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**Emerging Markets Queries in Finance and Business**

# Diffuse hotels in the function of creating augmented agricultural households tourist offer based on innovations

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**Abstract**

Agricultural households very often offer just a part of service. The aim of the paper is to explore the possibility of improving the agricultural household tourist offer based on implementation of new type of facility called diffuse hotels. The purpose of the paper was to respond to the question „Is there any possibility to create agricultural households tourist product based on the model of diffuse hotels?” For the purpose of this paper in Jun, July and August 2013, the perception of 220 tourists has been explored in the area of Dubrovnik- Neretva County, Croatia. According to the results of the research it is visible that agricultural households very often have problems in creation of integral agricultural product. The challenge for agricultural owners and managers is to try to apply holistic approach based on the organizational changes and coordination of activities provided by different stakeholders of tourist offer.

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Selection and peer-review under responsibility of Asociatia Grupul Roman de Cercetari in Finante Corporatiste

*Key words:* agricultural households; difusse hotes, Dubrovnik-Neretva County, Croatia

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**1. Introduction**

Increasing the quality of private accommodation facilities is one of the key objectives of the Development Strategy of Croatian Tourism till the 2020th . At the same time it is the reason for developing the National

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Programme what includes creation of new and innovative tourism products, which will arise the level of services professionalization in private accommodation facilities. All this actions lead to increasing demand in the rural areas in main season and out of peak season and strengthen the competitiveness of Croatian tourism. 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 model of diffused hotel has been founded in Italy by the Giancarlo dall'Ara in 1982. There are 62 diffuse hotels in Italy Bacac, 2013. According to the new Strategy of Tourism Development until 2020, diffuse hotel are predicted as a form of tourist offer in Croatia. There are some positive initiatives by private accommodation facilities owners in Istria, for institution of private accommodation facilities based on the model of difusse hotel [www.glasistre.hr](http://www.glasistre.hr), 15.07.2014, what is encouraged because the agricultural households in Croatia are mostly located in Dubrovnik-Neretva County, followed by Istria Demonja and Ruzic, 2010, p. 51.

In 2012 in Croatia has been registered 173 rooms, 42 suites with 527 beds in agricultural households. Statistical report, 1463/2012. The Agricultural household offer in Croatia and in Dubrovnik- Neretva County, is very often based on the food and beverages services and agricultural households have problems in creation of integral agricultural product. The challenge for agricultural owners and managers is how to try to apply holistic approach, based on the organizational changes. Although bed and breakfast service (B&B) is very often present as the important service in the agricultural areas Chen, Lin & Kuo, 2013, the tourism establishment should be trained to handle a variety of other services such as marketing and public relation activities involving professional advertising and public relation personnel, various media channels and less formal methods of attracting customers Reichel, Lowengart & Milman, 2000, p. 458. While the business is often referred to as "bed and breakfast" accumulating evidence indicates that the tourist's expectation is much more diverse thus treating the venture as only "B&B" operation will probably result in failure Reichel, Lowengart & Milman, 2000, p. 458. Diffuse hotel offer wide spectar of activities such as tour guiding, visiting of local museums and collections, bike rental, horsing and other services that promote employment and self-employment and influence the agricultural household income. The purpose of the paper was to respond to the question „Is there any possibility to create agricultural households tourist product in Dubrovnik-Neretva County based on the model of diffuse hotels? For the purpose of this paper we have stated basic hypotheses: H1. The diffuse hotels are acceptable model for agricultural households offer development in the Dubrovnik-Neretva County.

For the purpose of this paper in Jun, July and August 2013, the perception of 220 tourists in the area of Dubrovnik- Neretva County, Croatia has been explored.

## **2. The main characteristics of diffused hotels and their role in the agricultural households tourist offer**

The diffuse hotel is partly a house and partly a hotel. The main characteristic of diffuse hotels is that the components of the tourist product are distributed in different buildings located in the same village or town if the word is about urban destination. The main advantages of dissuse hotels are respecting culture and authenticity, creating experience, original management style Croatian Ministry of Tourism, 2014. The difussed hotel is characteristic for the old town centres. The main goal of difusse hotels building is to put in function existing objects inside the old city centres and to create new value based on tourist supply integration (in the first order private accomodation facilities). The accomodation is organized in more objects which are not connected but they are on the same level of comfort and service quality. So the guests can stay in rooms, apartments or houses which are dispersed in the city centres or microdestinations. There is also central reception and central restaurant Bacac, 2013.

If we analyse the case of Italian Association of Diffused Hotel's Mission it is visible that they promote the development of diffuse hotels or AD (Albergo Diffuso) in Italy protecting their image in the eyes of public, intermediaries and tourists' demand. At the same time the main objectives of Association are connected with practice of lobbying activities and promoting funding projects. In the model of difussed hotels the guest units

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