

Szent István University

**ANALYSIS OF TOURISM DESTINATION MANAGEMENT
ORGANIZATIONS IN HUNGARY**

Theses of the PhD dissertation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism management and tourism destination management were brought to the center of attention of Hungarian tourism academy in the last decade. Tourism destination management (TDM) and tourism destination management organization (TDMO) were launched in tourism terminology. According to the National Tourism Development Strategy (2005-2013) which is a strategic document in Hungarian tourism planning “nowadays structure of Hungarian tourism is not stable, it seems to be impretable and responsibility and competences are not identified adequate” (NTS 2005:14). Consequently building up an efficient operation system is considered a general goal in the goal structuring of the forenamed strategy. Evolving local destination management organization, reforming regional institution system and building up the pyramid of tourism institution were found among the cardinal goals. We can experience raised attention and eagerness towards Destination management after 2014. National Tourism Development Conception (2014-20124) and National Development 2030: National Development and Territorial Development Concept are also dealing with TDM-led tourism governance. As far regional policy is concerned, TDM was highlighted in the last programming period (2007-2013) and it may be highlighted in the present one (2014-2020).

Act modifications and the national tourism institutional and organizational restructuring that started 2016 spring are creating a challenging situation for present TDMOs and the TDM system itself. Based upon the following facts, we can say that the theme is relevant.

Analysis of the Hungarian approach of TDM shows that tourism studies and practices are concerned with competitiveness (see PhD theses by SZIVA 2010, TÓZSÉR 2010, PAPP 2013) and network analysis aspects (MADARÁSZ 2016). TDM-oriented research is carrying out by tourist institutions of higher education as well. Faculty of Commerce, Catering and Tourism of Budapest Business School has started its research 2014. Goal of the research is to measure Hungarian settlements’ tourism potencial that may enable commensurability and comparability of destinations. As a result of the research Tourism Complex Indicator is expected to be able to grade settlement in respect of tourism-commitment. This future indicator will enable easier positioning of TDMOs (SZALÓK 2014). In case of future validation of Tourism Complex Indicator, AUBERT’s ten-year-old statement will be denied namely “there are not any

objective successfulness criteria and indicators for measuring efficiency of TDMOs”.

My PhD dissertation targets a representative research among Hungarian TDMOs. So the focus of present survey is Hungary. Research population includes all TDMOs registered by Ministry for National Economic. Referring to the fact that registration process of TDMOs is now available, population means 88 organizations until end of the research (April 2016).

Not only the theme but the research also were motivated by my former position and working experiences as a TDMO manager and Tourinform office manager in an emerging destination. Development of the concerned destination – I mean settlement – was facilitated by TDMO project I actively took part in. As far as the operation specifics are concerned I gained personal experiences. Directions of my research were defined by the following areas: human resources, working motivation of TDMO managers, knowledge management, European Union project properties and change management.

I intend to get responses for the next **research questions**:

Q1. Is there any coherence between TDMO’s geographic area and its working team?

Q2. How much burden does a TDMO manager have to take and is it possible to fill extra position?

Q3. What factors motivate TDMO managers during their work?

Q4. How to become a TDMO manager? What work experience and qualification are needed for this position and what factors drove them to absolve a TDM-oriented course?

Q5. What factors have a great role in their fluctuation?

Based on the upper research questions the following **hypotheses** can be drawn.

H1. I think there is linear correlation between TDMO’s geographical area (so settlement amount that is concerned by TDMO) and working team number. I mean, the extended the destination is, and the more team workers are involved.

H2. I suppose the less working team number, the more position the TDMO manager has.

H3. During their work, TDMO managers are motivated by having new and innovative ideas, yet they do not reckon that innovation and creativity have primarily role in achieving organizational effectiveness.

H4. I think the extended working experiences the TDMO managers have, the less affinity for retraining they have.

H5. I assume that the training of most TDMO managers was motivated by a successful TDM-project and absolving preferably master-level course to other available training courses (e.g. OKJ course).

H6. Fluctuation of TDMO managers is caused by rather social and human factors than economic factors.

Beyond exploration of TDM situation in Hungary, I carried out researches in Slovakian Republic in the frame of Central-European outlook. I made quantitative research among Slovakian TDMOs, the so called OOCR and KOOCR and qualitative research among potential stakeholders of a future Podunajsko OOCR (Danubian TDMO). It is noticeable that the named OOCR was established after research.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Both international (Swiss tourism school, 1989; KASPAR, 1991, MÜLLER, 2008) and Hungarian (LENGYEL, 1992; PUCZKÓ-RÁTZ, 1998; BODNÁR, 2000; DÁVID, 2007; MICHALKÓ, 2012) researches emphasize system and environment of tourism. Representatives of tourism theory agree that tourism environment has more aspects: natural, social, economical, political, legal, cultural and technological ones. TDMOs are crucial actors on tourism market; they are influenced by the above mentioned environmental elements and vice versa: environmental elements are affected by TDMOs. The same chapter of the dissertation ensure general information about present tourism environment in Hungary regarding TDMOs: most of all its political, legal, economical and social aspects.

2.1. Condition of primary research carried out among Hungarian TDMOs

Research area	Hungary as tourism destination
Target group of the research	TDMOs managers (professional leaders)
Research period	2014-2016 (end of research: April 2016)
Population size (piece, person)	88 TDMOs registered by Ministry for National Economy (according to status 31. 12. 2015)
Achieved sample size (piece, person)	74
Response rate (%)	84%
Research method	Quantitative
Research tool	Own questionnaire
Data analysis method, used statistical methods	IBM SPSS program (descriptive statistics, mathematical-statistical diversity and coherence analysis)

Source: Own editing

Aim of Central-European outlook of the dissertation is to present TDM-theory and practice of a sample area of abroad, incl. establishment circumstances and specialities of TDMOs and a short review about financial and support features. The sample area extends Slovakian Republic and its operating TDMOs. Doctoral research aimed to compare Hungarian TDM-system with another

Central-European one originally. Regarding to that variable country endowments (natural and social geographical, touristic ones, governance system etc.) and different numerosity of TDMOs (there are 40 Slovakian TDMOs), we can only draw parallel. We have to admit that comparison of TDMOs within the same country is a challenge because of different tourism products, operating mechanism or different position on TALC (Tourit Area Lifecycle).

2.2. Primary research carried out in Central-Europe

	Research method	
	Quantitative	Qualitative
Research area	Slovakian Republic as tourism destination	South-east of Slovakia, area between Komárno-Sturovo
Target group of the research	Directors of TDMOs (so called OOCR and KOOCR)	Potential stakeholders of a future TDMO (sa called “Podunajsko OOCR”)
Research period	April 2016	August 2014
Population size (person)	40	no available data
Achieved sample size (piece, person)	16	22
Response rate (%)	40%	not relevant
Research tool	Own questionnaire available in Slovakian language	Interview
Data analysis method, used statistical methods	Argument (Microsoft Excel)	
Other information	Supporters of the research: Balassi Institute, MINDOP (Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic)	Supporters of the research: Balassi Institute. The examined TDMO was registered on 01.12.2015 by MINDOP.

Source: Own editing

3. RESEARCH RESULTS

This chapter gives details about the most important research results.

3.1. Hungarian questionnaire evaluation

3.1.1. Content of the sample

I aimed representative primary research. The whole population indicates 88 TDMOs until 31 December 2015 based on registered organizations by Ministry for National Economy. Data analysing covers 74 professional leaders of organizations (N=74) that means 83% of the population participated. The sample must be representative.

As shown in Figure 1, there is location concentration of TDMOs and organizations are over represented in Central-Danubian and Northern region of Hungary.

It is important to emphasize that operational reach may not only focus on one settlement, the map illustrates only the seat of the TDMOs.

According to results by analysing geographical area, 38.9% of the sample is responsible for only one settlement's management, but the average rate is 9 settlements. It means management of TDMOs extends 9 settlements on the average.

If analysing TDM levels, it turned out that 77% of the sample (57 pieces) is local TDMO and the left (23%) represents bigger area than local level but smaller than regional one.

The operational forms also show differences: 52 TDMOs are society, 22 TDMOs are non-profit corporation.

The most society is located by Lake Balaton (15 pieces) and Northern part of Hungary (12 pieces). Most of the non-profit corporations are in Central-Danubian region with 6 corporations.

When focusing on human resources of TDMOs it can be stated that number of team members is 3 people on the average. As far as TDM levels are concerned regarding human resources, local TDMOs employ 3.33 and bigger TDMOs employ 2.94 people on the average. 19 organizations employ only 2 people, there are 4 workers in 11 cases but 9 organizations have only one worker.

Linear correlation between geographical area of TDMOs and organizational number can be measured by Pearson correlation coefficient (r). Value of -0,170 means no linear correlation between the above mentioned variables.

There is no linear correlation between organizational number and TDM-levels, as well (see: $r=-0.157$ in local and $r = -0.14$).

Consequently, organizational numbers are affected by neither its geographical area nor operational level.

Local-levelled TDMOs covers management of 4.47 settlements and employ 3.33 people on the average. If analysing the next level of TDMOs, the same average values are 23.94 settlements and 2.94 people.

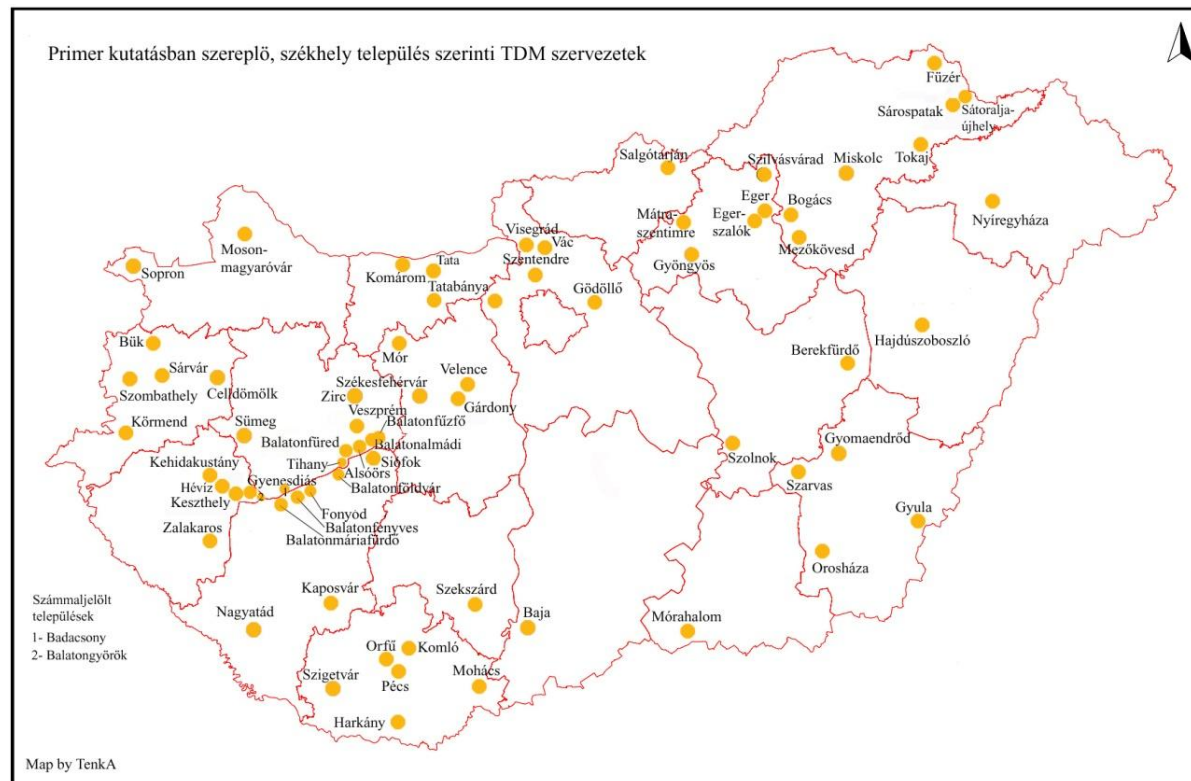


Fig. 1 Seat of TDMOs involved in primary research

Designed by András Tenk (2016)

3.1.2. Analysis of factors related to TDMO managers' work

Former empirical researches and own experiences showed that TDMO managers have more positions within the same TDMO at the same time. They may be:

- *Leaders of the organizations* (chairmen or directors): Research resulted 8 chairmen and 15 directors. 15% of the associations and 68% of corporation directors are TDMO managers, as well.
- *Other position depends on the form of partnership* (e.g. secretary). Present research shows that there are 16 managers who are responsible for this position.
- *Office managers of tourist information bureau run by TDMO* (e.g. Tourinform office manager). It is revealed that the number of TDMOs operating information bureaus is 65, from that 49 are Tourinform offices 8 are independent offices (so they do not depend on any franchise system as Tourinform) and 8 are both Tourinform and own offices.
- *Project-related positions resulted from successful European Union projects* – e.g. project managers, financial leader etc. These tasks and commitments are only incidental, so the managers' assignment is temporal (they play role in the implementation period of the project), but they can not left out of consideration. As a result of the research there are 29 project managers and 6 financial leaders among TDMO managers. Further project-orientated details will be demonstrated later.
- *Other position within the same organization* (e.g. marketing manager): 4 people are concerned.

Overall, there are only 15 managers who do not hold other position within the organization, 31 managers are responsible for another position and there are 13 managers with 2 extra positions and 10 managers with 3 further positions. Furthermore, there are 4 people with altogether 5 positions and one manager with 6 positions in addition to the present one. The correlation between the managers' extra positions and successful TDMO projects is presented in Table 1.

In relation to hypothesis 'H2', a correlation analysis was carried out to study the connection between organizational number and TDMO managers' other positions. Pearson coefficient correlation ($r = 0,337^{**}$) presents relatively high significance (correlation is significant at the 0.01 level). We can conclude that bigger organizational size assumes more positions held by TDMO managers within the TDMO. When analysing correlation between other variables namely the form of partnership, it can be detected that $r = 0,322^*$ by associations and $r = 0,295$ by non-profit corporations (correlation is significant at the 0.05 level).

The results can be explained with the following facts: there is linear correlation between organization number and the form of organization in case of associations, so the bigger the working team is, TDMO managers more likely fill in other position. Comparing organization number to TDM level, we get the above mentioned result.

Pearson coefficient correlation is $0,387^{**}$ by local TDMOs and $0,215$ by more extended TDMOs. Therefore there is linear correlation between local TDMOs team working and other positions filled by managers. Projects may account for the above facts. There are 35 responses regarding project-orientated positions (project manager, financial leader). It is remarkable that smaller organizational number and successful projects relate.

Table 1. Crosstab of successful project and TDMO managers' other positions

			Do you have successful project?		Total
			No	Yes	
Other positions filled by TDMO managers	1,00	N	6	2	8
		Proportion, %	75,0	25,0	100,0
	2,00	N	4	14	18
		Proportion, %	22,2	77,8	100,0
	3,00	N	2	19	21
		Proportion, %	9,5	90,5	100,0
	4,00 (at least 4)	N	0	25	25
		Proportion, %	0,0	100,0	100,0
	Total	N	12	60	72
		Proportion, %	16,7	83,3	100,0

Source: Own elaboration (2016)

Research dealt with motivational factors in connection with TDMO managers' work. It was revealed that the most important factor is creating new ideas and values, followed by heterogen tasks and improving tourist indicators. According to TDMO managers organizational efficiency is achieved by financial-economic sustainability, followed by cooperation willingness and the same direction, I mean the same goals.

3.1.3. TDMOs' workmanship (knowledge management)

Figure 2 illustrates data about TDMO managers' qualification. 54% of the target group has qualification in some wise: 26% has OKJ-level, 21% has MSc and 7% has BSc level diploma. It is astonishing that 14 managers (19%) do not have the necessary qualification, and on top of all that they do not think it will be needed in the future. They are satisfied with the basic tourist knowledge. It is encouraging that 20 people (27%) are completing TDM-oriented course in the period of research.

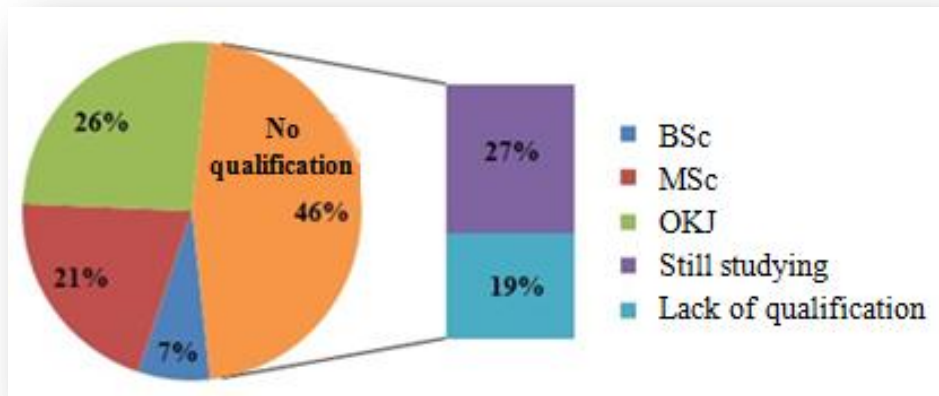


Figure 2. TDMO managers' qualification

Source: Own elaboration

Due to comparing the qualification to the managers' work experiences, the research results are the following: on the whole TDMO managers have worked at 2.8 workplace yet. When focusing on different qualification levels: managers with BSc and MSc level tourism diploma have gained work experiences in 3.2 fields. The average rate is 2.57 in case of OKJ level qualification. Those managers, who are attending a course in the period of data collection, have worked at 3 workplaces before. But those who are not involved in further training, represent a value of 2.28. Consequently, it can be stated that the higher educational level the managers were involved in, the more workplaces, so the more work experiences they possessed. The hypothesis that the more comprehensive work experience the manager have in the field of tourism, the less they think that further training are needed, is not proved.

Detailed survey was conducted regarding TDM training that paid respect to the following points:

- Identifying those institutions where TDM-oriented training is available
- Motivational factors of taking part in training
- Who bore the costs of the thetraining absolved by managers
- Common analysis of training and project
- Satisfaction with the training
- Satisfaction with the training by principal component analysis
 - Principal component by institution
 - Avarage rate of principal component in case of the two most occurring institutions
 - Avarage rate of principal component according to payer

It is revealed that absolving of TDM-oriented training was motivated by TDM-project since training is an obligatory part of the project. Training was financed mostly (95%) by TDMO – 62% out of the sample due to successful project, 33% irrespective of project. Only 5% of all TDMOs took part in the training with self-effort.

The necessary skills and competences for TDMO manager position were identified and analysed with factor analysis. Three factors were set among the variables that estimated the importance of the skills and competences: namely (1) skills, (2) purchased knowledge and (3) business spirit. Results of factor analysis can be observed in Table 2.

Table 2. Factor analysis of skills and competences of TDMO managers

Rotated Factor Matrix^a			
	Factor		
	1 Skills	2 Purchased knowledge	3 Business spirit
Communicational skills	0,552		
Social skills	0,613		
Innovation affinity	0,580		
Creativity	0,667		
Sales inspiration	0,614		
Loadability	0,531		
Professional competences		0,487	
Managerial knowledge		0,459	
TDM-oriented qualification		0,601	
At least one foreign language		0,842	
Strategic approach			0,953
Entrepreneurial approach			0,526
System approach			0,592

Source: Own elaboration

Fluctuation of TDMO managers is generated by local political relationship, conflict within TDMO, project fails, unsatisfactory tourist indicators, financial condition of TDMO managers, inactivity of present TDM-members and the lack of TDM-oriented qualification.

3.1.4. Analysis of project aimed TDMO development

Relevant subsection of the dissertation deals with primary and secunder data thoroughly. The most important data will be discussed now. 82% of the whole sample (61) has relevance in the field of successful project. As it is shown in Figure 3, linear correlation (Pearson type) was implemented between two variables, namely years of operation and years last between establishment and the first support decision. Pearson correlation, $r = 0,879^{**}$ present strong positive significance (that report significance at the level of 0.01).

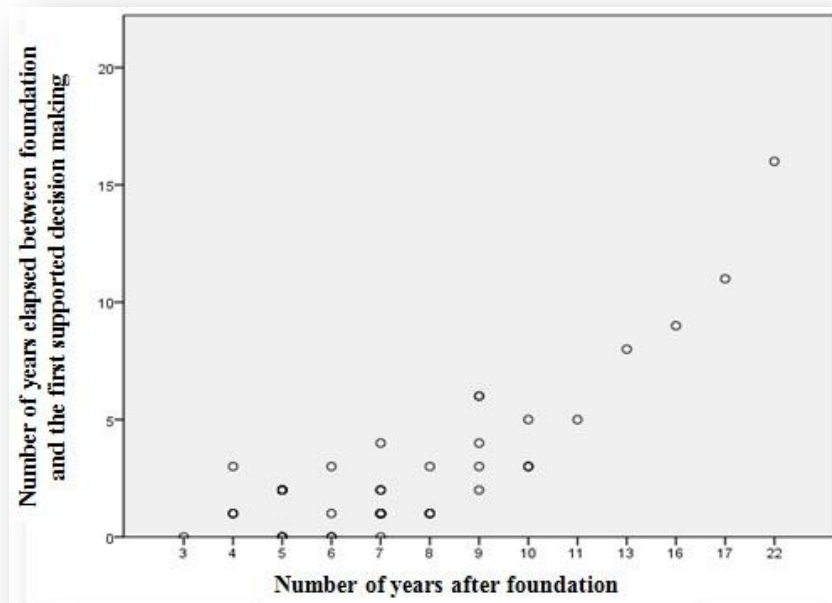


Figure 3. Scatter plot

Source: Own elaboration

Due to the projects it was also proved that the younger the TDMO is, the earlier it could submit a project, so the year of establishment and the year of the first successful project were closer.

3.2. Evaluation of the hypotheses

In relation to Hungarian TDMOs, the following **theses** can be set by research results:

T1. There is a lack of coherency between geographical district and work organization number. It can also be considered that TDMOs' human resources are indifferent from geographical district.

T2. Organization number and TDMO managers' extra positions within TDMO are interconnected. The larger number the more work responsibility a TDMO manager has.

T3. TDMO managers are motivated primarily through creation of new and innovative concepts, but the efficiency of organizations can be judged from financial aspects. Financial and economic sustainability have a great role in achieving organizational effectiveness.

T4. The more professional practice the TDMO managers have, the more work experiences they have. If not involved in touristic retraining, the less professional practice they have.

T5. TDM-oriented courses were carried out due to EU projects by most TDMO managers and TDMOs preferred shorter training forms (e.g. OKJ courses) to taking master diploma by reason of time efficiency.

T6. Reshuffling of TDMOs is caused by rather economic facts than social ones.

3.3. New and original scientific results of the research

New and original scientific results can be summed due to secunder and primary researches.

1. Based on literature elaboration I reckon that TDMOs are the results of **organizational innovation and reengineering process**.
2. I consider TDMO as a **destination-specific network** that can be a touristic settlement or result of other higher level destination partnership. Based on geographical concentration and articular relations among local touristic stakeholders I can state that **TDMOs serve utilization of localization advantage**. These advantages include not only cost efficiency (e.g. common marketing activities, common research, common purchase etc.), but special services for their members and special expertise and competences.
3. **Capital factors of TDM** were identified after primary and secunder research. These factors are shown in a Figure of own conception (called 'gear wheel figure' because well functioning cooperation of factors is needed to achieve effective and efficient TDMO operation.
4. In relation to **projects** it was found that there is strong significance between years of operation and years last between establishment and the first support decision. The younger the TDMO is, the sooner it submitted project, so between the year of establishment and the first year of successful project is shorter. Consequently, financial-economic sustainability can not be imagined without any project support. It also emerged that TDM-oriented training was motivated by successful projects. It follows that projects contributed to human capital development.
5. **Principal component analysis** within primary research focused on Hungarian TDMO managers and surveyed TDM-oriented institutions and managers' satisfaction with training. Satisfaction principal component resulted that participators in OKJ-level training are more satisfied than the ones in master level studies. Due to the successful project, TDMO managers' satisfaction with training financed by TDMO lags behind the average significantly.
6. Thus, I consider **holistic destination management** as a useful and new definition in tourism terminology.

4. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on literature and empirical research I am drawing the following conclusions and making the next suggestions.

(1) The analysed organizations' dependence of legal and political endowment. TDM looked back to a ten-year past in Hungary. Enouncement of tourist partnership and association following TDM-principles to TDMOs was enabled at the end of 2010 due to Ministry for National Economy's registration process. Organizational process is still going on, so the whole TDM structure has not been finalised yet. National Tourism Development Strategy was the first strategical document in Hungarian tourism policy that highlights tourist institution toward TDM reforming and operating. National Tourism Development Concept was the next document or rather would be the following if it had had accepted. Thus, touristic regions' independent tourism development strategies are needed from 2013. They contained TDM building, as well. There is inordinateness in the almost system, because of lack of legal background regarding TDMOs. All kinds of information so establishment, operation and maintenance originate from TDM operational handbook and western good practices (e.g. South-Tyrol). The tourism law was accepted 2016 at last and includes only the development but not TDM and TDMOs. The new law's areas differ from the common touristic regions. Base units of the development are destinations whose categories do not consider any indicators (e.g. guest commerce, tourism income, tourist spending). Organizations that cover public and private sector depend primarily on the all-time legal, political environment and situation. I suggest a TDM-special law that disposes of TDMOs' performance framework and sustainment, as well. Active presence of TDMOs is inevitable during legislation and elaboration.

(2) Dependence of project support. Both secunder and primary research prove that establishment of TDMOs was motivated by project opportunity. These support ensured the organizations' financial and economic sustainability for a while but not over the long pull. The latest invitation to project namely GINOP-1.3.4-15-Development of tourist organizations (TDMOs) enabled for TDMOs beginning of project before publication of support at their own risk. It is important to know that earlier beginning does not imply that they will be supported. The invitation document promised that 60-80 TDMOs will be supported. Thanks to this promise, projects were carried out but TDMOs did not count on recall of projects. Maintenance problems of TDMOs are still current and it will not be solved in spite of a new project promised by Hungarian Government. Lack of project support causes serious operating risk. As it is discussed in chapter of analysis regarding tourist environment, I think that Hungarian TDMOs will be split into two groups: (1) group one will include TDMOs that will be able to self-maintenance. Mature and developed destinations belong to this group that are successful and have remarkable past on tourism market. Success means tourism indicators. (2) Second group includes TDMOs with spontaneous foundation because of project support. Relevant destinations' tourist endowments and performance are significantly below the destinations of the first group and their tourist potential is weak, as well. As the tourism means no solution (wonder) everywhere, so do not TDMOs.

(3) Lack of TDM database and register that may support researches. I experienced during empirical studies that list of TDMOs of Hungary's national marketing association (former Magyar Turizmus Zrt.) differs from the list of Ministry for National Economy (NGM). The following facts raise difficulties of register of TDMOs:

- Registration by NGM is not a must, but lack of ministry registration does not enable project support.
- Membership of Hungarian TDM Association is not a must
- Difficulties of geographical impoundment: liquidation of tourism regions 2016 makes geographical affiliation of TDMOs more difficult
- Lack of follow-up (e.g. annulment of TDMOs are unknown)
- Difficulties of follow-up regarding networking (e.g. it is not known which local TDMOs belong to the next level TDMO)

I suggest TDM database that can be linked up with existent databases (e.g. NETA – Hungarian Tourism Database, TÉRKÉPTÉR, Hungarian Centrak Statistic Office, TeIR) included details about both destinations and organizations. The new database will be useful if it is supported by geoinformatics.

(4) There are two types of cooperation and coordination in TDMO: vertical and horizontal. The vertical type describes hierarchical relationship among TDM levels; the horizontal one comprises potential stakeholders of organizations. **Figure 4** is a **suggestion** that shows the concept described above so the graphical illustration of partnership mechanism and relations.

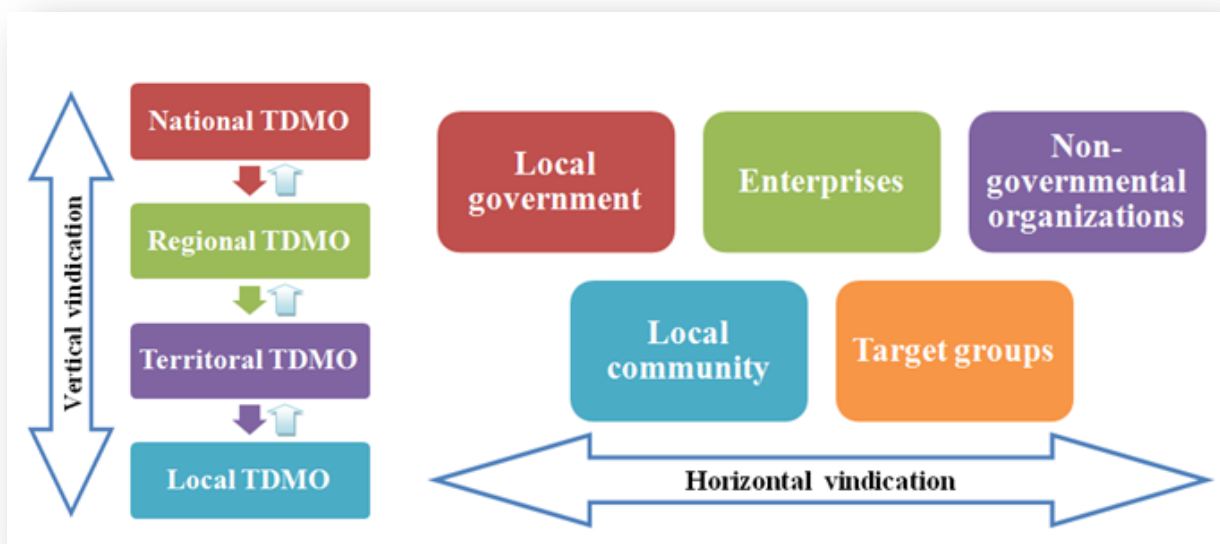


Figure 4 Vertical and horizontal coordination regarding validation of destination cohesion

Source: Own elaborating

(5) Based on literature research (LENGYEL 2008; HORKAY 2014, MAGYAR TDM SZÖVETSÉG 2014) it is stated that theory's concept and practice vary regarding TDMO levels. Moreover regional level is missing from TDMO registration. Chapter focused on Central-European TDM model demonstrated that the second level of TDMOs (KOCR) adjusts to Slovakia administration system. It is allowed to found one KOCR per districts that includes every OOCR. This kind of set-up enables an embraceable and a transparent system, by making sense of network. There are 8 districts in Slovakia, so maximum 8 KOCR can be founded and operated. Thus a TDM-system would be considered that adjusts to the country's administration system. If considering regions in Hungary, the statistical regions would be taken into consideration. Figure 5 shows a recommendation regarding new levels.

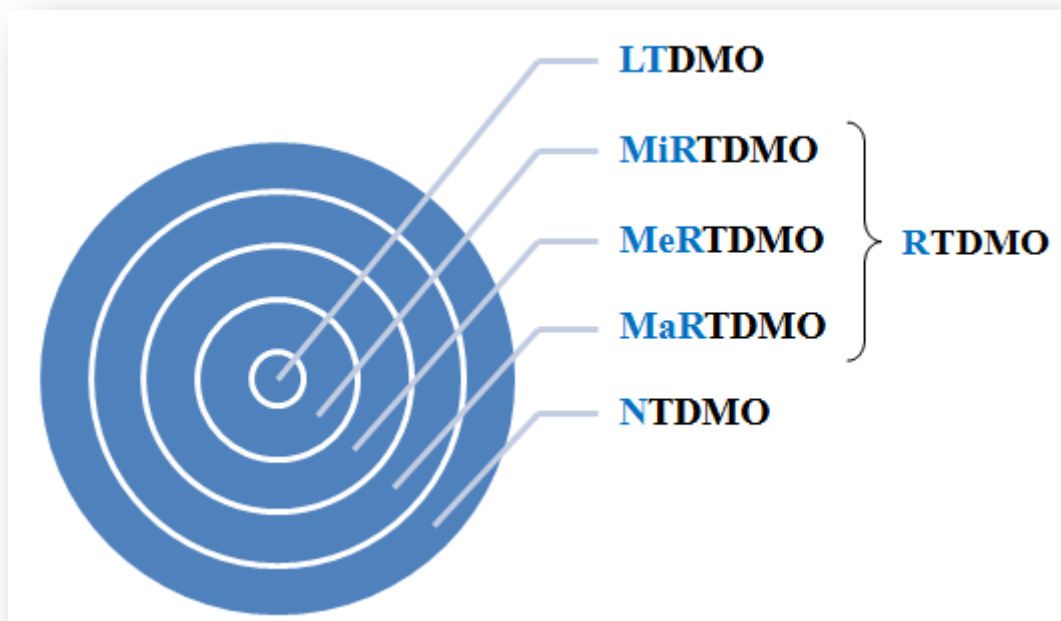


Figure 5: Recommendation regarding TDMO levels

Source: Own edited

Extra information:

- **NTDMO** (*National Tourism Destination Management Organization*)
- **RTDMO** (*Regional Tourism Destination Management Organization*) – included all three counties belong to the same region:
 - **MaRTDMO** (*Macro-regional Tourism Destination Management Organization*) – covers two counties
 - **MeRTDMO** (*Meso-regional Tourism Destination Management Organization*) – covers whole county
 - **MiRTDMO** (*Micro-regional Tourism Destination Management Organization*) – level of districts
- **LTDMO** (*Local Tourism Destination Management Organization*) – level of settlements

(6) Conclusions and recommendation regarding primer research conducted in Hungary. TDMOs have been operating for 7.45 years on average. Associations of Lake Balaton's region with 9.89 years' operation period which are overrepresented in present research are considered the oldest, while the youngest one in Tisza Lake region have a history of 5 years. The spirit for founding local TDMOs emerged with Lake Balaton, followed by Budapest-Central-Duna Countryside, Northern Hungary, Southern Transdanubia, Northern Great Plain, Central-Transdanubia, Southern Great Plain, Western Transdanubia and Lake Tisza. Consequently regional spreading of TDMO shows an orientation from west to east, which is not a tendency.

There is a strong positive relation between the number of years passed since TDMO's foundation and the first project decision. In this sense, the closer the year of an organization's foundation is, the less time passes between the foundation and the project decision, and vice versa. So it is proved that project source is a great motivation factor when establishing a TDMO.

The Hungarian TDMO Association founded in 2011 is considered to be the key organization and professional representative organ of local TDMOs. Regular members of this "peak" institution are TDMOs; among its supportive members we can find business organizations. Policy only plays an indirect part, through the governments that make up TDMOs. Participation rate was 51%, which means that only 45 organizations had membership from the total population of 88 organizations. Membership is not obligatory for the organizations.

The association continuously keep in touch through several channels (e.g. Countrywide TDM Conference twice a year) with TDMOs, so the information regarding members' claims, operation condition, professional news and incidental system errors. In this manner project terms and the challenge of supporting are also well-known by the association and it stands for the TDMOs definitively when withdrawal of latest project.

I reckon that the **Hungarian TDMO Association**, as the **network of networks**, would be able to operate as **national TDMO**, where membership is not based on willingness. This presumes the rational reform of the Hungarian touristic institution system, so as political presence could be less dominant than nowadays, moreover the industry would be responsible for professional topics, challenges, projects and programmes. It is essential that information of international tourism market, knowledge, and professionalism are centered in one hand. The Hungarian TDMO Association would be responsible for the professional registration process of TDMOs. Interest representation of local TDMOs would be more efficient, and a complete local TDMO system would emerge. But practically, it is the Hungarian Touristic Agency that is trusted with every touristic task in accordance to 61/2017. (III. 20.) Government Decree. We can find TDMOs registration and professional contribution to calls for TDM-oriented project among the tasks. Despite the fact, that the national tourism improvement law ignores TDMOs, the above mentioned Government Decree believes in the existence of TDMOs.

As far as professional preparedness is concerned it is notable that 14 people work with no relevant qualification, albeit it is required during the organizations' registration process.

(7) Chapter ‘Central-European outlook’ focused on TDMOs in Slovakian Republic. Response rate was very low (40%) inspite of anonymized research, survey available on mother language and ministry support. Theme of present PhD dissertation is also current beyond doubt, but the research faced difficulties. It has to be achieved that **research activity** as a facilitate and a positive effect will have the same importancy as rise of guest commerce data. Now research is blocked by low response rate and lack of **statistical database regarding settlements**.

(8) I had the opportunity to get involved in a TDMO-foundation when I carried out empirical research in South-western part of Slovakia, in the territory bounded by Komárno and Sturovo. Based on this research I came to the following conclusions. The most frequented destination and the largest and most attractive tourist attraction – that are able to achieve significant tourist indicators – took the TDMO-concept with a grain of salt. Smaller settlements and service providers are more open-minded when discussing collaboration. As far as qualified human resource is concerned, arrears to Hungarian characteristic can be experienced. On the one part migration of young workforce means problem and there is no available TDM-oriented training in Slovakia. TDMO managers are supported professionally by the relevant ministry (MINDOP), but not in the frame of frequent and organized training courses. There is tourism law in Slovakia, but TDMO’s operation is not supported by vocational training. Accreditation of TDM-oriented training is to be wished in the future in Slovakia, so that professionalism as one of the principles can be ensured.

(9) Based on research carried out among 16 Slovakian TDMOs (so OOCR and KOCR), the following **distinctions** were observed in comparison with the Hungarian TDM-system.

- There is tourism law in Slovakia that enters into details regarding TDMOs’ foundation, operation and financial questions. Slovakian TDMOs have been operating for 3.47 years on the average. Hungarian TDM spreading was in full swing when still clusters were established in Slovakia.
- Territorial boundaries of Slovakian organizations are greater than in Hungary. The relevant law can be the right explanation, because membership of OOCR is limited by at least 5 settlements.
- Slovakian work organization includes 2.2 workforces on the average. This average rate is 1.9 person on OOCR level and 3 employees on KOCR level. These numbers are below the Hungarian ones, and even KOCR’s employee number does not reach the Hungarian local-leveled TDMOs’ one.
- Evanescent proportion of Slovakian organization disposes tourism product development and sustainability strategy. TDMO managers should consider usage of European Tourism Indicators System that could be the basis of their sustainability strategies. However, R+D+I activities of the organizations would be promoted by continuous collaboration between institutions of higher education, knowledge centers and TDMOs.

It is doubtful in the future, how long TDM-building process last and when the Hungarian TDM-system draw to an end. It is inessential that which organizations will be able to sustain self-directed. Ten year-old history insinuated that key of native tourism governance must be TDM-system that was supported in communication, by concepts, project funds, foreign success samples and destinations. Now tourism policy is changing, politics show a great role and pressure on tourism. On top of it all, retention of EU project funds lead to unsustainability of TDMOs. There is desultoriness instead of system building. After all I think that not only organizations face now with challenges but also me: I am ready for new TDM-oriented researches.

Future research orientation and emphasis are:

- Quantitative and qualitative research that covers total population (Slovakian OOCR and KOCR organizations) with special focus on level 'krajská', so called KOCR organizations.
- Present research did not concern sustainability of organizations. A complex sustainability analysis would be advisable in the future. We should take into consideration that the central government budget (mean: granted tourism tax) may vary from time to time or European Union project source of found is finite. Because of the identified benefits, the required long-term sustainability of TDMOs is now a kind of challenge.
- It can be also cautionary if analysing EU projects. Namely, how did projects that aimed development of TDMOs, contribute to complex and sustainable destination development?

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