special, offering something that no one else can offer is something that separates tourist destinations from the similar ones. Bosnia and Herzegovina offers a wide variety of authentic elements, since every area features certain characteristics that comprise potential for tourism development that can be offered only here. Success stories given below feature projects that have something that others do not and base their tourist arrangements on that.

### 3.3.1. Wine Route of Bosnia and Herzegovina

*Krešimir Miličević, Bosnia and Herzegovina Wine Route Project Coordinator*



The Project Wine Route of Bosnia and Herzegovina was implemented by the HNC Tourist Organisation and the Herzegovina Vineyards and Wine Producers Association in the period from December 2005 to April 2007. The project was funded by the EU (€ 200,000) and the HNC Tourist Organisation (€ 20,000). The utmost goal of this project was to create the new image of Herzegovina, as a tourist region where wine is produced from authentic varieties Žilavka and Blatina. Similarly, by creating this tourist product, the new form of sales of Herzegovina wines is created, thus encouraging agricultural development, agro-tourism and tourism in general at the area of Herzegovina.

**First activity** – to define elements of package (22 wine cellars and wine collections, restaurants, hotels, museums and galleries, old forts, rivers, lakes, water falls, traditional cuisine, wine and other events).

**Second activity** – to make the marketing assessment and create the marketing concept

**Third activity** – to demarcation of the wine road

**Fourth activity** – to publish experiences generated by project implementation

#### **Tourist product Wine Route of Herzegovina**

Following the project implementation, Herzegovina, and Bosnia and Herzegovina as a whole, got probably the most interesting regional tourist product. It covered all operational attractions of Herzegovina. As such, this tourist product is already recognisable at the market. It is assessed that such products offer the best results in medium-term period whereas they reach the peak in about ten years.

#### **Positive (obvious) impacts**

- Wine producers observed new opportunities in the agritourism
- Raising awareness on importance of vineyards and tourism
- Herzegovina kras is cultivated and transformed into agricultural land
- Increase of investments into cellars
- Beginnings of building accommodation capacities

The wine road is the example of how special forms of tourism can be created in this area. Activities of some associations and state organisations at the area of Herzegovina, that are currently trying to develop some other forms of tourism, speak in favour of the positive impact of the Herzegovina Wine Route Project on the region.

[www.vinskacesta.ba](http://www.vinskacesta.ba)



### 3.3.2. Etno-Village Stanišići

**Boris Stanišić**, Director of Etno-Village Stanisić

*The Etno-Village Stanišići, being out of the present time and place, takes us back to our ancestors and the nature, incites our admiration for the simplicity of living in the past. Eyes and soul are at rest here, a man becomes more dignified, but also prudent while listening to gurgle of the crook and buzz of the windmill.*

The Etno Village “Stanišići” was established in 2003. Its founder, Boris Stanišić, has travelled for several years around the villages of central Bosnia searching for old houses and objects that would capture the image of one time and culture of living from the late 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The result of that is the authentic mountainous village in the middle of Semberija plain.

There are two parts of the village. The one presenting the secular life is a wood-built. It consists of wooden houses – cottages with furniture that belonged there for centuries. The houses are connected by stone-paved paths, with two lakes in the middle of the village. The other part presents the spiritual side and medieval stone-built architecture, that actually represents the ensemble of replicas of historical and religious significance.



Along with the combined catering and accommodation capacities (accommodation is possible in either the modern hotel or etno-houses), and wishing to offer the full ambience to its visitors, there are additional activities and programmes offered by the etno-village. Souvenir shop offers unique wooden products, as well as antique objects produced many years ago. The etno-village organises rides by hackney carriages or hunting sleds. Also, there are workshops of antique crafts and a special possibility of organising celebrations of Orthodox religious holidays with the special programme.

Bearing in mind the specific offer of the etno-village Stanišić, it seems natural that this village has already got the award the Gold Tourist Rose for 2008. It is only one of the several awards, which encouraged other visionaries to make a connection of a good idea, creative content and to turn it into a tourist attraction that lures tourists demanding unique experiences that feature past and authenticity.

## CONCLUSIONS OF THE CONFERENCE

Hamza Ajanović, chairperson of the Working Group for the coordination of activities in the tourism sector in BiH, before presenting the agreed conclusions, gave a brief overview of everything that was said and presented at the Conference. Pointing out that there were numerous positive examples of tourism development in BiH, he especially emphasised the main problem – no Tourism law at the state level, which greatly renders difficult the acquisition of a unique tourism product.

The conclusions presented at the end of the Conference are the following:

1. The tourism sector in Bosnia and Herzegovina, in both entities and the Brčko District, should be regulated in accordance with the European Union directives and brought in line with the standards applied in the European Union;
2. Organisation and regulation of the tourism sector should be developed in line with the positive legal provisions and the level of joint activities should be coordinated, respecting the current legal framework, so that these could contribute to the formation of a single economic space in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which is one of the key priorities of European partnership;
3. Establish an efficient regulatory framework in the tourism sector by strengthening the competencies of the current institutions and defining the competencies of tourism associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina;
4. Ensure efficient and coordinated activities of the tourism structure in Bosnia and Herzegovina, taking into account the following:
  - Current requirements in tourism and finding adequate models to meet them,
  - Ensuring the coordinated rules for functioning of the administration system and tourism sector development, and
  - Harmonization of the future development of the abovementioned system, having in mind the present deficiencies, development plans within Bosnia and Herzegovina, but also the regional and European development plans.
5. Seek a more adequate and efficient organisational form of coordinating the activities in tourism in Bosnia and Herzegovina, with emphasis on defining and brining the priorities in the tourism sector in line with the regulations and standards of the European Union.
6. Conclusion to be forwarded in their agreed form to:
  - The parliamentary assemblies and governments of BiH, entities and Brčko District,
  - Tourism associations in Bosnia and Herzegovina,
  - Vocational associations in the tourism sector in BiH,
  - Delegation of the European Commission to BiH, and
  - International organisations dealing with the field of tourism in BiH.

*Sarajevo, 23 September 2008*