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The managers' attitude towards diffuse hotels as innovative form of agricultural households tourist offer

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Abstract

The concept of a diffuse hotel is designed to connect small tourism providers in a specific small geographic area into a broader and more complete offer of tourist services. The diffuse hotel model enables the village or specific selected area to become a "hotel" with one reception, offering overnight accommodation, gastronomic services and including other providers into a network of activities, featuring tour guiding, selling of traditional food products, wine and souvenirs, horse riding, visiting of local museums and collections, bike rental and the other services. The purpose of a diffuse hotel is to provide new workplaces and to promote employment and self-employment. Permanent and seasonal employment enable the locals to work in the reception and doorman service, at the information centre, in the field of tour guiding or in the services of hotel housekeeping and maintenance. Placing a scattered hotel in a specific place stands for an increase of tourist inflow and additional income of existing business entities as a consequence. Such a hotel also makes an important contribution in maintaining the countryside vividness and population, progress of other tourist activities and products, while it enables revitalisation of old abandoned houses. Agricultural households in Dubrovnik-Neretva County very often offer just a part of the service. The aim of the paper is to explore the possibility of improving the agricultural household tourist offer based on implementation of diffuse hotels. The purpose of the paper was to explore in what measure are diffuse hotels acceptable as form of accommodation facilities for future agricultural households business practice in Konavle and Peljesac. For the purpose of this paper in 2015, the perception of 15 agricultural households managers/owners in Dubrovnik- Neretva County, Croatia has been explored. According to the results of the research it is visible that agricultural households business practice can be organized as diffuse hotels.

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1. Introduction

The diffuse hotel is not classic hotel can be defined as an official category of accommodation which consists of a couple of facilities located in different places with a common reception. It incorporates elements of specific architecture, culture and feeling of home atmosphere Dell' Ara (2000). The main differences between integral and diffuse hotel is in fact that integral hotel consists connect different units, and there is no distance limitation. According to the Croatian law in 2014 has been introduced the term of integral and diffuse hotel, so the legislative frame for their introduction on the tourist market have been crated [www. mint.hr](http://www.mint.hr).

The integral hotel is mostly predicted for urban destination, but can be used for connecting different stakeholders in rural areas too. The same case is with diffuse hotel. There are examples of introducing integral and diffuse hotels in Croatian hospitality business practice. ZIGZAG is first integrated hotel in Zagreb. The hotel ensures superb accommodation in luxurious and modern apartments and rooms of high-quality and fascinating interior design. ZIGZAG Integrated Hotel Zagreb consists of 11 specially chosen and newly decorated apartments, 4 double bedrooms and 1 single room. It can accommodate 70 persons at any given time. Receptionists and ZigZag personnel are at the guests' service. ZIGZAG Apartments&Rooms Dubrovnik is a mixture of luxury, beauty, style and cultural heritage of the Old City of Dubrovnik, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Centre. It consists of 2 apartments and 2 double rooms which can accommodate 12 persons. It is fully equipped for a pleasant and carefree stay. Prime locations in the very heart of Zagreb and Dubrovnik, within a walking distance of the majority of historical, cultural and leisure facilities, offer its guests a special experience of a city life, traditional atmosphere, and a first-hand experience of life, both in Zagreb and Dubrovnik [www. zigzag.h](http://www.zigzag.h). The second integral hotel which have been opened is „Srcе prirode“ and is located in Karlovac County. Hedera-estate is the first diffuse hotel in Dubrovnik which has been opened in 2015 [www. hedera-estate.com](http://www.hedera-estate.com). There are aslo integral hotel on the island Dugi otok and Vir in Zadar County.

The first diffuse hotel in Croatia has been built in 2013 in the area of Biograd, in 2015, called “Raznjevica in Dvori” in Zadar County [www. raznjevica.dvori.com](http://www.raznjevica.dvori.com) . The attractive diffuse hotel called “Vrbanj, is on the island of Hvar. Unlike the standard hotel accommodation units are scattered all over the place. The central reception area is where the guests informed about the history, culture and customs as well as area where employees help clients. The buildings are autochthonous, made of stone and wood, and are surrounded by clean air and unspoiled nature. The hotel includes 17 cooperative members who are engaged in different agricultural and non-agricultural activities and produce superior products that are sold through a diffuse hotel. The service is based on the ecological products and organic food. The hotel is used by indigenous soaps and shampoos made on the basis of local herbs. Accommodation can be choosen, or by the sea or in the interior. The hotel slogan is "Good food, fine vine & quite stay". The products are certificated and can be bought in the hotel as unique souvenir [www.poslovni .hr](http://www.poslovni.hr)

The initiatives for organizing private accommodation facilities as diffuse hotel have started in Istria, too. They have been faced with the legislative problems in the past. One of important projects is project in Završje, ancient village near Grozňjan. The plan has included the reconstruction of all buildings, which will later become hotel depadances, so the rooms are scattered all over the place. The project included and the central reception area, small restaurants and souvenir shops, that is all the facilities of a hotel. It was the first project in Istria www.grozňjan-gisignan. The same initiative has started in the village Oriha in Istria, where private accommodation facilities providers have intention to make cooperation. The same is planned for the village Barban and Hrboki in Istria www.glasistr.hr.

Very important factor for future development of new and innovative forms of accommodation facilities is creation of positive attitudes towards changes .

For the purpose of this paper we have stated basic hypotheses:

H1. The managers of agricultural households in Konavle and Peljesac area are willing to accept new and innovative form of accommodation facilities and find that diffuse hotels are suitable and convenient for future development of agricultural households, both for keeping authenticity of destinations and preservation of local products.

We have carried out empirical research in Dubrovnik-neretva County including the sample of 15 agricultural households. For analyzing data we have used descriptive statistic.

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