Analysis of the Tourism Policies under the Background of Austrian Tourism Economy

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Abstract. The paper starts by analysing the past years tourism trends in Austria, we all know it is clearly that the tourism industry has been an important part of Austria's economy. Tourism sector accounts for considerable value in the country Gross Value, the improvement of tourism is not only to affect the GDP but also to provide work opportunities for employment marketing. Government had revised tourism policy that generated the new challenge in the future in the tourism. Moreover, Austria’s tourism would face more opportunities and changes because of the international economic environment and climate change trend.

Introduction

The tourism industry plays an important role in the Austrian economy. In 2012, according to the data which was collected by Tourism Satellite Accounts (TSA), which is based on the recommendations of EUROSTAT, OECD and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), tourism direct contribution to GDP is about 5.8 % (€17.9 billion). At the same time, the tourism industry also generates about 326,300 tourism-related workplaces for employees [1]. TSA Employment Module (TSM-BM) in Austria showed clearly 14.8% employees work in the tourism industry, in which some are self-employed. About 60.2% of workers work in the hotel and catering industry. In the overall tourism industry while the rest of the percentage were employed in tourism-related positions.

Tourism Issues

Climate Change

Climate change is a serious problem in tourism industry in Austria because Austria tourism is seasonality sector. Overnight beds occupancy providing in winter season is lower than beds in summer after 2009. In the last 50 years, the temperature has risen 1-2°C, the southeast Austria area has become drought land. About 30% glacier area had lost from 1969 to 2006 and snow cover areas have been dropped gradually. Therefore, skiing tourism is easily influenced by the loss of glacier and the trend goes from bad to worse [2].

Global warming changed tourism trend and choices of tourists, in order to solve the problem of climate change and develop sustainable tourism industry, seasonal products and infrastructure should be improved. Some new strategies like year-round products, knowledge transfer and awareness rising on climate change and tourism, promotion of energy efficiency, which are from ministry. Many efforts have implemented to come up with the issues from climate change.

Tourism Challenges

Egon Smeral, a professor of Austrian’s Modul University, did a presentation: “Economic development in Europe and Austria and their implications on tourism.” He talked that there will be a lot of changes in tourism behaviours in the following years. There are two points should be focused: Austria tourists are increasing every year, but the receipt is slight rise on average which can reduce the value of inbound overnight. Shorter stays trip is more and more popular, which is big
challenge to city destination hotel compared to rural traditional hotel, because people are more likely to select traditional hotels to stay for lakes and winter sports.

Table 1. Key Challenges for the Tourism Sector.

| CHALLENGES                                | IMPORTANCE / PRIORITY |
|-------------------------------------------|-----------------------|
| Diversification of the tourism offer      | x                     |
| Protection of the cultural heritage       | x                     |
| Protection of the natural heritage        | x                     |
| ICT and innovation                        | x                     |
| Connectivity and transport                | x                     |
| Employment in tourism                     | x                     |
| Improving education and skills in tourism | x                     |
| Combating seasonality                     | x                     |
| Demographic changes                       | x                     |
| Improving accessibility of tourism        | x                     |
| Improving socio-economic data in tourism  | x                     |
| Economic crisis and recovery              | x                     |
| Improving the sustainability of tourism   | x                     |
| Combating climate change                  | x                     |
| Improving the quality of tourism offer    | x                     |
| Developing responsible tourism practices  | x                     |
| Competition against other destinations    | x                     |
| Administrative / regulatory burden, bureaucracy | x         |
| Other, please specify                     |                       |

Source: Annual Tourism Report 2013 Austria

Climate change and tourism behaviours changed would be a huge challenge to tourism in Austria. According to the figure 8, some key challenges in tourism sector should be considered by ministry of Austria, for example, employment and combatting seasonality, connectivity and transport, which are core issues in the tourism Austria. In addition, ANTO should pay attention to improve tourism education and skills and innovative the traditional infrastructure. The improving tourism quality is also a high challenge to tourism in Austria [3].

Policies

Economic statistics is very important in measuring a country economics, the same way, tourism statistics is also an indispensable element for tourism policy makers and surveyors. They use statistics to supervise and assess the impact of tourism industry in the national economy and how to affect the other departments of Economic Gross [4].

Tourism Organisation and Governance

Austrian Federal Constitution defined that federal and European laws apply to the tourism industry, because it is a typical cross cutting segment, although nine states (Länder) have the right of legislative and executive to tourism issues. Parliamentary Committee for Tourism was established by the Austrian Parliament in 2006. It is a first tourism policy that is responsible for the Federal Ministry of Science, Research and Economy. The tourism policy tries to manage and treat tourism affairs with a national level [1, 5].
The Austrian National Tourist Office (ANTO), which is the country’s national tourism marketing organisation, receives funding 75% from ministry and 25% from Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. Sometime, States tourism board, destinations and tourism organizations also fund ANTO for marketing services. ANTO pay more attention to the Market research, brand management, innovative marketing of domestic and international market trends and tourism products development. However, how to strength the international market share is the core responsibility for ANTO, which is also the main point to promote the international tourism industry in Austria [1].

**Tourism-related Policies**

As mentioned above, a new tourism strategy (New Ways) launched Austria in 2010. New Ways mainly took account into cooperating with the nine states and relevant organization shareholders. Austria’s unique selling propositions (USPs) is an example, which the Alps, the Danube its lakes, cities and culture are the focus of new strategy. New Ways, on a basis of last year's tourism affairs experience, adopted international and national excellent ideas to adjust old tourism policies by a high-level Tourism Conference. The conference representatives were sent by the ministry and the nine states, and an independent expert advisory committee analyzed last year’s tourism trend and current challenges and gave some recommendations for future development [5].

**Policies and Programmes**

New ways classified five main tourism issues: marketing, innovation, subsidies, infrastructure and business environment [1].

**Marketing.** ANTO should work close the tourism- marketing organizations of the nine states. All destinations in Austria should generate effective adjustment to promote their images, for example, according to USPs to enlarge their architecture cultural marketing. In addition, recently years tourism report should be reviewed and annual ANTO Conference also should be organised in order to discuss tourism branding and marketing issues with all tourism marketing organizer [6].

**Subsidies.** To develop Austria tourism industry, the Ministry strengths cooperation with Austria Bank and open funding programmes. The responsibility of the funding programmes is to encourage investment and promote the service quality in tourism industry, otherwise the structure of financial of SME should to be optimised and new tourism business also need to be encouraged.

**Innovation.** Innovation makes an important role in Austrian tourism. In 2012, ANTO pay more attention to improve the tourism strategy and do a lot of innovative practices. For example, when the tourism organization won the innovative practice, they would get funding supporting. ANTO measures the tourism new strategy with different method and organized co-operating programmes with nine provinces twice a year. At the same time, it organized tourism product innovation workshops. In 2013, a new standard was designed to measure the innovative programmes rather than funding supporting. The purpose is to encourage the young tourism business and make them run effective that can meet the future tourism demand.

**Infrastructure.** The main issue is to renew different landscape infrastructure and generate new tourism product in order to change the seasonality tourism. The particular focus on alpine renovation sustainable development, because the Austrian government do a lot of efforts to reduce energy consumption in order to climate balance.

**Business Environment.** The ministry focus on the tourism labour market and commit to a complimentary development market. The development of labour market would be promote the national images, competitiveness and balance job opportunities (e.g., by supporting information brochures in several languages, image campaigns, events, etc.).

**Conclusion**

According to analyse past years tourism trends in Austria, like arrivals, revenues and expenditures and employment, it is clearly that the tourism industry has been an important part of Austria’s economy. Tourism sector accounts for considerable value in the country Gross Value, the improvement of tourism is not only to affect the GDP but also to provide work opportunities for
employment marketing. Therefore, government had made and revised tourism policy, particularly New Ways in 2011. It generated some new strategies for tourism issues on a basis of past tourism reports and the new challenge in the future in the tourism. However, Austria’s tourism would face more opportunities and changes because of the international economic environment and climate change trend. Whatever how stagnant to develop the tourism in Austria, the industry has reached a high level maturity [1]. Innovation traditional tourism products and strength the investment to tourism are crucial parts for increasing the industry. Otherwise, Austria as a famous tourism destination, it is necessary to construct a favourable tourism context and improve the international market share. In that way, Austria tourism would be promoted the images and competitiveness.

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