

Congress tourism and fair tourism of Slovakia – quantification, spatial differentiation, and classification

Anton Kasagrandá

Ministry of Finance of the
Slovak Republic
Comenius University in Bratislava,
Slovakia
E-mail: kasagrandaa@gmail.com

Daniel Gurnák

Comenius University in Bratislava,
Slovakia
E-mail: daniel.gurnak@uniba.sk

Katarína Danielová

Comenius University in Bratislava,
Slovakia
E-mail: danielova@fns.uniba.sk

Keywords:

congress tourism,
fairs in tourism,
regional and resort analysis,
Slovakia,
type of tourism,
categorization

Congress tourism and fair tourism are two of the most profiting types of tourism from the perspective of economic benefits. According to the research in the field of tourism, they are part of meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibitions (MICE) tourism. Developed countries with developed tourism focus on the importance of MICE. They also compete with one another. From the perspective of congress tourism, Slovakia is an attractive country due to its location in Central Europe, membership to the EU and Schengen, good transportation accessibility and political stability. This paper evaluates the development and importance of congress tourism and fair tourism as well as briefly evaluates the history of the development and potential of Slovakia, and characterises the accommodation infrastructure of these types of tourism in Slovakia. The conclusion summarises the most important findings of the analysis of congress centres as well as the findings of the identification of the main resorts of fair tourism in Slovakia.

Introduction

Congress tourism and fair tourism are two of the most profiting types of tourism from the perspective of economic benefits. Both are part of MICE tourism. Countries with developed tourism focus on the importance of MICE. These international destinations also compete with one another. Congresses are characterised by relatively high economic benefit and represent a way to promote cities (often on an international level) or countries that host them. These two types of tourism can also 'fill in' the off-season parts of the year and enable resorts to redistribute the tourist occupancy and create profit equally throughout the year. Both fair tourism and con-

gress tourism are economically oriented types of tourism that are bound to the existence of suitable conditions (material and technical basis) for their realisation. It is not only typical of the facilities such as exhibitions or congress resorts, but also their accompanying infrastructure or services, such as transportation system and accommodation (Vystoupil et al. 2006).

Slovakia is attractive for the needs of these types of tourism due to its location in Central Europe, membership to the EU and Schengen, good transportation accessibility, and political stability. Many of the resorts have additional services available, such as wellness and spa facilities, attractive regional products (cuisine, folklore, etc.), and attractive cultural and architectural sites (United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation [UNESCO] sites). These types of tourism are demanding material and personnel capacities, and the resorts need to have specific infrastructure.

This paper presents a brief overview of congress tourism and fair tourism, and evaluates their development and importance as well as briefly evaluates the development, potential of Slovakia and characterises the accommodation infrastructure of these types of tourism in Slovakia. The conclusion summarises the most important findings of the typing of congress resorts as well as the findings of the identification of the main resorts of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia. Resorts are compared on a regional level and spatially differentiated on the level of resorts.

Theoretical basis and literature review

The concept of MICE tourism is widely used within the field of tourism. MICE tourism is considered the fastest growing sector of tourism of the recent past (Dwyer–Forsyth 1997, Mistilis–Dwyer 1999, 2000, Sangpikul–Kim 2009). Matlovičová et al. (2015) understand this concept as business trips during which a traveller uses tourist services. Some authors consider MICE to be a part of event tourism, business tourism, or business events (Getz 2008, Getz–Page 2016, Rogerson 2005 in Caber et al. 2017). Business tourism, where the trip is undertaken for business and not for leisure purposes, is a major segment of the tourism market and is vitally important to the economies of many countries worldwide (Mair 2010). Davidson (1994) in Swarbrooke–Horner (2001) considers business tourism concerned with people travelling for purposes that are related to their work. This paper analyses only part of business tourism, specifically congress tourism and fair tourism.

Congress tourism is a part of tourism focused on ‘exchange of expert and scientific knowledge and experience combined with travelling of people within the congress locality’ (Orieška 2001). Pekez-Pavliško et al. (2016) point out that this type of tourism is also labelled as a type of convention tourism (Yoo 2005) or convention

and meetings tourism. It experienced tremendous growth during the past decade, and today, it is truly global in nature (Yoo–Weber 2005, Yoo 2005). According to Spiller (2014), foundations for the modern convention industry or convention tourism were laid only in the past two centuries, particularly in the United States and in Europe. During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, industrialisation spread throughout the United States as well as in Western Europe. With the growth of industry and commerce, the need for meetings between businesspersons and entrepreneurs has been materialised. Scientific and technological revolution, development of education and information technology had strong influences on the development of congress tourism in the 20th century. The positive influence is mutual as stated by Dwyer–Forsyth (1997) that meetings and conventions are a source of continuing education and training and are a forum for developing and maintaining professional contacts. Conferences draw together leading national and international specialists and practitioners in their fields, including world leaders in science, medicine, and business, strengthening a nation’s internal capabilities in each profession (Dwyer–Forsyth 1997).

According to Spiller (2014), congress tourism is one of the most buoyant sectors of the tourism industry. Attendees of congresses are demanding guests with high purchasing power; therefore, they need the provision of all necessary conditions for quality work, but also for quality leisure time (Gregoric et al. 2016). A significant benefit of congress tourism is its time of organisation of the events. The season does not play an important role. It is popular among accommodation service providers as it successfully fills hotel capacities during the off-season. It is generally held in spring or autumn seasons when hotel facilities need to fill in their free rooms (Kasagranda 2015, Matušiková–Plavčanová 2014, Šušić–Mojjić 2014).

Events in congress tourism can vary in size. Carey (1999) and Rogers (2003) explain that a congress is a regular meeting of a large scale, the coming together of large groups of attendees, where they discuss a particular issue over the course of several days. Conferences are also intended for discussions, exchange of experience, and problem solving, but generally on a smaller scale than congresses (Rogers 2008). Colloquiums and seminars are even shorter in time and smaller in scale. These events are appealing to professionals owing to the ability to present and discuss topics in a smaller circle of people.

The development of congress tourism requires a quality congress-tourism offer, which will satisfy the needs of the attendees and organisers of the congress. The quality of the congress or conference is dependent on many factors, many of which are the quality of the organisation of the event and the quality of the facility hosting the event. Congress tourism as a part of MICE tourism is a multifaceted industry. Its activities require, to a varying extent, many different players (Mistilis–Dwyer 2000): transport (international and domestic), accommodation, provision of pre- and post-conference tour opportunities, specific venues-purpose built centres

and hotels, services of professional conference and exhibition organisers, catering services, social programs for delegates and attendees, specialised technical support such as audio-visual services, and exhibition facilities for products.

Kuo et al. (2010) evaluated the satisfaction of the attendees of congress tourism at international congresses in Taiwan. The authors point out that the satisfaction of the attendees is dependent on a wide range of segments, such as hotel lodging, transportation, restaurants, tours, sightseeing, and entertainment. According to the authors, hotel services are critical to the success of the conference industry. The first contact or impression of international conference attendees is the one they have with hotel services, and this directly affects their satisfaction with international conferences. It is not only about the quality of the accommodation, but also about helpfulness, flexibility, awareness of the personnel, language and organisational capabilities as well as the ability to solve unexpected problems and satisfy special requests of the attendees of the events. Wei and Huang (2013) highlight that the planners of international conferences are advised to consider the conference-specific demands of the attendees when developing food service schemes. On such occasions, food is largely provided in the form of buffets that feature flexible options to feed a diverse body of attendees. Congress resorts are beginning to explore more options for attractive food display as food-conscious conference attendees are now demanding more than a quick bite (Wei–Huang 2013). The attendees of the conferences appreciate local products (cuisines as well as souvenirs).

One of the essential elements is the technical equipment of the accommodation facilities for the purpose of congress tourism. These facilities need to have sufficient number of larger and smaller conference rooms equipped with necessary audio-visual equipment as well as Internet connections (Schlentrich 2008). Information technologies have started to be an important precondition for the localisation of congress tourism. Mistilis and Dwyer suggested in 2000 that the rapid growth of MICE tourism, combined with increasing competition, makes information technology an imperative tool for marketing, distribution, promotion, and coordination.

Owing to the importance of this type of tourism, we can state that congress tourism helps the hotel industry to survive and it supports regional conditions. Congress tourism can constitute an important factor in developing the image of a place, region, or country where congress events take place, as both private and public entities are interested in the development of congress tourism (Oriška 2007). Regions have good odds in becoming more visible when choosing the appropriate social program with the usage of local products and local atmosphere. Few examples of these programs are thematic excursions in nature or around the place of the event, trips to the local employers, tasting of local products, offer of local handmade products, and shows of local bands (preferably folk bands). Even negative phenomena that are present in the location of the congress can attract attention of the attendees of these events.

The other parts of MICE tourism are fairs and exhibitions. According to Mydlová and Tolmáči (2013), fairs and exhibitions belong to the oldest communication tools that have been present since the time of ancient Rome to the present era of multimedia society. Similarly, Davidson (1994) in Swarbrooke–Horner (2001) states that a visit to these events is one of the oldest forms of tourism; men have travelled for this purpose of trade since the early times. The higher necessity to organise exhibitions emerged from the beginning of the industrial revolution. The first industrial exhibitions (both expert and for the public) took place from the middle of the 18th century. The first exhibition in continental Europe titled Waarenkabinet (display of goods) took place in Prague in 1791. The exhibition took place in the honour of the coronation of Leopold II. The organisation of these events soon started to occur on almost an annual basis in Paris and soon after in other cities and countries of Europe at the turn of the 18th and 19th centuries.

The development of exhibitions is inextricably coupled with the development of the economic fields that exhibitions serve as trade, information exchange, and network platforms (Jin et al. 2010). The praxis supports the significance of fairs and exhibitions, even in the 21st century and in the time of globalisation. A new type of industry ('fair industry' or 'exhibition industry' or within tourism as 'fair tourism' or 'exhibition tourism') grows around this complex medium and creates a global network of organisations and associations that control the direction of the industry. The growth of the industry was manifested in the rise of the numbers of fairs and exhibitions (UFI 2017). Global Association of the Exhibition Industry (UFI) was founded in Milan, Italy in 1925 by 20 leading European international trade fairs. UFI had 211 members (exhibition centres) in 2000, 540 members in 2010, 675 members in 2015, and 668 members in 2017 (until May). The association was present in 272 cities in 83 countries until May 2017. The attendees of the exhibitions have similar needs to the attendees of congresses, such as higher standards of services, sufficient knowledge, and need of a professional approach. According to Gúčík (2001, 2010), Plesník (1999), Novacká et al. (1999), and Krogmann (2002, 1999a, 1999b), they are clients with higher average expenditure in tourism.

The economic impact of congress or fair tourism is highly significant owing to the low economic and foreign exchange pressure on the industry (Grado et al. 1997). According to Bradley et al. (2002), tourists of meeting events are major users of the entertainment and accommodation facilities of the locations they visit. Congress and fair tourists spend more money on an average than leisure tourists do. The same authors emphasise that the potential for direct and indirect job creation associated with meetings tourism has been recognised as high. The importance and growth of congress tourism and fair tourism, which are reflected by the construction of centres and buildings for conferences and conventions, are not only witnessed in the major cities of the world, but are also increasing in secondary and tertiary tourist cities and locations (Oppermann 1996 in Martín et al. 2017).

There are several definitions for congress tourism. Orieška (2004) defines it as a type of tourism that is only very occasionally the result of a decision of an individual attendee. The motive of the attendee is mainly driven by his/her work necessities. Zelenka–Pásková (2012) and Malá (2002) consider congress tourism to be a form that is executed based on the visitors' motive. This motive can be primarily related to work and other activities, where leisure and regeneration are often only an additional service (sometimes entirely absent). Congress tourism is focused primarily on the exchange of expert, scientific, and other experiences.

Owing to the ongoing debate about inclusion of major forms or types of tourism into specific categories, authors of this article decided to identify it as a type of tourism according to Kasagrandá (2016), Šauer et al. (2015), and Lew et al. (2011). This type of tourism is a wider concept that includes both types (the determining criterion is the course of the event) and forms (the determining criterion is the course of the motivation) of tourism. The authors consider congress tourism and fair tourism to be a type of tourism.

The term 'tourist resort' is another problematic term owing to its problematic spatial delimitation in geographical literature/research of tourism. Many authors discussed this problematic delimitation (Holešinská 2012, Kasagrandá et al. 2016, Mariot 2001, Šíp 2005, Vystoupil et al. 2016, etc.). The authors of this article understand the term tourist resort as an administrative unit (commune/city) with tourist attractions, sufficient tourist infrastructure, and with accommodation facility with a specific bed capacity.

Methodology

The authors base their characteristics of congress tourism on research of some Slovak and Czech authors (Čuka–Šenková 2012, Krogmann 1999a, 1999b, Malá 2002, Orieška 2001, 2004, Vincze 2015, Vystoupil et al. 2006, 2011, and Zelenka–Pásková 2012). These authors address congress tourism as one of the essential components of tourism. There are many aspects that are absent in the geographic research of tourism, such as the spatial quantification of data and its identification (within the structure of Slovak tourism, differentiation on regional level or level of individual resorts) or two-way comparison and categorization of both congress and fair resorts. The authors' goal is to present a simple spatial analysis of congress tourism and fair tourism.

The theoretical portions of this article present an overview of the approaches to the solution of congress tourism and fair tourism in foreign countries as well as in Slovakia. The main goal of this article is to outline the main research questions when identifying MICE tourism and its connection to congress tourism and fair tourism.

In the introduction of the analytical part of this paper, the authors identify the brief development of congress tourism and fair tourism in a Slovakian context according to Esterhay (2010), Komora (2016), Kačírek and Tišliar (2014), Jančura

(2011), and Kršák et al. (2009). The brief development is followed by an outline of the brief characteristics of the potential of territory according to Matusíková–Plavčanová (2014), Slovakia.Travel (2017), and ICCA (2017).

The authors followed few logical steps when delimiting resorts of congress tourism and fair tourism. The first step was to identify the resorts of tourism according to Mariot (2001) and Vystoupil et al. (2011, 2016). As such, the SO SR (2017) database was used for the identification of 753 administrative units with mass accommodation facilities in 2015. In the second step, the authors used the database of MTC SR (2017a) and Slovakia.Travel (2016) to single out resorts that have facilities of congress tourism according to the Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic. There were totally 74 resorts identified (9.8%) with 33,604 beds from a total of 198,585 beds in Slovakia in 2017 (the share of beds used in congress tourism was 16.9%).¹ Regional differentiation was created within the internal structure of the resorts of congress tourism. Infrastructure was evaluated (number of facilities of congress tourism in resorts, number of apartments and beds) and subsequently, the number and visit rate of the congress events were evaluated and spatially differentiated on a regional level.

The main part of this article is dedicated to the spatial analysis of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia. The authors used the modified methodology of Vystoupil et al. (2006, 2011) and used the following criteria for the identification of the most important resorts of congress tourism:

- identification of 753 administrative units with mass accommodation facilities together with 74 resorts of congress tourism,
- identification of the number of accommodation facilities in these resorts.
- allocation of the number of apartments, mainly the number of beds,
- allocation of the area of conference space in the resort or its close proximity.

A total of 15 very attractive resorts of congress tourism was identified (see Table 3). These 15 resorts account for 66.4% of all the bed capacity of resorts of congress tourism (from a total of 74). These very attractive resorts were given the status of international, national, supra-regional, and regional significance, according to secondary criteria. The other 59 resorts of congress tourism were categorised as ‘other resorts of congress tourism’.

Resorts characterised as international dispose superstructures that are suitable for congress events of global importance. They have excellent transportation accessibility, excellent accommodation and congress capacities, and have connections to

¹ The authors do not challenge the ability of other resorts to host congresses (outside the 74 resorts). The authors assume that the application of the mentioned criteria represent limits for movement from local to regional significance. Databases of MTC SR (2017) or Slovakia.Travel (2016) has 209 subjects of congress tourism. Slovak Convention Bureau is one of the key organisations for organising congresses of great importance. The authors assume that the centres (having good infrastructure) that organise the most significant congresses are present in the database.

international organisations/institutions and companies. They dispose excellent pre-conditions for the development of congress tourism as well.

Resorts of national importance have relatively large number of international clientele, above standard number of more luxurious accommodation capacities, sufficient superstructure for the purpose of a major congress with international participation of at least European importance. These resorts are also important centres of tourism.

Resorts of supra-regional importance dispose sufficient infrastructure for organising a significant congress. These resorts are categorised according to Vystoupil et al. (2016) and are centres of tourism with higher than regional significance. More luxurious accommodation facilities are present in their territory (hotels with four plus stars). International visitors are common in these resorts with sufficient capacity of congress space.

Resorts of regional importance are often used for organising congresses with at least national attendance for companies and institutions that are present in the region. They dispose at least basic superstructure for the realisation of similar events.

The other resorts that dispose congress facilities are identified according to the database of SO SR (2017) and MTC SR (2017a, 2017b) as ‘others’.

Resorts of fair tourism were more easily quantified in Slovakia than it was in the case of resorts of congress tourism. Slovakia was a part of Hungary (and Austria-Hungary) for a long time, and subsequently a part of Czechoslovakia. There were more significant resorts of fair tourism in close proximity such as Vienna, Budapest, Prague, and Brno. As such, Slovakia did not develop a tradition of fair tourism. The authors used listed criteria to determine the potential resorts of fair tourism (methodology of Vystoupil et al. 2006, Vystoupil et al. 2011):

- dimension of the indoor exhibition area used for fair/exhibition purposes,
- number of regular events in a year,
- tradition of fairs in the tourist resort (counting the year of the oldest organised event).

If the mentioned methodology used for the identification of resorts of fair tourism in Czech Republic is applied to Slovakia, three resorts can meet the minimum criteria (Trenčín, Košice, and Banská Bystrica), while Nitra can meet the more strict criteria and only Bratislava can partially meet the toughest criteria. None of the fair resorts in Slovakia can be compared to the most significant fair resorts of the V4 countries and Austria, such as Vienna, Budapest, Warsaw, Krakow, Graz, or Brno. Two resorts of fair tourism are relevant in Slovakia from an international perspective: Bratislava and Nitra. These two are thoroughly characterised in the results.

There is important information that is necessary to mention at the end of this methodical part. The authors processed the most detailed available statistical database that reflects the present condition of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia when identifying tourist resorts. The Ministry of Transportation and

Construction of the Slovak Republic as well as the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic probably dispose more specific data on the level of individual resorts, congresses, and fair events (database of superstructure of resorts of tourism, number of visitors of congress events in the resorts of tourism, percentage of international visitors, characteristics and internal categorization of fairs/congresses, their distribution and multiplicity throughout a year, etc.). Such data, under the information of the mentioned institutions, are secret and private data, which can be published only after previous generalisation. According to what was mentioned, the data was not provided for the purpose of this article even after multiple enquires. It is also necessary to mention that similar analysis would exceed the extent of this article and it was not its main goal.

Results

The development and importance of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia

The main positive factor of the development of congress tourism in Slovakia was the development of university education (the foundation of many faculties of Comenius University and other universities as the ones in Žilina [1953], Banská Bystrica [1954], Košice and Nitra [1959]) and other scientific or technological institutions (e.g. Slovak Academy of Sciences in 1953) in the after war period. Socialism, owing to its ideology, helped to develop tourism in Slovakia due to its necessity to organise smaller or larger events of the Communist party.

Congress events (various conferences, symposiums, scientific, expert, or politically motivated programmes) took place in different parts of Slovakia with various periodicity, but without commercial character. Congress tourism in the present definition started to develop in Slovakia after the economic transformation of 1990. Liberalisation of the market along with relieving of the social environment (freedom of grouping, opening of borders) enabled the formation of congress tourism as a specific and essential form of tourism in general.

The success of the development of congress tourism is connected to its year-round feasibility that applies to the region of Tatras (Esterhay 2010) or many spa resorts.

The development of exhibitions dates back to 19th century as well. The most significant fair in Hungary was the Hungarian industrial exhibition in 1841 in Pest. The exhibition lasted nearly a month and was attended by 14,425 paying visitors (Komora 2016). It was soon followed by other exhibitions (in 1843 and 1846). The exhibition continuity was halted by the revolutionary years of 1848–1849 and after the suppression of the revolution, a repression of public life took place in Hungary. Slovakia as a part of Hungary started to organise exhibitions of regional character. Industrial exhibitions in Košice and Prešov in 1846 are considered the first modern exhibitions of fair character in Slovakia (Komora 2016). The devel-

opment of fairs in Hungary (in the Slovak part as well) was halted for social, economic, and political reasons after the revolutionary years of 1848–1849. Other countries of the world experienced a rapid development of fair tourism. A ‘World Fair’ tradition started in London in 1851. Central Europe was not without involvement as participants’ from Central Europe were part of the World Fairs and the Fifth World Fair took place in the nearby Vienna in 1873. The number of fairs that took place in Hungary, as well as in the region of Slovakia, started to increase by the second half of the 19th century. Exhibitions were numerous, mainly in Bratislava, Kežmarok, and Košice. Numerous one-off events took place in cities such as Rimavská Sobota, Oravský Podzámok, Nitra, Martin, Trnava, Komárno, Liptovský Mikuláš, Prešov, Žilina, and Spišská Nová Ves. The most significant event that took place in Hungary was without doubt the Millennial Fair in Budapest in 1896. The exhibition hall with an area of 55 ha was visited by 5.8 million visitors in 6 months. With these numbers, the Millennial Fair resembled the fairs around the world (Komora 2016). The largest fair in the region of Slovakia was the Second Provincial Agricultural Fair that took place in Bratislava in 1902. The exhibition area was in the present Sad Janka Kráľa area in Petržálka (22 ha) and was visited by 180,000 visitors in 20 days (Komora 2016, Kačírek–Tišliar 2014). An industrial exhibition took place in Žilina in 1903. It was the largest exhibition of its kind in the region of Slovakia with an exhibition area of 10 ha and with 60,000 visitors in 6 weeks. The popularity of economic exhibitions was in decline in the next period. The continuity of exhibitions was than halted by the First World War (Kršák et al. 2009).

With the formation of Czechoslovakia, the position of Slovakia changed rapidly. Fairs experienced a renaissance owing to an increased effort to present the development of Slovakia in the new political situation. The most significant of all the events was the Bratislava Fair that took place between 1921 and 1942. The importance of these events was weakened by the economic crisis from 1930 (Jančura 2011). Several regional exhibitions took place in Slovakia in the interwar period (Bratislava, Malacky, Liptovský Hrádok, Zvolen, Košice, Nitra, Trnava, etc.). All these were affected by the economic crisis. In 1938, there was a unique attempt to create a new fair centre in Košice by building a new exhibition area and by organising the ‘Exhibition of the East of ČSR’.

After the Second World War, the development of fairs and exhibitions was halted owing to the changing political relations after the communists took over in Slovakia. Bratislava started to organise exhibitions after 1967 when exhibitions of chemical products ‘Incheba’ (later renamed as International Chemical Fair [INCHEBA]) took place (Kršák et al. 2009). The present exhibition area of Incheba was not planned and built until the late 1970s. Soon after its completion, it started to host other events, such as INTERCAMPING, FLORA, and POLYMARKET. Trenčín started to host exhibitions, sooner than Bratislava, from 1963. It hosted the

exhibition of “Trenčín mesto módy” (Trenčín the City of Fashion) for which it later built a separate exhibition area. Nitra has become the third fair resort in Slovakia. Nitra has been hosting the agricultural exhibition ‘Agrokomplex’ since 1973. The largest exhibition area in Slovakia was built for this event (143 ha). Exhibitions have returned to Košice since 1981, specifically ‘Košické výstavné trhy’ (Košice Exhibition Markets).

The change of the regime and the economic transformation after 1990 presented a new impulse for the development of fairs in Slovakia. All the three major fair resorts (in Bratislava, Nitra, and Trenčín) had to be adapted to the growing competition by raising the number of events that they hosted. Banská Bystrica has hosted exhibitions as well from 1993. Exhibitions in Slovakia had to be accustomed to challenging international competition, changes in the market, as well as demand of the public. The two largest exhibition areas INCHEBA EXPO in Bratislava and AGROKOMPLEX in Nitra, in reaction to the changing market, started to open to the dynamically developing congress tourism.

Potentials for the development of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia

According to Čujková (2012) in Matusíková–Plavčanová (2012), the Slovak agency for tourism considers congress tourism strongly important. As such, it has created the Department of Congress Tourism, whose main responsibility is to move Slovakia from the position of one of the least known convention destinations in Europe to the position of an interesting, attractive, and competitive destination. This brings a tremendous challenge for the future.

Based on Slovakia.Travel (2017), Slovakia is a unique country located in the middle of Europe. It is a perfect destination for meetings, incentives, congresses, and events. The modern cities and their surroundings are supported by infrastructure, quality, and service. The countryside is full of unspoiled natural beauty. You will come across a multitude of outstanding cultural treasures, and taste delicious Slovak food and drinks which, with the influence of Hungarian, Austrian, and Czech regional cuisines, is exceptional. The same source indicates 10 strong points of Slovakia: stability of the destination; its scenery; cities and towns; thermal water and spas; gastronomy, traditions and folklore; great location and easy to reach Bratislava; history, culture and heritage; active holidays and busy cultural and social life; and not limited to the capital city.

Overview of congress and fair resorts

The International Congress and Convention Association (ICCA) (2017) measured the number and performance of congresses in Slovakia in 2016. Slovakia was ranked 63rd in the world in the number of congresses hosted (32nd in Europe). In comparison with the other V4 countries, Slovakia was ranked the worst (world ranking:

Poland was the 17th, Czech Republic was the 29th, and Hungary was the 33rd). Austria was ranked 12th in the world and 8th in Europe. The position of Slovakia moved down in ranking by six places in comparison with 2013. There were totally 33 congress events in Slovakia (of which 21 were in Bratislava). According to ICCA (2017), Bratislava ranks 120th in the world (moved up in the ranking by 14 places in comparison to its 2015 rank). Bratislava is ranked as the worst V4 capital (Prague is the 11th, Budapest is the 16th, and Warsaw is the 30th). Vienna belongs to the most significant world congress resorts as it is ranked as the second world congress centre right after Paris.

Facilities of congress tourism are organised into an organisation called the Slovak Convention Bureau. This organisation benefits from its membership to the national touristic organisation, Slovak Agency for Tourism (from 1 January 2017, the competences moved to the Ministry of Transportation and Construction of Slovak Republic [MTC SR]) and partnership with key service providers of MICE. In 2016, the organisation associated 4 hotels classified as ‘professional organisers of congress events’ (all in Bratislava), 5 ‘organisations of destination management’ (4 in Bratislava and 1 in Pezinok), and 10 hotels with category of ‘congress and conference facility member of SCB in Slovakia’ (7 in Bratislava, 2 in Vysoké Tatry, and 1 in Nitra). MTC SR (2017a) or Slovakia.Travel.sk (2016) agency (that worked until recently) also have a registry of the congress resorts of tourism. According to both these registers, there were totally 208 facilities in 74 resorts of tourism in 2015 (see Table 1).

The highest number of resorts can be found in the Žilina region (17) when spatially differentiating the resorts on the level of regions, than in Prešov region (13) and Banská Bystrica region (11). According to Vystoupil et al. (2016), these regions are characterised by high share of beds in city, mountain, and spa resorts. These resorts have very good infrastructures of bed capacities with exceptional additional services. They are primarily oriented towards luxurious clients and hotels of mainly five-star facilities. Congress tourism can play a dominant position on the visit rate of these resorts mainly in the off-season in the near future.

Bratislava is the most significant resort of congress tourism and fair tourism in Slovakia. There are many reasons why is it so. It is the capital and the resort of major scientific and expert institutions, universities, or seats of board of directors of major companies. The city benefits from the close proximity to Vienna, an international airport, good highways and railroad connection, close proximity to cultural and historical landmarks, and has sufficient number of accommodation capacities suitable for the needs of MICE tourism. The INCHEBA EXPO area, which regularly hosts CONECO exhibition, is in the close vicinity of the city resort.

Žilina, Košice, and Nitra are other important resorts of congress tourism in Slovakia. All these cities are more than just the capitals of their regions. Košice is ‘the capital’ of the East Slovakia with good infrastructure. Žilina has the University of Žilina, formerly known as the University of Transportation. This university was the

only university in the former Czechoslovakia, which awarded a degree in transportation. Nitra is the seat of more universities and has the national exhibition area AGROKOMPLEX (Krogmann 1999a, 2002).

The other cities are predominantly resorts of congress tourism. These cities benefit from the environment or specifically natural environment. Many of them benefited from the development of spas or were considered as a good access point to the mountains in the past. As such, many of these cities have had a good infrastructure necessary for the development of the present tourism (spa resorts Piešťany, Vysoké Tatry, Trenčianske Teplice, Bojnice, and Bešeňová; access point to the mountains/valleys of Tatry and Nízke Tatry, specifically Poprad, Demänovská dolina, Stará Lesná, etc.). These resorts were not originally used for the needs of congress tourism, but the owners of the facilities of tourism realised the potential of the locality and the facility to adjust to the needs of congress tourism.

Accommodation infrastructure, guests and visitors of congress and fair resorts

According to Slovakia.Travel (2016), there were 74 congress resorts with 208 mass accommodation facilities with a total number of 33,604 bed capacities in 2015 (see Table 1). The bed capacities of congress tourism accounts for 16.9% of the total share of mass accommodation facilities in Slovakia. The highest number of resorts is in the Žilina region (17), Prešov region (13), and Banská Bystrica region (11). The share of these resorts amounts to 55.5% among all resorts of congress tourism. The reasons for this were discussed in the previous part. The highest number of beds is concentrated in cities or villages (based on their significance) in the region of Bratislava and Prešov (Vysoké Tatry, Poprad, Stará Lesná, etc.). These resorts combined to 53.1% of the total share of the bed capacities of congress resorts (see Table 1 and Figure 1) and 49.4% of the total share of all bed capacities in congress tourism. This situation is understandable based on the importance of both resorts in the structure of tourism in Slovakia. The regions of Nitra, Trnava, Trenčín, and Košice (see Table 1 and Figure 1) are characterised by one well-equipped resort. These resorts are the economic resorts of the regions or have sufficient facility infrastructure that is – according to categorization of Vystoupil et al. (2016) or Kasagrandá et al. (2016) – oriented predominantly on the wealthy clientele.

Table 1

Characteristics of resorts with congress centre in Slovakia, 2015

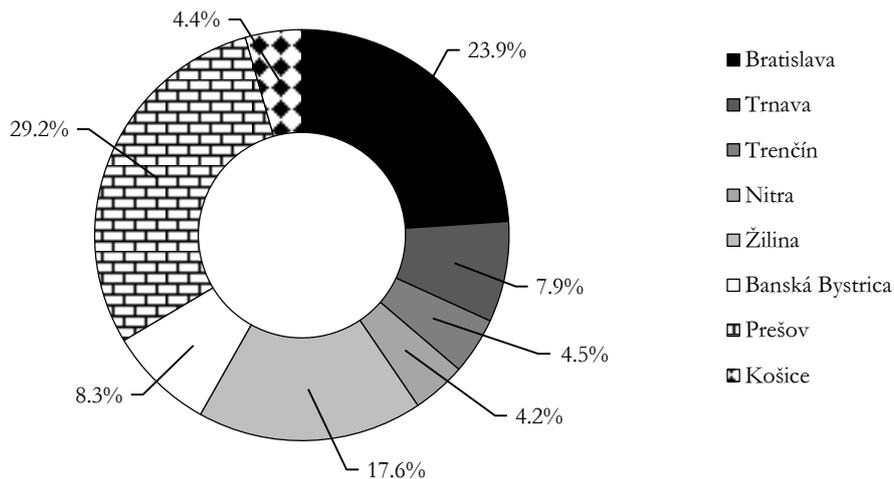
County/region	Number of resorts	Distribution of the number of resorts, %	Number of accommodation facilities	Distribution of the number of accommodation facilities, %	Number of rooms	Distribution of the number of rooms, %	Number of beds	Distribution of the number of beds, %
Bratislava	5	6.8	46	22.1	4,439	30.7	8,043	23.9
Trnava	8	10.8	17	8.2	1,3	9.0	2,662	7.9
Trenčín	6	8.1	14	6.7	570	3.9	1,501	4.5
Nitra	9	12.2	14	6.7	578	4.0	1,419	4.2
Žilina	17	23.0	31	14.9	1,986	13.8	5,913	17.6
Banská Bystrica	11	14.9	20	9.6	1,039	7.2	2,789	8.3
Prešov	13	17.6	51	24.5	3,91	27.1	9,798	29.2
Košice	5	6.8	15	7.2	621	4.3	1,479	4.4
<i>Slovakia</i>	<i>74</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>208</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>14,443</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>33,604</i>	<i>100.0</i>

Note: Here and in the following tables and figures, the deviations from 100.0% result from rounding.

Source: Own calculation based on MTC SR (2017a) and Slovakia.Travel (2016).

Figure 1

Distribution of beds in resorts of congress tourism by counties/regions of Slovakia, 2015



Source: Own calculation based on MTC SR (2017a) and Slovakia.Travel (2016).

There are two regions of *fair resorts* in Slovakia that are partially capable to withstand international competition. The first group of resorts is located in Bratislava (due to INCHEBA EXPO arena with 27 events in 2015) and the second is in Nitra (with AGROKOMPLEX exposition area with 26 events in 2015, its history is related to Slovak Agricultural University in Nitra). The other fair resorts such as Trenčín, Košice, and Banská Bystrica do not exceed regional character.

Table 2

Number and distribution of the participants and events of congress tourism in Slovakia

County/region	Number of participants		Change in the number of participants, %	Distribution of the number of participants, %		Number of events		Change in the number of events, %	Distribution of the number of events, %	
	2016	2015		2016	2015	2016	2015		2016	2015
Bratislava	199,819	234,047	-14.6	39.5	46.8	2,010	2,081	-3.4	39.9	42.9
Trnava	49,679	38,800	28.0	9.8	7.8	496	372	33.3	9.8	7.7
Trenčín	20,426	17,811	14.7	4.0	3.6	251	222	13.1	5.0	4.6
Nitra	13,154	22,857	-42.5	2.6	4.6	181	223	-18.8	3.6	4.6
Žilina	86,701	61,791	40.3	17.1	12.4	767	650	18.0	15.2	13.4
Banská Bystrica	65,038	58,014	12.1	12.8	11.6	658	701	-6.1	13.1	14.4
Prešov	41,241	43,157	-4.4	8.1	8.6	428	458	-6.6	8.5	9.4
Košice	30,256	23,170	30.6	6.0	4.6	245	148	65.5	4.9	3.0
<i>Slovakia</i>	<i>506,314</i>	<i>499,647</i>	<i>1.3</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>5,036</i>	<i>4,855</i>	<i>3.7</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>100.0</i>

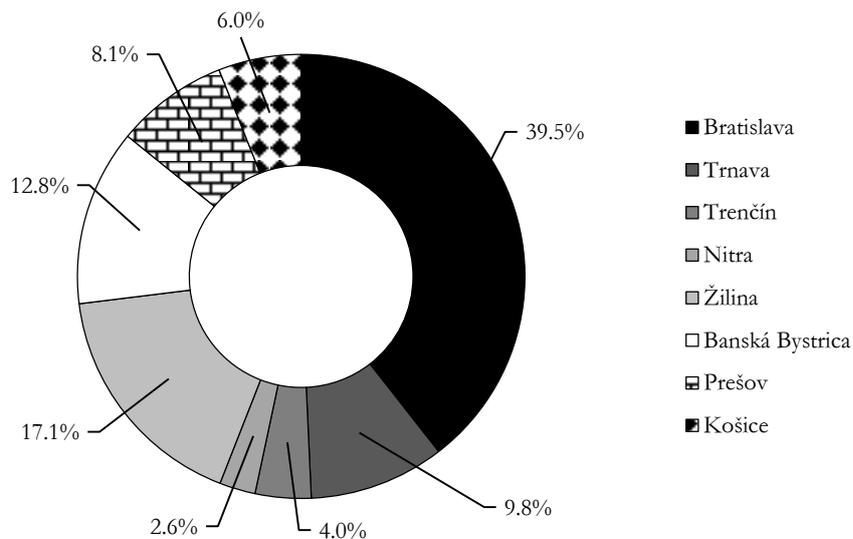
Source: Own calculation based on MTC SR (2017b) and SO SR (2017).

The Bratislava region dominates the number of attendees of congress tourism (with a total share of 46.8% in 2015 and 39.5% in 2016 of the total attendance of congress tourism in Slovakia) (see Table 2 and Figure 2). The Žilina region is second in the number of attendees of congress tourism (see Table 2 and Figure 2) with its congresses focused on industry and transportation. The city of Žilina seats a university that was at the prelude of the millennia, the most important university focusing on transportation in entire Czechoslovakia. Žilina resort is also one of the most important industrial centres of Slovakia. The Banská Bystrica region ranks third with a total share of attendees above 10% (see Table 2 and Figure 2). This region is specific. Two particularly attractive resorts of tourism are located here (Donovaly a Brezno—mainly part of Tále), each with history and developed infrastructure (both belong to the top 15 resorts of congress tourism). Besides these, there is the economic, political, educational resort and the regional capital Banská Bystrica. The city

of Banská Bystrica is not as significant as it was in the past, but suitable infrastructure remained for the possible use of congress tourism.

Figure 2

Distribution of the number of congress participants by counties/regions of Slovakia, 2016



Source: Own calculation based on MTC SR (2017b) and SO SR (2017).

The other regions are characterised by one or two significant economic resorts or have extremely attractive resorts of tourism, as mentioned in the previous part. Košice is the economic, scientific, and other centres of Košice region and of the entire East Slovakia. Piešťany is a well-developed centre of spa tourism of the Trnava region that focuses on more lucrative national and international clientele. It has excellent accommodation and other accompanying infrastructure that can be used (in combination with spa tourism that is the main type of tourism in the resort) for the purposes of congress tourism as well.

Classification of congress and fair resorts

The authors identified 15 resorts that exceeded local significance from a total of 74 resorts of congress tourism in Slovakia (20.3% of all the resorts). These resorts account for 66.4% of the total bed capacity of the congress resorts of tourism in Slovakia (22,314 from a total of 33,604 beds).

The rest of the 59 resorts were classified as 'Others'. These resorts represent 33.6% of the total share of bed capacity of the congress resorts of tourism in Slo-

vakia. These resorts are distributed relatively equally around Slovakia (see Figure 3). These resorts can be divided predominantly into two types of resorts when compared to the research of Vystoupil et al. (2016) and Kasagranda et al. (2016) (both concentrated on typisation of resorts of tourism). The first type of resorts according to Kasagranda et al. (2016) are the resorts of city tourism that fulfil the function of economic, social, educational, and other centres (such as Zvolen, Trnava, Trenčín, Prešov, and Dunajská Streda). The second type of resorts are particularly attractive resorts characterised according to Vystoupil et al. (2016) as resorts of spa (Rajecké Teplice, Turčianske Teplice, Sliač, etc.), resorts of summer recreation by water (Sládkovičovo, Šamorín, Štúrovo, Levice, Kolárovo, etc.), and mountain resorts of summer and winter recreations (Oščadnica, Ružomberok, Zázrivá, Pribylina, etc.). All these resorts have infrastructure oriented for more lucrative clientele with good hotel capacities and sufficient capacities of the congress and meeting rooms.

The city of Bratislava is the only resort of congress tourism in Slovakia with an *international significance*. It has 7,292 beds in 39 facilities that represent 21.7% share of the bed capacity of the congress resorts of tourism in Slovakia (see Table 3 and Figure 3). The position of Bratislava was mentioned many times in the previews parts of this text. It is an economic, cultural, educational, political, and other centre of Slovakia with very good infrastructure, numerous congress spaces, and good accessibility, among other features. Its position is strengthened by the fact that it is in close proximity to Vienna and Budapest, and by the river Danube. Bratislava is ranked at the bottom when compared to the major congress centres of V4 countries and Austria according to ICCA (2017). All the four capitals (Vienna, Prague, Budapest, and Warsaw) belong to the global top 30 centres of congress tourism. Bratislava is ranked 120th in terms of international significance.

Vysoké Tatry is the only resort of congress tourism in Slovakia with *national significance*. The city is very specific. There are 29 congress facilities with 5,556 beds (16.5% of total share of congress resorts of tourism) with an above average number of congress and meeting spaces. Vysoké Tatry is, in terms of area, the second largest resort in Slovakia. It comprises of three parts: Štrbské Pleso, Starý Smokovec, and Tatranská Lomnica (totally 15 settlements) that are natural centres of tourism in the Vysoké Tatry mountain range. This resort is the second most visited resort of tourism in Slovakia after Bratislava. The same applies for its infrastructure. There are a number of hotels that are oriented on wealthy national and international clientele and an airport Poprad–Tatry is in close vicinity. It can be assumed that owing to its natural and infrastructural advantages, this congress centre of tourism will develop and will exceed national significance.

Table 3

Overview of the most important resorts of congress tourism in Slovakia, 2015

Resort	Number of accommodation establishments	County/region	Number of beds	Number of rooms	Distribution of beds by the top 15 resorts, %	Distribution of beds by all resorts, %	Dimension
Bratislava	39	Bratislava	7,292	4,111	32.7	21.7	International
Vysoké Tatry	29	Prešov	5,556	2,216	24.9	16.5	National
Piešťany	8	Trnava	1,716	911	7.7	5.1	Supra-regional
Demänovská dolina	4	Žilina	1,058	368	4.7	3.1	Supra-regional
Košice	10	Košice	1,033	452	4.6	3.1	Supra-regional
Žilina	6	Žilina	897	416	4.0	2.7	Supra-regional
Poprad	6	Prešov	837	379	3.8	2.5	Supra-regional
Bešeňová	4	Žilina	588	177	2.6	1.7	Regional
Brezno	4	Banská Bystrica	572	221	2.6	1.7	Regional
Banská Bystrica	3	Banská Bystrica	555	276	2.5	1.7	Regional
Senec	4	Bratislava	507	207	2.3	1.5	Regional
Trenčianske Teplice	4	Trenčín	495	235	2.2	1.5	Regional
Martin	4	Žilina	487	189	2.2	1.4	Regional
Nitra	5	Nitra	404	202	1.8	1.2	Regional
Stará Lesná	3	Prešov	317	132	1.4	0.9	Regional
<i>Top 15 resorts</i>	<i>142</i>	–	<i>22,314</i>	<i>10,492</i>	<i>100.0</i>	<i>66.4</i>	–
<i>Other (59)</i>	<i>66</i>	–	<i>11,290</i>	<i>3,951</i>	–	<i>33.6</i>	–
<i>Total (74) resorts</i>	<i>208</i>	–	<i>33,604</i>	<i>14,443</i>	–	<i>100.0</i>	–

Source: Own calculation based on MTC SR (2017a) and Slovakia.Travel (2016).

Piešťany, Demänovská dolina, Košice, and Žilina a Poprad are the five congress resorts of tourism in Slovakia with *supra-regional significance*. There is total of 34 facilities with 5,541 beds (16.5% of the total share of congress resorts). The resorts of supra-regional significance (see Table 3 and Figure 3) can be divided into two groups. The first group consists of Košice and Žilina as natural economic, cultural, social, and other centres of the regions. Košice is the counterpart of Bratislava

and the most important centre of East Slovakia. Žilina is an important industrial centre of the Považie region. International investors have economic interests in both these centres. As such, the congresses take place in both these cities. Both the cities have major investors (US Steel in Košice or KIA motors in Žilina), educational institutions (Pavol Jozef Šafárik University in Košice, University of Žilina), and therefore have the potential for organising expert oriented smaller congresses with international attendance. The second group of supra-regional significance consists of specially attractive resorts of tourism (Piešťany as the most important spa resort in Slovakia and Demänovská dolina a Poprad as particularly attractive resorts of winter and summer mountain recreation) that concentrate on wealthy clientele. These resorts have a high share of international tourists, excellent accommodation infrastructure, and above average accommodation capacities of the higher category. The surroundings have good additional infrastructure.

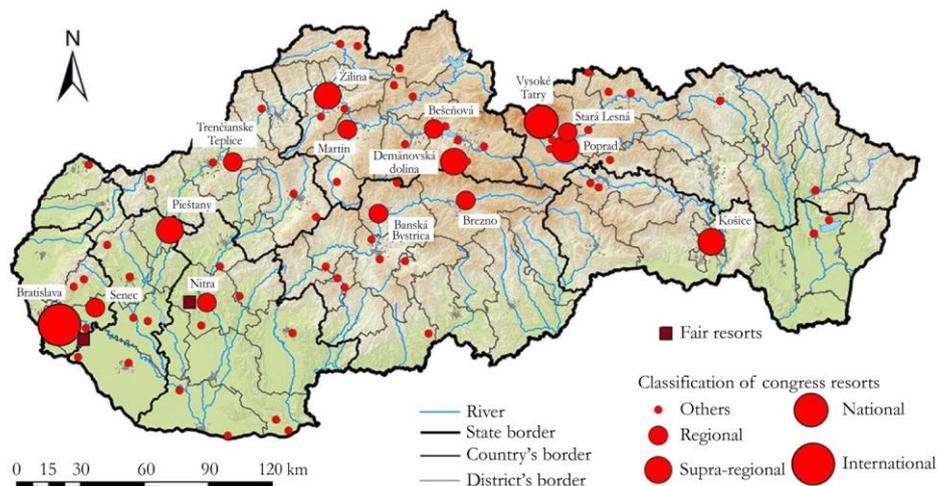
Eight congress resorts of tourism in Slovakia have *regional significance* (see Table 3 and Figure 3). There are a total of 31 facilities with 3,925 beds (11.7% of total share of congress resorts). The centres of regional significance can be divided into two groups as well. The first group consists of Banská Bystrica (educational and economic centre of Central Slovakia), Nitra (regional capital with important agricultural university and area suitable for fair events), and Martin (centre of Turiec region, seat of Jessenius Medical Faculty of Comenius University, Ecco Martin, and close proximity to the sub-contractors of KIA Motors). The second group consists of Bešeňová (resort of summer recreation by water in close proximity of Vysoké Tatry), Brezno (mainly recreational area of Tále with golf course in Nízke Tatry), Senec (resort of summer recreation by water in close proximity to Bratislava), and Trenčianske Teplice (spa resort of tourism – venue of regular international film festivals).

It is necessary to point out this short categorization of congress resorts of tourism that all 15 congress resorts with higher than regional significance are particularly attractive resorts. These resorts have an important role in the structure of Slovak tourism. They are visited by a large number of foreign tourists, they have exceptionally good infrastructure, and congress tourism can play a significant additional function to their main functions (city, spa, high mountains, and other types of tourism).

The authors of this article would like to repeat that there are currently two significant resorts of fair tourism in Slovakia, Bratislava and Nitra. Both these centres organise smaller fairs and exhibitions. Neither of them can be compared to the most important centres of fairs in the region of V4 countries and Austria as are Vienna, Prague, Budapest, Brno, Warsaw, and Krakow. Mostly national visitors attend these exhibitions. As such, most of these fairs do not have higher than regional or supra-regional significance. In addition, the number of organised events is lower in comparison to the previously mentioned fair centres.

Figure 3

Classification of congress and fair resorts in Slovakia



Source: Own elaboration based on MTC SR (2017a, 2017b); SO SR (2017) and Slovakia.Travel (2016).

Conclusions

Congress tourism and fair tourism are in this contemporary economically advanced and globalised world an integral part of MICE tourism and tourism in general. Experts and the public can discuss the theory behind their inclusion in the form or type of tourism. It is the task of all the science disciplines (economy, sociology, geography, management, etc.) to use appropriate methods of their own disciplines. As such, the role of geography is to evaluate spatial phenomena, to quantify and analyse infrastructure and visit rate, and create categorizations and compare the internal structure of congress tourism on a national, regional, or topical level.

It is necessary to begin the evaluation of the development of congress tourism in Slovakia with fairs, as congress tourism is relatively a new phenomenon with high significance mainly in the present globalised world. For objective reasons, the development of exhibitions and fairs in Slovakia lags behind other former Austria-Hungary nations (mainly Austria, Czech Republic, and Hungary). This is partially the reason why there are no internationally important centres of fairs in Slovakia. Five centres of fairs were created in Slovakia. Bratislava and Nitra are the most significant centres among them. It is important to observe that fair tourism started to develop from the 19th century, but its present form is the result only of the past few decades.

Congress tourism and fair tourism are presently an important part of Slovak tourism. The infrastructure of congress tourism constituted 16.9% of the total share

of bed capacities of mass accommodation facilities in 2015. This parameter is the most important part of the primary infrastructure of tourism in the conditions of all regions of Slovakia. The Bratislava region has the highest significance in the indicators of infrastructure as well as visit rate of events. The regions of Prešov and Žilina are second and third respectively, from the perspective of infrastructure; and the regions of Žilina and Banská Bystrica are second and third respectively, in terms of the number of organised events and visit rate. There are resorts in Slovakia with extraordinary infrastructure for the development of congress tourism, but this type of tourism plays only an additional role (e.g. for spa tourism or summer or winter mountain recreation). These characteristics are reflected in the statistics of the regions. As such, the characterisation on a lower level (identification of resorts of congress tourism) is important. The most important centre is Bratislava as the capital city and the economic, science, social, political, and other centre of the entire country with the best infrastructure as well as the highest number of events and visit rates in Slovakia. Bratislava is a centre with international significance and exceptional location between Vienna, Budapest, and Brno. Vysoké Tatry can be defined as a congress resort with national significance and good infrastructure potential that far exceeds the number of events and visit rates of the congresses. It is important to highlight two of the few supra-regional resorts (Piešťany, Demänovská dolina, Košice, and Žilina a Poprad) and these are Košice and Žilina. These are resorts with good infrastructure and high number of organised events and visit rates. Both are not only centres of tourism, but are also economic centres of their regions as well. Eight regions with regional significance (Bešeňová, Brezno, Banská Bystrica, Senec, Trenčianske Teplice, Martin, and Nitra a Stará Lesná) can be divided into two types of centres. The first type has excellent infrastructure, but low number of events (Bešeňová, Trenčianske Teplice, Brezno, and Stará Lesná). The second type has higher standards of infrastructure and comparably higher number of events as well as visit rates (Banská Bystrica, Martin, Senec, and Nitra). The other 59 resorts of congress tourism constitute 34.9% of the total share of bed capacities.

Fair centres do not have sufficient infrastructure for special significance in comparison to the resorts of congress tourism. This type of tourism only constitutes an additional function to the primary tourist function. Spatial differentiation on a regional level does not provide relevant data with any type of relevance, therefore it is almost insignificant. Five potential resorts of fairs were identified in Slovakia (Bratislava, Nitra, Trenčín, Košice, and Banská Bystrica). Only two of these (Bratislava and Nitra) have sufficient infrastructure to host more significant fair events.

The authors want to highlight that according to ICCA (2017), Vienna (2nd in Europe and globally), Prague (9th in Europe and 11th globally), and Budapest (12th in Europe and 16th globally) can be considered as global metropolises of congress tourism in the international confrontation of the most significant congress centres of the V4 countries and Austria (Prague, Budapest, Warsaw, Bratislava, and Vienna).

These three are followed by Warsaw (19th in Europe and 30th globally) and Bratislava (66th in Europe and 120th globally).

It is questionable as to what will the status of the centres of congress tourism look like in the system of Slovak tourism. We can only assume that the significance of the Slovak centres of tourism will grow in international confrontation.

Acknowledgement

The paper was supported by the grant of VEGA No. 1/0540/16 ‘Social, economic, and environmental determinants of regional development and transformation: a regional geographic approach’.

REFERENCES

- BRADLEY, A.–HALL, T.–HARRISON, M. (2002): Selling Cities. Promoting New Images for Meeting Tourism *Cities* 19 (1): 61–70. [https://doi.org/10.1016/s0264-2751\(01\)00046-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/s0264-2751(01)00046-4)
- CABER, M.–ALBAYRAK, T.–İSMAYILLI, T. (2017): Analysis of Congress Destinations’ Competitiveness Using Importance Performance Competitor Analysis *Journal Of Convention & Event Tourism* 18 (2): 100–117. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2017.1288185>
- CAREY, T. (1999): *Professional Meeting Management: A European Handbook* Meeting Professional International, Brussels.
- ČUKA, P.–ŠENKOVÁ, A. (2012): Geography of Tourism of Slovakia In: WIDAWSKI, J.–WYRZYKOWSKI, K. (eds.): *Geography of Tourism of Central and Eastern European Countries* pp. 381–406., University of Wrocław, Wrocław.
- DWYER, L.–FORSYTH, P. (1997): Impacts and Benefits of MICE Tourism: A Framework for Analysis *Tourism Economics* 3 (1): 21–38. <https://doi.org/10.1177/135481669700300102>
- ESTERHAY, P. (2010): *Vybrané Formy Cestovného Ruchu* (downloaded: 19/04/2014) <http://www.ulozto.sk/xtsk8uf/kongresovy-cestovny-ruch-ppt>
- GÚČIK, M. (2001): *Cestovný Ruch pre Obchodné a Hotelové Akadémie* Spn Ba, Bratislava.
- GETZ, D. (2008): Event Tourism: Definition, Evolution, and Research *Tourism Management* 29 (3): 403–428. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.07.017>
- GETZ, D.–PAGE, S. J. (2016): Progress and Prospects for Event Tourism Research *Tourism Management* 52: 593–631 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2015.03.007>
- GRADO, S. C.–STRAUSS, CH. H.–LORD, B. E. (1997): Economic Impacts of Conferences and Conventions *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management* 1 (1): 19–33. https://doi.org/10.1300/j143v01n01_03
- GREGORIĆ, M.–NAĐ, M.–GREGORIC, M. (2016): Potential of Congress Tourism in the Republic of Croatia in Comparison to Neighboring Destinations *Acta Economica Et Turistica* 2 (2): 195–209. <https://doi.org/10.1515/aet-2016-0017>
- GÚČIK, M. (2010): *Cestovný Ruch – Úvod Do Štúdiá* Slovak-Swiss Tourism, Banská Bystrica.

- HOLEŠINSKÁ, A. (2012): *Destinační Manažment – Jako Nástroj Regionální Politiky Cestovního Ruchu* Esf Mu, Brno.
- ICCA INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS AND CONVENTION ASSOCIATION (2017): *ICCA Statistics Report 2016*. International Congress and Convention Association Country & City Rankings Public Abstract (downloaded: 07/07/2017) <http://www.iccaworld.org/knowledge/benefit.cfm?benefitid=4036>
- JANČURA, V. (2011): Bratislavu Mali Zviditel'nit' Orientalne Vel'trhy *Pravda* 13. 08. 2011 <https://spravy.pravda.sk/domace/clanok/171398-bratislavu-mali-zviditelnit-orientalne-veltrhy/>
- JIN, X.–WEBER, K.–BAUER, T. (2010): The State of the Exhibition Industry in China *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 11 (1): 2–17. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470140903574021>
- KACÍREK, E.–TIŠLIAR, P. (2014): *Petržalka Do Roku 1918* Muzeológia a Kultúrne Dedičstvo, Bratislava.
- KASAGRANDA, A. (2016): *Hodnotenie A Priestorová Diferenciácia Cestovného Ruchu Na Slovensku* Dizertačná Práca Uk Ba, Bratislava.
- KASAGRANDA, A. (2015): Spatial Differentiation and Evaluation of Tourism Performance of Slovakia and its Specificities *Czech Journal of Tourism* 4 (1): 54–74. <https://doi.org/10.1515/cjot-2015-0004>
- KASAGRANDA, A.–RAJČÁKOVÁ, E.–VYSTOUPIL, J. (2016). Urban Tourism in Slovakia – Its Quantification, Spatial Differentiation, and Typification *Geographica Pannonica* 21 (2): 114–126. <https://doi.org/10.5937/geopan1602114k>
- KOMORA, P. (2016): *Hospodárske a Všeobecné Výstavy 1842–1940 – Svetové Výstavy, Výstavy V Uhorsku, Výstavy Na Slovensku* Snm – Historické Múzeum, Bratislava.
- KROGMANN, A. (2002): Návštevnosť mesta Nitra na príklade výstavy Autosalón *Geografické informácie* 7: 105–110.
- KROGMANN, A. (1999a): Congressional and fair tourism in Nitra *Acta Facultatis Rerum Naturalium: Geographica supplementum* 2: 317–322.
- KROGMANN, A. (1999b): Perspektívy kongresového a veľtržného cestovného ruchu v Nitre *Geografické informácie* 6: 96–101
- KRŠÁK, P.–GURŇÁK, D.–BARBORÍK, V.–BRLÁŇOVÁ, E.–ČIČAJ, V.–ČURNÝ, J.–FEDER-MAYER, F.–HERUCOVÁ, M.–HÓK, J.–JABORNÍK, J.–KACÍREK, E.–KOHÚTOVÁ, M.–KOVÁČOVÁ, M.–LACIKA, J.–LACKO, M.–LENGOVÁ, J.–LONDÁK, M.–LUDIKOVÁ, Z.–LUKAČKA, J.–MARUŠIAK, J.–MORAVČÍKOVÁ, H.–PAŠTÉKOVÁ, J.–PEŠEK, J.–PETÓCZOVÁ-MATÚŠOVÁ, J.–POHANIČOVÁ, J.–PRAVDA, J.–REPKA, V.–ROGUEOVÁ, J.–SABOL, M.–SIVOS, J.–STEINHÜBEL, J.–ŠOLTÉSOVÁ, D.–ŠŤASTNÝ, P.–ŠVÍK, P.–TARANENKOVÁ, I.–TURČAN, V.–VESELOVSKÁ, E.–ZERER, A. (2009): *Ottov Historický Atlas Slovensko* Ottovo Nakladatelství, Praha.
- KUO, CH.–CHEN, L.–LIN, S. (2010): Exploring Relationship between Hotel-Based Service Attribute Importance and Customer Satisfaction at International Conferences in Taiwan *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 11 (4): 293–313. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2010.533073>
- LEW, A. A.–HALL, C. M.–TIMOTHY, D. J. (2011): *World Regional Geography: Human Mobilities, Tourism Destinations, Sustainable Environments* Kendall Hunt, Phoenix.

- MAIR, J. (2010): Profiling Conference Delegates Using Attendance Motivations *Journal Of Convention & Event Tourism* 11 (3): 179–194. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2010.502032>
- MALÁ, V. (2002): *Základy Cestovního Ruchu* Vysoká Škola Ekonomická, Praha.
- MARTÍN, J. C.–ROMÁN, C.–GONAZAGA, C. (2017): Quality of Service and Segmentation in the MICE Industry: An Approximation Based on Fuzzy Logic *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 18 (1): 1–25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2016.1154808>
- MATLOVIČOVÁ, K.–KLAMÁR, R.–MIKA, M. (2015): *Turistika a Jej Formy* Pu, Prešov.
- MATUŠÍKOVÁ, D.–PLAVČANOVÁ, D. (2012): Congress Tourism in Slovak Conditions and its Importance in Regional Development *Visnyk of Volyn Institute for Economics and Management* 3: 92–103.
- MARIOT, P. (2001): Príspevok K Typizácii Stredísk Cestovného Ruchu *Geografický Časopis* 53 (4): 307–319.
- MISTILIS, N.–DWYER, L. (1999): Tourism Gateways and Regional Economies: the Distributional Impacts of MICE *International Journal of Tourism Research* 1 (6): 441–457. [https://doi.org/10.1002/\(SICI\)1522-1970\(199911/12\)1:6<441::AID-JTR177>3.0.CO;2-8](https://doi.org/10.1002/(SICI)1522-1970(199911/12)1:6<441::AID-JTR177>3.0.CO;2-8)
- MISTILIS, N.–DWYER, L. (2000): Information Technology and Service Standards in MICE Tourism *Journal of Convention & Exhibition Management* 2 (1): 55–65. https://doi.org/10.1300/j143v02n01_04
- MTC SR, MINISTERSTVO DOPRAVY A VÝSTAVBY SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic) (2017a): *Kongresové a Konferenčné Zariadenia na Slovensku (Mice)*. Interné materiály.
- MTC SR, MINISTERSTVO DOPRAVY A VÝSTAVBY SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic) (2017b): *Kongresový Cr 2017/2016* (downloaded: 06/07/2017) <http://www.telecom.gov.sk/index/index.php?ids=209458>
- MYDLOVÁ, A.–TOLMÁČI, L. (2013): Geografia Výstavníctva a Veľtržníctva *Geografické Informácie* 17 (1): 114–126. <https://doi.org/10.17846/gi.2013.17.1.114-126>
- NOVACKÁ, L.–PLESNÍK, P.–ŠTOFILOVÁ, J. (1999): *Rozvoj kongresového cestovného ruchu* Ekonomická Univerzita v Bratislave, Bratislava.
- ORIEŠKA, I. (2001): *Kongresový Cestovný Ruch* Univerzita Mateja Bela V Banskej Bystrici, Banská Bystrica.
- ORIEŠKA, I. (2004): *Kongresový Cestovný Ruch* Idea Servis, Praha.
- ORIEŠKA, J. (2007): *Kongresový Cr Na Slovensku. Top Hotelierstvo 2007*. (downloaded: 06/07/2017) <http://www.tophotelierstvo.sk/domaci-cestovny-ruch/turizmus/kongresov-cr-na-slovensku/>
- PEKEZ-PAVLIŠKO, T.-P.–VRDOLJAK, N.–ALEKSIĆ, A. (2016): Organization of International Medical Congresses Extending Croatian Tourist Offer *Acta Economica et Turistica* 2 (2): 101–236. <https://doi.org/10.1515/aet-2016-0018>
- PLESNÍK, P. (1999): *Geomarketing kongresového cestovného ruchu* Marketingový manažment kongresového cestovného ruchu pp. 39–42.

- ROGERS, T. (2003): *Conferences and Conventions. A Global Industry* Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- ROGERS, T. (2008): *Conferences: A Twenty-First Century Industry* Butterworth-Heinemann, Oxford.
- SANGPIKUL, A.–KIM, S. (2009): An Overview and Identification of Barriers Affecting the Meeting and Convention Industry in Thailand *Journal Of Convention & Event Tourism* 10 (3): 185–210. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470140903131822>
- SCHLENTRICH, U.A. (2008): The MICE Industry: Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibition In: WOOD, R. C.–BROTHERTON, B. (eds.): *The Sage Handbook of Hospitality Management* pp. 400–420., Sage, Thousand Oaks, California.
- SLOVAKIA.TRAVEL.SK (2017): *Údaje O Kongresovom Cr Sr* (downloaded: 06/06/2017) <http://slovakia.travel/kongresovy-cestovny-ruch>
- SLOVAKIA.TRAVEL.SK (2016): *Kongresové A Konferenčné Zariadenia Na Slovensku (Mice)*. Interné materiály.
- SPILLER, J. (2014): History of Convention Tourism In: CHON, K. S.–WEBER, K. (eds.) *Convention Tourism: International Research and Industry Perspectives* pp. 3–20., Routledge, London.
- SWARBROOKE, J.–HORNER, S. (2001): *Business Travel and Tourism* Routledge, London.
- ŠAUER, M.–VYSTOUPIL, J.–HOLEŠINSKÁ, A.–PALATKOVÁ, M.–PÁSKOVÁ, M.–ZELENKA, J.–FIALOVÁ, D.–VÁGNER, J.–HALÁMEK, P.–REPIK, O.–PETR, O. (2015): *Cestovní Ruch. Učební Text*. 1. vyd. Masarykova Univerzita, Brno.
- ŠÍP, J. (2005): Retrospektiva Vývoje Infrastruktury Lůžkových Kapacit Na Území České Republiky Před Vstupem Do Eu *Časopis Geografie-Sborník čgs* 2005/1.: 62–65.
- ŠUŠIĆ, V.–MOJIĆ, J. (2014): Congress Tourism as a Market Niche of Business Tourism *Economic Themes* 52 (4): 513–530.
- SO SR ŠTATISTICKÝ ÚRAD SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY (STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC) (2017): *Vybrané Ukazovatele Ubytovacích Zariadení Cestovného Roku Na Slovensku V Roku 2015, Resp. 2013* Interné Materiály, Bratislava.
- UFI (2017): *Ufi Global Membership* (downloaded: 20/07/2017) <http://www.ufi.org/about/ufi-history/>
- VINCZE, R. (2015): *Kongresový A Incentívny Cestovný Ruch* (downloaded: 16/09/2015) <http://www.sacr.sk/sacr/kongresovy-a-incentivny-cestovny-ruch-mice/>
- VYSTOUPIL, J.–HOLEŠINSKÁ, A.–KUNC, J.–MARYÁŠ, J.–SEIDENGLANZ, D.–ŠAUER, M.–TONEV, P.–VITURKA, M. (2006): *Atlas Cestovního Ruchu České Republiky* Ministerstvo Pro Místní Rozvoj ČR, Praha.
- VYSTOUPIL, J.–ŠAUER, M.–HOLEŠINSKÁ, A.–KUNC, J.–SEIDENGLANZ, D.–TONEV, P. (2011): *Geografia Cestovního Ruchu České Republiky* Vydavatelstvo Aleš, plzeň.
- VYSTOUPIL, J.–KASAGRANDA, A.–ŠAUER, M. (2016): Funkčně – Prostorová Typologie Středisek Cestovního Ruchu Česka A Slovenska *Geografický Časopis* 68 (2): 171–192.
- WEI, Y.–HUANG, Y. (2013): The Impact of Food Quality on Foodservice Satisfaction at International Conferences *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 14 (3): 252–269. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15470148.2013.815593>

- YOO, J. J. (2005): Development of the Convention Industry in Korea *Journal of Convention & Event Tourism* 6 (4): 81–94. https://doi.org/10.1300/j452v06n04_06
- YOO, J. J.–WEBER, K. (2005): Progress in Convention Tourism Research *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research* 29 (2): 194–222. <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/1096348004272177>
- ZELENKA, J.–PÁSKOVÁ, M. (2012): *Výkladový Slovník Cestovního Ruchu*. 2. vyd. Linde, Praha.