



Study of unused tourism potentials and possibilities of investment in tourism in the cross border area Hungary - Croatia"

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1. INTRODUCTION

Globalisation, technological development and demographic trends increasingly affect changes in Europe, especially those related to the situation on the labour market. Researching and analysing economy, trends on the labour market and social changes as consequences of these trends are therefore of great significance for the population, especially in the cross-border area of Hungary and Croatia.

On July, 1, 2013 Croatia became a member state of the European Union, which implied significant changes in all spheres of Croatian economy, including the tourism sector as well. Besides mass tourism, better known under abbreviation (Sun, Sea, Sand) the last decades were marked by the beginning of diversification on the tourism product and development of new kinds of tourism, such as rural, health, transit tourism, and many others. Unlike Croatia dominated by maritime tourism, Hungary to the great extent develops all forms of continental tourism.

In the present global competitive environment, tourism development should be based on knowledge, innovation and promotion, whereas development of regional cross-border area can be based on mutual development of cross-border tourism as innovative model of tourism development in general. In this respect, cross-border tourism will develop local tourism environment which supports and establishes a portfolio of the regional tourism product and in this way represents an important segment in development of the cross-border area.

„Study of unused tourism potentials and possibilities of investment in tourism in the cross border area Hungary - Croatia“ advances the existing and creates new contents attracting an increasing number of visitors, achieving a larger number of multi-day stays resulting in bigger consumption and overall development.

In this way cross-border tourism:

- Becomes an important segment of economic development and increases its direct contribution to local and regional economy
- Contributes to revitalisation of the overall economy with reference to interdependence of this business activity with the other economic sectors
- Contributes to employment
- Creates new possibilities to production and service sector which contributes to complete and quality logistics of the local and regional market and content of tourism stay
- Encourages additional investments in infrastructure (municipal, sports, catering, cultural, human) thus increasing the quality of life of the local population.

1.1. *PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVE OF THE RESEARCH CARRIED OUT WITHIN THE „INVEST-PRO“ PROJECT*

„INVEST–PRO“ project is implemented within the IPA Hungary-Croatia cross-border cooperation programme 2007 - 2013. Its main objective is to contribute to the increase of economic potential and improvement of life quality in the cross-border area Hungary - Croatia. Lead beneficiary of the project is Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Zala County in cooperation with the other project partners – Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Somogy county, Varaždin development agency - AZRA and Križevci College of Agriculture.

The project aims at researching the potentials for tourism development related to the possible realisation of investments for tourism purposes, as well as getting to know the unused potentials in the targeted research area. By means of supporting the existing and creating new forms of tourism offer, the objective of the project is to initiate the creation of recognizable image of the continental tourism destination of this area.

Target groups achieving direct benefits from this project are:

- unemployed individuals,
- local population, especially women - (it has been observed that women find jobs easier in the tourism sector than in other sectors).
- entrepreneurs from the cross-border area.

Target groups achieving indirect benefits from this project are:

- employers, employees,
- future potential investors,
- destination management organisation (DMO¹),
- visitors from the region who can obtain useful information from the study and data bases
- young citizens, whereas investments carried out within this project indicate direction in choice of career, and
- local self-government units through economic development, professional contacts and tax income.

The objective of the project is to outline advantages and opportunities of tourism development in the analysed cross-border counties, primarily because of their adjacency and connection, based on data obtained from the informants who participated in the research.

¹ Destination Management Organisation.

„INVEST–PRO“ project encompasses numerous activities which include collection of data, implementation of research activities in the analysed area, data processing in the form of a study, as well as other coordinated activities of the project partners.

1.2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

The research was carried by means of a survey questionnaire (annex 5) which was compiled solely for this purpose on the representative sample of entrepreneurs and citizens of the residential area, taking into account a proportional number of informants in each analysed county, which amounted to the total of 313 informants.

During May, June and July 2013 the informants were included in the administration of the survey, which was, according to availability of informants, carried out by means of the procedure which included:

- a) group survey method,
- b) individual survey method, or
- c) e-mail survey

Survey administrators first contacted the informants and presented in brief project objectives. Then they described the method of carrying out the research and structure of questions in the survey, as well as forms of providing answers to individual questions. Furthermore, the survey administrators emphasized the importance of informants' participation in survey administration, pointing out that there are no right or wrong answers. What matters are the informants' attitudes, thoughts and suggestions regarding the research topic.

This resulted in high percentage of informants who were willing to participate in the survey and thus contributed to the research topic.

In the initial phase the informants participated in the group survey, which was cost-effective and quick, and in the final phase the informants answered the questions via e-mail or individual „face-to-face“ survey, which was time-consuming and required field research.

Collected answers were relevant for the interpretation due to good instructions provided to the informants.

Data collected on similar informant sample in Varaždin county, as well as Somogy county and Zala county were subsequently forwarded in digital form on the CD to research team in Koprivnica-Križevci county (Križevci College of Agriculture). Control survey was carried out and it was established that the results were suitable for further analysis.

The survey questionnaire consisted of 20 opened and closed questions. The informants answered the closed questions simply by marking one or several selected answers (according to instructions specified for each question), whereas in some questions they were

asked to rank the answers according to their importance. The informants answered the opened questions with their own words, but it was essential to list at least three answers to some of the questions asked in the survey.

The survey questionnaire consisted of four parts:

- a) Demographic questions
- b) Research related to the image of the region
- c) Tourism potential in the region - current state
- d) Tourism potential in the region – plans.

Answers to closed questions were processed by means of standard statistical techniques for analysis of distribution regarding frequencies, percentages and mean values and the results were presented in tables and graphic forms for all informant groups, i.e. sections where higher deviations were observed were presented separately for each informant group. Opened questions were grouped around the joint semantic basis and were interpreted by means of the qualitative method.

Analysed data was explained in the study and it sums up the opinion of local citizens and entrepreneurs regarding the observed unused tourism potentials of the cross-border area suitable for future investments, and therefore for new employment as well.

1.3. ABOUT THE CROSS-BORDER AREA HUNGARY - CROATIA BASED ON THE INTERREG PROJECT SLO/HU/HR-4012-106/2004/01/HU-74²

Cross-border area Hungary - Croatia analysed in this study includes Zala county, Somogy county, Koprivnica-Križevci and Varaždin county. This area has a significant tourism potential which is not sufficiently used and needs to be presented to potential investors.

Zala county is one of the 19 Hungarian counties and it belongs to the region of western Danube. The county surface is 3.784 km², and number of inhabitants 269.705. Administrative centre of the county is Zalaegerszeg. It is composed of 9 micro regions and 257 municipalities. Tourism plays an important part in county economy. Primary share of the county tourism activity is carried out by Hévíz because of its natural thermal lake. Besides other thermal spas (primarily spa complex in Zalakaros) this area offers some other tourism attractions: untouched nature (National park Balaton-felvidék, Nature reserve Small mud lake (Malo blatno jezero) (Hung. Kis-Balaton) and rural tourism (primarily in the ethnographic

² Social-economic analysis of Hungarian-Croatian cross-border area: written within INTERREG project SLO/HU/CRO-4012-106/2004/01/HU-74. Keszthely: Microregional, multifunctional and development association Keszthely-Heviz: West-Balaton workshop for social-scientific research, 2007.

region Gőcsej). Baroque palace of the Festetics family is located in Keszthely. The fact that international airport Sármedék is located in Zala county is of great significance for further tourism development.

Somogy county is located in south-west Hungary, in southern Danube region (Dél-Dunántúl), alongside with the Croatian border, which is to some extent natural, since it is composed of the Drava river in the South and Blatno jezero (Mud lake) in the North-West. The county has surface area of 6.036 km² and it is the least densely populated county in Hungary, with merely 56 inhabitants/km². Somogy county consists of 244 settlements inhabited by 335.237 citizens. Administrative centre of the county is Kaposvár. Hunting, medical and rural tourism represent account for high quality tourism in the county

Koprivnica-Križevci county is located in north-west Croatia. City of Koprivnica is administrative centre of the county. With surface area of 1.746 km² it is the seventeenth county in size in Croatia. The county consists of three towns and 21 settlement inhabited by 124.467 inhabitants with average population density of 71 inhabitants/km². Present distribution of inhabitants is the result of economic and social processes within the last fifty years, such as deagrification, industrialisation, deruralisation and urbanisation. Agriculture is the most important economic branch. Regarding tourism, it is important to mention the significance of Naive art gallery in municipality of Hlebine, town of Križevci with its St. Anne Church, Greek Catholic Cathedral and St. Cross Church. Furthermore, Koprivnica is famous for its Museum of Food "Podravka", and Đurđevac for its old town and Lacković Gallery.

Varaždin County is located in north-west Croatia. Its centre is the town of Varaždin. It encompasses the area along river Bednja between the mountains Ivančica and Kalnik and river Drava. Varaždin county has 184.769 inhabitants with population density of inhabitants/km². The county is divided in 6 towns and 22 municipalities. The most important economic branches are textile, food processing and wood processing industry. Varaždin falls within the most beautiful and best preserved baroque units in Croatia (Old Town, City hall). Since 1971 it has been a home of the famous It hosts music festival Varaždin baroque evenings. With reference to tourism excursions, due to its numerous tourism activities Varaždin County belongs to the most attractive parts of continental Croatia. The most famous tourism and cultural destinations are:

- a) Varaždin: fortress, baroque centre, city cemetery;
- b) Ludbreg: sanctuary of the precious blood of Christ, centrum mundi, St. Cross chapel, Church of Holy Trinity;
- c) Trakošćan: castle;
- d) Lepoglava: Pauline monastery, first grammar school in Croatia;
- e) Varaždinske Toplice: antique thermal spa, St. Martin church, Old town, Chapel of the holy spirit;

- f) Vinica: castle and arboretum Opeka;
- g) Ivanec: Church of St. Mary Magdalene;
- h) Maruševec: castle;
- i) Sračinec: St. Michael church
- j) Bednja: St. Mary church.

Table 1 Unemployment rate in the cross-border area, Hungary and Croatia

County	Number of the unemployed in the county	(%) of the unemployed in the county
Baranya	11,544	8,0
Zala	6.272	4,7
Somogy	7.805	6,1
TOTAL: cross-border area that belongs to Hungary	25.621	6,2
HUNGARY 2006.		7,3
HUNGARY 2013.*		10,3
Brodsko–posavska	15.911	29,5
Vukovarsko–srijemska	19.610	32,1
Požeško-slavonska	5.458	20,9
Zagreb	13.662	16,7
Virovitičko-podravska	9.822	29,6
Osječko–baranjska	32.120	26,1
Bjelovarsko–bilogorska	11.922	25,6
Međimurska	7.221	15,5
Varaždinska	10.721	14,2
Koprivničko–križevačka	8.069	16,8
TOTAL: Croatian cross-border area	13.4516	22,7
CROATIA 2006.		17,1
CROATIA 2013.*		18,6

* <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/> (data retrieved on June, 30, 2013)

Source: Social-economic analysis of Hungary-Croatia cross-border regions, 2007

Based on previous research (Interreg) of the cross-border area Hungary - Croatia, it was observed that demographic characteristics of the population account for the biggest obstacles to local development. These characteristics primarily refer to big differences in the

age structure, insufficient educational potentials of the population, high unemployment rate in numerous micro regions at both sides of the border.

According to the respective research carried out in 2006 (table 1), based on data of the Central Hungarian Bureau of Statistics, the most unfavourable unemployment structure in the country was observed in Hungary in the cross-border counties. (KSH³), with very high levels indicated for the area of Baranya county (7,5%) and Somogy county(9,7%)⁴. The average unemployment rate has increased for 3% from 2006 to the present day.

Counties on the Croatian side of the border are faced with even higher unemployment rates. Average unemployment rate in Croatia in 2006 amounted to 17,1% with the tendency of further growth, and it is currently 18,6%.As indicated by research results of the aforementioned Interreg project, the analysed cross-border area (especially rural micro regions) is marked by relatively low income of the population, which is to a large extent based on income from traditional agricultural activities, insufficient to result in the increase of the life standard. It is therefore essential to ensure resources for those areas with the objective of increasing the life standard by means of an adequate institutional system and strategy of strengthening the local economy through domestic and foreign private capital investments. The project indicated that the best possibilities of cooperation and development in the cross-border area relate to tourism, traffic infrastructure, education and culture (table 2). In order to implement the aforementioned possibilities of cooperation and cross-border development, it is necessary to do the following:

- a) revitalise towns and villages,
- b) work on synergy - targeted development of new attractions,
- c) valorisation of the existing attractions
- d) development of the cross-border transport infrastructure.

³ Központi Statisztikai Hivatal

⁴ In the Interreg research a more detailed analysis revealed more serious problems. Micro regions along the border are marked with alarmingly high unemployment rates: Sellye (34,7%), Szigetvar (28,1%), Szentlőrinc and Siklos (20%), Barcs and Csurgó (23%).

Table 2 SWOT analysis of the border region Hungary - Croatia

Strengths	
	<p>TOURISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Siklós-Harkány-Villány - wine and thermal tourism ➤ Pécs, Osijek, Varaždin - urban tourism ➤ Mohács - ethno tourism ➤ Thermal tourism on both sides of the border (Hévíz, Zalakaros, St. Martin, Bizovac, Varaždin) <p>EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Bigger universities in Pécs and Osijek ➤ Development of university institutions in Križevci, Varaždin, Keszthely and Kaposvár. <p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Existence of the extensive nature protection of the cross-border area (National park Danube-Drava), together with river Mura. ➤ Rich water resources (surface, thermal)
Weaknesses	
	<p>TRANSPORT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Unelectrified international railway connections from Pécs and from Osijek ➤ Poor condition of the intern road system causes difficulties in accessibility to intra-regional centres and intra-regional main roads ➤ Lack of international border crossings (on average at 62km) <p>DEMOGRAPHY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Internal differences in age structure observed during research ➤ Rural population and border micro-regions with alarming difference of age structure <p>EDUCATION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Low percentage of college or university graduates compared to the national average ➤ Low level of joint language skills ➤ Inflexible labour market, slow reaction of educational institutions to the needs of the labour market <p>LABOUR MARKET</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Alarmingly high unemployment rate at both sides of the border, especially on Croatian side ➤ Extremely high percentage of the unemployed in the rural micro-regions ➤ Extremely high percentage of the unemployed in numerous micro-regions along the joint border ➤ Discrepancies between offer and demand <p>NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Lack of system for protection from floods ➤ Lack of waste water management and solid waste management, which negatively affects the Mura-Drava ecologic system ➤ Remaining mined areas from the war period of 1991

Opportunities	
<p>TOURISM</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Area of the nature reserve Danube-Drava creates tourism opportunities <p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Inadequate areas for forestation for high added value of agricultural production <p>BORDER CONTROL</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Gradual removal of the internal border after Croatia becomes a full EU member state within Schengen (Croatia within Schengen since 2009) <p>CULTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Increasingly intensive, better and longer cultural cooperation ➤ Cooperation and networking in the field of joint construction and different heritage management <p>ECONOMY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Potential for vertical integration in agricultural products ➤ Potential for export in agro-forestry 	
Threats	
<p>DEMOGRAPHY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High level of mobility and migration outside the region ➤ Continuation of depopulation in isolated rural areas <p>NATURE AND ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Possible continuation of deterioration of Drava ecosystem due to lack of waste management <p>MANAGEMENT AND PLANNING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Poor joint planning ➤ Lack of detailed plans in individual sectors (education, development of thermal tourism) ➤ Small number of local self-government units prevents successful development of local politics <p>CULTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Insufficient financing leads to deterioration of cultural heritage 	

Source: Social-economic analysis of Hungary-Croatia cross-border regions, 2007

Within the aforementioned Interreg project, natural and constructed environment in the function of tourism is defined as the main tourism attraction for promoting potential investments, using the perceived development opportunities and mobilising investment capital, leading to several conclusions:

- In Hungary, tourism is to a great extent focused in individual micro-regions within adequate areas. There are significant tourism capacities along the Balaton coast in the counties of Somogy and Zala. Most investments in the region referring to tourism are oriented to construction of numerous hotels and excursion places. Airport Sármellék is of crucial importance for spas and tourism sector of the Balaton lake.
- Drava area is characterised by river and ecologically oriented tourism. Architectonic heritage of Pécs comprises Roman and Turkish style, and was awarded the title of

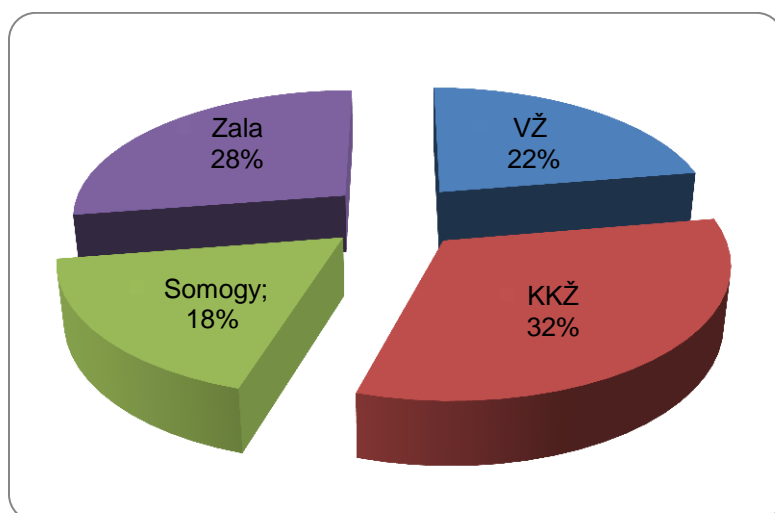
UNESCO world heritage. Adjacent area Harkány-Siklós-Villány very quickly developed into a very strong centre of wine and thermal tourism, which was recognized on international level as well. In this area the increase in the number of visitors can be balanced with the decrease of the number of overnight stays. Besides the above mentioned, tourism is significantly present in the towns of Kaposvár and Szekszárd.

- On the Croatian side of the border, the town of Varaždin has a significant architectural heritage, and in Varaždin county Trakošćan castle is significant for tourism. These two destinations have for several years indicated the increase of the number of tourists, accompanied with the reduced number of overnight stays.
- Thermal tourism is strongly present in the region and represents further potential in the region. Both sides are presently mutual competitors in this sector, although there are opportunities for joint marketing and other forms of cooperation. Hévíz, Kehidakustány and Zalakaros are very important destinations in Zala county. Varaždinske Spa in Varaždin county are also an important tourism destination.
- Koprivnica-Križevci county has favourable conditions for development of various forms of continental tourism (hunting, fishing, hiking, cycling, swimming). However, the existing natural resources - primarily river Drava, flat areas with lakes, mountain landscapes on the slopes of Bilogora and Kalnik are still not sufficiently used for that purpose.
- Besides the aforementioned, the county area has a rich cultural and historical heritage (numerous sacral objects), with developed artistic tradition due to the fact that Hlebine is the centre of naive art, which is presently the main tourism attraction and orientation.
- Presently, the entire tourism potential of the county is not significantly used, which is reflected in the fact that over 90% of tourism activities are carried out in the form of one day trips without overnight stays.

2. BASIC INFORMATION ABOUT THE INFORMANTS

Demographic questions include basic information regarding sex, age, place of residence and company headquarters (if the resident owns a company), as well as questions regarding their interest for tourism development in the area that the informant lives and/or works in. Furthermore, in the introductory part, the informant outlines the possibilities in which his company could contribute to tourism development.

Chart 1. Informants according to counties



The survey questionnaire was administered on the total number of 313 informants: 171 from Croatia, and 142 from Hungary. Chart 1 indicates that most informants that filled in the survey questionnaire come from Koprivnica-Križevci County (32%), followed by Zala county (28%), Varaždin county (22%), and finally the Somogy county Somogy (18%).

Women participated to the largest percentage in this research (63%), and men to a smaller extent (37%). Most female informants come from Varaždin county and Zala county, and somewhat less from Koprivnica-Križevci County and Somogy County (chart 2). The highest percentage of male informants come from Somogy county and the smallest from Varaždin county. The best ratio of male and female informants was achieved in Koprivnica-Križevci County, and the least favourable distribution of informants was observed in Varaždin county. However, it is important to point out that the existing ratio of informants does not correspond to the statistic data on number of male and female inhabitants in the analysed counties - it is much more the consequence of natural sample in which female population is more prone to participate in research.

Chart 2. Informants according to sex and counties (%)

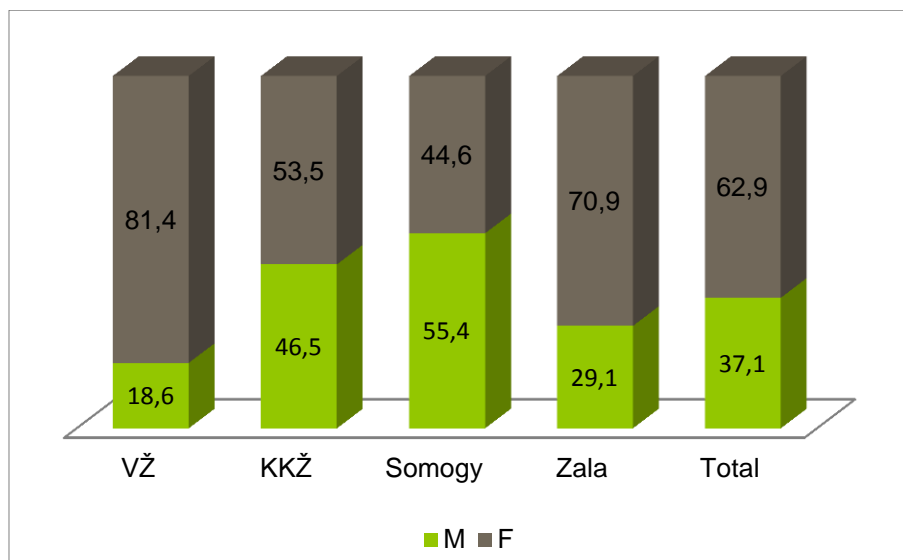
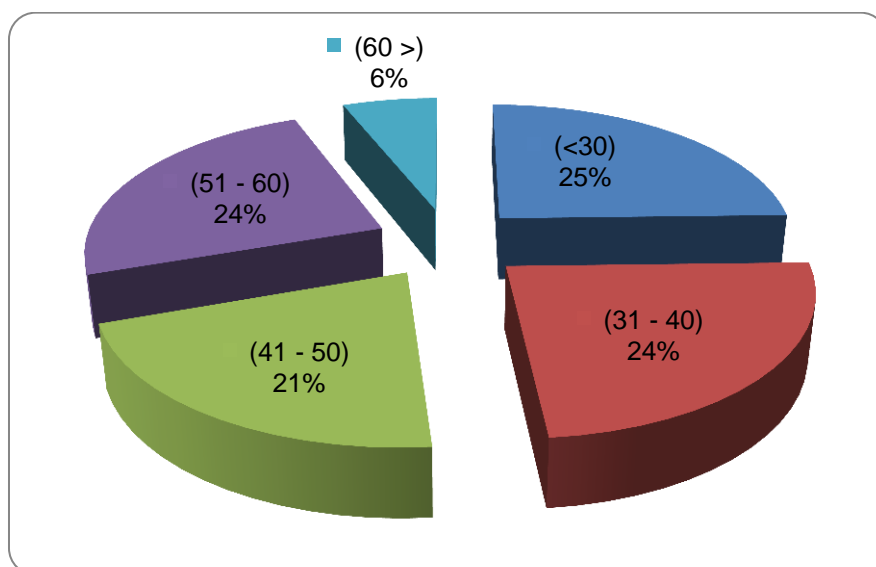


Chart 3 indicates that the age structure of informants is marked with a share of somewhat younger informants, not older than 30 years of age (25%). Further more, the research observed equal representation of informants aged 31-40 (24%) and informants aged 51-60 (24%). The lowest percentage was marked with informants older than 61 (6%).

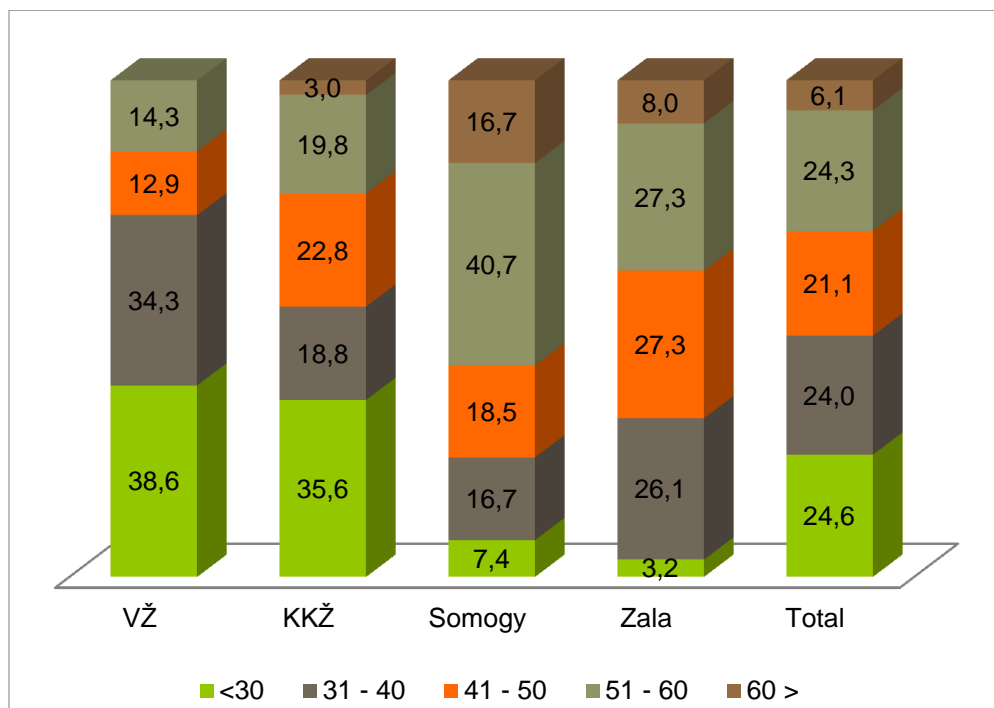
Chart 3. Age structure of informants



More detailed analysis of age and residential status of the informants provides a more precise overview on the profile of informants (chart 4.). The highest percentage of young informants (up to 30 years of age) comes from Koprivnica-Križevci and Varaždin County, some older informants aged 31–40 come from Varaždin and Zala county, and some of the

oldest informants again from both counties in Croatia. The highest portion of informants aged 51–60 is located in Somogy and Zala County. Based on the obtained data it can be concluded that the percentage of young informants is significantly higher in Croatian counties and the share of older informants is dominant in Hungarian counties. The reasons for such participation in research are most probably linked with preferences regarding the research topic and former tourism development in the analysed counties. It is possible that young people in Croatia see tourism as an opportunity for self-employment and possibility for development. Considering the fact that tourism in Hungarian counties is on a higher level compared to the situation in Croatian counties, it is possible that older informants from Hungarian counties find it easier to approach the research topic and give their contribution based on their former experience by means of directly answering the questions (especially the entrepreneurs that participated in the survey questionnaire). Due to sample limitations, it is not possible to make any further generalisations.

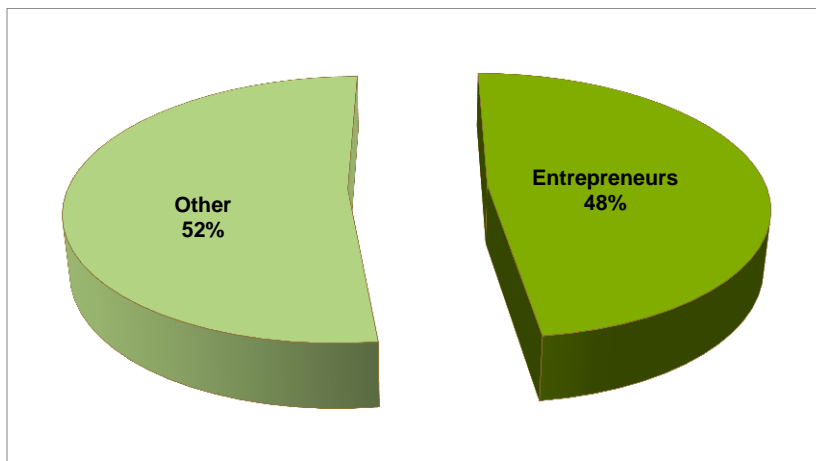
Chart 4. Age structure of informants according to counties



Furthermore, it is important to point out that the informants mostly come from urban areas, and to a smaller extent from the rural areas (annex 1). This information indicates to the fact that the people from smaller and bigger towns are more prone to participate in the research, except for Koprivnica-Križevci County, where the percentage of participants from the urban (towns) and rural (villages) areas was more or less the same.

Besides the citizens, this research also included the local entrepreneurs with companies located in bigger towns of the analysed counties (chart 5, annex 2). The share of entrepreneurs in this research was very high (48%) as well as representative, since former research activities showed lack of willingness to participate in survey questionnaires, mostly for the reason of finding the process of filling in the questionnaire too demanding or making a simple excuse „I don't have the time to do it“⁵. Such high level of participation regarding the number of entrepreneurs can be linked with the fact that they found the research topic very interesting, and it is also possible that the entrepreneurs were convinced of the research transparency and believed that their suggestions and remarks will be accepted and taken into consideration in future tourism development.

Chart 5 Number of entrepreneurs taking part in this research



Big differences in research results between Croatian and Hungarian informants/entrepreneurs were observed in response to the question regarding the possible contribution of the respective company to future tourism development⁶. Hungarian informants provided no answer to the aforementioned question, whereas Croatian informants proposed innovative and concrete suggestions for tourism development, which included promotional, gastronomy, organisational, infrastructural and production activities, with emphasis on local support of tourism activities.

1. Provide better promotion of tourism products, local values, tradition, natural beauties, promote counties and their companies in general,
2. Reduce prices, i.e. allow discount/action prices for tourism products, distribute some products for free,

⁵ Experience of the authors within similar research activities.

⁶ One reason for this could be the aforementioned fact that continental tourism in Croatia is insufficiently developed and that it is essential to make use of all identified tourism potentials for further economic development.

3. Expand the offer of traditional products, home-made food and beverages (gastro offer), improve and expand touristic offer through renovation and construction of new accommodation capacities, restaurants; improve the quality of offer and services through education of tourism workers,
4. Create interesting activities during manifestations, increase the number of attractions (more fairs, flower fair/exhibitions, more music events, fashion shows, more quality events during traditional manifestations such as workshop for traditional dishes, workshop for unique products, learning about tradition of the respective region),
5. Improve cooperation with tourism association,
6. Develop organic agriculture and produce healthy food,
7. One segment of the informants who don't own a company also provided answer to this question that they can also contribute to tourism development through positive response and participation in local manifestations, meetings, fairs, concerts, through their work in civil society organisations or through independent participation as volunteers (testing of products, grooming of horses etc.).

It is interesting to observe that the interest for tourism development varies between the Croatian and Hungarian informants in the cross-border area. The informants from Varaždin county indicate their interest for tourism development in the 100% ratio, Koprivnica-Križevci County also shows a very high percentage of interest for this form of economic development (96%), informants from Zala County also provided a positive answer to this question (55,4%), whereas in Zala county only 16,3% of the informants showed interest for development of the cross-border tourism (annex 3).

3. RESEARCH OF IMAGE THROUGH TOURISM ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE CROSS-BORDER AREA

Image represents the totality of the outer impression that someone makes or intends to make and represents the foundation for attracting foreign investors. The informants were therefore asked if they liked living in their region, whereas only 13 informants (4,2%) gave a negative answer (table 3). However, all the informants continued to fill in the survey questionnaire and answered the following survey questions regarding tourism advantages and disadvantages of the area they live in, and which they consider relevant for tourism development in their region.

Table 3 Informants' answers to the question „Do you like living in your region?“

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
YES	70	101	52	77	300
NO	0	0	4	9	13
Total	70	101	56	86	313
(%) of answers "yes"	100,0	100,0	92,9	89,5	95,8

According to Ružić (2011) the following factors are crucial for tourism development:

- Natural - climate, hydrography, landscape, flora and fauna, etc.
- Social - cultural monuments, institutions, manifestations etc.,
- Traffic - traffic infrastructure,
- Offer - facilities, capacities and their offer; accommodation, nutrition, beverages, shops in the function of supplying tourists etc.

The informants were asked to name the first three associations they would like to point out as touristic values (attractions or localities), i.e. the first three associations related to limiting circumstances for tourism development in their respective region. According to Kušen (2002) tourism attractions are tourism resources which could or already attract tourists to visit a tourism destination they are located in. The informants were, therefore, in their first associations directed towards those touristic values they recognize and find characteristic of the nearby surroundings of their place of residence. Further analysis provides an outline of research results separately according to the analysed counties.

VARAŽDIN COUNTY

Informants from the Varaždin county consider Varaždin the most beautiful town in the county. Web pages of Varaždin tourism association provide the answer to what makes Varaždin different from other towns, such as its remarkable monument and artistic heritage with the best preserved and the richest baroque urban unit. Along with the complex of the old town, the relatively small area contains preserved palaces, significant public buildings, valuable houses and villas in baroque, classicism, rococo and secession style, as well as one of the oldest European city halls.

It is therefore understandable that the Old town and the centre of Varaždin were singled out as the first, second and third association⁷.

Besides the Old town and the town centre, the manifestation "Špancifest" i.e. Varaždin street festival of artists and musicians is listed as the first association of touristic values, followed by sacral objects⁸, cultural heritage and Varaždin cemetery as an excellent example of park architecture and nature monument.

Besides the aforementioned, the informants from the Varaždin county listed Varaždin baroque evenings as second association of prominent values - a festival founded on rich tradition of Varaždin baroque music and individual specific objects, food, squares, civil society organisations etc. (poppy-cake, smitheries, wells, curies, pillars, archaeological findings, individual restaurants with local specialties, equestrian and fishing associations).

Preserved forests and nicely arranged parks are mentioned as third associations, as well as Ludbreg, also called the centre of the world.

Unfavourable conditions for tourism development are:

- poor promotion of the region
- lack of accommodation capacities (hotels and boarding houses)
- poor traffic infrastructure and lack of parking spaces
- lack of tourism offices and agencies
- lack of financial assets for tourism / unfavourable crediting conditions
- poor organisation/administration in general
- lack of interest and motivation of the local population regarding tourism
- lack of trained professionals in the tourism sector⁹.

⁷ The Old town of Varaždin is in fact an old feudal fortress built from 14. to 19. century, presently the Town museum of Varaždin.

⁸ Sanctuary of the precious blood of Christ in Ludbreg is most frequently mentioned.

⁹ This is mentioned as a disadvantage in some other counties which were the subject of this research, especially with reference to the inadequately trained labour force (lack of friendliness, insufficient knowledge of foreign languages etc).

KOPRIVNICA-KRIŽEVCI COUNTY

Informants from Koprivnica-Križevci County list the town of Đurđevac on the first place when it comes to attractive tourism destinations¹⁰, i.e. the Old town where the traditional cultural manifestation "Picokijada - Picoki legend" takes place. Natural beauties and clean environment, as well as the adjacency of the Drava river are also considered to be very important when it comes to the unused tourism potentials. Furthermore, one of the first associations is the protected botanical area "Đurđevački peski" - the so called "Croatian Sahara", as well as the Naive art gallery in Hlebine.

Besides Đurđevački peski and the adjacency of the Drava river, the informants from Koprivnica-Križevci county frequently mentioned sacral objects as the second association, primarily the Church of the Resurrection of the blessed virgin Mary in Molve and the chapel named after Saint Mark of Križevci.

The third association that the informants mentioned was well developed agriculture, with special emphasis on wine growing and production, wine roads and preserved old wine cottages¹¹.

Disadvantages in tourism development are:

- Poor promotion of the region
- Poor infrastructure in general (lack of water supply lines and sewage system are most frequently mentioned)
- Lack of finances for investment in tourism
- Poor traffic connections and poor accessibility (no motorway)
- Lack of interest of the local government and population for tourism
- Economic crisis and decrease of industrial production resulted in unemployment, which influenced the unfavourable population structure for tourism development. Young people move to bigger towns, causing older population to prevail in rural areas.
- Lack of developed tourism infrastructure (cultural events, catering offer, lack of accommodation capacities and restaurants)
- Lack of professional labour force in tourism

¹⁰ Đurđevac was in 2008 selected as Croatian representative of the European destination of excellence in tourism (EDEN).

¹¹ The informants agree that it is important to use the potential of restoring the old wine cottages into attractive tourism objects.

SOMOGY COUNTY

Somogy county borders with lake Balaton in the North - the largest fresh water lake in central Europe, and with the river Drava in the south. It abounds in large forest areas and other natural values. It is therefore not surprising that informants from Somogy county list Balaton and water in general (lakes, cure water, thermal spa) in all three associations, as well as natural values and clean environment (a lot of greenery, forests, vineyard etc.).

Besides the aforementioned, the informants emphasize nicely arranged town centres, rich cultural programme and well developed hunting and fishing tourism, as well as wine tourism and gastronomy.

Disadvantages relevant for tourism development are:

- Poor infrastructure, especially road infrastructure
- Unemployment and lack of domestic and foreign investment in tourism
- Poor organisation and promotion of the area, of tourism events, poor media coverage and insufficiently developed communication channels
- Lack of accommodation capacities
- Lack of joint conception of tourism development

ZALA COUNTY

Zala county has very similar geographic characteristics as the neighbouring Somogy county, so the replies of the informants are very similar regarding the first three tourism associations. The informants place Lake Balaton, wonderful landscape, clean air and abounding natural beauties on the first place (most frequently mentioned are Arboretum at Csacs, National park Orseg, mountains at Keszthely, forests). Unlike in Somogy county, in Zala county tourism is one of the most successful economy branches with one of the oldest tourism settlements Heviz spa, whereas medical baths Zalakaros, Lenti and Kehidakustany should also be singled out due to their importance for tourism development. The entire county abounds in medical baths, spas, regular baths and swimming pools supplied with medicinal water from the thermal springs. The informants, therefore, frequently list the well developed thermal/health tourism as an important tourism value, with special emphasis on Heviz, lakes and fish ponds, arranged city lakes suitable for rowing, as well as aqua parks.

Furthermore, cultural objects, historical monuments and town attractions and manifestations that take place in the county are frequently mentioned as second and third association.

Disadvantages are:

- Poor road infrastructure and public transport
- Lack of social, cultural and entertainment programmes
- Poor promotion
- Unemployment
- Lack of catering and accommodation capacities
- Insufficiently developed water tourism

JOINT CHARACTERISTICS OF ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF THE CROSS-BORDER AREA

Table 4 provides an outline of joint characteristics of the cross-border area according to the value of the informants marked in different colours (joint characteristics were taken into consideration if they were observed both in one of the Croatian and in one of the Hungarian counties). As already stated, advantages primarily refer to specific locations and attractions characteristic for individual areas where the informants live and work, so joint characteristics most frequently refer to natural beauties, clean environment, rich cultural heritage and well developed wine production, wine growing and gastronomy.

The number of observed joint characteristics was higher with reference to disadvantages, with emphasis on poor tourism promotion, insufficiently developed tourism infrastructure, lack of accommodation and catering capacities, poor road infrastructure and lack of financial assets for tourism development mentioned by the informants from all four analysed counties.

TABLE 4 ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES FOR TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN RESEARCHED AREA

	VŽ	KKŽ	SOMOgy	ZALA
ADVANTAGES	Old town and centre of the town of Varaždin	Old town of Đurđevac	Balaton	Balaton
	Špancirfest	Picokijada - Legend of Picoki	Lakes, medicinal waters and thermal baths	Natural beauties and clean environment
	Sacral objects	Natural beauties and clean environment	Natural beauties and clean environment	Developed thermal / health tourism
	Cultural heritage	Adjacency of Drava river	Nicely arranged town centres	Heviz
	Varaždin cemetery	Đurđevački sands	Rich cultural programme	Lakes and fish ponds
	Varaždin baroque evenings	Sacral objects	Developed hunting and fishing tourism	Aquaparks
	Ludbreg - centre of the world	Well developed wine growing and wine production	Developed wine tourism and gastronomy	Cultural heritage
			Manifestations	
SHORTCOMINGS	Poor promotion of the area	Poor promotion of the area	Poor road infrastructure	Poor road infrastructure
	Lack of accommodation capacities	Poor infrastructure in general	Unemployment	Lack of social, cultural and entertainment programmes
	Poor traffic infrastructure	Lack of finances	Lack of finances	Poor promotion of the area
	Lack of tourism offices and agencies	Poor promotion of the area	Poor promotion of the area	Unemployment
	Lack of finances	Lack of interest of the local government and population	Lack of accommodation capacities	Lack of accommodation and catering capacities
	Poor organisation/administration	Unemployment and unfavourable population structure	Lack of joint conception of tourism development	Lack of joint conception of tourism development
	Lack of interest and motivation of the local population	Lack of developed tourism infrastructure		Lack of bike tracks
	Lack of trained professionals	Lack of trained professionals		

4. TOURISM POTENTIALS OF THE CROSS-BORDER AREA - CURRENT STATE

In order to research tourism potentials of the cross-border area, the informants were asked if they are familiar with investments in tourism which are currently in progress in their region. Most informants did not answer the question or replied that tourism investments are almost non-existent, i.e. that they aren't familiar with the information related to the respective question. In Varaždin county the informants recognized the investments related to arrangement activities of Varaždin (decoration of Kapucinski square, construction of the underground parking garage), and in Koprivnica-Križevci county the informants mentioned construction of the motorway and asphaltting of the local roads.

In the Somogy county the informants most frequently mention the construction of the visitor centre at Deseda lake, construction of bike track, sports hall and renovation of the existing spas, hotels, traffic infrastructure and centres of settlements they live in. Informants from the Zala county observed construction of the sewage system, detours, as well as renovation of the existing beaches, roads, squares, schools, Festetics castle and promenades.

According to Demonja and Ružić (2010) there are numerous tourism activities based on which it is possible to create various forms of tourism, such as cultural, health, recreational-active, water (wellness, water sports, fishing), wine, hunting, religious, agro tourism and other. The aforementioned forms of tourism are characteristic for rural areas.

Sports-recreational tourism implies holiday stays based on sports and entertainment activities in nature such as: walking, cycling, skiing, ski running, horse riding, skating, swimming, rowing, badminton, ball games, as well as activities on specially equipped sports grounds for skiing, archery, tennis, volleyball, handball, football, basketball etc. In contemporary society sport becomes an important content of stay during which tourists get involved in various kinds of sports activities such as: swimming, sailing, diving, rowing, skiing, tennis, golf, horse riding and other. Such form of recreation is called sports recreation and its primary objective is active and interesting holidays for tourists.

Health tourism is a form of tourism linked with thermal and mineral springs, medical mud and mountainous areas. In this form of tourism the services of accommodation, nutrition and medical surveillance are provided in special facilities - health resorts.

Cultural tourism implies travelling for the purpose of visiting cultural monuments, museums, galleries and cultural manifestations. Such kind of tourism offer is linked with religious tourism where tourists visit numerous sanctuaries and religious manifestations. Cultural

tourism is primarily based on culture, education, experience and adventures as requests of active holidays rich in various activities. Cultural tourism partly overlaps with some other forms of tourism, namely gastronomic, religious, transit, rural etc.

Religious tourism is manifested by travelling and visiting religious centres, rituals or pilgrimages. It is linked with local, regional, national and international religious centres. Participants in this form of tourism are to some extent or even entirely motivated from perspective of their religion to take part in travel

Hunting tourism is a typical form of tourism characteristic for rural areas, since it is carried out on agricultural and other soil and water surfaces. This form of tourism requires favourable geographic, hydro graphic and climate conditions, as well as plant cover, accounting for special advantages for the raising and growth of game animals, thus creating preconditions for hunting tourism. Participants in this kind of tourism are hunters, as well as members of their families.¹².

Wine tourism is observed in its close connection with gastronomic tourism, since food is always accompanied by wine. This kind of tourism requires vineyards before all other things.

Rural tourism or agro tourism implies stay at a family farm (registered family agricultural company, agricultural trade, limited liability company or stock company) with usage of accommodation, nutrition, beverages, entertainment, recreation and other activities carried out in family buildings or other accommodation objects (camp, boarding house, hotel) within the respective family farm. Basic business activity on the family farm is agriculture, whereas services to tourists are additional business activities.

The informants were asked to express their opinion on which of the forms of tourism (cultural, health, recreational, water, wine, hunting, religious and agro tourism) they find most attractive for tourists in their counties, marking each form with grades starting with 1 (most attractive) to 9¹³ (least attractive).

Table 5 indicates that the most attractive forms of tourism in Varaždin county are cultural and wine tourism, whereas the informants found agro tourism and religious tourism least attractive. Other forms of tourism mentioned by the informants included hiking and tourism of visual and musical arts. Informants from Koprivnica-Križevci county ranked the offered forms of tourism very differently, resulting in the fact that there are slight deviations in average ranks between hunting, recreational (active), wine and cultural tourism singled out as the most attractive forms of tourism. These informants found health and religious tourism least attractive. Other forms of tourism mentioned by the informants included winter, equestrian,

¹² Fishing tourism is frequently linked with the hunting tourism, as a typical form of tourism carried out in rural areas on their water surfaces. As participants in fishing tourism, the fishermen like and seek "healthy" waters and fish. to them fishing is sport, hobby, recreation and preservation of ntural environment.

¹³ Eight different forms of tourism were listed, with the optional category "other" listed in the end.

cycling tourism, naive art tourism, as well as tourism linked with meetings of motorcyclists. Informants from the counties of Somogy and Zala were unique in their answers, finding health and water tourism (wellness, water sports, fishing) most attractive in their counties, and religious tourism least attractive. Informants from Somogy county also listed the so called „party tourism“ as an attractive form of tourism¹⁴.

If we observe the obtained answers on the level of the entire research area, it can be concluded that religious tourism is least attractive for tourists (6,9), followed by agro tourism (5,2). The average rank of all informants indicates that the most attractive forms of tourism in the cross-border area are cultural tourism (3,7), health tourism (3,9) and water tourism (4,0), followed by wine and recreational tourism (4,1), and hunting tourism (4,2).

Table 5 Forms of tourism attractive to tourists

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
Cultural	2,2	4,3	3,7	4,4	3,7
Health	5,0	6,8	2,2	1,6	3,9
Water	4,8	5,0	3,3	2,9	4,0
Wine	2,4	4,0	5,3	4,5	4,1
Recreational (active)	5,0	3,9	3,6	4,0	4,1
Hunting	4,2	3,9	4,0	4,5	4,2
Agro tourism	6,5	5,1	4,6	4,6	5,2
Religious	6,5	6,0	7,5	7,6	6,9
Other	Hiking, tourism of visual and musical arts	Winter, equestrian, cycling, motorcycle meetings, tourism of naive art	party tourism	-	-

Most attractive

Least attractive

When asked in which way the visitors can obtain information regarding various sights located in the area that the informants live in, the informants were asked to select four out of the total number of answers, for which they thought to be the most significant and recognizable to tourists (table 6). Croatian informants first mentioned the information that the tourists can find out from local population, which is the trend of the new form of tourism, the so called „soft“ tourism characteristic for the present tourism, whereby the tourists wish to meet and make friends among the local population. Websites were listed on the second place, indicating that

¹⁴ Party tourism is oriented towards individuals under 30 years of age. It is linked with gatherings for pleasure, having a good time, dancing etc, in the context of a particular event or musical style.

the informants were aware of the fact that business activity is nowadays unthinkable without the assistance of information and communication technologies and the Internet. Furthermore, the informants consider that former visitors of the destination are of big significance ranking the strength of communication „from mouth to mouth“ as the best, most reliable and most trustworthy source of information about products and services in general¹⁵, alongside with printed materials. Hungarian informants placed printed materials on the first place, followed by websites, travel agencies and former visitors of the destination.

If we observe the research results as a whole, it can be concluded that the four most important means of obtaining tourism information are websites, local population, former visitors of the destination and printed materials. Publications and magazines, as well as Internet forums are considered a less recognizable source of information.

Table 6 Most important means of obtaining information about various tourism sights

	HR	HU	Total
Websites	124	72	196
Local population	125	46	171
Former visitors of the destination	84	57	141
Printed materials	60	73	133
TV, radio	56	44	100
Travel agency	23	66	89
Websites of tourism associations	60	26	86
Acquaintances (who did not visit the respective destination)	27	53	80
Tourism exhibitions, fairs	58	14	72
Internet forum	11	54	65
Tourist guide	11	38	49
Publications and magazines	13	16	29

Most important means of obtaining information

The informants were also asked to single out four activities in the 20 km radius, for which they think the tourists would be the most interesting in (table 7). Informants from Varaždin county listed cultural manifestations, sightseeing, wine and gastronomy as most significant, as well as various exhibitions and museums. In Koprivnica-Križevci county the informants were of the opinion that the most significant activities within the 20 km radius are hunting, cultural manifestations, rural tourism,¹⁶ followed by wine and gastronomy. Horse riding, hunting, beaches and baths are the most significant activities in the Somogy county, and

¹⁵ Hubijar (<http://marketingodustadousta.com/o-autoru>)

¹⁶ The informants mentioned that within rural tourism it is possible to organise activities of preparing food for winter, pasta, cheese, home made jams etc.

similar situation was observed in Zala county, where health tourism was singled out as most important, followed by beaches, baths and horse riding.

If we observe the overall results, it can be concluded that the first four activities in the 20 km radius which could be attractive for the tourists of the cross-border area include cultural manifestations, developed wine production and gastronomy, hunting and sightseeing in general. Organised programmes with a tourist guide, passive holidays, rowing and educational paths are considered less interesting or non-existing.

Table 7 Interesting activities within the 20 km radius

	VŽ	KKŽ	HR	Somogy	Zala	HU	Total
Cultural manifestations	46	40	86	14	14	28	114
Wine and gastronomy	31	37	68	11	27	38	106
Hunting	8	47	55	22	21	43	98
Sightseeing	34	30	64	9	22	31	95
Horse riding	3	28	31	29	29	58	89
Exhibitions and museums	29	26	55	5	25	30	85
Rural tourisms	22	38	60	12	13	25	85
Baths	4	20	24	20	34	54	78
Fishing	9	35	44	12	13	25	69
Cycling	16	25	41	10	17	27	68
Health tourism	9	1	10	15	43	58	68
Festivals and manifestations	13	14	27	15	23	38	65
Beaches	2	3	5	21	36	57	62
Folklore traditions	21	24	45	6	5	11	56
Historical monuments	28	18	46	3	6	9	55
Walking, hiking	4	13	17	8	21	29	46
Educational paths	0	5	5	2	4	6	11
Rowing	1	0	1	0	1	1	2
Passive holidays	0	0	0	1	1	2	2
Organised programmes with tourist guide	0	0	0	0	1	1	1

The most interesting activities

Accommodation facilities are basic and characteristic receptive factor of a tourism destination, which means that their size to a certain extent influence the scope of tourism, whereas their kinds, forms and quality directly affect kinds and forms of tourism, and therefore their economic impact as well (Demonja and Ružić, 2010). The informants were therefore asked to express their opinion on which kind and category of accommodation they find insufficient and are required for the future tourism development in the region within the 20 km radius from the place they live in. (table 8). Croatian informants listed accommodation related to rural tourism, followed by camps and three and four star hotels. Hungarian

informants found the construction of four star hotels most important, as well as wellness hotels and apartments and holiday houses. Both Croatian and Hungarian informants agree that the cross-border area has sufficient capacities of one and two star hotels and resorts, emphasizing the fact that such accommodation will not play a crucial role in the future tourism development.

Table 8 Lack of sufficient forms and categories of accommodation crucial for tourism development

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
Rural accommodation	34	80	5	22	141
Hotel ****	29	26	43	14	112
Camp	44	25	3	17	89
Wellness hotel	32	12	16	19	79
Boarding houses	38	13	0	15	66
Holiday house, apartment	13	22	4	26	65
Hotel ***	32	21	0	11	64
Tourism resort	15	7	3	17	42
Resting place	2	14	0	9	25
Hotel **	5	1	0	3	9
Hotel *	2	3	0	2	7

Most highly ranked insufficient forms and categories of accommodation

5. TOURISM POTENTIAL OF THE CROSS-BORDER AREA – POSSIBILITIES OF FUTURE INVESTMENTS

Almost all informants (95,8%) agree that tourism development and investment can contribute to economic development of the cross-border area (annex 4).

The informants were asked to single out two forms of tourism (cultural, health, active, water, wine, hunting, religious, agro tourism) which they would develop in their county. They were subsequently asked to list several tourism values on which they would base the future development of the two selected tourism forms and to choose three promotional investments necessary to reach the target markets.

VARAŽDIN COUNTY

Informants from Varaždin county would primarily develop cultural tourism through better presentation of cultural events, improvement and decoration of the existing cultural heritage, followed by some interesting suggestions that handicrafts should be assigned to a higher level in culture. They find that it is essential to further develop Špancirfest and Varaždin baroque evenings, as well as to expand the offer of organising dance festivals, increase the number of musical events, theatre plays and use all the existing capacities for that purpose (cultural halls, culture centres, cinemas). Secondly, they would develop wine tourism through better organisation of visits to wine producers, organisation of additional fairs in order to present autochthonous wines, better presentation of wine-cellars, further development of the existing wine roads and development of the new ones, implementing activities related to grouping the wine producers in joint promotion of their region and wine. In order to reach the target markets, it is essential to implement activities related to promotion of cultural and wine tourism such as joint marketing, manifestations, fairs, setting up a regional tourism portal and development of information board systems such as tourism signalisation, geography maps, lists of accommodation capacities etc.

Local self-government (towns and municipalities) should be included in planning, realisation and marketing of tourism development through more organised actions and planning of tourism activities, better promotion oriented towards younger population, paying attention to needs and suggestions of the local population in order to achieve cooperation between local government and local population, investing financial assets into tourism development, arrangement of environment, better cooperation with the entrepreneurs providing support to their business activities, encouraging civil society organisations to be more active. They also

find that entrepreneurs should be included in tourism development, as well as local population organised through civil society organisations, emphasizing that each individual can in his own way contribute to tourism development by means of increased interest for various events, through proposing creative ideas and encouraging the increase of the number of events taking place each year, as well as through promoting ones region by „word of mouth“ method, and better offer of tourism products. Tourism authority, agencies and offices should pay attention to the needs of local population and tourists, better promote tourism activities, organise more tourism events, encourage local population and entrepreneurs to get involved in tourism development, especially young people with new and creative idea¹⁷ and develop signalisation and information signs. Besides the aforementioned, the informants from Varaždin county would include county representatives in tourism development, since they are the ones who should better present the existing tourism sights outside the county, create offices for strategy of tourism development and organise marketing activities for various events, providing timely information to tourists.

Scheme 1. Stakeholders of tourism development in Varaždin county



KOPRIVNICA-KRIŽEVCI COUNTY

Informants from Koprivnica-Križevci county are of the opinion that further tourism development should be based on development of recreational, i.e. active tourism, through development of fishing on Drava river and further construction of bike tracks and development of cycling tourism. Agro tourism should also be further developed based on the

¹⁷ Informants from the other counties also mentioned that it is essential to include local population in tourism development, with emphasis on lack of technical and professional support in development of ideas and lack of cooperation between the leading tourism stakeholders on a relatively small touristic area.

existing autochthonous products, natural resources, and it is also necessary to invest in horse raising and riding as one of popular activities in the scope of agro tourism.

with reference to promotional activities which should be implemented, informants from Koprivnica-Križevci county expressed the same opinion as the informants from Varaždin county, by placing joint activities first (advertising, manifestations, fairs etc.) followed by development of a regional tourism portal and development of an information board system. Planning and developing further development of tourism should primarily be administered by representatives of towns and municipalities by means of better organisation and improved offer for visitors, financing better promotion materials and activities ranging from planning to implementation of tourism activities and events. The informants also proposed that local authority should orient financial assets towards co-financing of all those who wish to adequately implement target measures in tourism development (elaboration of tourism plans, public procurement calls, transparent advertising, subsidies for offers in tourism). Furthermore, the informants are of the opinion that towns and municipalities should co-finance additional professional training for professionals in the field of tourism, especially those who will implement projects and team of people who will implement tourism projects and thus open the door to home and foreign investors.

Tourism associations were placed on the second place with reference to tourism development in Koprivnica-Križevci county, since they could contribute to tourism development through cooperation with the other tourism associations of towns and municipalities within the county - joint promotion, exhibition and arrangement of tourism activities, joint marketing and information support, including all places in tourism routes, additional education of professional workers and employment of young people in tourism sector, which could also prevent depopulation of rural areas. Tourism associations should also be responsible for monitoring the tourism related needs of local population of Koprivnica-Križevci county, as well as for development of tourism programmes adapted to needs and trends in tourism and for setting the objectives for tourism development and deadlines for their achievement.

Local population is by no means left out from tourism development. People are organised in civil society organisations and local boards which should be unavoidable subjects in tourism development, primarily through expressing their ideas and wishes through Internet forums, whereas the suggestions that towns and municipalities could organise a contest with a symbolic money prize for the best tourism ideas or the most beautifully arranged house plots¹⁸. It is very important that local population is actively included in development and

¹⁸ One of the best examples is the action of the Tourist association of Molve municipality „Molvarska jalša“, with the objective to influence the arrangement of the municipality. Prizes are awarded for the most beautiful balcony, the most beautiful window, flower bed, detail and general impression. diligence of Molve inhabitants related to

planning of tourism strategy. Besides local population, the informants are of the opinion that it is essential to include local entrepreneurs into tourism development, since they could provide their contribution through investments and development of tourism products. Furthermore, one should use examples of best practice in implementation of entrepreneurial ideas for the objective of tourism development.

Scheme 2: Stakeholders of tourism development in Koprivnica-Križevci county



SOMOGY COUNTY

Informants of Somogy county would continue to develop health tourism in their area. However, they are of the opinion that it is necessary to carry out reconstruction and renovation of the existing medicinal baths. Secondly, they would develop recreational/active tourism by revitalising the importance of Desdea lake (sports activities) and by construction and arrangement of horse riding paths in nature (equestrian tourism) and bike tracks (cycling tourism). Besides the necessity to develop the aforementioned two forms of tourism, the informants are also of the opinion that it is essential to invest in construction of the regional tourism portal, joint performances on tourism market (advertising, manifestations, fairs) and to continuously maintain the existing communication resources such as websites and tourism publications.

Informants from Somogy county partly answered the question on who should be included in planning, promotion and realisation of tourism development, however, majority of them didn't express their views regarding in which way the aforementioned stakeholders could contribute

decoration and arrangement of house plots, flowers, balconies and windows resulted in Molve being proclaimed as one of the most beautifully decorated smaller places in Europe.

to tourism development. The informants are of general opinion that local entrepreneurs, tourist offices and agencies¹⁹ as well as civil society organisations should be included in elaboration of the tourism development plan, and that local self-government (towns and municipalities) should put an emphasis on development of subsidy system for entrepreneurs in tourism sector.

Scheme 3: Stakeholders of tourism development in Somogy county



ZALA COUNTY

According to the informants from Zala county, tourism development in their county should be based on recreational/active, cultural and water tourism. Development of active/recreational tourism would be based on the existing bike tracks (development of bike tourism) and hiking, walking and forest paths. The informants also singled out tourism values and historical sights which are important for further development of cultural tourism, as well as the necessity to renovate the existing monuments, museums and rich tradition which needs to be preserved and promoted. The informants base the future development of water tourism in relation with several locations: Balaton and surroundings, town lakes, wellness centres, and they also mentioned the possibilities to develop fishing tourism.

The following investments in promotion should facilitate achievement of those objectives: construction of the regional tourism portal, continuous maintenance of the existing communication resources (website, publications) and issuing of the "county discount tourism card" for visits to various localities and attractions in the county area²⁰.

¹⁹ Most frequently mentioned are TDM and Tourinform.

²⁰ Takve kartice su uobičajene u glavnim gradovima, odnosno gradovima s masovnim turizmom, koja turistima omogućuje ulazak u muzeje, galerije i druga mjesta uz popust do čak 50%.

Informants of the Zala county are of the opinion that tourism development in the county should be based on active participation of entrepreneurs in creation of tourism events, whereas local self-government should provide subsidies for entrepreneurs on the local level and involve local population in organisation of tourism manifestations in the form of civil society organisation founded for the purpose of preserving old traditions and local heritage. In order to promote tourism values of the Zala county, the informants believe that both experts from the field of tourism and from the field of marketing should be included in tourism development. They all should jointly advocate for tourism interests and preserve in the elaboration of the unique tourism concept of the Zala county.

Scheme 4: Stakeholders of tourism development in Zala county



**JOINT CHARACTERISTICS OF TOURISM
POTENTIALS OF THE CROSS-BORDER AREA WITH
REFERENCE TO FUTURE OPPORTUNITIES OF
TOURISM INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT**

The previous section was primarily related to the current state of tourism potentials in the cross-border region, where the informants believe that the most attractive tourism forms at the moment include cultural, health, water and wine tourism. However, future development of the cross-border tourism would primarily be based on recreational/active, cultural, water and agro tourism (table 9).

As in previous section, the informants placed religious tourism as last option for future development and investment.

Table 9 „Which type of tourism would you primarily develop in the region“

Tourism type	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
Recreational (active)	9	39	26	39	113
Cultural	38	23	16	35	112
Water	21	23	17	34	95
Agro tourism	0	38	9	24	71
Health	7	10	30	21	68
Wine	25	24	7	12	68
Hunting	13	26	4	3	46
Religious	4	9	0	0	13
Other		winter tourism	eco-tourism		

It is generally known that selling a tourism product can be very complicated, since it does not involve selling of an individual product or service. One aims at selling the entire destination with all its values, natural and social beauties and sights. Due to increasing competition on tourism market, promotional activities are considered more important than ever in order to successfully sell some tourism product. Since the number of Internet users is increasing each day, the Internet is increasingly used as a form of promotion and sales. This was recognized by all informants from all analysed counties, placing the necessity to construct a regional tourism portal on the first place on the list of necessary promotional activities. (table 10). Furthermore, the informants are of the opinion that it is essential to support joint activities in advertising, participation at fairs and other manifestation, since it reduces the costs of such marketing activities.

On the other hand, the informants would not invest in publication of joint printed promotional materials and in support of online sales due to low level of knowledge in the field of information technologies and possibilities they offer, insufficient knowledge of foreign languages, low level of knowledge of the marketing „know-how“ and lack of differentiating and clear positioning on the market (Brščić, Tomčić, 2004.).

In order to further develop various types of tourism in the cross-border area it is essential to include all the interested and responsible parties in the field of tourism, environment and heritage of the analysed counties. According to the manual "Sustainable tourism in ten steps" it is important to systematically and strategically identify and include all those who have their share in a particular destination, region or tourism product because it will:

- Ensure participation of relevant people in planning and implementation of activities,
- Facilitate assessment of importance of heritage on selected localities,
- Ensure that all relevant topics were taken into consideration during planning of tourism development,

- Facilitate decision-making related to which activities are realistic to the extent that they can fulfil specific needs,

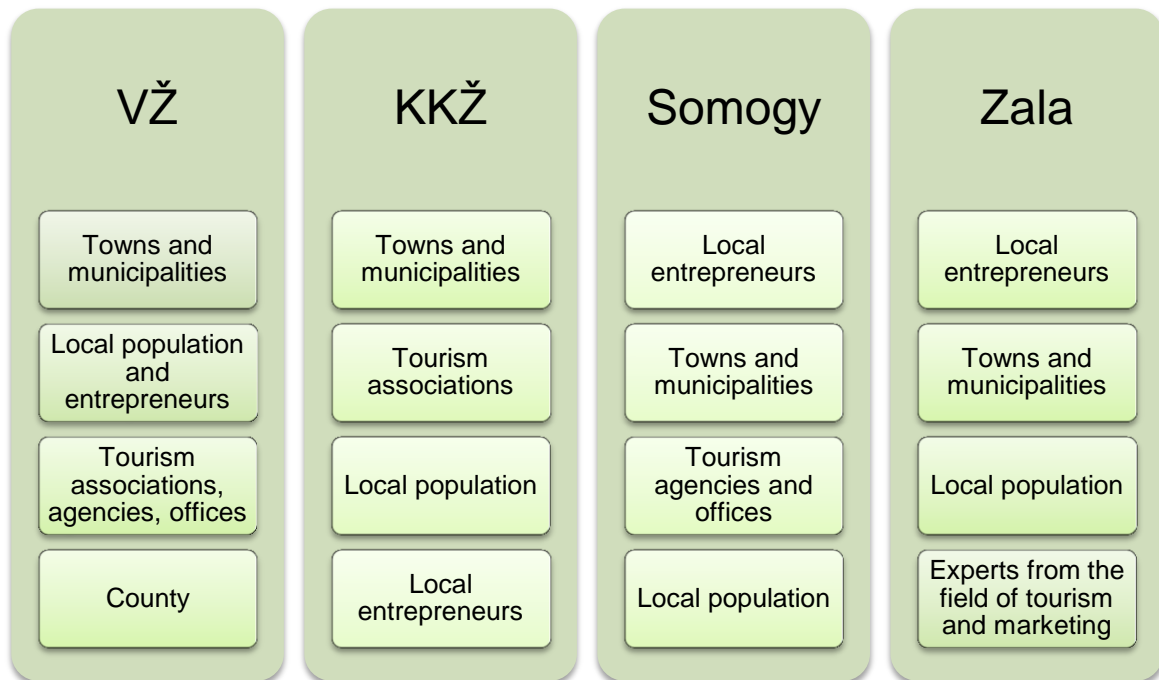
Facilitate the process of regional planning, as well as of management and development planning.

Table 10 Necessary investments in promotion in order to reach target markets

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
Construction of the regional tourism portal	47	57	33	45	182
Joint performances	51	66	26	24	167
Continuous maintenance of the existing communication resources	27	32	24	41	124
Development of the information board system	34	50	21	11	116
Issuing of the county discount tourist card	30	33	15	33	111
Online sale support (e-marketing solutions, websites)	9	20	20	29	78
Issuing of joint (merged) printed promotional materials	1	27	22	26	76
Other	creation of brand		jumbo posters		

If we observe the overall research results, it can be stated that the informants of all analysed counties agree that local self-government (towns, municipalities), local population and local entrepreneurs should be included in tourism development (scheme 5). Some differences relate to the fact that Croatian informants are of the opinion that it is the local self-government that triggers development of tourism activities, whereas Hungarian informants put the local entrepreneurs on the first place.

Scheme 5: Stakeholders of tourism development in the analysed cross-border area



6. SUGGESTIONS OF THE INFORMANTS

In the final question the informants were asked to give their suggestions regarding tourism development, which were not included in the other questions of the survey questionnaire. Most informants probably believed that the survey was very detailed and they did not propose any suggestions, whereas one part of informants expressed that they were pleased with the fact that the research will be the indicator of the opinion of local population and entrepreneurs with the possibility of investing in tourism and their own region.

Some of the other suggestions:

- One should pay attention to clean environment, since it is always attractive from the point of tourism
- In the future it should be less demanding to obtain licence for entrepreneurial tourism activities
- It is important to use the potential of exchange during summer holidays for primary and secondary school students (learning about cross-border development from a very young age)

7. CONCLUSION

The study of unused tourism potentials and investment possibilities in tourism in the cross-border area Hungary-Croatia identifies local tourism peculiarities of the cross-border area which could be included in the joint strategy of tourism development and be a foundation for investment study of this area.

Opinions and ideas of the local population and entrepreneurs related to investments in tourism indicate that tourism development is inseparable from characteristics and capacities of the local social structure.

Comparative research insight resulted in the following conclusions:

1. Local entrepreneurs and inhabitants generally express a very high level of interest for improvement of tourism development in domicile county, whereas concrete proposals and possible models of tourism development primarily come from Croatian entrepreneurs
2. Tourism development and investments in tourism can contribute to economic development of the cross-border area.
3. Current investments in tourism were not recognized by the informants.
4. Image of the area in Hungarian companies is more compact and includes natural beauties and environment, whereas Croatian counties lack such a prominent joint link. The basis of development of the cross-border tourism are natural beauties and environment, rich cultural heritage and developed wine growing and wine production.
5. Unfavourable circumstances for tourism development are the same in all analysed counties of the cross-border area and relate to poor promotion, poor traffic infrastructure and lack of financial assets.
6. The most attractive tourism forms in Croatian area are cultural and wine tourism, whereas religious, health and agro tourism are considered the least attractive. For Hungarian area the most attractive forms were complementarily health and water tourism, and religious tourism was the least attractive.
7. Information about tourism sights are obtained through different communication channels on both sides: on Croatian side the most prominent were local population, websites and previous visitors of the area, whereas Hungarian informants prefer printed materials, website and travel agency.
8. The most attractive activities for the tourists of the cross-border area are cultural manifestations, well developed wine production and gastronomy, hunting and sightseeing in general.

9. Accommodation capacities required for future tourism development on the Croatian side of the cross-border area are: accommodation in rural tourism, camps, three and four star hotels, whereas Hungarian side opted for four star hotels, wellness hotels, apartments and holiday houses.
10. Different kinds of tourism should be developed in the analysed counties based on the existing tourism offer which, in some segments, represents unused potential.
11. Future promotional activities should be oriented towards construction of the regional tourism portal, joint representation on the market (advertising, manifestations, fairs etc.) and continuous maintenance of the existing communication resources.
12. Stakeholders of planning, implementation and marketing of tourism development from the Croatian side are primarily towns and municipalities, and from the Hungarian side local entrepreneurs.

Recommendation for development of the cross-border tourism includes the need for continuous education on advantages of life and work in the cross-border area through preserving and promoting specific characteristics of the tourism area in creatively designed tourism product.

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9. ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 - Places of residence of the informants *

VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala
Varaždin (43)	Đurđevac (24)	Kapošvar (31)	Nagykanizsa (28)
Ludbreg (5)	Križevci (10)	Šiofok (6)	Zalaegerszeg (18)
Novi Marof (3)	Koprivnica (8)	Marcali (6)	Vonyarcvashegy (9)
Trnovec Bartolovečki (3)	Hlebine (6)	Nagyatad (5)	Keszthely (7)
	Ferdinandovac (5)		Pacsa (4)
	Virje (4)		Heviz (3)
	Brezje Miholečko (4)		
	Cepidlak (3)		
	Ferežani (3)		

* The places entered appeared three and more times in research results

ANNEX 2 - Number of entrepreneurs included in the research and location of their companies*

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
Number of entrepreneurs	31	50	30	39	150
(%) of entrepreneurs	44,29	49,50	53,57	45,35	47,9
Location of the company					
	VŽ (20)	Križevci (10)	Kapošvar (14)	Zalaegerszeg (13)	
	Novi Marof (3)	Đurđevac (10)	Šiofok (5)	Nagykanizsa (11)	
	Ludbreg (2)	Koprivnica (6)	Marcali (5)	Vonyarcvashegy (3)	
		Ferežani (3)	Nagyatad (4)	Keszthely (3)	
		Cepidlak (3)		Heviz (2)	
		Sv. Ivan Žabno (2)			
		Brezje Miholečko (2)			
		Kendelovec (2)			
		Hlebine (2)			

* Towns/municipalities listed appeared twice or more in the survey questionnaire

ANNEX 3 Interest of informants for tourism development in the cross-border area

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
YES	70	97	31	14	212
NO	0	4	25	72	101
Total	70	101	56	86	313
<i>(%) of answers "yes"</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>96,0</i>	<i>55,4</i>	<i>16,3</i>	<i>67,7</i>

ANNEX 4 „Do you agree that tourism development and investment can at the same time contribute to economic development of the cross-border region“

	VŽ	KKŽ	Somogy	Zala	Total
YES	70	101	49	77	297
NO	0	0	6	7	13
Total	70	101	55	84	310
<i>(%) of answers "yes"</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>100,0</i>	<i>89,1</i>	<i>91,7</i>	<i>95,8</i>

ANNEX 5 - survey questionnaire

The purpose of our survey is to know the people of the region, local entrepreneurs opinions and ideas about the turism investments and exploring the untapped potential for tourism place in the region.

The survey is part of the PRO-INVEST project, which the Hungary - Croatia IPA projects in the context of cross-border cooperation program. The project manager is the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of Zala County. The project aims at the Croatian-Hungarian border cooperation in the economic potential of the region grow, improve quality of life.

The Hungarian-Croatian border region is an excellent tourist destination and utilization of unused options - this option is included, and the promotion of efficient investment opportunities is part of the project.

A) Demographic issues

1. Respondent's gender:

- male
 female

2. The age of respondent:

- 30 51 – 60
 31 – 40 60 -
 41 – 50

3. Address:

4. If you have a business, it is based in the settlement:

5. Do you have any interest in the tourism of the region?

- yes
 no

B) Examination of the region's image

6. Do you prefer to live here, in your settlement?

- yes
 no

7. **What do you see as the most important values in the area?**

(Please enter at least three answers)

-
-
-
-

8. **In your opinion what are the key features of the negative space and the failures?** (Please enter at least three answers)

-
-
-
-

C) The tourism potential of the region - current status:

9. **What are the current developments, investments in your area?**

.....
.....

10. **In Your opinion, which values and areas are to attract tourists to the area?** (Please rank the items listed below!)

- Cultural tourism
- Thermal, spa and wellness tourism
- Leisure - Tourism and activities
- Other:
.....

11. **How did people find out about the neighborhood's different tourist sights?** (Please indicate the four most important!)

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Website: | <input type="checkbox"/> Guide |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Community page:
..... | <input type="checkbox"/> Local people |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Print media | <input type="checkbox"/> Previously, there were no personal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> TV, radio | <input type="checkbox"/> Traveling Exhibition |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Travel Agent | <input type="checkbox"/> Internet forum |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Publications | <input type="checkbox"/> Other: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Familiar | <input type="checkbox"/> |

12. Which tourism programs could tourists visit in the area of 20 kilometers?

(Please indicate the four most important!)

<input type="checkbox"/>	Sightseeing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Areas
<input type="checkbox"/>	Cultural events	<input type="checkbox"/>	Farms
<input type="checkbox"/>	Horseback riding program	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cycling
<input type="checkbox"/>	Exhibitions, Museums	<input type="checkbox"/>	Folk Traditions
<input type="checkbox"/>	Calendar of Events	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rowing
<input type="checkbox"/>	Walking, Hiking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Passive recreation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Historic Memorials	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nature Trail, show site
<input type="checkbox"/>	Festivals and other events	<input type="checkbox"/>	Organized, guided programs

13. What class of accommodation are there to choose from in the area of 20 kilometers?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel ****	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rural accommodation
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel ***	<input type="checkbox"/>	Guest house, apartment
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel **	<input type="checkbox"/>	Cottage
<input type="checkbox"/>	Hotel *	<input type="checkbox"/>	House Tour
<input type="checkbox"/>	Wellness hotel	<input type="checkbox"/>	Camping
<input type="checkbox"/>	Guesthouse		

D) Tourism potential of the region – Visions

14. Do You agree that tourism development could be the break point in boosting the economy of the region?

- yes
- no

15. What of the following areas should have development proposals in your opinion?

- Cultural tourism
- Thermal, spa and wellness tourism
- Leisure - Tourism and activities
- Other:.....

16. Please identify specifically what do you propose for the development of the area?

.....
.....

17. What specific development is important to the achievement of the target markets? (Please choose the three most important!)

- Preparation of regional tourism website
- Support (e - marketing solutions, Web) online Sales
- The information board system development (maps, accommodations, etc.).
- Common urban publications
- Public Appearances (advertising, events)
- Regional card issuance
- Ongoing maintenance of the existing tools (website, publications, structure)

18. Who and how should be involved in the implementation, operation and marketing of the development?

.....
.....

19. Comments and suggestions:

.....
.....

Thank You for answering our questions!