

2nd

**International
Scientific
Conference**

1-3 June, 2017

Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia

2

0

1

7

**TOURISM
IN FUNCTION OF DEVELOPMENT
OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA**

**Tourism product as a factor of competitiveness of
the Serbian economy and experiences of other countries**



**THEMATIC
PROCEEDINGS**

I



**UNIVERSITY OF KRAGUJEVAC
FACULTY OF HOTEL MANAGEMENT
AND TOURISM IN VRNJAČKA BANJA**



CITY BREAK TRAVEL AS A FACTOR OF TOURISM INDUSTRY COMPETITIVENESS

Milena Podovac¹

Abstract

Modern trends in the development of tourism indicate a growing interest of tourists for shorter but more frequent holidays in cities during the year. In addition to the main holiday during the summer season, the tourist demand is directed towards the urban destinations in order to satisfy the need for fun, relaxation, getting to know the cultural heritage, the acquisition of knowledge, etc. Consequently, cities are significant receptive destinations, and with their complex supply, they can meet the needs and demands of tourists even where seasonality is not expressed. City break travel includes holidays in a town, which usually lasts from one to three days. Although it has the character of additional leave during the year, tourists often opt for this type of travel in the time of important events or holidays. The subject of this study represents the city break travel and their role and importance for competitiveness of the tourism industry. Special attention was paid to the development of this type of holiday in the Republic of Serbia.

Key words: urban tourism, city break travel, tourism, competitiveness.

JEL classification: L83, M21.

Introduction

Urban tourism is a relatively developed market niche, especially in the areas of Europe. Modern development of tourism has caused growing interest of tourists to stay in the cities due to the creation of real conditions for travel and meeting tourism needs in the geographical areas such as urban destinations. On the other hand, tourism represents an important economic activity in all those cities which do not have developed production industry, but which, due to their active resources, are

¹ Milena Podovac, MSc, Teaching Assistant, University of Kragujevac, Faculty of Hotel Management and Tourism in Vrnjačka Banja, Vojvodanska 5A, tel. (+381 36) 515 00 24, e-mail: milena.podovac@kg.ac.rs

in a position to develop tourism as a sustainable and profitable activity. Urban tourism is developing in the cities which are very specific in their nature. They represent major economic, cultural and political centers, which developed a number of other activities with which tourism is directly or indirectly connected (Podovac, 2016a, p. 2). On the other hand, tourism is an important economic activity for all those cities which do not have developed industry, but due to attractive resources they can develop this economic activity that is profitable and sustainable. Multifunctional mainland cities provide year-round influx of tourists, thus creating significant economic effects on tourism and other complementary economic activity (Podovac, 2016b, p. 161).

City break travel is of particular importance for cities, as they represent a vacation implemented in the city center where tourists flows are not affected by seasonality (Zlatić & Dragičević, 2007, p. 101). Its comparative advantage lies in the year-round sustainability and the ability to satisfy multiple motives of staying in the city. City break travel is actually a secondary form of travel, practiced by tourists who engage in off-season period and/or during the significant holidays during the year. The main reasons for travel are reflected primarily in learning about cultural heritage, presence of events, shopping, partying, etc.

In this paper, the subject of analysis is the city break travel and its basic characteristics. In addition to conceptual determinations of city break travel, the paper analyzes the potential of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš as the most visited cities in the Republic of Serbia with the real possibility of being recognized on the European map of the city destinations. Analyzed cities are the examples of successful (Belgrade, Serbia), prosperous (Novi Sad) and potential (Niš) development of urban tourism. Concluding remarks provide guidelines that can improve an offer of city break travel in the analyzed cities.

The concept and characteristics of city break travel

Modern development of tourism is characterized by changes in the behavior of tourism demand. Specifics of modern tourism demand point to the existence of diverse and multiple travel motives, as well as different ways to meet them (Jovanović Tončev & Podovac, 2016, p. 123). Over the centuries, cities have been traditional places of gathering of large number of people (Milićević & Đorđević, 2016, p. 21). Ever more common today are short, frequent trips, which are not the primary

vacation in a year such as summer or winter holidays. This trend has contributed to the growing number of city break travel. Trew and Cockerell (2002, p. 86) define a city break travel as a short trip to rest in a city that does not include an overnight stay in another destination. According to this definition, a city break travel is focused on brief visit to one destination. On the other hand, arguing that it is a short trip, Charterina and Aparicio (2015) point out that city break travel is being realized by flights, performed at short distances to neighboring towns or immediate environment.

City break travel is a tourism product with the capacity to develop on a large scale (Štetić et al., 2011):

- The increasing trend of a large number of short (2-4 days long) trips during the year;
- The fastest growing tourism product;
- High revenue per tourist;
- The possibility to position a city on a map of trips at the regional level;
- The growing interest of business in short trips and vacations;
- Travel in the preserved nature.

According to the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (2005), city break travel lasts from one to four days and make second, third or fourth vacation of the year for tourists. This phenomenon does not represent the primary form of travel and rest, but supplementation during leisure time (holidays, events, visits to relatives and friends, etc.). The main prerequisite for the realization of this type of travel is the quality transport infrastructure and connectivity of emissive and receptive destinations and accommodation offer of the diverse structure. Rabotić (2012) points out the key features of a city break travel as follows:

- Shorter trip for a period of usually less than three nights;
- Destination is located in the vicinity, often neighboring country;
- Represents supplementation to the main vacation during the year;
- Tourists travel in pairs or in groups of friends.

The division of market of the city break travel was done on organized trips (package tours) and individually organized holiday. Organising individual travel has resulted as a consequence of *low-cost* airlines, which have enabled lower prices for transport services and faster journey to the

final destination. In addition, the possibility of booking through the Internet, especially in Western Europe, caused a simpler and cheaper purchase of tourism services (Tourism Development Strategy of Serbia, 2005, p. 63).

An important feature of this traveling form is by no means its duration, which is classified by different authors in various ways. The difference between all forms of travel according to the number of days is made in the following way: a city break (1-2 nights), a short vacation (3-4 nights) and longer holidays (8 or more nights) (Charterina & Aparicio, 2015). Length of stay in the city can be associated with the availability of resources and facilities at the destination. Accordingly, an important segment represents the motivation of tourists to visit the cities. Dunne (2009) pointed out two key features of the city break travel: the secondary character of vacations and short stay in the city. City break travel is usually realized during the vacations and lasts between one and three days (sometimes longer). According to his opinion, the length of stay depends on the nationality of the tourists. He supports this with the example of German residents who stay for longer periods in cities as opposed to the British. The secondary character of the trip highlights the fact that the city break travel is actually supplemental form of vacation in off-season period. City break travel is mainly popular among the inhabitants of the European continent, which have led to significant structural changes. Europeans are most often opt for this form of tourism due to dynamic structural changes, which led to an increase in the number of secondary vacation during the year (Dunne et al. 2007, p.5):

- The realization of workers' rights in terms of rests over the years;
- Shorter vacations during the year due to the existence of a large number of national and religious holidays;
- Increase of the family members and disposable cash income;
- Changes in the perception of people on travelling prices and quality of service;
- Improvement in the traffic quality in terms of speed and comfort of travel.

This form of travel has gained special popularity with the increase of leisure time fund of people due to more flexible working hours in the case of engagement. It is very often the case that the company itself uses travel agencies to organise this type of holiday for its employees in the period of major holidays. On the other hand, travel agencies offer potential tourists arrangements for city break travel in off-season period (during spring and

autumn) and during holidays like New Year, Christmas, Easter and others. In literature, terms of urban tourism and city break travel is interpreted in the same way, although there are some differences (Peroš, 2003):

- The duration of the trip. City break travel implies staying at a destination for a period of two or three days.
- The lack of need for planning. The decision to travel is brought spontaneously several days in advance.
- The possibility of independent travel arrangements. City break travel does not require separate organization; respectively, it can be organized without mediation of travel agencies depending on the availability of funds and time.
- Low prices. Prices of city break travel include the cost of accommodation in a hotel or private accommodation, transport and sightseeing.
- Motivation. The primary motivation of travel to cities is the desire to get knowledge about historical and cultural sites, then gastronomic offer, shopping, job, etc.
- Individualization of offers by agencies. Adopting the trend of individualization of travel and the length of city break travel duration, travel agencies create trips according to the requests of tourists.
- Accommodation. The growing trend of urban tourism development, followed by the process of journey individualization encourages a special kind of small, specially designed facilities for accommodation, such as boutique or designed hotels.
- Communication. Communication, as far as city break travel is concerned, includes special interpersonal skills of communication since the journey means a direct contact between a guest and a host.

A significant exploring segment of city break travel is the motivation of tourists for short stays in the city. Difficulties in investigating the reasons for visiting cities are connected with the fact that tourists travel to cities due to multiple motives, or one trip can meet many of your needs. Accordingly, it is possible to identify several reasons why cities are a destination for city break travel (Pivac, 2004, p. 64):

- In the cities there is a large number of people, which creates conditions for accordingly large number of visits to friends and relatives.
- As the ultimate destination, cities are also important tourism points in the tourist-transit exchange.

- In cities, there is a large concentration of commercial, financial, industrial and production services, due to which cities are places where a large number of people are gathered together.
- Cities provide opportunities for different experiences of cultural, artistic and recreational character.

The motives for taking city break travel can be classified into two groups. The first group includes visits to cultural attractions, while the second group classifies experiencing the city through its specific characteristics in terms of entertainment, gastronomy, night life, the way of life of local residents and others (Štetić et al., 2014, p. 157). City break travel is a growing segment of tourism market. Since there is a large number of tourism attractions in cities, tourists often choose to stay in urban areas due to multifunctionality of a city as a tourism destination. Multifunctionality of cities is reflected in their ability to provide the tourists with an integrated tourism product, and the entire experience that they expect from a visit to a city. With their offer, cities can meet the needs of almost all market segments ranging from business travelers to younger tourist population. On the other hand, city tourism is a significant source of income, especially for those who do not have developed economy. The specificity of the city break travel is reflected in the reduced impact of seasonality on the tourism demand, and therefore the operation of tourism enterprises. The constant influx of tourists in cities ensures the sustainability and profitability of the business of hotels, travel agencies, transportation companies and other entities that provide services to tourists. Modern trends in tourism market indicate a pronounced competition between cities, especially on the territory of Europe. The similarity, in terms of type of tourism attraction, points out the necessity of introducing new tourism services, in order to attract more tourists and retain competitive position in the market.

The analysis of the current state of the development of city break travel in the Republic of Serbia

City break travel has been identified as one of the key products in tourism portfolio of the Republic of Serbia (Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, 2005). However, despite their prevalence, very few cities have adequate resources and facilities for the creation of integrated product of city break travel. Tourism offer of the city break travel is developed in several towns, mostly in the main administrative centers of Belgrade and Novi Sad. The specificity of city break travel is reflected in

the necessity for looking at the existing tourism cities of the Republic of Serbia and its integration with other, mutually complementary, forms of tourism. On the other hand, an essential factor in the development is a comprehensive tourism offer complemented by high-quality traffic infrastructure and promotional activity in the domestic and international tourism market. The limiting circumstances of developing city break travel in the Republic of Serbia are reflected in the underdeveloped awareness of key stakeholders in tourism on the economic importance of this form of tourism. On their trips in cities, tourists stay shorter than in the case of overnight trips and spend significant funds during their city break. City break travel attracts commercial segment, which is largely sophisticated in terms of accommodation and transport service quality, but because they expect quality content of leisure activities.

As a tourism destination, the Republic of Serbia has significant potential for extremely dynamic development of city breaks and long-term positioning in this market. Tourism potentials of Serbia lie in the favorable geographical position and good connection with the main emmisse markets, the manifestations of rich content, cultural and historical heritage, facilities for sports, recreation and entertainment, and rich cuisine. The comparative advantage of Serbia is the possibility of combining urban tourism with other tourism products, such as business, events, nautical, cultural, youth, etc. On the other hand, having in mind serious and long-term development of this form of tourism, the crucial moment for urban destinations in Serbia involves connecting large tour operators, the entry of low-cost airlines on the domestic market, as well as investments in improving the quality of the accommodation offers and promotions of cities in the Republic of Serbia as attractive city destinations. A more detailed analysis in this paper focuses on the analysis of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš as the most visited cities in the Republic of Serbia by tourism demand. The selection criteria include the cities of tourism traffic, the structure of tourism resources and the number of population.

Belgrade

As the capital of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade is situated in South-Eastern Europe, and covers an area of 322,268 ha, which is divided into 17 municipalities. According to the 2011 census, there are 1,659,440 permanent residents in Belgrade (<http://www.beograd.rs>). Its natural features are favourable for the development of different tourism forms.

The average altitude of the territory of Belgrade is 117 m. The Rivers of Sava and Danube have about 200 km of river banks within the city borders. The characteristics of the moderate continental climate are dominant with an average temperature of 30°C. Natural resources which have the importance of tourism potentials are Great War Island, the Danube rim and backwaters and canals, Ada Ciganlija, etc. Other tourism products with special importance are Avala (511 m), on the top of which there is the Monument to an Unknown Soldier and Kosmaj (628 m), on the road Avala-Ralje (Institute of Economic Sciences, 2008).

Infrastructure represents an important element of the tourism system of the city of Belgrade. Two very important roads with European significance intersect in Belgrade, i.e. E-75 (as the northern and southern branch of Corridor X) and E-70 (as the Western Corridor X and the road leading to Romania) (Institute of Economic Sciences, 2008). Belgrade has a developed traffic network, from the railway (there are 15 stations used for goods transportaion), to the road traffic (with over 2,500 freight vehicles with the transportaion capacity of over 5 tons). The river economy companies have about 700 vessels of different types and purposes, with a total capacity of 510,000 tons. The harbor complex on the Danube represents cargo transportation center including an area of 120 ha. Unlike other cities, the comparative advantage of the transport network of Belgrade is air transport, which is one of the main prerequisites for the development of city break travel. The carrier of the air traffic development is Nikola Tesla Airport, which annually records a turnover of 5,500,000 passengers and has regular flights to 39 destinations (<http://www.beograd.rs/>).

As the capital of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade is an important cultural center due to the sites of cultural and historical heritage and a large number of cultural institutions and cultural events. The oldest cultural and historical monument in Belgrade is the Belgrade Fortress. Other buildings worth mentioning are the Princess Ljubica Shelter, Captain Miša's Mansion, Old and New Palace, the building of the National Assembly and the Temple of Saint Sava as one of the most important religious buildings. Belgrade is a sitting for significant institutions of importance for Serbian culture and history, such as the Serbian Academy of Sciences and Arts, the *National Library of Serbia*, the *National Museum*, the *National Theater* and others. Cultural events such as the *Festival*, *Bitef*, *Bemus*, *Belef* contribute to the development of the cultural life of the city of Belgrade (<http://www.srbija.travel/>).

Table 1: *The structure of the accommodation offer in Belgrade*

Category	Number of hotels	Number of rooms	Number of apartments	Number of beds
5-star Hotels	4	559	73	949
4-star Hotels	40	2,426	272	4,003
3-star Hotels	27	1,175	92	2,112
2-star Hotels	9	443	17	801
1-star Hotels	3	530	14	1,036
Hostels	90	863	/	3,468
Private accommodation	545	/	/	1,177

Source: *Internal data of the Tourism Organization of Belgrade*

High-quality and diverse range of accommodation is one of the essential prerequisites for tourist city stays. Therefore, Belgrade is one of the cities on the European map which has developed the accommodation offer with hotel accommodation as the dominant form. Data in Table 1 point to the 4-star hotels as the predominant accommodation facility. On the other hand, an important segment of the accommodation offer of Belgrade are the hostels, which mainly provide services to young tourist population that chooses accommodation in cities on the basis of price as a key criterion. As the capital of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade has the most significant potential for the development of urban tourism, primarily city break holidays. The structure of tourism resources, developed accommodation offer and excellent transport infrastructure with special emphasis on air traffic indicate its potential of being a competitive city break destination to the leading European destinations such as Vienna, Budapest and Athens.

As a tourism city destination, Belgrade attracts tourists of different age groups, and purchasing power as well as those of different needs and preferences. Compared to other cities in Serbia, its comparative advantage in terms of city break travel is reflected in the ability to meet multiple motives of tourists who visit it. Developing city break travel to Belgrade is also connected to the constant increase in the number of business travelers who come for business and other events, at the same time using the resources and tourism offer of Belgrade.

Novi Sad

Novi Sad is located on the Danube in the central part of Vojvodina, which is well connected with road, rail and water corridors. Novi Sad is the

center of the South Bačka District and the capital of the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina (Official Gazette of Novi Sad, 2012). According to the 2011 census, there are 335,701 inhabitants living in Novi Sad (<http://media.popis2011.stat.rs>). It is located at an altitude of 72-80m on the left side and 250-300m on the right side. The climate is moderately continental and continental with an average temperature of 10.9°C (<http://novisad.travel>). In the area of Novi Sad, one can note the natural beauties of the Fruška Gora National Park with the most complex types of forest and rare species of animals as well as those of the Fen of Kovilj and Petrovaradin which stretches along the Danube banks. In addition to these extremely valuable natural assets, there are some spatial also subject to protection, such as Park Institute for chest diseases in Sremska Kamenica, and the Parks of Danube, Futog and Kamenica (Department of City Planning Novi Sad, 2009, p. 16).

Novi Sad is intersected by traffic Corridor No. 10, which has the primary direction Salzburg-Thessaloniki, thus connecting eight countries and another six are connected to it indirectly. Corridor No. 7 or the Danube Corridor Waterway links Western Europe with the Black Sea. With a navigable small canal Novi Sad is connected to the system of Danube-Tisa-Danube, which provides transport links to the waterway upstream to Central Europe and downstream to the Black Sea. Novi Sad is located on 1,255km of the Danube, which flows through this city making numerous islands, backwaters and inlets (<http://www.novisad.rs/>).

Cultural Treasury of Novi Sad is very important for the development of tourism. Cultural tourism offer includes the Museum of the City of Novi Sad, with the permanent display, which shows the way people lived in the first half of the eighteenth to the twentieth century; Planetarium; the Vojvodina Museum; the Gallery of Matica Srpska (with more than 7,000 works of art); the Serbian National Theater; the Memorial collection of Pavle Beljanski and Jovan Jovanović Zmaj. Novi Sad is also known as event tourism destination for all age groups of tourists. The most visited events are Zmaj's Children Games, the International Jazz Festival, the International Fair of hunting, fishing, sports, tourism and nautical *Lorist* and Exit - the biggest music festival in Southeast Europe (<http://www.srbija.travel/>).

Table 2: *The structure of the accommodation offer in Novi Sad*

Category	Number of hotels	Number of rooms	Number of beds
5-star Hotels	3	102	639
4-star Hotels	8	250	816
3-star Hotels	10	410	675
2-star Hotels	3	79	167
1-star Hotels	1	18	31
Garni hotels	1	58	116
Private accommodation	1	91	160
Hostels	2	197	688
Farms	2	4	10

Source: *Internal data of the Tourist Organization of Novi Sad*

In accommodation offer of Novi Sad, the predominant form is that of hotel accommodation with 5-star hotels being far overnumbered by 4- and 3-star ones. However, the accommodation offer of Novi Sad can meet the needs of different market segments according to their preferences and purchasing power. Apart from Belgrade, Novi Sad is an important destination for city break travel.

The main peculiarity of Novi Sad as a city break destination is reflected in the possibility to merge multiple products into an integrated tourism product, which as such links the attraction of urban areas and the multiculturalism of the City. The rich cultural heritage of Novi Sad allows tourists quality activity during their stay in this destination. On the other hand, Novi Sad is known as a destination for congress tourism, which creates the possibility of connecting the supply of business and city tourism. The organization of events in Novi Sad, such as the EXIT music festival is especially attractive to tourist population, which, besides visiting this event, uses other tourism facilities during their short stay.

Niš

One of the oldest cities in the Balkans is located in Niš basin at the confluence of the Nišava and the Južna Morava. Geographically, Niš is located at the crossroads of the most important Balkan and European traffic routes. The main route, starting from Belgrade on the north, comes down the Morava valley and divides in Niš into two branches – the one heading toward south, down the Vardar valley follows direction of Thessaloniki and Athens, and the other heading toward east, down the

valleys of Nišava and Marica goes toward Sofia and Istanbul and further to the Middle East. Niš has 255,518 inhabitants and, at the same time, it is the third largest city in the country, the largest city in central Serbia and the headquarters of Nišava District (<http://www.ni.rs/>). The territory of the city of Niš is located in the lower Ponišavlje and northern area of the Južna Morava and covers an area of 596.7 km² (Department of Urban Development, 2011, p. 8). The approximate altitude is 194m. The climate is moderately continental (hot summers and moderately cold winters). The natural resources of Niš include geothermal water (Niška Banja, Banja Topilo, Miljkovac, Ostrovica), mineral water (Jelašnica), gorges (Sidevačka klisura, Jelašnička klisura, Cerjanska klisura) then the Heath of Kamenica and Suva planina (City of Niš, 2011). The structure and diversity of natural resources of Niš and its environment are favorable for the development of tourism, especially eco, recreation, excursions, spa tourism and other tourism forms.

The City of Niš is characterized by developed transport network. Both highway and railway go through the territory of the city connecting thus north and south of Serbia. There are important regional roads and/or railway links from Niš to Kopaonik, Novi Pazar and Montenegro, Kosovo and Metohija, Zaječar and Negotin Districts. Two important branches of the European Transport Network, i.e. Corridor 10 and Corridor 7 (Danube waterway which connects Germany with the Black Sea) directly or indirectly connect Niš with the wider, European surroundings. In the northern zone of the city, there is *Constantin the Great* International Airport with excellent technical and meteorological conditions for the provision of passengers and cargo air transport (City of Niš, 2009). This airport represents a strategically important facility to attract tourists from distant emissive markets.

The rich history of origins and development of the city of Niš is evidenced by the numerous sites of cultural and historical heritage, the most important being (City of Niš, 2009): *Medijana* (archaeological complex at 100 ha); Fortress of Niš; central area of the old part of the city of Niš; prehistoric sites in Niš villages; Naissus - excavations of the city of II - VI century; Skull Tower - a unique monument in the world built from the skulls of the killed Serbian heroes; Monument of Čegar of XIX century dedicated to Stevan Sinđelić, etc. Niš is an important meeting place for cultural events and tours brought together from different parts of the world and Europe, as well as the local population. Important cultural events are certainly the Days of Ss. Emperor Constantine and Empress

Helena, Nišville (the international festival of jazz music), *Film Festival* (festival of Serbian actors' realization), *Nisomnia* (a music festival), etc. (<http://www.visitnis.com/>).

Table 3: *The structure of the accommodation offer in Niš*

Category	Number of objects	Number of beds
Hotels	7	832
Accommodation in spa resorts	2	859
Lodging houses and overnights	18	593
Hostels	9	178
Private accommodation	/	925

Source: (*City of Niš, 2007, p. 34-36*)

The primary form of accommodation in Niš is a hotel accommodation, which includes 7 hotels with the capacity of 832 beds. Spas have two guest accommodation facilities, with a capacity of 859 beds. Tourists coming to Niš may use the services of boarding houses, hostels and private accommodation with the capacity of 925 beds. Niš is not a recognizable destination of city break travel in the Republic of Serbia. Analyzing the tourism turnover of the city of Niš, it should be noted that the development of city break travel is accompanied by constant fluctuations, indicating the disproportionate ratio of domestic and foreign tourists in the total tourism turnover. Due to the fact that it mainly relies on the domestic market, Niš cannot be said to be fully developed as a tourism destination city.

On the one hand, there is a realistic resource base to meet the needs of tourists as well as developed air transport, and on the other, it lacks in aggressive promotional policy and a unique City tourism offer that would direct tourists towards the urban area of Niš and its key attractions. Further development of Niš as a city break destination is conditioned by the intensive promotion of Niš in both domestic and international markets in order to join already distinctive city break destinations in Serbia, such as Belgrade and Novi Sad.

Quantitative indicators of tourism development in the cities of the Republic of Serbia

Tourism traffic is one of the main and most reliable indicators of the performance of tourism destinations in the market. In this part of the paper we present quantitative indicators of tourism traffic (number of tourists and the total number of nights) for the analyzed cities, in order to indicate their current position in tourism market.

Table 4: *Number of visitors in the cities of Serbia in the period 2010-2016*

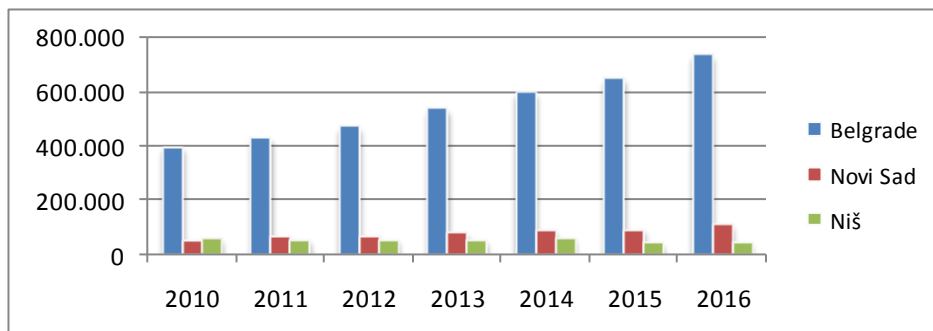
Y	Belgrade			Novi Sad			Niš		
	D	F	T	D	F	T	D	F	T
2010	223,046	395,408	618,454	43,320	52,681	96,001	51,368	36,811	88,179
2011	162,211	428,473	590,684	43,422	63,011	106,433	52,861	36,091	88,952
2012	189,375	471,299	660,674	48,323	65,690	114,030	45,986	31,796	77,782
2013	182,006	536,937	718,943	45,869	76,603	122,472	32,989	30,061	63,050
2014	155,977	597,765	753,742	53,872	86,874	140,746	31,297	37,391	68,688
2015	157,245	650,362	807,607	61,489	89,883	151,372	34,924	41,045	75,969
2016	176,087	737,063	913,150	67,808	106,681	174,489	404,191	44,629	85,048

Source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

Table 4, shows the tourism traffic of the analyzed cities, which are also the most visited in the Republic of Serbia for the period 2010-2016. Based on the presented data, it is evident that Belgrade in the reporting period is the most visited city in relation to Novi Sad and Niš. Looking at the tourism turnover for a five-year period, we observe significant fluctuations. For example, in 2014 Belgrade recorded the attendance of 753,742 tourists, while the lowest attendance was recorded in 2011 and amounted to 590,684 tourists.

According to the number of foreign visitors, Belgrade is the first with an increasing trend from year to year. Niš is almost equally visited by local and foreign tourists. For example, the largest attendance was recorded in 2011 (88,952 tourists). The biggest attendance of domestic tourists was recorded in 2011 (52,861 tourists), while the largest number of foreign tourists visited Niš in 2014 (37,391 visitors). Novi Sad is a major tourism destination in terms of tourism turnover.

Graph 1: *The ratio of the number of foreign tourists in the analyzed cities of the Republic of Serbia*



Source: *Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia*, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

Graph 1 shows a comparative analysis of domestic and foreign guests in the cities analyzed for the period 2010-2016. It is noticeable that Belgrade keeps track of the growing tendency when it comes to the number of foreign tourists. This trend is due to the continuous improvement of tourism offer, which allows tourists to stay longer in the city and meet their travel needs.

Table 5: *Total number of overnight stays in the most visited cities in Serbia*

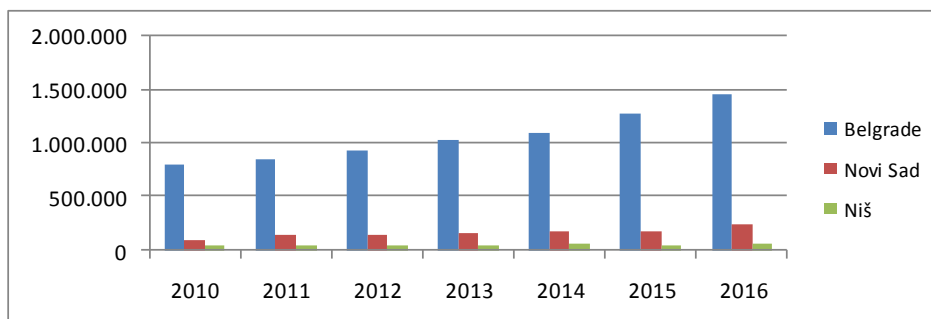
Y	Belgrade			Novi Sad			Niš		
	D	F	T	D	F	T	D	F	T
2010	509,807	809,822	1,319,629	71,606	103,795	175,401	254,834	54,824	309,658
2011	301,114	847,915	1,149,029	70,926	142,623	213,549	244,906	50,334	295,240
2012	493,531	937,853	1,431,384	79,845	151,444	231,289	235,505	51,252	286,757
2013	453,526	1,036,275	1,489,801	83,045	169,672	252,717	72,827	49,682	122,509
2014	231,237	1,106,085	1,337,322	103,893	183,274	287,167	71,714	58,532	130,246
2015	400,323	1,285,694	1,686,017	113,205	183,892	297,097	34,924	41,045	75,969
2016	406,674	1,460,476	1,867,150	118,956	241,622	360,578	90,175	70,772	160,947

Source: *Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia*, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

Table 5 shows data on the total number of overnight stays of domestic and foreign guests in the analyzed cities for the period 2010-2016. Based on the data, it can be concluded that Belgrade is the most visited city, which is logical given that it hosts the largest number of tourists. Novi Sad is, after Belgrade, the most visited city by foreign tourists, while tourism turnover in Niš recorded the highest share of domestic tourists

with the noticeable fluctuations in the number of overnight stays of foreign tourists.

Figure 2: *The relationship between the number of overnight stays of foreign tourists in the analyzed cities of the Republic of Serbia*



Source: *Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia*, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>

Based on the comparative analysis of the number of overnight stays in analyzed cities, it is obvious that Belgrade is in the first place according to the number of overnight stays of foreign tourists, which is also the result of a quality tourism offer and additional facilities for leisure.

Concluding considerations

City break travel is a promising tourism product for cities. Their potential is reflected in the full-year inflow of tourists and the ability to combine different tourism products into a single one which is offered as such to city tourists. The growing interest of tourists for this type of tourism is associated with an increase in the amount of free time, especially in the period of marking holidays and important events of the year. Due to this trend, mainly off-season tourists opt for breaks in cities, which are dynamic in character and include a large number of services and content.

City break travel is a part of the tourism offer of the Republic of Serbia. Nonetheless, Serbia has a long tradition in the development of this form of tourism, with the exception of Belgrade, which is an important city break destination. According to the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (2005, p. 121), other cities can also be adequately presented in the international market of city break travel. The proposed guidelines refer to investments aimed at the market adjustment of this

product to the demand requirements especially in the sense of informing tourists about the product, commercialization, providing supporting elements of city break travel (arranging footpaths, tourism signposting, decorating shops, etc.). In order to make the offer of city break travel in Serbia complete and recognizable on the international tourism market, it is necessary to change the direction regarding promotional strategies to Serbian cities to be competitive in the market of city break travel.

In this study, the analysis of the potentials of Belgrade, Novi Sad and Niš, which are selected on the basis of tourism turnover, population number and resource structure. The offer imposes conclusion that Belgrade, as the most visited city in the Republic of Serbia, is a proper example of the city break destination, which has a rounded tourism and attracts many tourists. Beside Belgrade, Novi Sad is a destination rich in cultural heritage which organizes business events. Its multiculturalism and urban part of the town is attractive to tourists, who mostly come from abroad. On the other hand, Niš is not recognized in the tourism market as a city break destination. It is realistic to expect Niš to become an attractive city break destination thanks to its rich cultural heritage, event content and the intensive growth of air traffic.

Further development of the city break travel in the Republic of Serbia will depend on the capacity of the main actors in the tourism sector to continuously improve existing tourism offer by introducing additional facilities to meet the needs of urban tourists. It is inevitable that the Serbian cities, except Belgrade, according to the quality of urban tourism offers, are far behind European cities. Therefore, real efforts should be put into developing tourism industry reputation to be able to compete the city break travel of European cities such as Vienna, Berlin, Athens and others. An important segment of city break travel development is air transport, which, as far as Serbian cities are concerned, places utmost importance on the increase in the number of low cost airline companies whose prices of transportation services are a lot more competitive compared to the regular airlines. In general, the competitiveness of Serbia as a city break travel and urban tourism destination is dependable upon very implementation of modern information technology in the promotion and distribution of urban tourism. In this way, Serbian cities will be available to a wider market at a lower cost and the ability to create their recognition as city break destinations increases. The mentioned guidelines would result in the significant economic benefits in the form of increased influx of tourists and tourism revenues. However, one of the objectives in

the long run would certainly be linked to the achievement of competitiveness of Serbian city destinations in the international market and their recognition as an attractive, vibrant and hospitable city areas.

Reference

1. Charterina, J., Aparicio, G. (2015). A comparison of antecedents of satisfaction in city break traveling. *Revista Española de Investigación En Marketing ESIC*, Vol. 19, No. 2, 71-82.
2. Dunne, G. (2009). *Motivation and decision making in city break travel: The case of Dublin*. VDM Publishing, Saarbrücken, Germany.
3. Dunne, G., Buckley, J., Flanagan, S. (2007). City break motivation – The case of Dublin, a successful national capital. *Journal of Travel and Tourism Marketing*, Vol. 22, No. 3/4, 95-107.
4. Grad Niš, (2007). *Strategija razvoja grada Niša*. Niš.
5. Grad Niš. (2009). *Revizija strategije razvoja grada Niša za period 2009-2020*. Niš.
6. Grad Niš. (2011). *Strategija razvoja turizma grada Niša 2011-2016*. Niš.
7. Institut ekonomskih nauka. (2008). *Strategija razvoja turizma grada Beograda*. Belgrade.
8. Jovanović Tončev, M. Podovac, M. (2016). A Survey on Factors Influencing Tourists' Decision to Visit Spa Destination. *1st International Scientific Conference: Tourism in Function of Development of the Republic of Serbia*. Vrnjačka Banja, Serbia, 02-04. June, 2016, 122-138.
9. Milićević, S., Đorđević, N. (2016). Glavni gradovi kao turističke destinacije. *HIT menadžment*, Vol. 4, No. 1, 21-30.
10. Ministarstvo trgovine, turizma i usluga. (2005). *Strategija razvoja turizma Republike Srbije – Prvi fazni izveštaj*, <http://www.dgt.uns.ac.rs/download/ektur01.pdf> (03 February 2017).

11. Peroš, L. (2003). Affirmation of cultural identity tourism destination through city break travelling-Zadar city example. *The Third International Scientific Congress-Biennale:Icon Best 2013*, Skopje, Macedonia, 217-227.
12. Pivac, T. (2004). Grad kao reusrs u turizmu. *Turizam* 8, 62-63.
13. Podovac, M. (2016a). Gradski turizam kao razvojna šansa turizma grada Kragujevca. *BizInfo (Blace) Journal of Economics, Management and Informatics*, Vol 7, No. 2, 1-13.
14. Podovac, M. (2016b). Gradski turizam u funkciji konkurentnosti Republike Srbije. *Tematski zbornik radova međunarodnog značaja Savremeni menadžment alati i ekonomija turističkog sektora današnjice. Association of Economists and Managers of the Balkans*, 161-177.
15. Rabotić, B. (2012). Selektivni oblici turizma – predavanje 11. Nastavni materijal. *The College of Tourism*, http://www.visokaturisticka.edu.rs/skripte/selektivni_novo/predavanje11.pdf (20 February 2017).
16. Trew, J., Cockerell, N. (2002). The European market for UK city breaks. *Insights*, Vol. 14, No. 58, 85-111.
17. Zavod za urbanizam Novi Sad. (2009). *Studija zaštite životne sredine na području Novog Sada*. Novi Sad.
18. Zlatić, L., Dragičević, T. (2007). Analiza turističkog prometa Beograda i Novog Sada. *Zbornik radova Departmana za geografiju, turizam i hotelijerstvo*, 36/2007, 100-110.
19. Štetić, S., Šimičević, D., Stanić, S. (2011). Same-day trips: A chance of urban destination development. *UTMS Journal of Economics*, Vol. 2, No. 2, 113-124.
20. Štetić, S., Cvijanović, D., Šimičević, D. (2014). *Posebni oblici turizma Dunavskog regiona Srbije*. Institute of Agricultural Economics, Belgrade.

Internet sources:

21. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, <http://www.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Default.aspx>, (21 March 2017).
22. City of Belgrade, <http://www.beograd.rs>, (17 March 2017).
23. National Tourism Organisation of Serbia, <http://www.srbija.travel/>, (18 March 2017).
24. The Tourist Organization of the City of Novi Sad, <http://novisad.travel>, (18 March 2017).
25. City of Niš, <http://www.ni.rs/>, (28 March 2017).
26. Tourist Organization of Belgrade, <http://www.tob.rs/sr>, (28 March 2017).
27. Tourism Organization od Niš, <http://www.visitnis.com/>, (28 March 2017).
28. City of Novi Sad, <http://www.novisad.rs/>, (28 March 2017).
29. Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia <http://media.popis2011.stat.rs>, (28 March 2017).