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TOURISMOLOGICAL CLASSIFICATION OF SPORTING EVENTS

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Abstract: Sporting events are programs, which are dominated by creative and complex facilities, primarily sports, but also recreation and entertainment. As such, they achieve tourism effects and goals and have a socio-economic importance for the city, region or state. Depending on the size and importance of sports event, sport has a different role in the context of promoting tourist destination, as well as different values. Each sport discipline has its own criteria by which athletes are ranked individually or as team. The subject of the research is to determine the criteria for the categorization of sporting events, in order to determine the importance of sporting events as an element of the tourist offer (individually or as part of a tourist destination). Also, this paper's results present a comparative analysis of similar methodologies for the categorization of sporting events. Based on the research presented in the paper, there are four groups of criteria: economic, media, social and environmental. Together with this, paper gives the classification of traditional sporting events in the case of Serbia, dividing them in four groups.

Key words: tourism, sports, events, categorization, Serbia

Introduction

Sports and tourism are one of the world's most important industries, which are in many cases related and compatible. According to Zauhar, (2003), “...stipulates that sport is an outstanding motivator for travel and tourism through history, with it having grown into mass tourism activity” (p. 27). According to Schumacher (2003, pp. 17-18) sport tourism “refers to travel away from home to play sports, watch sports, or to visit a sports attraction and includes both competitive and non-competitive activities”. There are two main categories of consumers in this kind of tourism: sport participation travels (travel for purpose of participating sports, recreation, leisure or fitness activities) and sports spectator travels (travel for purpose spectating sports, recreation, leisure or fitness activities).

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In the scientific literature sports tourism includes the ranking of sports events from mega sporting events (such as the Olympic Games, the FIFA World Cup), over medium (such as national or regional sporting events) to small sporting events (local sports competitions). Depending on the size and importance of sports event, sport has a different role in the context of promoting tourist destination, as well as different values. This can be through the preservation of the natural environment, as well as through capital investments in infrastructure (where it stimulates the development of the local economy), organizing numerous entertainment and artistic programs, characteristic of the city / region / country organizer, etc. (Avramovski, 1996; Turco, 1998; Kaplanidou & Vogt, 2006; Getz, 2008; Bjeljic, 2010; Rydin, Seymour & Lorimer, 2011). Gratton, Dobson & Shibli (2000), singled out great sporting events, which are held every year (e.g. ATP and WTA tournaments at Wimbledon) and large sporting events that are occasionally held. Wilson (2006) also singled out small events where the number of competitors is often higher than the number of viewers, and they are often held throughout the year and have little interest from the national media, as well as limited economic activities. Sports events of this type are held in small or medium-sized towns in order to provide proportionally (in relation to the size and population) greater economic benefit than it would be to maintain them in large urban areas (Veltri, Miller & Harris, 2009).

If sport's event is converted to a system followed by the procedures inherent to the formation of an integrated tourist product (tourist destination), then the sports and tourist event occurs. In this case, the sport makes its primary component, i.e. the value and the offer, while other values and forms of offer have the task to effect stimulating and complementary. Also, there are children's sporting events, as well as sports competitions, where the main actors are animals (Bjeljac, 2010). Sports events have accompanying character (representing only the accompanying program of the event). This is the case with entertainment (e.g. regattas, motorbike meetings, sports competitions in swimming, football, basketball, etc.) and ethnographic (promoting sports games and folk arts and thus promoting a tourist destination) tourism events (Bjeljac & Radovanović, 2003; Bjeljic, 2010; Bjeljic & Ćurčić, 2010).

In addition to professional sports (competition) events, sports and recreational events are also organized (Bjeljac, 2010). They are characterized by large mass attendance, enjoyment and socializing, testing one's own strength, health preservation, i.e. each participant is a winner, e.g. Rural Olympics, Workers' Sports Games, Fruška Gora mountain marathon, Belgrade Marathon, etc. (Nogawa, Yamaguchi & Hagi, 1996; Bjeljic & Radovanović, 2003). They are

characterized by sports facilities, mass attendance and accompanying entertainment and other programs.

Criteria for the Classification of Sporting Events

Each sport discipline has its own criteria by which athletes are ranked individually or as team (from local to global levels), according to the rules of national and international sports organizations and federations. Sporting events calendars fit together at different levels. One of the examples of such regulations is the *Regulation on the Criteria of Classification of Sports, Mind Sports Games and Sports Skills in the Republic of Serbia* (http://www.wrestling-serbia.org.rs/pravilnici/kategorizacija_sp_grana). The criteria are regulated and established for 74 sports (Table 1).

Table 1. Criteria and classification of sports, mind sports games and sports skills in Serbia

Criteria	Description
National social significance	Representation in the world; Media popularity of sport in the world
International tradition	World Organization; Mainland organization; Number of member states; The competition system
National tradition	Success — mass attendance; association; International success; clubs; number of members; The competition system
National media coverage and popularity	-
The financial autonomy of sport in the world and at national level;	-
Advertising activity in the world and in our country;	-
Impact on participants	motoric, psychological, social, health, educational
accessibility	regulations; competition system; multidisciplinary; the price; organizational requirements
The overall impact on the quality of life	-

Source: http://www.wrestling-serbia.org.rs/pravilnici/kategorizacija_sp_grana (2009)

The classification comprises a total of 100 points. Based on these criteria, four sports categories can be distinguished:

1. The first group: 85–100 points (athletics, football, basketball, volleyball, swimming, handball, archery, water polo, rowing, tennis);
2. The second group: 70–84 points (cycling, boxing, judo, gymnastics, kayaking-canoeing, karate, bowling, wrestling, table tennis, kickboxing, taekwondo, aviation, mountaineering);

3. The third group: 45–69 points; and
4. The fourth group: 30–44 points.

Regulation for the organization of the “Belgrade Trophy” competition (Serb. Pravilnik za organizaciju takmičenja “Trofej Beograda”) also stands out, promoting the City of Belgrade and the sport which is organized. In order to achieve the objective, it must meet the highest criteria and sport standards in the organization. It aims to promote the sport which is organized, in particular the promotion of sport among the youngest (<http://www.osb.org.rs/dokumenti.html>). Belgrade Trophy is organized in the following sports: athletics, basketball, karate, archery, wrestling, chess, volleyball, handball, taekwondo, water polo, swimming, auto racing, rowing, football, skating, cycling, etc.

An international project *Global Sport Impact (GSI)* has been held since 2011 in the organization of the *Sportcal* (Sport Market Intelligence, UK, 2012), aiming at creating an internationally acceptable standard methodology for measurement of major sporting events (mega sporting events, Multi sports games, World / Continental championships and great championships, other big sporting events and the World series). The plan of this project is to analyze more than 600 large multi-disciplinary sports competitions in the period of twelve years (period 2009-2020). Sporting federations and destinations (hosts of major sporting events) and the leading experts and stakeholders in the sports industry have participated in the development of the project. Economic and social criteria have been investigated, as well as sponsorship, sport and the media (<http://www.sportcal.com/Impact/GSIProject>).

Gibson, Kaplanidou & Kang (2012) emphasized the social, economic and environmental impact on the sporting events of small scale and scope (held in smaller towns and local communities) compared to mega and other big sports events. According to them, along to the opinions of other theorists (Higham, 1999; Bjeljic & Radovanović, 2003; Liu, 2003), this type of events can be a sustainable form of tourism development in local communities. Unlike the *GSI* findings (2015), the research given here are very critical of the role of mega sporting events in the sustainable development of sports tourism (and tourism in general). This refers to the sustainability of positive values to the host of mega events, the consequences of the financial burden, utilization of the built infra and superstructure facilities, environmental impact, negative social settlement, etc. (Hall & Hodges, 1996; Lee & Taylor, 2006; Smith, 2009).

Based on the research of Bjeljic (2010), the geographical and economic group of criteria are distinguished. This valorization was the basis for the *Regulation on*

the classification and categorization of events in Serbia (Bjeljac et al., 2013). Scholars, journalists and organizers of tourist events participated in the making of the regulation.

Table 2. Proposed criteria for categorization and classification of sports events in Serbia

Criteria	Description
Geographical group	Geographical origin and the number of visitors and participants, place of maintenance, transport accessibility and connections, maintenance time, the number of visitors and participants
Program group	Content — the number of accompanying events, satisfaction of visitors and participants, cultural and artistic value, traditionalism, term of maintenance
Economic group	Capital investments, financial sustainability, media and promotional impact, cooperation with tourism organizations and the tourism industry
Social group	The impact on the community, stakeholder relations, environmental effects, adaptation to persons with disabilities, involvement of volunteers, ranking of event

Source: Bjeljac et al., 2013

Categorization and classification of events is organized in order to improve the tourist offer of Serbia and achieve a better quality of offered tourism products and services. The standards for categorization of tourist events include the required elements established for the specific category based on which the number of points is determined. The criteria are divided into program, geographical, economic and social groups (Table 2).

Economic group of criteria — have become a major factor used by states / cities when they want to be the host of the event, as over investments (capital investments, infrastructure) they expect return and earnings from investing during the event, but also after it. However, there is a negative aspect of economic investments in sporting event, especially with the capital and infrastructure investments (Bjeljac, 2010). The importance of the organization of major sporting events contributes to the international promotion of the country and therefore larger profit of the state in the provision of services, tourism and consumer products.

It is similar with small scale events, where the results of many studies have shown that the income the host has from earnings comes from accommodation and food, the economic benefit is greater than the costs, the organizers of such events use the existing sports and other facilities, bring people who probably would never have come, except during events, provide income from hotels and restaurants, retail stores, gas stations, etc. According to these studies, the key would be to make some sort of economic portfolios of the host city, in order to

ensure the steady flow of tourists. Economic indicators involve the following: What is the average time of stay (nights) of participants (athletes) and visitors (spectators)? What is the total number of overnight stays in accommodation facilities? How much money the competitors and visitors spend during the event and what is the main influence that leads to it (Walo, Bull & Breen 1996; Horne, 2000; Daniels & Norman, 2003; O'Brien & Chalip, 2008)? The cooperation of the organizers with tourist organizations and tour operators and travel agencies (in terms of promoting the event, organized coming of visitors to the event and entertainment of visitors during the event, etc.) is also one of the most important economic criteria (Bjeljac et al., 2013). The impact of sponsorship can be considered here as part of the cause and the resulting economic impact. For organizations and individuals (sponsors), the sponsorship appears as a powerful marketing activity that has the power to strengthen corporate image, change consumer attitudes and establish close communication with existing and potential customers (Skorić, 2014). It is an area that is often ignored by the host city or/and the host country. According to the *GSI* research (2015), the 20 largest global brands are included in the sponsorship of at least one major sporting event. A question that is posed is to which extent these brands are associated with the events and how they can be identified together.

The influence of the media on the organization, promotion and monitoring of the event is of great importance, since they can contribute to very positive or very negative view of the event. Considering that in recent times the Internet and other digital media increasingly take precedence over the print, it is very difficult to find the standards, common instruments for measuring the media impact. The main research questions within the *GSI* research (2015) are: Does the media influence benefit to all participants in the process of organization of the event? Advertising is taken as a standard instrument for measuring the media impact, but is the real state of media impact reflected on major sporting events over them? Since the online media and social networks have become the key media, who is in charge in these media, and how to measure the impact of the media?

Social influence is very difficult to measure, because it is intangible and it is almost impossible to convert it into monetary value. How can pride and social conditions be evaluated by material values? This section explores the different areas of social impacts, such as volunteering, youth participation, socio-cultural relations of competitors and visitors of the event on one side and the native population on the other side, as well as education and environment; how does policy affect the organization and current events? Awareness of the event in the host city / nation, the impact on the image of the host city / nation, utilization of existing infra and superstructure facilities along with volunteering are the key

factors for the increase in social, physical and economic benefits at a host of the event; through the development of cultural, ecological and other types of tourism, as a broader concept of sustainability, joining social and cultural differences of competitors, visitors and residents of the host of the event (in the positive but also the negative sense), tourist perception, motivation, satisfaction of visitors and athletes during the event. The research indicators/questions of the social impact are: In addition to sports competitions (athletes) and the watching of them (spectators who are outside the venue), what are other activities in the host city (region, country) of the event? What are the primary motives of the presence at the event? In general, what are the levels of satisfaction of visitors and competitors? What are the ways of the local population involving in the event (Cater, 1993; Walo et al., 1996; Horne, 2000; Daniels & Norman, 2003; Liu, 2003; Fredline, 2005; O'Brien, Chalip 2008; Bjeljac, 2010; Ziakas, 2010; Gibson et al., 2012; Global Sport Impact, 2011–2015)?

Sports impact involves the questions: Are participants of the Olympic Games more important than the participants in the World Cup? What is the impact of sport and how to measure it? Is the number of participants or the number of participating countries important, or it should be focused on the quality of athletes who participate in competitions? How many regions of the world are the hosts of sports events and how many competitors from the region participate in these competitions? There is an increasing number of sports (and sports federations), which in various forms more and more organize mass competitions and large sports events (continental and world championships). Which form of participation should be taken and how many participants should be generated as a common instrument to measure the impact (Global Sport Impact, 2011–2015)?

Environmental impacts on sports events are relatively underrepresented in the literature that includes sports events (Daniels & Norman, 2003; Bjeljac, 2010). They are mainly studied through the sustainable development of existing sports facilities and capacities as part of economic development strategies. Collins, Jones & Munday (2009) indicated in the research that management dealing with sustainable development (environmental) will become one of the key stakeholders. As indicators of environmental impact studies Gibson et al. (2012) single out the following: What types of facilities (sports and other) are used? In what ways are the host of the event and the organizers — sports association are involved in the promotion of environmental protection and sustainable development?

Categorization of Sporting Events in Serbia

If the criteria for the categorization of major international sports events (Regulation on the criteria of classification of sports, mind sports games and sports skills in the Republic of Serbia, 2009; Global Sport Impact, 2012–2015) are applied in Serbia, the following results can be obtained. Since the Universiade in Belgrade until 2014, a number of international sports competitions have been held in Serbia. There is little data to show what is the impact of sporting events on the GDP, as well as what is the direct and indirect economic gain, and there have been no significant *capital investments*. Basically, it comes down to significant or less significant investments in the renewal of existing sports and other supporting facilities (especially hotels and restaurants). For large sports competitions (e.g. Universiade, handball and water polo European Championships, Davis Cup finals, as well as for the Futsal European Championship) there was a great coverage of domestic and foreign electronic and print *media*, over the social networks, which significantly influenced the promotion of Serbia and Belgrade abroad, as well as the exploring, better promotion of those sports. On the other hand, all the international sports competitions in other places in Serbia were sporadically monitored in domestic media and known only to the circle of spectators who followed those sports disciplines (e.g. Military World Championship in cross country in Apatin, the European Schools Championship in Subotica, FIS slalom at Stara Planina, Kopaonik, Zlatibor and Mokra gora, etc.). Thus, one can say that the media influence on these sporting disciplines was almost negligible. The tourist promotional impact must also be mentioned. Tourist Organization of Serbia has only initially a significant impact in promoting, when organizing promotional travels of journalists from abroad who are accredited at the event. It appears as part of the sponsorship pool. At large sports events which take place in Belgrade, the Tourist Organization of Belgrade has a significant promotional effect, which is reflected through the organization of various tours for guests.

Sports effect is most pronounced in Serbia. There are good conditions for the development of the sport (athletes, top sports results, coaching pedagogical basis), which would be even more qualitative with greater investment in sports infrastructure and basic sport. Sports events have an impact on the promotion and development of sports (especially less-known sports disciplines) among the younger population.

Social influence is quite present in a positive context at the organization of sporting events in Serbia. When a sports event is organized, it is always talked about the hospitality of the population in Serbia. Socio-cultural contacts of

athletes (competitors), visitors from abroad and residents tend to have a positive and significant role (through volunteering, catering services and to some extent tourism). This also affects the good image, but there are potential elements for a negative image. In addition to the current increase in tourist traffic (the number of overnight stays of foreign tourists), hospitality, socio cultural contacts and tourism promotion are not enough to use the opportunity for organizing tourist visits (trips) to the attractive tourist areas in Serbia (outside the host cities of major sporting events). It is left to the visitors.

The Categorization of Events According to the Regulation on the Classification and Categorization of Events in Serbia

In addition to major sports competitions, there is large number of traditional international sports tournaments, rallies and competitions. On the territory of Serbia, around 2,500 traditional events are held each year and about 400 of them are sporting events (www.manifestacije.com). Based on the criteria (Bjeljac, 2010; Bjeljac et al., 2013), sports-entertaining (competitive and recreational) and traditional sports events are selected, which may represent some of the aspects of tourism. The largest part of those sporting events represents only a supplement to tourist stay of visitors who are interested in any of the mentioned kinds of sports (especially in professional sports competitions).

However, there are sporting events, which according to the location of maintenance, authentic and various programs represent an individual tourist product, a significant element of the tourist offer, but also a significant tourist potential (particularly if they are associated with other forms of tourism). Also, they represent a significant element of tourist promotion. Based on the Regulation (Bjeljac et al., 2013), the paper gives the categorization of sporting events that are interesting from the tourist aspect. There are four categories and the total number is 100:

First group: events with at least 75 points and represent the independent value and independent tourist product;

Second group: events with at least 45 points and represent a significant element of tourism offer of a destination;

Third group: events with at least 30 points and represent events with significant growth potential; and

Fourth group: events with at least 15 points and these are the events in the initial stage of development.

According to the scoring, the traditional sports events are singled out representing the independent value and independent tourist product and belong

to the first category of tourist events in Serbia. These are: *TID Danube Regatta* (82 points), *the Drina River Regatta* (79) and *Happy rafting* (75).

TID Danube Regatta (Tour International Danubien) is the largest and the longest river regatta in the world — it lasts 73 days and 2,455 km of the Danube River are rowed. It is very popular in the world and besides the participants from the Danube countries there are also participants from other continents. The basic idea and goal of regatta is the utilization of free time, fitness and general health, fostering friendship among people, tolerance and respect for different ethnicities and religions, as well as the protection and preservation of the environment. It contributes greatly to the reputation and promotion of the Republic of Serbia, because foreign tourists are those who make many the participants of this Regatta. It starts every year from the German city of Ingolstadt (the last week of June) and ends up in the Romanian town of St. George. From the second half of July until the first week of August, it passes through Serbia. The route in Serbia contains visits to the following towns: Apatin, Bačka Palanka, Novi Sad, Stari Slankamen, Belgrade, Smederevo, Veliko Gradište, Dobra, Donji Milanovac, Tekija, Kladovo, Brza Palanka (www.manifestacije.com). Events and programs are organized for kayakers, where they learn about the local culture, history, folklore, customs and tourism potentials of cities and municipalities. Visits to tourist attractions are organized and sponsored by the municipal tourist organizations. In Serbia, the organizer is the Canoe Federation of Serbia, and the regatta has been held since 1956, visited by a few tens of thousands of visitors every year.

Drina River Regatta is the oldest event of tourist and recreational character on the Drina River, which has been held since 1995 in memory of the ancient tradition of the Drina rafters in the organization of the Sports and Tourism Centre “Bajina Bašta”. It lasts three days, on the route Bajina Bašta–Perućac–Ljubovija. Various music and sports and recreation programs are organized for participants and visitors. There are several thousands of visitors every year (www.manifestacije.com).

Happy rafting (Serb. Veseli spust) is a two-day event of sports and recreation and tourist character organized by the Kayak Club “Ibar” and the Tourist Organisation of Kraljevo. It has been organized since 1990, on the Ibar River. The route of the regatta goes from the medieval town of Maglić to the city of Kraljevo. In this sports and recreation regatta up to 10,000 people are involved (www.manifestacije.com). The programs have entertaining, musical and sports and recreational character.

These three events, although held in the rivers, constitute an *important element* of the tourist offer of Serbia as a destination on the global tourism market. The *Danube* is part of the Pan-European Cultural Route — Trail of Roman Emperors and the Wine Routes, the national cultural route “Fortresses on the Danube”. Its banks are the most significant centers of urban and cultural, manifestation, fishing and nautical tourism (cities of Belgrade and Novi Sad). There are also two national parks (Fruška Gora, Djerdap), as well as significant geological heritage and biodiversity sites (protected natural areas). The *Drina* River is characterized by sports and recreational fishing and nautical tourism. The Tara mountain (National Park), the mountains Maljen (Divčibare) and Zlatar are near the banks of the river, representing important centers of mountain tourism in Serbia. The multicultural and multi-ethnic structures in the downstream of the Drina River are important for the development of cultural tourism. The Ibar River is characterized by the so-called rafting tourism. Important national and international competitions in rowing, kayaking and canoeing and recreational or sporting competitions have been held in the Ibar waters. The national cultural route “Valley of the Kings” goes through the Ibar valley (Novi Pazar - Raška - Kraljevo). Monasteries, fortresses and other cultural and historical monuments from the 14th and the 15th century are located here. This is the area where the first Serbian state was formed (Bjeljac, Štrbac, & Ćurčić, 2006; Terzić, Bjeljac, & Jovanović, 2014; Terzić, Bjeljac, Jovičić, & Penjišević, 2014).

The *second category* of the events that are significant element of tourism destination offer includes: *Cycling Race through Serbia* (70), *Fruška Gora mountain marathon* and *Inter-Municipal Youth Sports Games* (trijunction of Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Montenegro) (68 each), *the Belgrade Marathon* (67), *Ljubičevo Equestrian Games* (66), *Belgrade Trophy* and *Zobnatica Equestrian Games* (61 points each). *Cycling Race through Serbia (Tour de Serbie)* is also within this group. The Danube cycling route *EuroVelo 6* passes through Serbia, which means that it is on the Atlantic–Black Sea route of the *European Cyclists Federation (ECF)*. The route is also good for the international cycling race “Through Serbia”, founded in 1939. The race goes a different route each year, and at the same time promotes attractive tourist destinations in Serbia.

Sporting events, old sports games and skills are also singled out, representing a significant tourist potential by their authenticity and qualitative programs in the context of development of undeveloped areas in Serbia through the development of rural tourism and presentation of cultural heritage. These are: knight traditional games *Lička Olympics* (Junaković Spa) (49 points), the *Days of*

Stanoje Glavaš – the Duke of Smederevo district (Glibovac) (34) and *World Cup in Banat šore* – the traditional shepherd play (Tomaševac) (41 points).

Conclusion

Sports and tourism are in complex, cause and effect relationship as, perhaps, the two of the most important industries and phenomena that have a significant impact on the socio-cultural and political life on globe. Sports events are the events over which the whole such complexity is being manifested. In order to determine in more detail the connection of sports and tourism, there was a need to classify and categorize sporting events. In the world and in Serbia, there are studies that attempt to determine the instruments through a number of criteria that would help to measure the impact of sporting events (from local to global levels) (*GSI* research criteria, i.e. the Regulation on the categorization and classification of events). What is common to most of the research is selecting the economic, media, environmental and social impacts. In Serbia, geographical group of criteria is singled out as very significant one, and as unique in the world the Regulation on classification and categorization of events in Serbia was made in order to isolate traditional sporting events that represent an important element of the tourist offer of Serbia. On the basis of these studies, the *TID Danube Regatta*, *Drina Regatta*, *Happy Rafting* and *Cycling Race through Serbia* stand out.

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