

Tourism Research and Education in Central and Eastern Europe – History and Contemporary Issues

Guest Editors:

Jana Kučerová¹ and Harald Pechlaner²

¹Matej Bel University of Banská Bystrica, Slovakia, E-mail: jana.kucerova@umb.sk

²Catholic University of Eichstätt-Ingolstadt, Germany, E-mail: harald.pechlaner@ku.de

The recent tourism development in Central and Eastern European states is significantly affected by the political change since the beginning of the 1990s. Current dynamic developments often conceal the (tourism political) fundamentals that had been established in the postwar period especially in the countries of the Warsaw Pact. In particular, from a western point of view, the intense scientific discussion in the tourism and leisure area in the context of the given political and scientific as well as social framework is astonishing. It is notably necessary for western industrial nations with their economic and scientific context to understand the historical aspects of the development of tourism science and education in Central and Eastern European countries in order to reach a suitable basis for networking and cooperation which are necessary activities in the context of globalization. This special issue is focused on the presentation of the connections between research and education in the field of tourism and leisure and tries to discuss which political, social, economic and technological factors influenced research and education in tourism and leisure in the past and today. This special issue presents selected experience from research and education in Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Slovak Republic, Russia, Poland, German Democratic Republic, Czech Republic and Belarus. Every contribution includes a brief introduction of the country with special focus on history and transition

processes. In majority of these countries the tourism research and education started to be developed in the 60 th of the last century, when tourism has been highly supported by existing political system and the basis for education and research started to be created. In this period the system of education and research was centrally planned and was focused mainly on the support of domestic tourism and international tourism on the territory of the countries of the Warsaw Pact. The political changes and transition process has significantly influenced the system of education and research in the field of tourism and these changes are presented in particular papers. The articles do not present this topic for all countries of the previous Warsaw Pact, we strongly believe, that also other countries will present their experience and knowledge in this field in the future. The papers were written by authors, who have been able to get in more cases the information from their personal archives and this issue is valuable also as their authors personally participated in the creation and development of the system of education and research in these countries, have been part of changes or part of the creation of the old and new system of education and research in tourism and leisure. The guest editors are grateful to all authors, who contributed to this unique special issue.