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DEVELOPMENT OF TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN THE CROATIAN TRAFFIC SYSTEM

ABSTRACT

Valorisation of tourist potentials as a guideline for the achievement of strategic determinants of Croatia's tourism is one of the main determinants of the economic system of Croatia for the period of upcoming years. Realisation of this determinant is not possible without the implementation of a long term transport policy and a policy for financing the construction and maintenance of traffic infrastructure facilities, along with other already mentioned factors which exist within the framework of social and economic reality including tourist industry.

This indicates that Croatia must take a clear stand with respect to the determining of the traffic infrastructure construction and maintenance strategy, as the main precondition realising the strategic determinants of Croatian tourism.

The authors start from the basic conditions of determining the strategy traffic infrastructure facilities construction and maintenance in the function of attaining already set development strategies of Croatia's tourism. Synchronisation as a part of the process of realisation is possible if it is possible to determine the feasibility and capability of those responsible for the realisation of the strategy and development of traffic infrastructure and tourist industry. If it is not realised on the level of its feasibility, then the only thing we get is one more declarative document in the field of economic activity.

KEY WORDS

tourist potentials, long-term transport policy, traffic infrastructure, economic development

1. INTRODUCTION

The functioning of the facilities of the traffic infrastructure is a condition for the organisational, technical, technological and economic integration of the transport system with other subsystems of the economy. This fact indicates that the building of elements of the traffic infrastructure within a transport system of a country is a synthesis of a number of factors, which are transformed through the development of social and economic relations within a country. An impor-

tant part in this transformation had, and undoubtedly still has the development of the production force of a society, the general political and economic consolidation of the country and the establishment of new identities for a number of economic activities. Within the gradual transformation of socio-economic relations and forces, the transport facilities have started to take an increasingly important and irreplaceable position within the development of other activities of the socio-economic chain. In practice, this correlation is heterogeneous, which is undoubtedly the result of functional or basic technical, technological, economic and organisational characteristics of traffic infrastructure facilities.

The optimisation process, as the central starting point of the process of developing the traffic infrastructure facilities, is the multiplier of evaluating a number of economic and social actions, which is, to a significant extent, expressed within the process of establishing the new identity and market for the presentation of Croatian tourism. This, in its entirety, represents a synthesis of endogenous and exogenous development factors and market repositioning of Croatia as a significant tourist country. This fact, which is present as a determining factor of Croatia's tourism, indicates that the process of optimising the development of transport infrastructure (along with other segments of the process of establishing a new identity and market repositioning of Croatia) imperatively have to be in the function of valorising the already invested social accumulation, i.e. that which is intended to be channelled to individual tourist areas or the expansion – completion of the tourist offer (gradual establishing of the recognisable Croatian tourist area). This viewpoint contains an analysis, which must also comprise negative implications of the optimisation process of traffic infrastructure construction, if the construction of the mentioned facilities is not done in a manner which is to insure optimal social benefits. This means that the major investment endeavours must be subject to consultation and interest of the whole tourist indus-

try as well as the whole transportation system as an integral part of the economic system. The process of interest must be expressed through the activities of social structures, which means that it must be more than a mere declarative stand. If this activity is not synchronised from the standpoint of the economic system as a central factor of economic flows, the transport infrastructure can emerge as a limiting factor of development and valorisation of the already built or tourist potential in completion, and the presentation on the tourist market.

Facilities of the traffic infrastructure, as part of the totality of the transport system, in the course of their long development period, have been treated differently. This moment is important in the process of valorisation of greatly heterogeneous development and modernisation policy, and especially the maintenance process, which weakens the integrity of these facilities with its surroundings within the transport and socio-economic system and constitutes an insufficient traffic infrastructure, which was, with its level of technological activity, incapable of satisfying all the segments of the valorisation process of tourist potentials during a longer period of time.

2. DEVELOPMENT OF TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE AND VALORISATION OF CROATIA'S TOURIST POTENTIALS

The process of finding the right solution is closely related to the determining of traffic infrastructure development strategy and the realisation of strategic determinants of the development of Croatia's tourism and represents a synthesis of most favourable solutions regarding one or more set goals.

If we are to incorporate also in these considerations significant financial means, which each society must contribute out of its accumulation, or else take credit obligations, it is beyond any doubt that we are faced with the question of already forgotten rationalisation of investment activities in our area where it did not have any previous significance in the sense of the activity of market forces. This means that the construction and modernisation of facilities and equipment of traffic infrastructure must be rationally used in the sense of inaugurating market forces, if we are to obtain significant economic effects in the process of realising all strategic determinants of Croatia's tourism.

This means that we must part with the established investment mentality, which was so immanent in all our investment endeavours that it is truly amazing that it was, for such a long period of time applied as a rule within our economic system. This does not mean that

at this moment, investments of new capital from abroad, which also attracts a different and richer structure of tourist clientele, are not disputable.

The principle of distribution rationalisation of available financial means should have been implemented a number of years ago as a form of behaviour and compliance with economic factors in the area of total economic activity. Economic rules, known for decades in other parts of the world, are only now finding their place with other segments of economic life in our country. Therefore, it is imperative to revitalise the severed or never existent links between limited financial resources, the phase of defining strategic avenues (determinants) of development of traffic infrastructure facilities with its environment, specifically tourism potential of Croatia in the process of obtaining determinants of development of Croatian tourism. If this link fails to be realised in due time, the results will be devastating, primarily for our process of revaluation of tourist potentials, where substantial part of own as well as foreign accumulation was invested. In this context, it is necessary to include a number of transport policy and Croatian tourist development policy measures, which must be functional within a fixed period of time. This means not those before their time nor those which are late or lagging behind in their effect.

Investment activities directed to traffic infrastructure facilities including: roads, railways and stations, air fleet, airports, safety landing equipment and over-flight equipment and aircraft take-off equipment, postal and telecommunication capacities, river ways, river ports, sea routes, sea ports, marinas, ask for significant financial resources, the effects of which are not realised within the year of their introduction but, in the economic and transportation sense, mature over a long period of years. This means that the strategy of establishing, modernising and maintaining the facilities of traffic infrastructure and in the function of valorising of tourist potentials must be carefully balanced so that it becomes a segment within the process of the development strategy of Croatia's tourism. Therefore there must be a synthesis of strategies of both of these economic activities, of transport and tourism.

Rationalisation, as a form of investment behaviour, and optimisation, as means for establishing an optimal network of transport infrastructure objects, are undoubtedly the most important moments to which every society must pay special attention.

Extra-economic effects should also be considered, which are occasionally of equal importance as the economic ones. The finding of the rational investment and homogenisation process of artificial facilities of traffic infrastructure present for the investor a number of multidisciplinary problems when the creation of realistic and most of all for the realisation process feasi-

ble development, modernisation and traffic infrastructure facilities maintenance policy is concerned. This means that the investor must bear in mind the necessity of harmonisation for the purpose of more complete valorisation of tourist potentials with all the forms of traffic infrastructure with which the synthesis is made, which is an integral part of establishing new identity and the market repositioning of Croatian tourism. The disharmony of these elements results in a fragmented tourist offer which, unfortunately, cannot be presented to the tourist market, which itself results in the incapacity to realise the wanted financial effects and achieve an adequate integration in the European transportation and tourist flows.

3. DETERMINING OF THE STRATEGIC DETERMINANTS OF TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENT WITHIN THE FUNCTION OF VALORISING THE CROATIAN TOURIST POTENTIAL

The basic determinant in determining the development of traffic infrastructure in Croatia, within the function of valorising tourism potentials must be based on the really possible and realistic goals and timely and effective economic instruments which are necessary in the process of reaching the strategic determinants.

Questions which need to be synthesised with all the segments of the economic coexistence within the process of revalorization of Croatia are:

1. defining of infrastructure policy, which also encompasses the long term policy for financing transport infrastructure,
2. co-ordination of transport system of Croatia with all segments of the economic system, as this is the only way of achieving a balanced economic growth,
3. scientific and expert valorisation of the transport policy and the policy of construction and maintenance of the traffic infrastructure, as well as programs for development of transport and traffic infrastructure at all levels and in all aspects of transport in the country with other activities of economic existence of the country.
4. measures aimed at reaching such transport and infrastructure policies must be synchronised, their effectiveness or ineffectiveness being proportional with the realisation of the program. This indicates that the Croatian state must clearly define the goals and instruments with which these can and are to be obtained, and without explicitly defined persons responsible for individual tasks there can be no discussion about clearly defined policy of the

State aimed at financing and maintaining of the traffic infrastructure facilities in Croatia.

The basis for establishing of traffic infrastructure financing policy must be based on the really feasible and realistic goals, measures and executable instruments. If this important moment is not determined, the bearers of the traffic policy will, as in the recent past, act individually and inadequately within a framework of a dubious transport policy, non-existent suitable methodology, which will result in unrealised program i.e. strategic goals by those responsible for their realisation. The negative effects will manifest themselves through a set of unrealised program goals, which will have a negative effect on the geo-transport valorisation of Croatia. In this manner, one of the main problems of our tourist offer will remain unsolved, the problem of the chronically inadequate infrastructure in all segments of transportation. When mentioning the geo-transport position of Croatia in the context of the determinants of Croatia's tourism, it must be pointed out that it covers the activity of three great segments: The Mediterranean (Adriatic), the Pannonian (Danube), and the Dinaric region. Therefore, Croatia is located at the symmetric position of the Mediterranean and Europe, and the position of the Adriatic, set deeply in the European mainland gives it an exceptional transport-strategic significance. The transport and geographic position of Croatia presents the basis for its transport planning and also in accordance with this, for determining the basis for the establishment of the possible transport policy and the policy for the construction of traffic infrastructure facilities.

One question arises when setting the strategic avenues of the transport infrastructure in Croatia: what are the strategic interests of Croatia that lie behind the construction of the traffic infrastructure? In answering this complex question one must pay due attention to the analysis of the whole economic system, its needs, the evaluation of new complex "incoming" data from which one could derive the specific weight and importance of all facilities of the traffic infrastructure and from which an attempt could be made to determine the strategy for the development of the Croatian transport system and co-ordinate the same with the already inaugurated development strategies of other economic activities.

Therefore, within the process of defining, it is necessary to determine: a) direction of traffic infrastructure development and b) strategic transport priorities of Croatia, which are co-ordinated with the already set strategic determinants, concretely of Croatian tourism.

- a) The programmed direction of development related to the geo-transport and geo-political position of Croatia and its role in the transportation

linking of Europe. Programmed directions of transport infrastructure development for the following time period are:¹

- 1) Within the context of road construction – construction of the Goričan-Zagreb and Karlovac-Delnice-Rijeka motorway, the completion of the Zagreb-Macelj motorway towards Austria, as well as the construction of the Adriatic motorway from St. Rok, Maslenica and Zadar-Split to Dubrovnik. The reconstruction has to be carried out on the stretch of the so called “south corridor” from Karlovac to Zadar and from Bjelovar to Osijek, which belongs to the “northern corridor”.
- 2) Within the segment of rail transport, it is necessary to complete the modernisation and elimination of bottlenecks on the existing railway line Rijeka-Zagreb-Koprivnica, enable international lines to facilitate speeds of up to 200 km/h (direction Karlovac-Rijeka with an extension in Istria and a double track direct line Zaprešić-Pragersko on the Zagreb-Graz (Austria) line, and the defining of the corridor and line of the Adriatic fast railway line.
- 3) In the area of air traffic, emphasis should be placed on the process of intensive interregional, Euro-Mediterranean, regular and charter connections with clear defining of Croatian government policy for air traffic.
- 4) Within the field of telecommunications – the acceptance of the TEL (Trans Europe Lines) program, i.e. the construction of the part of the international fibre optic cable system from Ukraine and Hungary, via Zagreb to Rijeka with extensions branching to Osijek and Slavonija and from Zagreb to Ljubljana. Of special importance is the ADRIA 1 program – the underwater fibre optic cable system from Rijeka to Krk, Zadar, Šibenik, Split, Hvar to Dubrovnik, with its connections.
- 5) In the field of maritime transport – with the key development role of the Rijeka port, the emphasis is put on further development and specialisation of all the Adriatic ports as crossroads of all integral traffic (road-rail-boat) through cargo and container terminals, especially connected with free industrial and trade zones.
- 6) In the field of river transport – modernisation of river ports on the Sava, Drava and Danube rivers along with a large development project for the construction of a navigable and irrigation canal Sava-Danube from Slavonski Šamac to Vukovar, which will enable Croatia to become a part of the European navigable system Rhine-Main-Danube.

- b) Strategic traffic infrastructure development priorities in Croatia should primarily be concerned with the form and position of the Croatian territory as well as long term interests, where one should not forget the geo-transport, transport-geographic and geopolitical position of Croatia within the European and the transport and economic system of the world. Furthermore, it should be taken into consideration that Croatia has no direct link with the developed Europe (only through Slovenia) which makes necessary the following: better usage of ferry boat connections with Italy, and a possible valorisation of the ferry line Umag-Italy, as well as directing development towards Rijeka-Zagreb-Budapest-Kiev.

As far as traffic infrastructure facilities are concerned, it is necessary to maintain a high level of balance in the development process, which indicates that the systems for their financing and subsequent maintenance need to be determined.

Rationalisation in all aspects of traffic infrastructure necessitates the determining of directions of construction, individual phases, but primarily the appointment of those responsible for the construction. In due time, it is necessary to prepare the scientific and expert basis for the secure performance of government transport policies through channelling and co-ordinating the development of transport infrastructure in an optimal: spatial, transport, construction and technical, traffic-safety, ecological, economic and commercial and generally economic sense, and taking into consideration the advantages of the Croatian territory as a Central European (Pannonian and Danube region) and Mediterranean (Adriatic) region.

This points to the necessity of analysing such important strategic goals, determining the priorities, subjecting the investment process to market and economic principles, differentiating the cost effectiveness balance so as to realise the feasible, and avoid writing programs containing unrealistic and unrealisable wishes.

4. THE EFFECT OF TRAFFIC INFRASTRUCTURE MODERNISATION IN THE CROATIAN TRAFFIC SYSTEM

The achievement of strategic traffic infrastructure development goals in Croatia up to the year 2010 represents an important factor in development and valorisation of tourist potentials on all localities in the country. This is even more important if we take into account the resolving of chronic infrastructure problems present on all localities in Croatia. The traffic infrastructure, which, by its technological and exploita-

tion characteristics does not meet the modern demand of fast movement, is gradually but surely beginning to come up as a determining factor of the tourist potential and starting to be called "chronic infrastructure problems". As such, it is, along with other segments present in the Croatian tourism, a limiting factor to intensifying tourist development.

When we analyse the cost of transports or the transport of mail services and telecommunications, the analysis can be made from the standpoint of the user as well as the supplier of the transport service.

From the standpoint of the transport service user, it presents expenditures connected with transport functions, dispatching of postal services and telecommunications messages, whether these arise during the transportation process or are related to the start-end operations. These expenditures are contained within the price which tour operators offer as part of the package of a certain tourist service – arrangement, but their size represents an important factor in the final price of the presented tourist arrangement.

Considering that, from this standpoint, there is no doubt that the technical – exploitation state of the traffic infrastructure facility represents one of the greatest contributing factors which each transport participant – user must take into account, it is obvious that the extent of these expenditures presents itself as a function of choice for a certain transport service in the sense of the technical, technologic and exploitation level of the traffic infrastructure facility. This moment undoubtedly puts us within the process of optimising the strategic direction of development of traffic infrastructure facilities as one of the more significant factors of valorisation of the complete complex of the tourist offer.

Time saving constitutes an important component in choosing between certain localities. These savings greatly differ due to the different transport means within that composition of the traffic infrastructure facilities. We could mention savings in fuel consumption, length of the trip on arrival or departure, exposure to unnecessary expenditures during the arrival to individual destinations. This means that these have the significance of variable expenditures, and tourist arrangements should minimise these or at least reduce them to reasonable market levels.

Within the context of elements relating to the modernisation and construction of transport infrastructure facilities, an important factor included all the facilities which enable safe and undisturbed performance of all types of transport (road, rail, air, sea and river transport), which means that their modernisation and higher technical-technological level enables the presentation of a safer service of traffic infrastructure facilities.

Outdated elements and poor technical, technological and exploitation condition of traffic infrastructure

facilities are the main contributing factor in traffic accidents. All the mentioned elements represent segments of an inseparable whole of the transport and economic system and it is impossible to view them partially. Therefore, the carrying out of the process optimising the traffic infrastructure as a function of valorising Croatia's tourist offer demands that goals and instruments with which these are to be obtained must be clearly set, with a clear appointment of those responsible for carrying out the individual tasks. Without this we cannot speak of a clear policy of the Croatian government towards the significant impact of transport infrastructure and of working on reaching the strategic goals in the tourist industry of Croatia set for the future years.

5. CONCLUSION

The insufficient traffic infrastructure, within the process of valorising the tourist potential of Croatia, is the limiting factor of the interactive linkage with all the segments of the socio-economic, transport system of the country and further.

The synthesis of all segments within the socio-economic system is the primary condition of the harmonious development and valorisation of what was already invested in tourist potentials, which must be rationalised through the valorisation component. The palette of valorisation components does not necessarily consist only of the transport infrastructure, but its role in the process is significant.

The significance of the presented elements can be realised through the process of strategic development of the traffic infrastructure facilities in Croatia, while in tourism, significant activity lies in the process of restructuring, various forms of rural tourism, valorisation of our cultural heritage through tourism, more aggressive marketing on the European tourist market. This means that realisation is possible and the process of harmonisation of the economic system as a whole can be fully implemented, but the measures and instruments for their implementation must be realistic and feasible. Otherwise, all the documents become an expression of mere declarative support which bears negative economic connotations and affects the complete process of Croatia's integration into tourist and transport flows of the developed Europe.

SAŽETAK

RAZVOJ PROMETNE INFRASTRUKTURE U HRVATSKOME PROMETNOM SUSTAVU

Valorizacija turističkih potencijala kao smjernice realizacije strateških odrednica hrvatskog turizma jedna je od temeljnih odrednica hrvatskoga gospodarskoga sustava u narednim

godinama. Realizacija te odrednice nije moguća bez postojanja dugoročne prometne politike i politike financiranja gradnje i održavanja objekata prometne infrastrukture uz ostale već spomenute čimbenike koji se nalaze u okruženju društvene i gospodarske zbilje u kojoj djeluje turistička privreda u Hrvatskoj.

To ukazuje da se hrvatska država mora jasno očitovati glede utvrđivanja strategije gradnje i održavanja prometne infrastrukture kao osnovne pretpostavke realizacije strateških odrednica hrvatskoga turizma.

U radu autori polaze od temeljnih pretpostavki utvrđivanja strategije gradnje i održavanja objekata prometne infrastrukture u funkciji realizacije strategije razvoja hrvatskog turizma. Sinkronizacija kao dio procesa realizacije je moguća ako se utvrdi realnost i mogućnost obnašatelja da realiziraju strategiju i razvoj prometne infrastrukture i turističke privrede. Ako se to ne realizira na razini provedivosti, dobivamo još jedan deklarativan dokument u sferi gospodarske aktivnosti.

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