

DRAFT ANNUAL TOURISM REPORTING TEMPLATE

1. INTRODUCTION

Council Decision 86/664/EEC of 22 December 1986¹ establishing a consultation and cooperation procedure in the field of tourism foresees that “each Member State shall send the Commission, once a year, a report on the most significant measures it has taken and, as far as possible, on measures it is considering taking in the provision of services for tourists which could have consequences for travellers from the other Member States”.

With the publication of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism”, the Commission announced that “in order to strengthen the collaboration with and among Member States, their current annual reporting through the Tourism Advisory Committee (TAC) will be used to facilitate the exchange and the dissemination of information about how their policies and actions safeguard the sustainability of tourism”.

This Communication was welcomed by the Competitiveness Council conclusions (22nd-23rd November 2007) and by the Presidency Conclusions of the Brussels European Council of 14th December 2007.

The main aims for the reporting process are:

- to be able to monitor the level of implementation of the “Agenda for a sustainable and competitive European tourism” by Member States;
- to facilitate the exchange of experiences among member States with regard to how they tackle issues which are important for the competitiveness and sustainability of European tourism.

MS reports referring to year n shall be sent to the European Commission by the end of February of year $n+1$.

If the reports are sent in English, the deadline is shifted to the end of April.

2. ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

This section should provide an overview of the main organisational structure to illustrate how tourism is organised and managed, to identify linkages and to identify the engagement of other organisations/stakeholders.

The information required will only need to be prepared fully in year 1 as it will subsequently only be necessary to provide details of any changes.

¹ Official Journal L 384, 31/12/1986 P. 0052 – 0053.

2.1 Please identify the National Bodies responsible for tourism (Ministry and also any separate/related National Tourism Organisation), including key areas of responsibility, and their relationship to other national bodies. (maximum of 1.000 characters)

The Ministry for Regional Development is a central state administration authority of the Czech Republic for tourism, which is responsible under the Competencies Act for coordination and setting guidelines in the field of tourism in the Czech Republic. The Tourism Department carries out activities related to the development and implementation of the State Tourism Policy Concept in the Czech Republic for the years 2007 – 2013, implements measures arising from partial strategies and contributes by its activities to the recognition of tourism as an important industry in the national economy (for example by promoting quality improvements of the Tourism Satellite Account). Another important activity is the promotion of international relationships in the field of tourism by means of membership in international organizations and presentation of ~~itsour~~ activities at international conferences or tourism trade fairs.

The Tourism Department is the founder of the Czech Tourism Authority – CzechTourism - a state contributory organization through which the Tourism Department coordinates the promotion of the Czech Republic in the field of tourism at the domestic and foreign market. ~~The most important partners of this agency in these promotional activities are the regional tourist organizations, include domestic tourism regions,~~ municipalities and also business entities. CzechTourism's objective is the state promotion of tourism by means of activities carried out by businesses and the development of a medium-term and up-to-date strategy for marketing of tourism products at the domestic and international market. CzechTourism is a member of the European Travel Commission (ETC), and thus participates with other European states in marketing activities at markets overseas. About 25 representations of CzechTourism around the world contribute to the promotion of the Czech Republic in the field of tourism.

2.2 Please, describe what organisations/agencies are used to deliver services at the national and regional level and the services that they deliver. (maximum 800 characters)

The specifics of tourism as an economic sector is the necessity to ensure cooperation of a large number of entities during coordination of development activities of businesses and service providers, local and regional self-government authorities, non-profit organizations, information centres, state administration etc.

The activities in the field of tourism are carried out at the national level by professional associations, societies and non-state non-profit organizations, striving to comply with the relevant standards and certifications in the provision of tourism services. An important contribution to the development of environmentally friendly forms of tourism is provided by the Czech Tourist Club, which promotes the development of hiking (40,157 km of marked hiking paths and 37,000 km of marked bicycle paths and

trails in the Czech Republic).

The development of tourism at the regional level is addressed by self-government authorities (regions, municipalities and unions of municipalities). To foster collective solution of conceptual objectives in the field of tourism, the municipalities may jointly establish unions of municipalities (microregions), which will bring economic revival to the given region and will increase the quality of services.

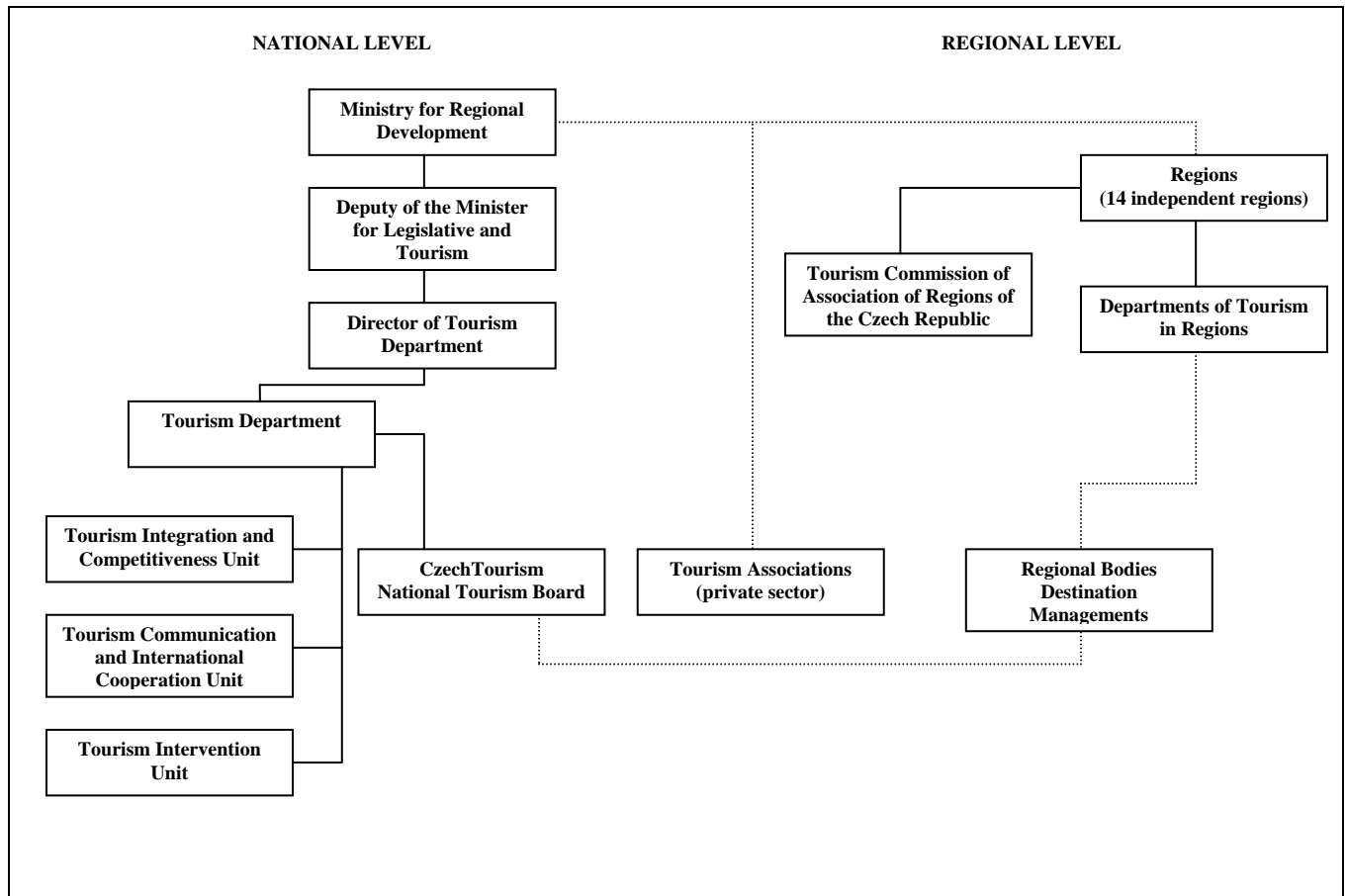
Lately, an important role in the coordination process of the development of activities at the regional and local levels has been played by newly established tourism organizations (destination agencies and companies), which foster a conceptual and systematic approach to the development of sustainable tourism. In practice, they implement appropriate marketing instruments in order to increase the visitor rate of the region. An irreplaceable role at the regional and the local level is played by tourism information centres, which receive guidance from the Association of Tourism Centres in the Czech Republic.

2.3 Please, describe which other bodies and organisations are involved at the national level and the process for involving them. (maximum 800 characters)

Since tourism has a cross-sectoral nature, there is a number of government ministries participating in its sustainable development (Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Transport) and of other entities focused on the compliance with the Consumer Protection Act (the Czech Trade Inspectorate), with health regulations and standards (public health service authorities), food safety (the State Veterinary Administration and Food Inspection) and on environmental protection (nature and landscape preservation authorities).

Non-state non-profit organizations, which draw from local partnerships and strive to ensure sustainable tourism development in the field of services, products and destinations such as Nadace Partnerství (Czech Environmental Partnership Foundation), the Greenways activity, Asociace regionálních značek (Regional Brands Association), Sdružení vinařů (Association of Wine Makers), Česká inspirace (Czech Inspiration) etc.) also contribute to the maximum possible increase of the tourism potential.

2.4 Please provide a diagram/organogram of the organisational structure for tourism identifying the relationship between national, regional and local bodies. Provide also a short description of the core responsibilities and competencies of each of the organisations. Include also information regarding the direct and indirect links between other departments, stakeholder organisations and unions. Information about mechanisms of decision making process participation from outsider organisations, e.g. forums, advisory committees is also requested. (maximum of 2.000 characters)



2.5 Please provide information about financial data, including spend/budget on tourism as a percentage of overall government spend/budget, the level of national funding support for tourism marketing, the amount of EU funding support made available for tourism and data concerning the support to SMEs and Destinations. (500 characters)

- Budget of the National Tourism Administration.

Tourism budget in million EUR

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Budget	35.9	52,5	52,0	53,5	x

Note: Rate 28 CZK/1 EUR

Budget of Ministry for Regional Development, budget of Czech National Tourism Board, budgets of Regions and the budget for co-financing European structural funds from the National budget.

- Budget of the National Tourism Organisation.

Budget of Czech National Tourism Board - Czech Tourism in million EUR

Year	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Budget	7.8	8.0	12.4	13.0	13.5

Note: Rate 28 CZK/1 EUR

- Total financial allocation of operational programmes designated for tourism

Total funds in million EUR					
EU	State budget	Other public budgets	Total public funds	Private funds	Total
959,4	105,3	73,4	1 138,0	66,1	1 204,1

Note. not including funds from OP Cross-border Cooperation

3. POLICIES AND STRATEGIES

3.1 Is there a current National Strategy for tourism? Yes No ;

If yes, please, provide information in bullet point format about the key aims, objectives and priorities of the strategy highlighting those that are designed to address sustainability issues in economic, environmental and social terms in particular those related in the six aims included in the Agenda. In preparing the tourism strategy, explain how consideration has been given to the 9 principles set out in the Agenda (para2.3 p5) and given in the appendix. (maximum 1.000 characters)

Tourism policy in the Czech Republic

approved The **State Tourism Policy Concept in the Czech Republic for 2007 – 2013** (hereinafter the Concept) as the fundamental medium-term tourism-related strategic document in the Czech Republic was approved by the Regulation of the Czech Republic Government No. 1239 of 7 November 2007.

The strategic part of the Concept is represented by the vision “**Destination Czech Republic – number one in the heart of Europe**”.

Priorities of the Concept are:

- 1) Competitiveness of national and regional tourism products
- 2) Expansion and increase of quality of tourism infrastructure and services
- 3) Tourism marketing and human resources development
- 4) Creation of organizational structure of tourism

Successful performance of the Concept depends, however, on properly and precisely set implementation of defined strategic projects. This necessitated the elaboration of an **Implementing Document to the Concept**, based on the above Regulation, which further specified individual projects included in the Concept. This document, which was submitted to the Czech government, was approved by the Czech Republic Government Regulation No. 913 of 23 July 2008 and represents therefore a kind of an action plan which contains a detailed description of how to perform individual activities stipulated in the Concept.

3.2 Who was the initiator and who is responsible for its implementation? (maximum 200 characters)

The main initiator of the elaboration of the Concept was the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic, which plays an important guiding and coordination role in the field of tourism in the Czech Republic. The primary objective of the elaboration of the Concept was the harmonization of conceptual activities in the field of tourism with the programming period of the European Union and the creation of strategic material which will be an efficient instrument for promotion of sustainable tourism development in the Czech Republic in the following period and will sufficiently reflect the significance of tourism for the national economy of the Czech Republic.

The implementation of the Concept is based on the Government Resolution No. 1239, which includes an annex containing division of responsibility for performance of individual measures of the Concept. In addition to the Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic, there are other state administration and self-government authorities participating in the implementation of the Concept, specifically the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Ministry of the Environment, Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports, Ministry of Industry and Trade, Ministry of the Interior, Ministry of Culture, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Health, the Czech Statistical Office and all 14 regional authorities in the Czech Republic. Other participants include a number of entities representing professional and expert public in tourism (professional associations, societies, universities etc.), with which particularly the Ministry for Regional Development has established close cooperation in the implementation of measures included in the Concept.

3.3 How is the strategy monitored and how often? (maximum 500 characters)

The Resolution No. 1239 imposes upon the Ministry for Regional Development the task to assess the approved Concept by 30 June and every two years thereafter in cooperation with other entities ~~to~~ responsible for the implementation of partial Concept measures. The report on assessment of the Concept ~~assessment~~ shall be submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic for approval.

3.4 What tourism specific legislation exists? (maximum 500 characters)

The basic laws dealing with tourism issues are as follows:

Act no. 159/1999 Coll. on Some Conditions of Carrying on Business Activities in Tourism and on the Amendment to Act No. 40/1964 Coll., the Civil Code, as amended, and Act No. 455/1991 Coll. on Trades (the Trades Licensing Act), as amended,

Council Directive 90/314/EEC of 13 June 1990 on package holidays, package travel and package tours,

Regulation (EC) No. 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws (the Regulation on consumer protection cooperation);

Directive 2008/122/EC the European Parliament and of the Council of 14 January 2009 on the protection of consumers in respect of certain aspects of timeshare, long-term holiday product, resale and exchange contracts;

Commission Decision of 22 December 2006 implementing Regulation (EC) No. 2006/2004 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 27 October 2004 on cooperation between national authorities responsible for the enforcement of consumer protection laws as regard mutual cooperation
Act No. 634/1992 Coll. on Consumer Protection;

Act no. 160/2007 Coll. of 7 June 2007 Amending Some Consumer Protection Laws - amendment to the Consumer Protection Act.

4. MEASURES AND INITIATIVES

This section provides Member States with an opportunity to outline specific initiatives and policies that are or are going to be adopted to manage and develop tourism activity in ways which respond to the key challenges of the Agenda and which fall within the six main aims of the Agenda itself.

1 Economic prosperity

- a. To ensure the long term competitiveness, viability and prosperity of tourism enterprises and destinations.
- b. To provide quality employment opportunities, offering fair pay and conditions for all employees and avoiding all forms of discrimination.

2 Social equity and cohesion

- a. To enhance the quality of life of local communities through tourism, and engage them in its planning and management
- b. To provide a safe, satisfying and fulfilling experience for visitors, available to all without discrimination by gender, race, religion, disability or in other ways.

3 Environmental and cultural protection

- a. To minimise pollution and degradation of the global and local environment and the use of scarce resources by tourism activities.
- b. To maintain and strengthen cultural richness and biodiversity and contribute to their appreciation and conservation.

4.1 Please set out, briefly, the steps which have been or will be taken, if any, to address the 7 key challenges for the delivery of sustainable and competitive tourism, covered in the TSG report and referred to in the 'Agenda'.

4.1.1 Reducing the seasonality of demand. (maximum 200 characters)

Finding a solution to the problem of local and time spread of visitor rate in the Czech Republic is an urgent task not only for CzechTourism but particularly for the relevant destination agencies in regions with regard to the regulation of visitor flows not only to exposed areas (Prague, Southern Bohemian Region, Western Bohemian Region, etc.) but also into less visited areas and destinations in the Czech Republic throughout the whole year.

The tools employed by regions in these efforts will include Regional Operational Programmes, which focus their attention on the improvement of basic tourism infrastructure and on the expansion of complementary and leisure time services. Particular attention will be paid to the improvement of transport accessibility of less visited tourism destinations, especially to the expansion of environmentally friendly transport forms (water and railway transport, development of biking).

New tourism products developed in this respect will be focused on addressing potential visitors throughout the year and inviting them to visit the relevant destination with an attractive offer of programmes, activities and local attractions.

4.1.2 Addressing the impact of tourism transport. (maximum 200 characters)

The financial support provided by the State Transport Infrastructure Fund, supervised by the Ministry of Transport of the Czech Republic, has been contributing significantly to the increase of road safety. These efforts have been reflected mainly in the completion of motorways (D 47, D 11, and D 3) and of class E international roads.

The construction of regional airports (Brno, Ostrava, Karlovy Vary, Pardubice) and expansion of the Prague-Ruzyně airport capacities will be carried on to satisfy air transport requirements.

At the same time, the upgrading of the Eurocity and Intercity railway carriage fleet to meet the European standard with connections Prague - Vienna, Prague - Berlin, Prague - Paris and other European destinations will also continue.

4.1.3 Improving the quality of tourism jobs. (maximum 200 characters)

One of the priorities of the State Tourism Policy Concept in the Czech Republic for the years 2007 – 2013 is the development of human resources in tourism. The Ministry for Regional Development implements a wide range of educational activities concerning tourism. A total of seven large systemic projects for education of tourism and public sector employees, focused on information technology, destination management and ebony marketing for a total amount of 8.5 million EUR were carried out in the past programming period 2004 - 2006 within the Operational Programme Human Resources Development. A total of 8,907 people were trained and 79 specialized publications were created, which are further used for educational purposes, even by secondary vocational schools focused on tourism.

Target groups for the education programmes include stakeholders from business and municipal spheres, non-governmental organizations, destination managements and educational institutions focusing on the improvement of specialized education in tourism, increase of awareness about marketing, publicity and presentation of tourism products.

The system of more extended presentation of good practice examples to master well-tested procedures, strategies and tourism offer packages with the aim of increasing local and regional visitor rates will be also further applied.

4.1.4 Maintaining and enhancing community prosperity and the quality of life, in the face of change. (maximum 200 characters)

A number of shortcomings found until now in the provision of tourism services prevents the establishment of a collective systemic approach to sustainable tourism development (failure to coordinate and to establish mutual links in the provision of services, insufficient response to changes of tourism market trends and demand, unhealthy competitive atmosphere). In this respect, increased support will be provided to activities arising from local partnerships, deepening of cooperation between regions and expansion of cross-border cooperation in tourism. This measure will lead to the increase of prosperity of the relevant regions, to the creation of new jobs and to the enhancement of competitiveness of these destinations.

4.1.5 Minimising resource use and the production of waste. (maximum 200 characters)

Spontaneous development of tourism has a negative impact on sustainable tourism development, the competitiveness of destinations and on the environmental stability of the territory. This issue is addressed by initiatives arising in the Czech Republic which regulate visitor flows to minimise the impact of tourism on the environment. Fifty professional guides who have been trained in the territory of the Šumava National Park will accompany visitors in the most valuable areas of this park and will provide special information to the general public. This system will be expanded to cover other exposed areas (České Švýcarsko, Český ráj, Bílé Karpaty, etc.).

A more important role with regard to accommodation capacities will be played by the Environmental Section of the Association of Hotels and Restaurants in the Czech Republic, which will further promote efficient waste management, implementation of environmentally friendly hotel operation systems and energy savings in the operation of these facilities.

4.1.6 Conserving and giving value to natural and cultural heritage. (maximum 200 characters)

The Czech Republic has an exceptional natural and cultural heritage. However, this potential has not been hitherto fully used. Therefore, greater emphasis will be put on the implementation of new innovative approaches by operators of these cultural and natural monuments. The aim of these efforts will be to expand the accessibility of these monuments to the public, to expand the programme offer and services, to increase the attractiveness of tourism information services, to increase the offer of appropriate souvenirs and gastronomic services, including local specialities, and offering new regional tourism products alongside the offer of visits to cultural and historical monuments.

4.1.7 Making holidays available to all. (maximum 200 characters)

The objective of further tourism development is to address the largest possible group of potential participants. This applies namely families with children, older people, people with disabilities, those interested in leisure-time activities and adrenaline sports, young people, students, people interested in forms of environmentally friendly tourism and in environmental and landscape protection.

The task of addressing the general public with incentives supporting sustainable tourism development will be implemented by means of the expansion of the network of environmentally friendly tourism centres in the Czech Republic. The objective of the centres will be to facilitate the education towards protection of natural and cultural heritage, respecting the rules of environmentally friendly stay in the nature, and to prevent conflicts between environmental protection and other interests.

The creation of leisure-time programmes focused on specific target groups will reflect specific interests and needs of the relevant target groups.

4.2 As key challenges may change over time, please identify any other areas that are becoming a new challenge. (maximum 600 characters)

We see the key basic points and objectives regarding the most efficient use of leisure-time and tourism in the development of marketing and increase of competitiveness of the Czech Republic as a target destination of tourism.

Due to the foregoing, our attention will be focused mainly on the increase of professional competence of managers in destination companies in close cooperation with CzechTourism and service providers.

To increase the participation of professional associations and societies and economic chambers in the process of tourism planning and development for the purpose of increasing competitiveness and improving the quality of provided services.

An instrument that will help achieve the strategic objectives of tourism development in the Czech Republic will be the newly developed National Tourism Information and Reservation System, which will promote the Czech Republic more efficiently abroad and will considerably contribute to the increase of economic prosperity of tourism service operators.

Another impulse for an increase of the number of visitors to the Czech Republic throughout the year will be the completion of the Tourism Satellite Account and the application of collected data in the planning of tourism development and creation of marketing strategies.

4.3 Please identify and describe a specific initiative, which is related to the 7 key challenges, that is innovative/ successful and which would be of interest to or of help to other Member States. (maximum 2.000 characters)

Establishing conditions for creation of supra-regional thematic tourism products, which point out the uniqueness, specialities, authenticity of traditions and preservation of historical and architectural heritage for next generations in the European area.

Promoting the effort to expand the network of geoparks, especially protected territories, biosphere reserves and other unique places and localities that are attractive for tourism and form parts part of the Natura 2000 system.

The development of environmentally friendly transport, which will make cultural and natural heritage easily accessible to the general public, such as public transport, connecting transport systems of neighbouring countries and the use of discounts for visits of monuments using public transport.

5. MECHANISMS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

Three mechanisms for implementing the Agenda were identified in the "Agenda": sustainable destinations, sustainable businesses and responsible tourists.

5.1 Sustainable destinations: What support is given to strengthen destination management at the regional/ destination level (supportive policy environment, knowledge networks, training programmes, establishment of measures/indicators for benchmarking, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

The Czech Republic supported in 2009 an EU initiative for the development of destinations which cooperate with nature and landscape protection authorities ([European Destination of Excellence – theme: Tourism and protected areas](#)). A total of 21 destinations which have participated in the initiative intend to approach systematically sustainable tourism development, while respecting its three pillars - economic, social and environmental. In accordance with the State Tourism Policy Concept in the Czech Republic, conditions will be created to implement environmentally friendly forms of tourism and to identify appropriate certification instruments which will lead to an increase of quality of eco-tourism offers of services, products and destinations. The implementation of this project will be closely linked

with the educational system in the field of sustainable tourism, marketing and activities which provide the image of a sustainable destination in interaction with the business sector, non-profit organizations, professional and special-interest associations and the destination companies in regions.

5.2 Sustainable businesses: What support is given to strengthen the sustainability and competitiveness of businesses (supportive policy environment, orientation of business support services to sustainability, training, financial incentives, etc.)? (maximum 600 characters)

The introduction of standards and certification will be decisive for the increase of economic effects of services, product offer and establishment of sustainable destinations. Businesses and service providers will thus obtain a marketing instrument increasing their competitiveness not only at the domestic market, but also abroad. This trend fully complies with the UNWTO's and EC's recommendations regarding tourism.

The system will be supplemented with the use of already elaborated manuals and procedures, which were created within the professional education of employees in tourism in the Czech Republic with financial support from the EU and national sources.

5.3 Responsible tourists: What support is given to promote responsible choices by tourists (e.g. sustainability in education, national marketing and media campaigns, promotion of certification schemes)? (maximum 600 characters)

The objective of the Czech Republic is to support responsible behaviour of visitors towards the environment, respecting fundamental principles of sustainable development. Increasing environmental awareness of visitor and education towards sustainable development is in process in the Czech Republic in accordance with the State Tourism Policy Concept. All completed marketing campaigns and products created at the national level accentuate the meaning of a responsible approach towards the environment. National service quality standards in the field of sustainable tourism development that are being set and the system of certification will be gradually integrated in the Czech Republic into the emerging National Service Quality System in the Czech Republic, which will guarantee the quality of tourism in future under a single brand. The objective of the emerging system is the increase of publicity and education not only on the side of businesses and service providers, but also on the side of the consumer public to increase their protection and awareness of quality of tourism services.

6. DATA AND INDICATORS

Eurostat will provide, as an annex, the key statistical data required to support the reporting process covering around 20 indicators². These are mainly related to the aim of 'economic prosperity'.

² These indicators have been selected from the 50 TSG indicators on the basis of the possibility to calculate them at the European level.

Please, identify indicators that are being used or developed which could add to the range of information being provided by Eurostat, particularly in relation to social and environmental issues (other indicators from the TSG report, visitors/ residents satisfaction, etc.). (maximum 500 characters)

Results of an incoming tourism survey held in 2009: the total amount of guests in collective accommodation establishments reached 12,105,287 (a decrease by 5,7 % as opposed to 2008); 6,081,244 of those were foreign tourists (source: Czech Statistical Office).

7. COMPLEMENTARY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

If necessary use the following box to provide additional complementary information that has not already been covered.

The Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic has announced the National Tourism Support Program for the years 2010 to 2013, in 2010 it is focused on the sub-program Tourism for All. The objective of the sub-program is to support entrepreneurs in tourism (hotel and restaurant sector, travel agencies). The sub-program is aimed to create new tourism products focusing on the development of social tourism products as well as marketing and promotion of created products. Selected target groups in this sub-program are families with small children and low income, senior citizens, handicapped persons as well as and young people. In addition, the project's budget can to some extent (20 % of total costs) be used to pay for the acquisition of the necessary infrastructure, such as barrier-free entryways, children's play areas, pools, etc. Subsidies account for 50% of project costs, where the remaining 50 % are made up from own resources of the individual applicants.

The selected target groups have a tendency to spend their vacation outside the main season because of lower prices, which could stimulate demand in the tourism sector throughout the year and increase employment during the off season.

An important instrument aimed at attenuating the impact of the economic crisis is using financial resources from EU funds. The Ministry for Regional Development has prepared and since 2009 has been executing several programs aimed at the development of the tourism sector and the competitiveness of the Czech Republic. The objective of the non-investment projects is to set out, in cooperation with professional and expert public, National System of Quality in Tourism. The aim of the system of quality is to set a new system of standardization and certification of services in individual tourism segments. Other projects are aimed at the improvement of the quality of the statistical system in the tourism sector of the Czech Republic.

An allowance organization funded by the Ministry for Regional Development, the CzechTourism Authority has prepared and since 2008 has been executing two projects financed from EU funds specialized in market research. One of the projects concentrates on incoming tourism, while the other is aimed at domestic tourism. The results of market surveys will serve as a basis for better planning and implementation of marketing activities in the future and more effective targeting of promotional activities on domestic market or abroad.

The Ministry for Regional Development of the Czech Republic has announced the National Tourism

Support Program for the years 2010 to 2013, where the focus in 2010 will be the sub-program Tourism for Everyone. The objective of the sub-program is to disburse subsidies to assist businesses providing hotel and restaurant services as well as travel agencies in the creation of new products that target the development of social tourism, i.e. products for selected target groups (families with small children, senior citizens, handicapped persons and young people). In addition, the project's budget can to some extent be used to pay for the acquisition of the necessary infrastructure, such as barrier-free entryways, children's play areas, pools, etc. Subsidies account for 50% of project costs, where the remaining part of the budget must be provided by individual applicants.

The selected target groups of the population have a tendency to spend their vacation outside the main season because of lower prices, which could stimulate demand in the tourism sector and increase employment during the off season.

An important instrument aimed at attenuating the impact of the economic crisis is using financial assistance from EU funds. The Ministry for Regional Development has prepared and has been executing since 2009 several programs that target non-investment projects, where the objective is to cooperate with professional association on introducing in the Czech Republic a new system for standardizing and certifying the quality of services provided in the individual segments of the tourism industry and to improve the quality of the statistical system used for reporting activities in the travel sector.

An organization agency funded by the Ministry for Regional Development, the Czech Tourism Agency has prepared and has been executing since 2008 two projects financed from EU funds, which target market research. One of the projects concentrates on incoming tourism, while the other is aimed at domestic travel activities. The results of market surveys will serve as a basis for the future preparation of marketing projects and the promotion of tourism in the Czech Republic and abroad as well as for work with the domestic clients.

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APPENDIX

Principles of sustainable tourism:

- **Taking a holistic and integrated approach**

All the various impacts of tourism should be taken into account in its planning and development. Furthermore, tourism should be well balanced and integrated with a whole range of activities that affect society and the environment.

- **Planning for the long term**

Sustainable development is about taking care of the needs of future generations as well as our own. Long term planning requires the ability to sustain actions over time.

- **Achieving an appropriate pace and rhythm of development**

The level, pace and shape of development should reflect and respect the character, resources and needs of host communities and destinations.

- **Involving all stakeholders**

A sustainable approach requires widespread and committed participation in decision making and practical implementation by all those implicated in the outcome.

- **Using best available knowledge**

Policies and actions should be informed by the latest and best knowledge available. Information on tourism trends and impacts, and skills and experience, should be shared across Europe.

- **Minimising and managing risk – the precautionary principle**

Where there is uncertainty about outcomes, there should be full evaluation and preventative action should be taken to avoid damage to the environment or society.

- **Reflecting impacts in costs – user and polluter pays**

Prices should reflect the real costs to society of consumption and production activities. This has implications not simply for pollution but for charging for the use of facilities that have significant management costs attached to them.

- **Setting and respecting limits, where appropriate**

The carrying capacity of individual sites and wider areas should be recognised, with a readiness and ability to limit, where and when appropriate, the amount of tourism development and volume of tourist flows.

- **Undertaking continuous monitoring**

Sustainability is all about understanding impacts and being alert to them all the time, so that the necessary changes and improvements can be made.