

UNIVERSITY OF ECONOMIC-VARNA
FACULTY OF MANAGEMENT
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OPPORTUNITIES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE
HOTEL INDUSTRY IN A SMALL MUNICIPALITY (AS THE MUNICIPALITY
OF KAVARNA)

DISSERTATION ABSTRACT

for the awarding of an educational and scientific degree "doctor" in a professional direction 3.9. Tourism, scientific specialty Economics and Management (Tourism)

RESEARCH SUPERVISOR
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The dissertation consists of 236 pages of which- introduction (7 pages); exposition in three chapters (187 pages), conclusion (4 pages), a list of references (18 pages). The main text consists of 58 tables and 36 figures. The list of references consists 191 literary and informational sources, including 131 literary and 60 web pages. The dissertation also includes 5 appendices (20 pages).

The defense of the dissertation will take place on..... fromh. in the hall ... of the University of Economics-Varna at a meeting of a scientific jury, appointed by Order ... of the Rector of the University of Varna.

I. GENERAL CHARACTERISTIC OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance and importance of the issue

The realization of the activities of the tourism sector requires the availability of appropriate infrastructure and superstructure and the investment of significant amounts of resources. The statement is especially relevant for the hotel industry, where basic tourist services are provided.

The construction of hotel facilities in tourist destinations and their operation contribute to the valorization of available tourist resources, provide opportunities for employment and income for the host community, and promote the activity of related economic sectors. Meanwhile, some negative consequences for the environment are observed such as changing the landscape of the destinations and creating a risk of destruction of existing ecosystems, excessive use of natural resources especially water and energy. The hotel's superstructure has been exploited inefficiently and the sector's employment is fickle and short-term with low levels of remuneration are observed under the influence of seasonality. The negative impacts for the social environment are related to depersonalisation of cultural identity and the creation of opportunities for intercultural conflicts between tourists and the host community.

The problem of exhaustibility of natural resources, uncontrolled development of economic sectors, including tourism, and the consequences of society's activities for the environment have been considered by a number of institutional organizations and researchers working in various economic and scientific fields from the end of 20th century to the present. The conception of sustainable development is coming as a result of their research. According to Weaver (2020) "most interpretations of sustainable development share the basic statement that the mobilization of natural and cultural resources to adapt ongoing global human development, to be sustainable, should not exceed the carry capacity of the natural and cultural implemented systems" (Weaver. 2020:19). The concept aims to reduce the negative impact of the society's activities and generate benefits for the environment, economy and the host community of the territories where it is applied.

The concept of sustainable development has an universal character and could be applied in all economics activities. In the tourism field, it should contribute to overcoming the mentioned risks and maximizing the positive aspects of tourism and hospitality, thus

achieving a balance between their development and the need to protect the environment and natural resources, culture and identity of the host community. W. Legrand et al., citing the UNWTO in their publication, consider the essential role of tourism and hospitality in realization of the "2030 Agenda " and "Sustainable development goals" (W. Legrand et al. 2022).

A number of Bulgarian researchers, among them Mihailov, Dubeva, Karadzhova, Narleva, Kazandzhieva and others, explore the problems of tourism and sustainability. Their papers concern its application to the various forms of tourism and the possibilities for sustainable hospitality. The author aims to complete existing research, proposing a theoretical model for sustainable development of hospitality in the territories of small municipalities. The study of the possibilities of applying the principles of sustainability in the municipality of Kavarna is conditioned by the author's in-depth knowledge of the site, as well as his previous developments

Subject and object of the study

- The subject of the study is hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna.
- The object of the dissertation is sustainable hospitality in small municipalities. The

Purpose and tasks of the study

The purpose of the present work is to derive guidelines for the application of the concept of sustainable tourism in the municipality of Kavarna, by developing a plan and formulating measures for the development of sustainable hospitality.

The adopted goal will be realized through the implementation of the following **research tasks**:

1. Review of the scientific literature and derive the main characteristics of sustainable tourism and sustainable hospitality.
2. Development of a theoretical model for sustainable development of hospitality in small municipality.
3. Analysis and evaluation of the socio-economic conditions for the development of tourism and hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna.

4. Studying the hoteliers attitude regarding the implementation of the concept of sustainable development.
5. Studying the potential tourist attitude regarding buying sustainable hospitality products in the municipality of Kavarna.
6. Evaluation the extent of sustainable development of the chosen destination.
7. Formulation of a plan and measures for sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna, the implementation of which will be realized by the municipal administration, tourist association and independent hotel establishments.
8. Creating a system of indicators to monitor the effectiveness of the proposed plans.

Research thesis and hypothesis

Thesis: *The application of the concept of sustainable development in the hospitality in small municipality contributes to overcome the tourism development's negative consequences and to generate socio-economics benefits for the host community.*

The thesis is proved by the adoption or refusion of the following hypotheses:

Hypotheses 1: The concept of sustainable development is not sufficiently represented in the tourism and hospitality sectors in the municipality of Kavarna.

Hypotheses 2: The hoteliers in the municipality of Kavarna show moderate interest in the application of sustainable development measures in hospitality.

Hypotheses 3: The potential demand supports the sustainable hospitality through prominent readiness for buying sustainable hospitality products.

Research methods

The purpose and tasks set in the dissertation are fulfilled by applying a set of research methods and approaches. A system approach, theoretical analysis and synthesis, method of system analysis, descriptive analysis, method of abstraction and concretization, method of induction and deduction, method of field observation, statistical and descriptive methods, questionnaire survey, semi-structured interview are part of used methods. The characteristic features of the research object and the specific nature of the considered problem require the following studies:

- **A field observation:**

1. The available infrastructure and resources in the municipality of Kavarna are observed. Their main characteristics are brought out by the application of system analysis and system approach and the applicability in relation to the conditions for the development of tourist activities in the destination is evaluated.
2. The functioning hotel establishments in the municipality of Kavarna are observed. The main characteristics of the hospitality superstructure in the destination are brought out by system analysis, system approach and descriptive analysis.

- **Semi-structured interviews:**

Two semi-structured interviews were conducted-one interview with a representative of the municipal administration and the second, with Mrs. Darin's Argirova, a chairwoman of the Kavarna tourism association. The interviewees were asked open and closed questions regarding the application of the concept of sustainable development in tourism and hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna.

- **Questionnaire survey**

1. A questionnaire survey among the hoteliers in the municipality of Kavarna with a representative sample size of N=18 was conducted from June 2021 till August 2021. The questionnaire was online. The survey data were processed and analyzed using **Excel** and **SPSS** software and descriptive statistical methods. The aim of the survey was to identify the main factors affecting the readiness of hoteliers in the municipality of Kavarna to implement principles of sustainable development.

2. A questionnaire survey among Bulgarian tourists with a representative sample size of N=87 was conducted from August 2021 till September 2021. The questionnaire was online. The survey data were processed and analyzed using **Excel** and **SPSS** software and descriptive statistical methods. The main aim was to present the tourist's attitude to buying sustainable hospitality products.

Sources of information

- Secondary sources

They include monographs and scientific works by Bulgarian and foreign authors, mostly in English, publications of international and tourist organizations and hotel groups, plans and strategies for the development of the municipality of Kavarna, laws and regulations, statistical directories of regional, state and international organizations, dissertations, studies, journal articles, conference reports, specialized websites.

- Firstly sources

They include the described upside field observations, interviews and questionnaire surveys.

Limits and problems

- **Limits**

1. The survey's subject is **geographical limited** to the hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna.

2. The set **time limits** in the periods of conducting the questionnaire surveys are in accordance with the duration of the tourist season in the destination.

- **Problems**

1. The main problem of the present dissertation is the lack of empirical surveys on application of the principles of sustainable development concept in the municipality of Kavarna. A similar research was made in 2014 related to testing the ETIS system. The sequence of study is missing next years and because of it there is no data to compare.

2. The weak interest of the hoteliers and their limited cooperation in relation to the conducted survey are a significant problem, due to which the representative sample is greatly narrowed.

II. STRUCTURE AND CONTENTS OF THE DISSERTATION

1. Structure of the dissertation

The structure of the dissertation is defined by the combination of the subject, the object of research, the set of purposes and tasks, reflecting the author's approach to the present study.

The dissertation consists of 236 pages of which- introduction (7 pages); exposition in three chapters (187 pages), conclusion (4 pages), a list of references (18 pages). The main text consists of 58 tables and 36 figures. The list of references consists 191 literary and informational sources, including 131 literary and 60 web pages. The dissertation also includes 5 appendices (20 pages).

2. Contents of the dissertation

List of used abbreviation

List of tables and figures

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER ONE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IF THE HOSPITALITY

1.1. Characteristics of the sustainable development of the tourism and tourist destination

1.2. Characteristics of the sustainable development of the hospitality

1.3. Model of sustainable development of the hospitality in a small municipality

1.3.1. Characteristics of the hospitality and its sustainable development in a small municipality

1.3.2. Stages of the model for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality

1.4. Advantages and disadvantages of the application of the principles of the concept of sustainable development in the hospitality industry

CHAPTER TWO

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE HOSPITALITY AND ITS SUSTAINABILITY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAVARNA

2.1. Characteristics of the tourism in the municipality of Kavarna

2.1.1. Analysis and evaluation of the municipality of Kavarna'S geographical and socio economic indicators

2.1.2 evaluation of the tourism development in the municipality of Kavarna

2.1.3. Degree of tourism development in the municipality of Kavarna

2.2. Analysis of hospitality superstructure in the municipality of Kavarna

2.3. Evaluation of hotelier's attitude towards sustainable development in the municipality of Kavarna

2.4. Evaluation the customer's attitude toward sustainer hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna

CHAPTER THREE

GUIDELINES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF THE HOSPITALITY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAVARNA

3.1. Evaluation of sustainable development is tourism in the municipality of Kavarna

3.2. Measures and activities for developing a sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna

3.2.1. Measures and activities for developing a sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna, performing by the local administration

3.2.2. Measures and activities for developing a sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna, performing by the tourism organization

3.2.3. Measures and activities for developing a sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna, performing by the local administration by the hotel establishment

3.3. Indicators for monitoring of sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna

CONCLUSION

LIST OF REFERENCES

APPENDIX

II. BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DISSERTATION

CHAPTER ONE

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IF THE HOSPITALITY

In article 1.1. Characteristics of the sustainable development of the tourism and tourist destination, the author considers the development of sustainable tourism concept. Some definitions for terms sustainable development, sustainable tourism, sustainable hospitality and sustainable hospitality products have been derived by review and systematization of institutional publications and scientific literature in this field. The relationship between tourism, hospitality and sustainable development has been derived also.

Tourism is one of the dynamic sectors worldwide and it has an important role for the economic and social status in the tourist destinations, host community and tourists. It is a specific industry of a socio-economic nature that satisfies the secondary needs of the individuals. It covers all voluntary travel for peaceful purposes, carried out outside the usual place of residence of the travelers, excluding those related to employment or permanent relocation. The places where attractive tourist resources, appropriate infrastructure and hospitality superstructure are located, we could define as tourist destinations. Some complex relations between travelers, host community and the environment in the destinations have been realized during the tourism travels. Specific intangible goods are made and consumed in the tourism sphere which satisfy the consumers needs and realize some benefits for the host community. Tourism is a main economic sector in some territories where it generates a significant part of the GDP, a number of economic and socio benefits for the host community and also contributes to developing other economic sectors, traditional crafts and more.

At the same time, tourism development must be observed and controlled. Authors as Foster (1964), Clawson&Knetch (1966), George Young (1973) and Archer (1977) evince doubts about benefits coming from tourism development. According Mazanec, Wober&Zins “tourist destinations often rely on tourism as their primary source of economic

development. However, development that is not properly planned can have a devastating effect on natural resources and the local community. As a result, sustainability is an important factor in the growth and competitiveness of tourist destinations” (Angeles Iniesta-Bonillo, M. et al., 2016: 5003).

It is appropriate to say if the economic and social systems are improving, the threats to the environment are significant. At the same time, the preservation of the environment could limit the activity of the enterprises in the tourism sector, and in result the economy and the host community in the tourist destinations would suffer losses. In order to avoid these limitations in the implementation of the activity and to achieve a balance between the preservation of the environment, the economic condition of the destinations and the social well-being of the local community, it is necessary to implement a development model that takes into account the specified features.

At the end of the 1980s, the World Commission on the Environment of the United Nations issued a report called "Our Common Future", also known as the Brundtland Report. The conference in 1987 was the starting point for the development of the concept of sustainable development. The Commission defines this term as "development that meets the needs of present generations without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own." (UN, 1987: 44).

With the awareness of the need for sustainable development of society, the need for sustainable tourism in the territories where research in this scientific direction is developed and initiated also appears. Governmental and non-governmental organizations directly interested in this activity, as well as scientific researchers, have examined and discussed the possibilities for its sustainable development at various international forums and conferences since the end of XX century. The studies and the definitions derived from them can be classified into two main directions - institutional and private-scientific.

The government and non-governmental organizations have their own contribution in defining the term of sustainable tourism. Their activities are directed to study the state of the environment and social development as well deriving future directions for developing including tourism.

According to the UN definition, "sustainable tourism must: make optimal use of environmental resources, which are a key element for tourism development, preserve basic ecological processes and help preserve natural heritage and biological diversity, respect the socio-cultural authenticity of host communities , preserves their built and living cultural heritage and traditional values, and contributes to intercultural understanding and tolerance. In this way, viable and long-term economic operations are ensured, providing socio-economic benefits to all stakeholders that are equitably distributed, including stable employment and income opportunities, as well as social services for host communities and poverty reduction" (Institute for tourism).

According to the WTO definition, sustainable is "tourism that fully considers current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, taking into account the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and the host community" (UNWTO).

According to the European Commission, "the sustainable nature of tourism covers numerous aspects: responsible use of resources, takes into account the environmental impact of activities (waste production, pressure on water resources, soil and biodiversity, etc.), the use of 'clean' energy sources, preservation of the heritage and the nature and cultural integrity of the destinations, the quality and security of the jobs created, the benefits for the local economy, as well as the quality of the holiday offered" (EC).

Institutional organizations are united around the thesis that sustainable tourism refers to the environmental, economic and social environments of the tourist destination and the balance between them. When carrying out the activity, the resources should be exploited in a way that they can be used by the present and future generations.

International governmental and non-governmental organizations set the framework for sustainable development of tourism, which are of a recommendatory nature and represent encouraging measures. The branch organizations and the authorities at the national, regional and local level should take responsibility for the application of the concept of sustainable tourism, and among their main tasks is the creation of a suitable environment for its effective implementation.

There are a significant number of definitions of the term sustainable development, respectively sustainable tourism in the specialized scientific literature. Some researchers, such as Farrell (1992), associate sustainable development, including tourism, with the balance between environmental, economic and social environments. He agrees that all elements should be in sync, develop simultaneously and avoid putting one of them before the others (Hunter, 1997). Bramwell and Lane (1993) agree that "sustainable tourism should be aimed at improving the quality of life of the host community, maximizing local economic benefits, protecting nature" and "providing a high level of visitor experience " (Martins & Costa, 2016: 5).

Dabeva (2005) defines the sustainable development of tourism as "development that achieves environmental protection and preservation of socio-cultural values, economic efficiency and revenue growth, social justice for today's and future generations of tourists and residents of different regions of the world" (Dabeva, 2005: 3). Choi and Sirakaya (2006) support the thesis that sustainable tourism is the permanently established relationship, in an economic aspect, between the tourist destination and the host community, significantly reducing the negative consequences on the environment and improving the social environment of the local population (Choi and Sirakaya, 2006). Hérve Houdré (2008) finds a contradiction between sustainable development and raising the standard of living of the population. According to him, as the quality of life increases, the demands of consumers increase, and environmental protection remains in second place (Houdré, 2008). Pedrana (2013) asserts that "sustainable tourism does not exceed its own capacity when tourism activities are developed without altering the natural, social and cultural environments" (Pedrana, 2013: 92). Schönherr, Peters and Kuščer (2023), based on Becherel (2001), state that sustainability refers to the preservation of the resources of the environmental, social, cultural and physical environments (Schönherr, Peters and Kuščer, 2023). According to Kazandzhieva (2023), sustainable tourism contributes to improving the quality of tourist trips and community life, taking into account the impact of the activity on the destination and ensuring fair income for the host community (Kazandzhieva,2023: 28).

The cited researchers relate sustainable tourism development to the protection of the environmental, economic and social environments of the tourist destination. They are united

around the thesis that a balance must be achieved between these three dimensions and the tourism industry should take an active position for the sustainable development of society.

We could conclude that sustainable tourism refers to the preservation and restoration of the environment, long-term economic growth, improvement of the social environment and increasing the quality of life in tourist destinations based on the definitions of the institutional organizations and the private scientific school. The main goal is to achieve a balance between these three dimensions.

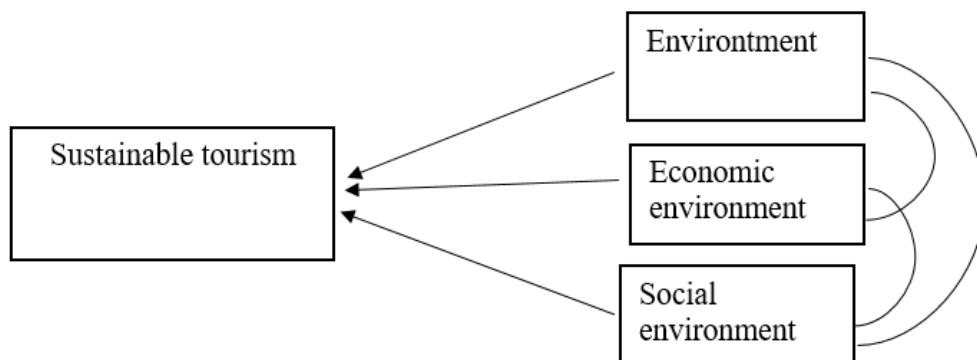


Figure 1. Sustainable development dimensions

Source: compiled by author

In article §1.2. Characteristic features of the sustainable development of the hotel industry, the author examines and systematizes institutional and private-scientific definitions of sustainable hospitality.

Hospitality as a part of the tourism system, has an important socioeconomic to the destinations, host community and the tourists. It is generating benefits such as improving the local economy, increasing the destination's competitiveness and the GDP, assure locals employment, increasing their incomes and living standard etc.

At the same time, establishments require a significant amount of water and energy, generate greenhouse gasses, pollute water and waste, change landscape and tourist resources become a part of the hospitality products. The unemployment is increasing in the destinations where tourism and hospitality demand is strongly dependent by seasonality,

local traditions and cultures are depersonalization, employment conditions are not satisfied, which refers to low level of remuneration, extended working hours, labor migration and there is a risk from the occurrence of intercultural conflicts etc. Erdogan and Baris (2017) concluded that "hotels are a key element of the organizational chain of activities in the tourism industry and have an important role in protecting the environment related to travel and tourism" (Rosa & Silva, 2017 : 41).

With the emergence of the concept of sustainable tourism, a concept of sustainable hospitality is developing. Institutional organizations such as WTO, UN, EU, MPHA and others are engaged in researching this phenomenon. In their reports and publications, there is no clear definition of the term, which is defined by its application in different programs. They address the environmental and social aspects of sustainable hospitality. They recommend the application of technologies and programs for the preservation and partial restoration of environmental resources, and more specifically the preservation of water and energy resources, biodiversity, and the improvement of the living and working conditions of the host community.

Hotel chains such as Hilton, Accor, Intercontinental and others include in their management strategies the principles of the concept of sustainable development due to increasing tourist interest in sustainable products.

Institutional and hotel chains programs unite around few main directions of sustainable development-management of water, energy and waste, architecture, employment environment and conditions, supply chain. We could also add social responsibility and apply quality standards and certification systems, used by hotel chains.

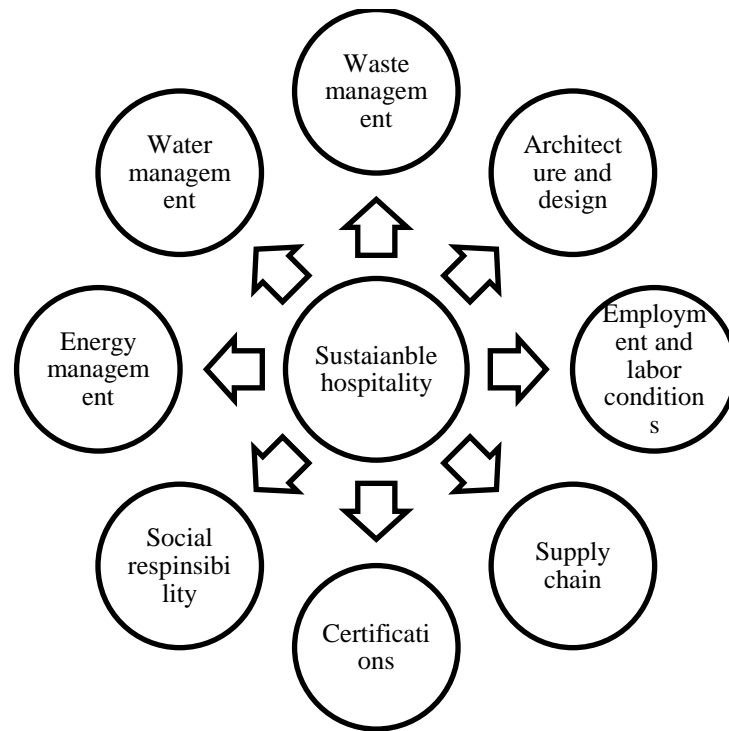


Figure 2. Sustainable hospitality directions

Source: compiled by author

Researchers from the private science school are also looking at the problems in this direction. Like institutional organizations, some of them define the term by means of the directions in which it is applied, others derive their own definitions. Legrand, Sloan and Chen (2017) define sustainable hospitality “as hospitality resource management activities addressing environmental, economic and social benefits and consequences to meet the needs of present generations while protecting and enriching opportunities for future generations. generations' (Legrand, Sloan & Chen, 2017: 26).

According to Dubeva (2017), "a sustainable hotel product is one whose creation, implementation and development guarantees social comfort and social responsibility, economic stability and prosperity, protection and partial restoration of natural and tourist resources" (Dabeva, Lukanova, 2017:98).

We could conclude that sustainable hospitality refers to the environmental, economic and social environments of tourist destinations, Based on the derived definitions and statements of the institutional organizations and the representatives of the private scientific school. By undertaking activities such as the introduction and use of energy-saving and

resource-saving technologies, taking into account the carrying capacity of resources, including tourist resources, recycling, building sustainable relationships with local producers, training employees in the hospitality industry, etc. the realization of socio-economic benefits for society, partial restoration and long-term preservation of the environment is aimed at. The application of the holistic principle in relation to the hotel product and hospitality contributes to the realization of tourism sustainability in the destinations and increases their competitiveness. The development of sustainable hospitality, respectively the tourism sector, is of particular importance for the development of the regions.

In article 1.3. the author suggests **a theoretical model for sustainable hospitality development** in small municipalities.

In article 1.3.1. the subject of research is defined as **development of sustainable hospitality.**

The scope of the research is limited to the small municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. For the purposes of this study, we will accept and apply the classification of the administrative territorial units of the Republic of Bulgaria, adopted by the NSI. Through this system, territories at the district/municipality level are evaluated and classified as smallest, small, large, larger and largest, using criteria such as "area", "total population" and "average population density" (NSI).

The author points out problems characteristic of the economy and social environment of small municipalities, which limit the opportunities for development of economic sectors and society. Among them are limited territorial scope and access to resources, respectively opportunities for economic development, poorly developed tourism sector, insufficient quality and capacity of infrastructure and superstructure, excessive exploitation of available resources, strong influence of factors such as seasonality.

Despite these characteristics, in territories where suitable resources are available, developed and stable economic sectors can be observed, including tourism and hospitality, which generate significant benefits for the host community.

Sustainable development is an alternative for improving the socio-economic and environmental environment of tourist destinations. This concept can also be applied in the development of small municipalities in order to overcome the mentioned problems. The implementation of its principles generates significant benefits for destinations and local society. These include preservation and partial restoration of environmental resources, improvement of the economic environment through efficient exploitation of resources, diversification of the hotel offer, reduction of the unemployment rate and increase of the period of employment of those working in the hotel industry, increase of income from the activity for hoteliers, the host society and the local government, improvement of the social environment, by means of raising the standard of living of the host society, improvement of the educational level and professional qualification of the employed persons, preservation of the authentic culture and traditions of the local community, etc. The sustainable development of the hospitality industry helps to integrate small municipalities towards achieving global goals, such as dealing with climate change, protecting and preserving the environment, natural resources and biodiversity etc.

Section 1.3.2. Stages of the model for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality graphically presents the proposed theoretical model. The author gives a description of the stages, between which there is a logical sequence and an investigative connection. The model is adapted for the hospitality industry in a small municipality and can be applied to all small municipalities in the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

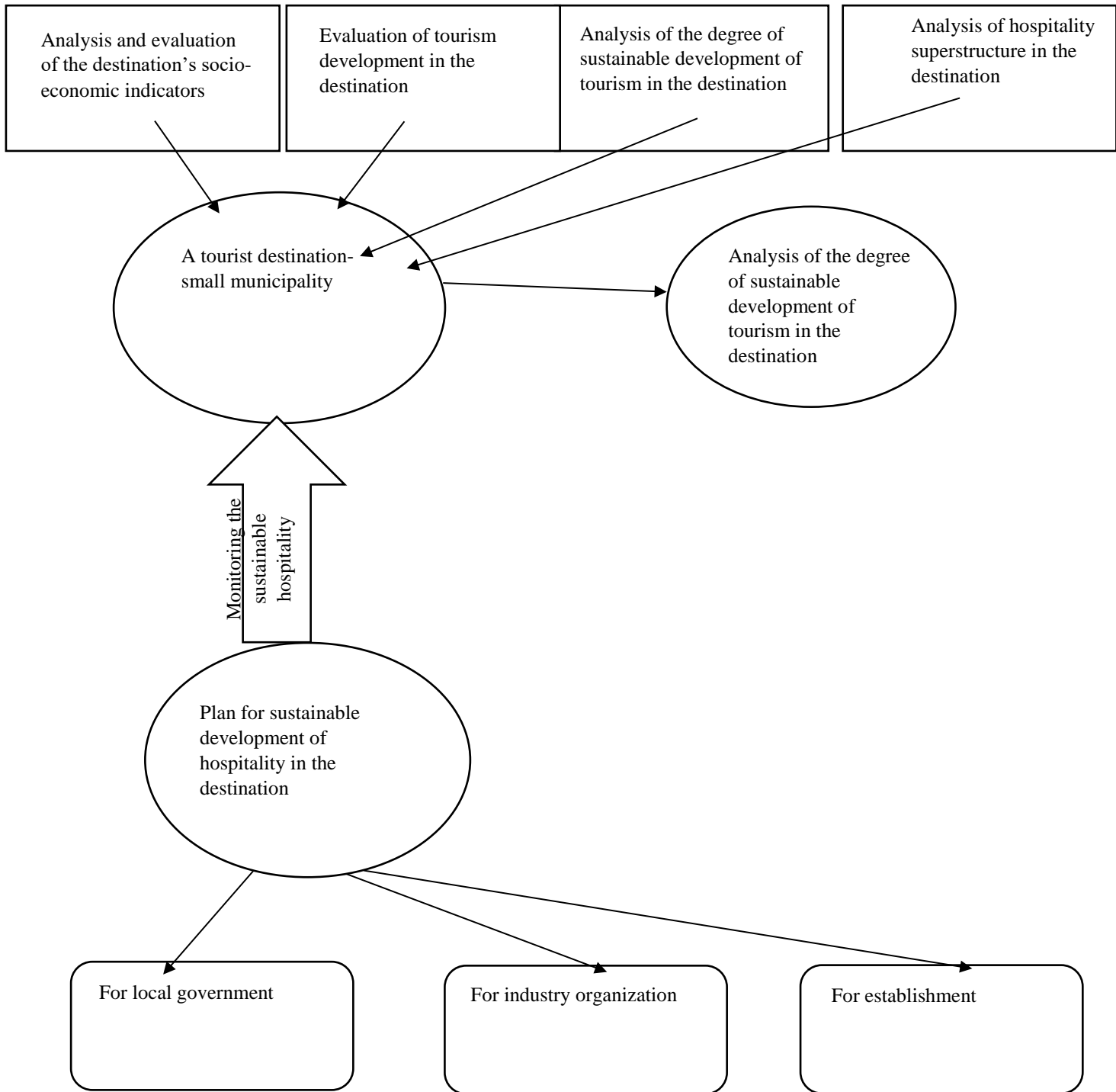


Figure 3. Model for sustainable development of the hospitality in small municipality

Analysis and evaluation of the destination's socio-economic indicators

The study of the socio-economic indicators of the small municipality provides guidelines for the state of the system, the potential problems facing the development of the destination and the possibilities for overcoming them, including through the concept of sustainable development.

In the study of tourism in the small municipality, the factors that promote or limit the application of this concept should be analyzed. By analyzing the direction and strength of their impact, stakeholders can take the necessary actions to increase sustainability in the sector. In order to determine the necessary measures and actions to be implemented to achieve sustainable hospitality, a situational analysis should be carried out, covering the following quantitative and qualitative socio-economic indicators:

- analysis and assessment of the state of resources on the territory of the small municipality - geographical location, available resources, climate, waters, soils, ecosystems, etc.;
- degree of development and ratio of built-up and vacant areas;
- development of economy activities;
- a part of municipality's GDP of total GDP of the country;
- scale and quality of infrastructure in the small municipality;
- demographic structure of the population: age, gender and educational structures;
- employment and unemployment of locals.

Evaluation of tourism development in the destination

The study of tourism in the small municipality provides information on the scale of the activity and trends in its development. On this basis, a conclusion and assessment can be made about the impact of the sector on the socio-economic environment of the destination. Among the investigated quantitative and qualitative indicators are:

- the state of the tourist resources in the small municipality - degree of utilization, access to them, carrying capacity and others;

- structure of developed tourist activities - basic and additional services offered;
- number of persons employed in the tourism industry and in periods of the year;
- number of tourists (tourist visits) for a certain period of time, classified by way of organization, nationality, age structure, reasons for travel and etc;
 - number of overnight stays;
 - average length of stay;
 - tourist visits and overnight stays for a certain period of time (definition of high and low tourist season);
- impact of tourism on the development of other economic sectors in the small municipality;
- share of tourism in the total GDP in the small municipality.

Analysis of the hospitality superstructure in the destination

The analysis of the hospitality superstructure covers indicators that reveal the degree of development, usage and efficiency of the hotel activity in the small municipality. The indicators used include:

- total bed fund (total number of beds in establishments);
- type and category structure of establishments;
- degree of occupancy of the bed base for a certain period of time, which can be measured using different indicators.

Assessment of the degree of sustainable development of tourism in the destination

In order to assess the degree of sustainable development of the tourist destination, different systems of indicators have been created and applied, which cover various aspects of sustainable development. One of the applicable systems is ETIS (European Tourism Indicator System). According to Tudorache, Simon, Frent, Musteata-Pavel (2017) “The system is designed to support the sustainable management of destinations while being a comprehensive tool for monitoring, managing and improving sustainable tourism management.... Its role is to offer informational support for the assessment of the

sustainable development of tourism in European tourist destinations" (Tudorache, Simon, Frent, Musteata-Pavel, 2017: 8).

Plan for sustainable development of hospitality in destination

The results obtained from the study of the state of the general and tourist infrastructures and the hotel superstructure, as well as the assessment of the degree of sustainable development, can serve as a starting point for the development of a plan for the development of sustainable hospitality for the small municipality. By means of the foreseen measures and actions, the aim is to overcome the weaknesses and threats to the socio-economic and environment of the small municipality from the development of tourism and hospitality in particular. It is appropriate to prepare a plan at three levels - at the level of the municipality (local government), at the level of the (local) industry organization and at the level of the hotel establishment.

Monitoring the sustainable hospitality

The last stage of the model for sustainable development of hospitality in a small municipality is monitoring the implementation of the adopted strategic goals and measures. At this stage, performance is evaluated by examining a set of quantitative and qualitative indicators. Their current values should be compared with values from previous periods, as well as the set final goals. Their results present the trends in the sustainable development of the hotel industry in a small municipality. If significant deviations between expected and current achievements are found, corrective actions are planned.

The application of the proposed theoretical model should support the process of implementing the concept of sustainable development in the hotel business in small municipalities. The implementation of its principles generates a number of benefits for the environmental, economic and social environments in the destinations, also for the host community and tourists.

In article 1.4. the author systematizes the benefits and negative aspects of the application of the concept of sustainable development in hotel facilities in small municipalities.

The essence of the concept of sustainability implies a balanced development of the activities to which it is applied. With its introduction in the hospitality industry, a number of benefits should be generated for the interested entities. On the one hand, the positive aspects refer to the environment of the destination, and on the other, to the economy and the host community. As a result of its application, favorable conditions for the development of their activity are created for the economic subjects that have a direct or indirect relations with the hotel industry. Tourists also bear the benefits of the offered sustainable hotel, respectively tourism product.

Among the environmental benefits of destinations are conservation and partial restoration of available resources, including tourism, creation of a favorable environment for the host society and tourist visits, limitation of the activity's impact on climate change, environmental pollution and destruction of ecosystems.

Regarding the economic environment, the positive aspects are associated with establishing a favorable environment for economic development, including increasing investor interest in the destination. The operational costs of the hotel facilities are limited in the future period, the average annual occupancy rate of the bed stock and the efficiency of its operation are increased. The positive effects for the host community refer to increased employment rates and incomes.

The benefits in terms of the social environment refer to the creation of a favorable environment for employment and life of locals, equal opportunities for employment and increasing the competitiveness of those working in the sector, preservation of the authentic local culture, traditions and customs, increasing the level of satisfaction of tourists, preventing potential conflicts between tourists and employees in residence establishments.

At the same time, the concept of sustainable development also has disadvantages. Among them are limiting the possibilities of building new establishments and increasing the number of beds in the destination, with the aim of preserving the environment and sensitive areas. Investments in modern resource-saving technologies and equipment are significant, the payback period is also long. The concept requires the investment of sustainable materials and goods at all levels of the supply chain, which also increases operating costs.

In terms of the locals, among the negative results are an increase in the prices of the goods and services offered, which are produced outside the tourism sector, but are consumed by locals and tourists. The improvement of the education and qualification of the persons employed in tourism leads to their emigration outside the destination in search of more favorable conditions for employment.

Overcoming the negative aspects and deciding to apply the principles of sustainability in residential establishments would contribute to establishing a sustainable and favorable environment in tourist destinations

CHAPTER TWO

ANALYSIS AND EVALUATION OF THE HOSPITALITY AND ITS SUSTAINABILITY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAVARNA

In section 2.1. the author, applying the specified NSI system for qualifying the administrative-territorial units in the country, defines the municipality of Kavarna as the object of the study. By means of the specified system for qualifying the administrative-territorial units in the Republic of Bulgaria, applied by NSI, the destination qualifies as a small municipality. In conclusion, the theoretical model can be successfully applied to assess sustainable hospitality and prepare an effective sustainable development plan.

In article 2.1.1. Analysis and evaluation of the socio-economic indicators of the municipality of Kavarna, by means of a situational analysis, the author evaluates the geomorphological features and the available natural resources of the territory. Ore and non-ore minerals, climate, water resources, soils, flora, fauna, degree of urbanization, demographic and educational structures, infrastructural facilities were examined.

The physical-geographical and demographic features predetermine the possibilities for economic development of the municipality of Kavarna. The lack of ore and non-ore minerals limits the development of the mining and processing sectors. The available conditions are suitable for the realization of activities from the service sectors, agriculture and light industry, in particular the food industry. The higher concentration of construction and urbanization in the coastal zone and the localization of cultivated areas, mainly in the north of the territory of the municipality, predetermine the territorial distribution of the developed economic activities. The location of the municipality on the Black Sea coast, the

moderate climate with relatively not high temperatures, numerous sunny days and a low annual amount of precipitation, the various types of representatives of the flora and fauna provide opportunities for the development of tourist activity.

The most significant for the economic structure of the municipality of Kavarna are the sectors "Agriculture, forestry and fisheries", "Production and distribution of electric energy and gaseous fuels", "Hotel and restaurant industry" and "Trade; car and motorcycle repair". Based on the presented facts about the economic structure of the municipality, we could conclude the following:

- the main economic sector is agriculture, followed by the service sector. The industrial sector is underdeveloped;
- the territorial distribution of the economic activities of an agricultural area located in the northern and central parts of the territory, and an area where all other economic activities are developed, located along the Black Sea coast, can be clearly defined.

In the municipality of Kavarna, transport, electricity transmission, water supply, telecommunication, educational, cultural and sports infrastructures have been built, which provide conditions for the development of economic sectors and a social environment for the local community. Based on what has been stated about the state of the available infrastructure in the municipality of Kavarna, we could assess it as sufficient, but of low quality, which hinders its socio-economic development. The built road infrastructure for road transport provides a quick connection at a low cost to the nearby territories. The unsatisfactory condition of the water transmission network, the frequent interruption of water supply, the loss of drinking water and the lack of a constructed sewage network, which is a prerequisite for environmental pollution, can also be assessed as a threat and limiting factor for development. In the electricity supply infrastructure, problems related mainly to outdated, depreciated and insufficient infrastructure and interruptions in power supply are reported. The presence of a developed and quality telecommunications infrastructure, including Internet access, favors the socio-economic development of society by improving access to information.

Considering the number of people under working age and the available conditions for economic development, we could conclude that the educational infrastructure and opportunities for education are sufficient. Providing access to the facilities of the cultural and sports infrastructures, which create conditions for organizing numerous and diverse events, as well as restoring the active activity of the sports clubs, offer opportunities to improve the socio-cultural environment of the community.

The facts presented so far regarding the conditions and infrastructure show that in Kavarna municipality the possibilities for the development of various economic activities are limited. As indicated above, the available resources are suitable for the development of the sectors "Agriculture, forestry and fisheries", "Production and distribution of electric energy and gaseous fuels", "Hotel and restaurant industry", "Trade; car and motorcycle repair". The available infrastructure facilities and their condition also have a limiting influence on the development of economic activities in the municipality.

Due to these features, it is appropriate to provide appropriate measures and actions to improve the general condition of the economic structure and the well-being of the local community. In terms of infrastructure, the local authority should make efforts to improve it, including access to the territory. It is necessary for the interested parties to direct their efforts to improving the conditions for the development of the structural economic sectors, the main of which are agriculture and tourism.

In § 2.1.2. Evaluation of the development of tourism in Kavarna municipality, the author examines the available natural and anthropogenic resources and their importance for the development of tourism activities on the territory of Kavarna municipality. The most significant resources with touristic value are classified in table 1. The qualification of some of them as both natural and anthropogenic is due to the symbiosis between significant natural conditions and preserved valuable cultural and historical finds.

Natural and anthropogenic tourist resources in the municipality of Kavarna

<i>Natural resources</i>	<i>Anthropogenic resources</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Climat; ● Black sea and coastline; ● Mineral springs; ● “Yailata”area; ● “Tauk liman”area; ● “Bolata”area; ● “Kaliakra” Nature Reserve; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Yailata” National Archaeological Reserve; ● “Tauk liman”area; ● “Dalboka”area ; ● “Kaliakra”Architectural Reserve; ● Turkish bath (Hamam); ● The old shops of the port in Kavarna Sea Zone; ● Stone bridge, city of Kavarna.

Source: compiled by the author

We could assess the reviewed resources as significant for the development of tourist activity on the territory of the municipality of Kavarna. The Black Sea coast, the "Yailata", "Bolata" and "Kaliakra" localities, the anthropogenic fortresses "Yailata" and "Kaliakra", the ancient settlement of Bizone, the city of Kavarna and the cultural calendar are considered to be the most important natural resources. They determine the development of basic forms of tourism, such as recreational and cultural and educational, event tourism has potential for development.

Based on the available conditions, we could assess the municipality of Kavarna as a destination suitable for the development of domestic and international tourism. Given the transport accessibility, we should assume that inbound tourism is limited to nearby emission markets. The conditions created by the characteristic climate, the location and the available mineral springs are suitable for the development of forms of medical tourism - balneo, spa tourism, practicing climate therapy. The facilities of the available sports and cultural

infrastructure create suitable conditions for the development of sports and event tourism. The conditions in the municipality are suitable for the development of alternative forms of tourism - ornithological, rural, pilgrimage.

In section 2.1.3. Degree of development of tourism in Kavarna municipality, the development of tourist activity in the territory of the destination is monitored.

According to data from the municipal administration for the period 2013-2020, there is a trend of increasing the number of tourist visits, respectively the number of overnight stays and revenues for the municipal budget collected as tourist tax. We saw a drop in performance in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and its aftermath.

***Figure 4. Number of tourist, overnight stays and revenue of tourist tax (BGN)
(2013-2020)***

Source: compiled by the author based on data from the Kavarna municipal administration

There is a tendency to decrease the average length of stay of tourists. The values of this indicator show that the municipality of Kavarna is a preferred destination for short-term stays. Looking at the ratio of Bulgarians and foreigners staying overnight, we could conclude that it is preferred by foreigners. Given the short stay and transport accessibility features described above, we could assume that the main issuing market for the destination is the Republic of Romania.

**Number of overnight stays from Bulgarians/foreigners in the municipality of
Kavarna in the period 2015-2020^[1]**

Year	Number of overnight stays	
	Bulgarians	Foreigners
2015 г.	31762	122035
2016 г.	39102	157364
2017 г.	103645	111030
2018 г.	49699	223442
2019 г.	60668	256787
2020 г.	44371	120485

Source: reference of Kavarna municipal administration, Department of Tourism and Culture

For the purposes of the present study and the preparation of an objective assessment of the degree of development of tourism in the municipality of Kavarna and related activities, 2 semi-structured interviews were conducted in 2019. One with a representative of the municipal administration, holding the position of Specialist "Municipal Property and Economic Development", which department is responsible for tourism in the municipality, and the second with the chairman of the Tourist Association "Kavarna", Ms. Darina Argirova. Analogous structured questions are put to them to express an opinion and assessment about the degree of development, condition, carrying capacity and exploitation of the available tourism resources, general infrastructure and superstructure, the impact of tourism on them, the economy and the host society, as well as the degree of sustainability of the destination.

Based on the presented facts, data and estimates, we could conclude that tourism is a significant activity for the economy of the small municipality. To improve development opportunities and generate additional benefits, it is necessary to make efforts to improve the quality of the general infrastructure and reduce the negative impact of factors such as seasonality, as well as limiting environmental risks.

At the same time, the measures taken should be consistent with the nature and capacity of the tourist resources in order to preserve them. Based on this, we could conclude that the application of the concept of sustainable development is a suitable tool for realizing these goals. Its implementation is expected to generate a number of benefits for the environment, economy and society in Kavarna municipality.

In article 2.2. Analysis of the hotel superstructure in the municipality of Kavarna, the available material base and bed stock in the destination are examined and evaluated.

The analysis of the hotel superstructure should examine and evaluate the available establishments in the municipality of Kavarna, their capacity, type and category structure, and the degree of occupancy of the bed stock. The data were collected from the National Tourist Register, the Register of Accommodation Places and processed using **Excel** and **SPSS** software, by means of which they were systematized by criteria such as location, type and category structures, number of rooms and beds by types of accommodation facilities and category.

There are suitable conditions for the development of tourism and hotel activities, the superstructure corresponds to the capacity and quality of the general infrastructure in the municipality of Kavarna. Operating establishments are mostly small-capacity and medium-sized establishments, despite the presence of several significantly large apartment complexes. Regarding the total capacity of the hotel facilities, we could conclude that it is sufficient and corresponds to the carrying capacity of the tourist resources and is operated efficiently. The types and category of objects correspond to the available conditions, helping to preserve the environment of the tourist destination.

In section 2.3. Assessment of the attitudes of hoteliers towards sustainable development in Kavarna municipality, the results of the survey among them are presented.

The survey was conducted among hoteliers in the municipality of Kavarna in the period from June 2021 till August 2021 with the size of the representative sample **N=18**. The data was collected by means of a questionnaire sent via Google forms to all hotel establishments in the destination territory. The results were processed and analyzed using **Excel and SPSS and descriptive statistical methods**.

We could make the following statements as a result of the survey carried out by the author, regarding the attitudes of hoteliers towards the application of the concept of sustainable development in the municipality of Kavarna:

- the principles of sustainable development are not applied in the hotel industry;
- a small part of the hoteliers questioned are interested in the study;
- the respondents define some sustainable activities as implemented by them or express readiness for their implementation which introduce energy-saving technologies, recycling and use of recycled materials, cooperation with local producers and service providers, employment of local people, application of sustainable products and materials, offering a specific tourist product outside the active season. Hoteliers show the least interest in activities such as environmental certification and corporate social responsibility;
- among the factors that influence hoteliers to implement the concept are demand and supply of a sustainable hotel product, cost savings, access to resources and information, tax benefits, impact on resources and the environment, initial cost of investments, regulatory framework;
- according to them, the benefits that are generated from the implementation of the concept are mainly economic in nature, the impact on the environment and the social environment of the host society is insignificant.

Based on them, we could conclude that hoteliers in Kavarna municipality do not know the essence of the concept of sustainable development, respectively the principles and benefits of its application. Regarding its implementation, they show moderate interest.

For the effective application of the concept of sustainability in the hotel industry in Kavarna municipality, it is necessary to make efforts on the part of the municipal administration and the local tourist association. They should clarify in detail the strengths and opportunities for improving the environmental, economic and social conditions of the destination as a result of the application of its principles in the residential establishments they operate, as well as the potential threats in the future from neglecting them.

In section 2.4. the data from the survey among tourists on the consumption of a sustainable hotel product are presented. Knowing consumer behavior and the factors that influence it contributes to the adoption of an effective macro- and micro-level concept that sets clear, measurable and achievable goals, through appropriate measures and actions.

The survey was conducted among Bulgarian tourists in the period from August 2021 till September 2021 with the size of the representative sample **N=87**. The data was collected by means of a questionnaire, through Google forms, to all hotel facilities in the territory of the destination. The results were processed and analyzed using **Excel** and **SPSS** and **descriptive statistical methods**.

Based on the data from the conducted survey, we could conclude that the consumers of hotel services know the concept of sustainable development and the benefits of its application. They show considerable interest in the supply and consumption of the respective hotel products on the territory of the municipality of Kavarna. The data confirm Roy's (2022) theory that modern generations of tourists are interested in the consumption of sustainable products, including hotel products.

Knowledge of consumer behavior and preferences has a special role in the macro- and micro-level planning process. Taking into account the demographic profile of the respondents, when preparing the plan for sustainable development, measures and actions should be planned to keep their attention and help attract those groups on whom the negative influence of the factors is significant.

CHAPTER THREE

DIRECTIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF HOSPITALITY IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF KAVARNA

In article 3.1. Assessment of the degree of sustainable development of tourism in the municipality of Kavarna, the author presents the results of an assessment of the tourist activity in the destination. The research should cover all elements of the tourism system, including hospitality. Its results present important information about the state of available resources, infrastructure and superstructure, their exploitation and the application of the principles of the concept of sustainable development.

To assess the degree of sustainability of tourism in the municipality of Kavarna, in the author's opinion, it is appropriate to apply the European Tourism Indicator System (ETIS), which was developed by the EC. In its essence, it is a voluntary system of indicators, by which the degree of application of the concept is measured and goals are set for implementation in a future period, most often 1 year.

We could gather and analyze information on a total of 26 main indicators related to tourism in the municipality of Kavarna. The share of those in the direction of *Economic Value* is the largest, followed by *Social and Cultural Impact* and *Destination Management*, and the smallest - in relation to *Environmental Impact*.

Based on study results, we could conclude that the concept of sustainable development is not efficiently applied in the tourism and hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna.

From the derived data and estimates of the impact of tourism on the environmental, economic and social environment of the destination, we could draw the following conclusions:

- there is a stagnation in the sustainable development of tourism in the municipality of Kavarna, which is evidenced by the similar results of the current and the evaluation prepared in 2014 according to the system of tourism indicators ETIS;
- priority is given to economic indicators at the expense of those related to the environment and the impact of tourism on it;

- tourism businesses, including accommodation establishments, are not interested in applying some of the principles of the concept of sustainable development, such as certification, social responsibility, climate change, water and energy management.

In section 3.2. the appropriate, according to the author, measures and actions through which to effectively introduce the concept of sustainable development in the hospitality industry in the municipality of Kavarna are presented. The proposed plan is based on the previously studied socio-economic conditions and the assessment of the degree of sustainability of the destination. It sets out clear and achievable objectives, together with relevant measures and actions to be implemented by the local administration, the tourist association and each accommodation facility.

In the author's opinion, the development vision could be defined as *creating conditions for the development of a high-quality, sustainable and competitive hotel product, whose market positions on the national and international tourist markets are improving*. A strategic objective should be defined as *the proposed product being based on the available unique resources and established traditions in the destination, and the priority of the current plan is the preservation and restoration of the available natural resources, including tourism, balanced long-term economic development and improvement the well-being of the local community*.

In § 3.2.1. Measures and actions for sustainable development of the hotel industry, implemented by the local administration, the author presents goals, measures and actions to create a favorable environment for the development of a sustainable hotel industry in the municipality of Kavarna. Their implementation should conserve environmental resources and establish stable economic and social environments in which residential facilities can function.

At the end of 2021, the Municipal Council adopts the Kavarna Municipality Integrated Development Plan (MIDP) for the period 2021-2027. The measures, actions and projects envisaged in it follow the principles of sustainability and are aimed at preserving and improving the state of the environment, development of the economy and improvement of the quality of life of the local community. The specific goals, measures and actions proposed by the author should complement the priorities described in the MIDP.

Goals for sustainable development of the hospitality, set for implementation by the local administration

Direction	Specific goal
Architecture and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● construction of landscaped environment and appearance of the tourist destination;
Energy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● improvement of electricity supply;
Supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promotion of cooperation between local producers and tourist enterprises;
Employment and labor conditions for locals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the level of employment in tourism, respectively the hotel industry; ● reducing the share of seasonal jobs; ● ensuring equal access to the labor market;
Certification systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the share of establishments that are part of voluntary sustainability/eco-certification systems;
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● conservation of natural tourist resources; ● reducing the negative impact of transport on the environment of the destination; ● reducing the greenhouse gasses; ● reducing the tourism negative impact over climate change;
Economic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the number of tourists/nights on a monthly basis, with priority in periods of low occupancy; ● increasing the average length of stay of tourists in the destination; ● increasing the average annual occupancy rate of the beds; ● increase the income from hotel activity for the local administration;
Social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing visitor satisfaction; ● promoting the loyalty of visitors to the destination; ● preserving the traditions and cultural heritage of the local society.

Source: compiled by the author

In article 3.2.2. the measures and actions that, according to the author, the tourist association should implement for effective implementation of the concept of sustainable development in the hotel industry are presented. A significant part of the measures and

actions that the association could undertake have an informational nature and a supporting function. Among them are:

Table 4

**Goals for sustainable development of the hospitality, set for implementing by
“Kavarna”tourist organization**

Direction	Specific goal
Energy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● encouraging establishments to introduce energy-saving technologies and improve energy efficiency; ● increasing the share of used energy from alternative sources;
Water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promoting the introduction of water-saving technologies;
Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promoting the separate collection of waste;
Supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● encouraging cooperation between establishments and local producers; ● promoting relations between local producers and establishments;
Employment and labor conditions for locals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● assisting hoteliers in determining the needs of qualified personnel; ● raising the qualifications of those employed in the hospitality industry;
Certification systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● encouraging hoteliers to join voluntary certification systems for environmental protection, sustainability, social responsibility;
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● storage of sensitive areas on the territory of the destination; ● reducing the impact of transport on the environment;
Economic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the average annual occupancy rate of the beds in the establishments; ● increasing the average length of stay of tourists; ● limiting the influence of the seasonality factor on the activity of establishments;
Social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● promoting the loyalty of tourists to the destination.

Source: compiled by the author

C. § 3.2.3. the author presents measures and actions based on established good practices in the field of sustainable hospitality. Through their implementation, the aim is to

more effectively implement the concept in establishments and increase the degree of sustainability of the activity. Their implementation should generate a number of benefits for the destination, including for the environmental and economic environments, the host community and tourists. At the same time, the implementation of the concept at the local level leads to an increase in sustainability at the regional and national level.

Table 5

Goals for sustainable development of hospitality, set to implement by establishments

Direction	Specific goal
Architecture and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● entry of the establishments in the general appearance of the destination; ● turning residence facilities into "green buildings" and improving their energy efficiency;
Energy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reducing the used electricity produced from traditional sources and increasing the share of used electricity produced from alternative sources; ● reducing the amount of electricity used;
Water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reducing the amount of water used; ● preservation of water resources from pollution;
Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● reducing the share of used single-use plastic products; ● reducing the total amount of generated waste; ● waste recycling and input of recycled materials;
Supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● cooperation with local producers; ● increasing the degree of sustainability in the supply chain;
Employment and labor conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● employment of local residents to work in hotel facilities; ● increasing the qualifications and key competencies of those employed in the hospitality industry; ● improving the working conditions of those employed in the establishments;

Social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the degree of ethics and responsibility of residence establishments;
Certification systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● participation in voluntary systems for quality and eco certification;
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● conservation of natural resources in Kavarna municipality; ● limiting the negative impact of transport on the environment of the destination;
Economic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing the quality of the offered hotel product; ● increasing the average annual occupancy rate of the beds in the establishment; ● limiting the influence of the seasonality factor on the activity of establishments;
Social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● increasing customer satisfaction in residential establishments; ● increasing the degree of customer loyalty in establishments; ● encouraging clients to apply the principles of the concept; ● preservation and promotion of local authentic culture and traditions; ● establishing a safe environment for clients in hotel facilities; ● improving accessibility in hotel facilities for people with special needs.

Source: compiled by the author

In section 3.3. the author proposes a system of quantitative and qualitative indicators, through which to carry out regular monitoring of the implementation of the proposed measures and actions. Monitoring the implementation of the planned measures and actions provides information on the degree of sustainability and effectiveness of the adopted development plans. In the event that the results are unsatisfactory, the set goals, planned measures and expected results should be revised and subsequently, if necessary, amended.

In the author's opinion, when determining the monitoring indicators, it is appropriate to re-apply the EITS system, which is the basis of the prepared analysis of the sustainability of the destination and the proposed measures and actions for the implementation of the concept. Quantitative indicators are suitable for measuring the results of specific objectives that could be quantified, such as activities related to energy, water and waste management,

supply chain, economic environment, and environmental and social measures. Their data can be analyzed using statistical methods.

Table 6

Quantities indicators for monitoring sustainable hospitality

Direction	Indicator
Energy management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amount of consumed electricity for a hotel room for 1 day/month/year, for a predetermined period of time (mwh); ● amount of consumed electricity produced from own alternative sources (mwh); ● term of purchase of the investment in energy-saving devices and technologies;
Water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amount of water used for a hotel room for 1 day/month, year or other predetermined period of time (l); ● amount of water used for irrigation per month/year or other predetermined period of time (l); ● term of purchase of the investment in resource-saving devices and technologies;
Waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amount of plastic waste generated, including from disposable products (kg); <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amount of general waste generated, including food (l);
Supply chain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amount of input goods and/or materials produced by local manufacturers;
Employment and labor conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● employment rate of the local community, including year-round and seasonal; ● male/female ratio employed in establishments;
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● amounts of greenhouse gasses generated by road transport (kg);
Economic environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● number of overnight stays per month/year or other predetermined period of time; ● average length of stay of tourists (days); ● revenues from overnight stays of tourists for a month/year or another predetermined period of time (BGN/currency);
Social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● number of tourists who revisited the hotel within 3 years.

Source: compiled by the author

Qualitative indicators refer to specific objectives whose results cannot be measured statistically. The data for their analysis is collected by conducting questionnaire surveys of interested parties, including the local population and visitors to the residential facilities. They are applicable in the assessment of objectives related to architecture and design, working conditions, social responsibility, certification systems, environmental and social environments.

Table 7

Qualitative indicators for monitoring sustainable hospitality

Direction	Indicator
Architecture and design	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degree of development in the territory of the destination (%); • degree of registration of residence establishments in the architecture and landscape of the destination (%);
Water management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of water resources, including for drinking purposes;
Employment and labor conditions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quality of the educational and qualification structure for those employed in accommodation establishments;
Social responsibility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participation in charity initiatives;
Certification systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • share of residential establishments belonging to quality systems and eco products (%);
Environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degree of preservation of natural resources, including those with touristic value;
Social environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • degree of customer satisfaction with the offered hotel product; • degree of customer loyalty in establishments; • degree of security of the environment in the establishments and the destination.

Source: compiled by the author

Monitoring should be implemented by all parties for which action measures have been proposed - local administration, tourist association and hotel establishments. Each of them should compile its own system of indicators that correspond to the strategic goals adopted by it, and through them track the trends in their realization. It is recommended that an assessment be prepared annually, and in hotels that operate several months a year, for the period of their operation.

The implementation of the last stage of the model aims to examine and evaluate the effectiveness of the proposed plans and implemented measures and activities. It ensures the implementation of the principles of the concept, the achievement of the expected results and the generation of benefits from it.

CONCLUSION

The application of the concept of sustainable development in the hospitality industry in small municipalities creates suitable conditions for the realization of the activity. Through its principles, a balance is achieved between the conservation of natural resources, economic prosperity, competitiveness and sustainability in the long term and raising the quality and standard of living of the host community. In-depth knowledge and understanding of the essence of the concept by hoteliers is a condition for its successful implementation in the objects operated by them, which guarantees the sustainability of the activity. On the other hand, there are consumers who, through the possibilities of access to information and under the influence of globalization, change their needs and direct their demand towards sustainable hotel products.

Applying theoretical and empirical methods, the author proves the presented hypotheses, by which **the main thesis is accepted**, namely: *The application of the concept of sustainable development of the hotel industry in a small municipality contributes to overcoming the negative consequences of the development of tourism and generating socio-economic benefits to the host community.*

In the author's opinion, the topic is relevant and the problems related to its development should not hinder future studies. In order to effectively apply the concept of sustainable development in tourism, all interested entities should be familiar with its essence and the benefits that are generated. The proposed theoretical model, measures and actions for sustainable development are universal and can be applied in the hospitality industry in all small municipalities on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria.

IV. REFERENCE ON SCIENTIFIC AND SCIENTIFIC-APPLIED CONTRIBUTIONS IN THE DISSERTATION

As a result of the research and the implementation of the set tasks, the main **contributions** of the dissertation work are distinguished. The latter could be classified into two main directions - scientific and scientific-applied, and be systematized as follows:

- by commenting on various author's opinions, the interrelationship between sustainable development, tourism and hospitality is clarified;
- theoretical knowledge has been systematized and definitions have been derived for the concepts: sustainable development, sustainable tourism, sustainable hospitality and sustainable hospitality product;
- the mentioned concepts are adapted to the characteristics of the small municipality;
- an original author's model for the development of sustainable hospitality in a small municipality was created and approved;
- an empirical study was conducted on the degree of development of sustainable hospitality in the municipality of Kavarna;
- as a result of the experimental application of the author's model, strategic plans were developed for the implementation of the principles of the concept of sustainable development in the hotel business in Kavarna municipality;
- a system of indicators for monitoring sustainable hospitality is proposed;
- the presented model and plan (measures and actions) for sustainable development of the hotel industry are universal and can be applied in the hotel business in small municipalities on the territory of Bulgaria.

[1] There is not date the period of 2013-2014

V. LIST OF PUBLICATIONS ON THE TOPIC IF THE DISSERTATION

ARTICLES

1. Dimitrova, M. (2022). Factors Affecting Hotelier's Management Decisions for Sustainable Development. *Izvestia Journal of the Union of Scientists-Varna*. Vol. 11 (1). pp. 193-201

REPORTS

1. Dimitrova, M. (2018). Sustainable hospitality as a figure for protection of tourist destination environment. *The International Sustainable Tourism and Environment Protection Conference. Edirne, Turkey*. pp. 30-33
2. Dimitrova, M. (2018). Advantages of the sustainable development of hotel industry for small municipalities. *Regional Economy and Sustainable Development, Conference Proceedings*. Research Institute, University of Economics - Varna. (1). pp 600-609.
3. pp 600-609.

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I declare that this dissertation is a completely author's product and that during its development no foreign publications and developments were used in violation of their copyrights.