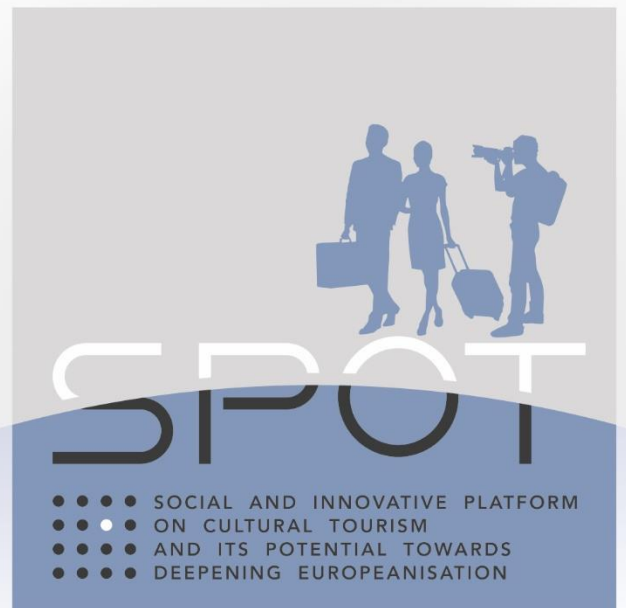


CZECHIA

POLICY BRIEF

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South Moravian Region

To public administration bodies at the level of the South Moravian Region

Authors: the team of the Department of Applied and Landscape Ecology, Faculty of AgriSciences, Mendel University in Brno

Introduction

The **South Moravian region**, together with the regions of South Bohemia, Královéhradecký and Karlovy Vary, is among the regions of the Czech Republic that receive the most tourists, after Prague. Unlike other regions (along with southern Bohemia), it has a very diversified spectrum of attractions such as natural beauties, represented by a national park, three protected landscape areas and other attractions. Traditional folklore associated with wine culture is a huge competitive advantage. There are also tangible and intangible UNESCO cultural heritage monuments. On the other hand, there are many other monuments in the South Moravian region, which are well-known, less well-known or waiting to be discovered by the general public - whether it is a church or noble buildings, folk architecture, technical monuments and so. Brno is an important conference centre in Europe.



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1. Evidence and Analysis

The COVID-19 pandemic, which has been subdued but is still ongoing, has turned the attention of Czech tourists to **domestic destinations**. While destinations aimed at foreign visitors (Prague, UNESCO monuments, spas in the Karlovy Vary region) lost significantly, domestic, especially rural destinations experienced only a slight decrease in attendance, and in some places also an increase. Even though international tourism is starting to recover, **certain barriers remain** - the collapse of air transport, the energy crisis, but also Russia's aggression towards Ukraine - which reduce the comfort, safety and economic accessibility of tourism to distant destinations. On the other hand, it is possible that a number of domestic tourists who discovered the beauties of the Czech Republic during the pandemic restrictions are open to the idea of spending more of their free time in the country.

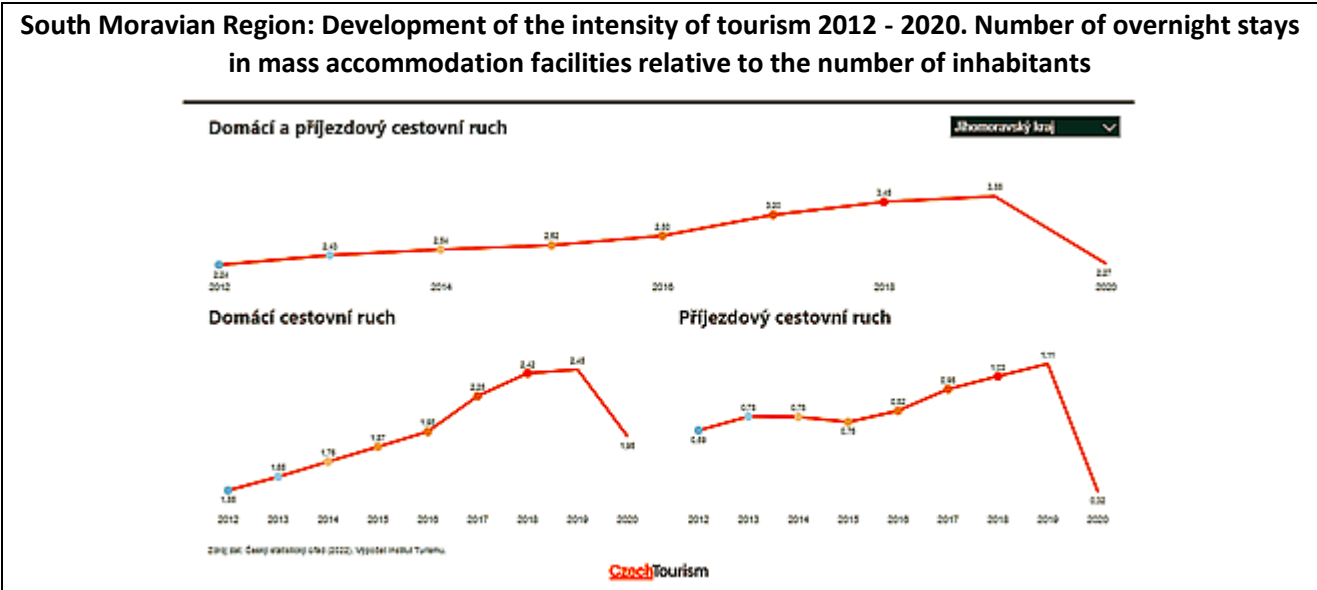


Number of visitors during the pre-covid year 2019

Year 2021

Source: CzechTourism

It would be advisable to capture and evolve this trend. The South Moravian region could focus on supporting cultural tourism with a focus on rural tourism, which does not mean suppressing other forms of tourism, as tourists usually require different attractions in one destination.



2. Policy Implications and Recommendations

Why support rural cultural tourism in the South Moravian Region? Above all, this corresponds to the characteristics of the region, which, except of Brno, is rural and does not have attractive mountains, like other localities. Cultural tourism is less dependent on seasonality than other forms of tourism. Cultural tourism expands the knowledge and cultural outlook of visitors and local residents and supports the transition of the South Moravian countryside to the post-productive era. The highest degree of industrialization of the Czech countryside within the EU ceases to be a sign of progress and becomes a sign of backwardness. In most peripheral micro-regions, for example in the Vranov area or Hornácko, the development of cultural tourism can contribute to reducing unemployment. Most tourism establishments are small and medium-sized enterprises that can quickly adapt to changing conditions.



Fig. 1 Modern wine cellars in Velké Pavlovice. Photo by A. Vaishar

What prevents it? The significant development of rural tourism requires the improvement of the technical and social infrastructure, which so far is only designed to meet the needs of local residents. The human factor is also problematic. There are real concerns that the workforce that has left the travel industry during the pandemic has already established itself in other fields that are better paid, more stable and have better conditions and more favourable working hours. A significant problem which can also be considered is the lack of cooperation in destinations, where individual providers, sometimes including public administration, consider themselves competitors and insufficiently cooperate in promoting the destination as such.

What to do about it? In contrast to manufacturing industries, tourism facilities themselves do not require direct subsidies. Such subsidies can even be counterproductive, as the set conditions usually make it impossible for entrepreneurs to quickly adapt to the changing situation. We propose to focus on three areas of routing: **infrastructural, destination and educational.**



Infrastructure: The availability of all kinds of technical networks, including the Internet, should be a basic condition. Without it, it will not be possible to operate tourism in the future. A number of roads are in need of repair. Parking lots tend to be a weak point, not only at important monuments but in rural areas in general. In connection with the development of motorhomes/caravans, progress must also be made in the construction of parking spaces equipped with technical connections. A significant contribution can also be the construction of cycle paths, but they must be integrated into a county-wide network, must be consistently separated from car traffic and must be equipped with other infrastructure - rest areas, refreshments, rental offices, storage facilities, repair shops and the like.

Destination: An important initiative of the South Moravian Region in cooperation with the Tourist Authority South Moravia was the start of management certification in the region's destination management areas, which will take place at the state level from 2022. However, in order to make their activities sufficiently complex and planned, destination managements **need regular funding**.

Education: The region is the founder of secondary schools. Due to the acute lack of qualified workers and the expected increase of this need in the future, training and graduation programs focused on tourism should be introduced. These programs should be accredited so that they expand knowledge in the field of cultural tourism, in addition to technological and economic knowledge.



Fig. 2 The band Šardičanka in Pavlov village. In this case, it is an attempt to export folklore from traditional Moravian Slovakia to villages settled by German population before the WWII. Photo by A. Vaishar



Project Identity

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| Project name | Social and innovative Platform on Cultural Tourism and its potential towards deepening Europeanisation (SPOT) |
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