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Doctoral School of Earth Sciences

**Theoretical issues of sport tourism.
Sport tourism in Szigetköz and
Írottkő Nature Park**

PhD Thesis

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1. Academic background and objectives

In the 21st century tourism, continuing its dynamic development characteristic of the second part of the 20th century, is still one of the most developing and flourishing industries. Its excellent performance has drawn the attention of the actors of the economy, however it has not yet become a focal point of policy making and the authorities to the extent it deserves.

Studying the structure of tourism by scholars, however, is a recent phenomenon. Academic studies so far have primarily been carried out by the representatives of economics and geography. Economists emphasised the economic and financial aspects, while geographers analysed the tourists' spatial movements, and the infrastructure, traffic conditions and landscape of the destinations favoured by tourists. Nevertheless, the complexity and multidisciplinary nature of tourism have raised the interest of the representatives of the neighbouring disciplines as well to carry out research on tourism. Scholars of various fields joining in the basic researches apply their own discipline's research methods to investigate tourism, yet there is a pressing need to establish a separate methodology, 'tourismology', and to achieve a transdisciplinary approach to tourism. (MICHALKÓ G. 2002).

Nevertheless, most researchers of tourism are the representatives of geography. The so-called *applied tourism geography* covering leisure, recreation and tourism is a domain of applied geography.

Sport is a significant element of leisure, recreation and - based on the most recent tourism trends - of tourism, a tourism product, so the investigation of sport tourism, becoming more and more popular, has drawn the attention of both geography and sports academics.

Research on sport tourism is based on the joint research of sport and tourism. The first article in this topic was published by Don Anthony, entitled „Sport and Tourism” in the United Kingdom in 1966, where he examined the role of sports in people's leisure time. This article is regarded as the starting point for sport tourism experts, but sport tourism is still trying to define its place in the established system of sciences and fighting for its theoretical legitimacy. HINCH, T. – HIGHAM, J (2004) co-authors argue that a joint research on sports and tourism is needed with multidisciplinary approach. MICHALKÓ G. – RÁTZ T. (2003) co-authors also share this view, and argue for a holistic approach to sport tourism in order to discover the internal structure, the external relations and the coefficients of tourism.

Sport, which has always contributed to the development of productive forces, is part of the variable geographic environment that is investigated by earth sciences based on natural, social, economic and infrastructural criteria (TÓTH J. 2001). The geography of sport can be categorised as a

further discipline of social geography, therefore sport, which appears in space in various clusters, frequency and forms, must be subject to geography. It was J. ROONEY (1974) who presented sport geography as a new branch of geography in his work: „A Geography of American Sport”. As sport geography is stepping out of the shadow of leisure and recreation geography, and research on the spatial distribution of sports is getting emphasised, sport is becoming more significant within tourism geography.

Research on sport tourism started only in the past 10-15 years even in international literature. (HALL, C. M. 1992; GAMMON, S. – ROBINSON, T. 1997; FREYER, W. 2001; FRANKLIN, A. 2003; HUDSON, S. 2003; HINCH, T. – HIGHAM, J. 2004), and has not been dealt with nearly at all in Hungary (MICHALKÓ G. – VIZI I. 2002; VIZI I. 2005). Even the naming of the phenomenon is diverse in Hungary, mostly active tourism is used as an umbrella term, (MICHALKÓ G. – VIZI I. 2002), or the name of the separate sports are used in a qualifier compound structure, like cycling tourism, etc. The term sport tourism in international literature dates back to the past few years, as a consequence of the growing number of researches. As to the historical background of this phenomenon, we can trace it since the first human settling down. The ancient Greek launched which later became the Olympic Games, in this era people celebrated by relaxation and recreation. Sport reflected the habits and moral norms of the surrounding society. In the 21st century, besides professional sport, recreational sport has also been emphasised both at the residence and at tourist destinations, thus making research on sport activities within the framework of tourism the subject to sport tourism. Subject of sport tourism research can be the examination of the suitability of certain geographical areas for pursuing various sports, the location of various sport tourism areas, infra- and suprastructural investigation of the supplier zones, resource analysis of certain sport tourism destinations and a number of other fields.

Research theory of sport tourism is still at its early stage. This explains the research topics of sport tourism being until now mainly descriptive studies of sub-branches of sports in geographical environments. Researches so far have mainly focused on studying certain sport activities or sport events, pursued primarily in the framework of open-air recreational and adventure sports. (HINCH, T. – HIGHAM, J. 2004).

Sport tourism has been defined by various authors based on various indices. HALL, C. M. (1992) says that sport tourism is: „a non-commercially motivated trip with the objective to pursue or watch sports at destinations different than the residence.” RUSKIN, H. (1987) says it is „a certain human attitude in leisure conditions, e.g. on holidays, which is performed in particularly attractive natural or man-made environment, pursuing sports or

physical recreational activities in open-air." WEED, M. & BULL, C. (1997) say it is a „holiday including sports activities, either by watching or by pursuing." GIBSON, H. J. (1998): „It is a leisure travel temporarily taking people out of their permanent environment and making them participate in physical activities, either by watching, or by pursuing leisure activities combined with physical ones." My definition regards sport as a product, saying that sport tourism is „active or passive participation in sport activities within the framework of tourism at destinations where tourists arrive with leisure or business motivations." (BOKOR J. 2004).

Evaluating the present situation of tourism in the fields of sciences we can observe its multidisciplinary (MICHALKÓ G. – RÁTZ T. 2003). It gathers and systemises the knowledge of several sciences, including economics, anthropology, sociology, psychology, in order to make research of its open system possible, and so does sport tourism.

HALL, C. M. (1972) emphasises three inter-connected elements of tourism. Quality sport, open-air recreation and thirdly health and fitness motivated activities can be associated with sport tourism. PAUL DE KNOP (1999) separates the active and passive forms of the above. Quality sport is hallmarked by huge world competitions, continent and national championships, which attract a great number of passive tourists and the attention of researchers. Open-air recreation is in close relationship with sport tourism, and is mainly pursued in natural environment. One of its most dynamic elements is adventure tourism. Health and fitness motivated activities can also be linked to sport tourism, on the one hand they are pursued in natural environment, on the other hand they use waters with recreational motivations. However the latter is associated rather with wellness and enriches the concept of health tourism. Water equals health prevention from as long ago as the Roman spas up to today's therapeutic thermal spas.

As the topic of my thesis I chose sport tourism, which is a rare research topic in Hungary. As there is little relevant literature in Hungary, I wish to give a comprehensive descriptive presentation of sport tourism in my paper. My objective is to reveal, consulting the literature available for me, the historical background of sport tourism, its role in spending free time, its motivation and geographical environment with respect to the development of sport and tourism. To illustrate the situation of Hungarian sport tourism I have chosen two areas as case-studies, namely Szigetköz and the non-governmental Írottő Nature Park at the foot of the Alps (Alpokalja). The researches carried out in these two areas (in 2000 and 2004) cannot be generalised to describe Hungary's sport tourism as a whole, they are valid only in terms of the given regions, thus providing a picture only of two parts of the country. As my investigation in connection with sport tour-

ism is a descriptive research, I did not suggest previous hypotheses. Instead I intended to give a summary of the available literature, and to provide a description and statistical measurement of the surveyed tourist population.

Writing the thesis was hindered by the fact that sport tourism is not a separate discipline, moreover, the components sport and tourism are also fighting for their separate scientific acceptance. Integrating these two elements into geography is also a difficult task, but facilitated by the activity that sport and tourism reveal, together and separately, in social and economic terms. Elaboration of the topic was also impeded by the fact that academic sports professionals have ignored sport tourism so far, and even tourism professionals have only recently paid any attention to sport-related tourist activities.

2. Research methodology

My main method for investigating the topic was descriptive research, a type of exploratory research. Regarding the division of earth sciences, my paper belongs to *general* geography (MAROSI S. 1985), as on the one hand it intends to reveal the principles of sport tourism, on the other hand it is a process analysis. My paper also belongs to *branch* geography as it is part of tourism geography. Its relations to areal, i.e. *regional* geography are supported by its landscape geography features, defined by the territoriality of the two surveyed areas. It is also part of *leisure geography*, as it studies the natural environment where these leisure activities are pursued.

Tourism belongs to *applied geography*, its sub-branch covering leisure and recreation is *applied tourism geography*. Concerning my research methodology, I have chosen the *analytical and exploratory side* of tourism geography (SZABÓ G. 2006).

Investigations on the *exploratory side* involve three fields. 1. My investigations involved *attractions research* analysing existing attractions (natural landscape, man-made landscape, municipal sports facilities) and defining their scope (regional, national attractions). 2. I intended to reveal the *capacities of the destinations*, mainly the willingness and ability to start a business with regard to sport tourism (plans, intentions, decisions). 3. Finally, my *exploratory thesis* involves regional societies, non-governmental organisations participating in tourism development, and their plans with regard to tourism, and the *analysis of their development documents*.

As to the *analytical* part of applied tourism geography I focused on the *realised demand*, and the *evaluation of the changes* in the practice of sport tourism occurred during the four years. The analysis aimed at reveal-

ing the sport habits of the tourists in the two areas (both at their place of residence and at the destinations). I analysed the intensity, the seasonality of the regions' tourism, and the changes in sport tourism demands. Besides quantitative features, I was interested in qualitative ones as well, namely average length of stay and tourism suprastructure – manifesting as the quality assurance of the tourism supplier systems. The information and findings revealed by the analysis made it possible to define the situation of sport tourism in the given areas in terms of supply and demand, pointing out the preferred areas and sports.

The primary methods of the descriptive research were *questionnaires, attraction research, landscape standardising, SWOT analysis and personal interviews*, as secondary research methods I chose *studying the literature, and analysing documents and statistical data*.

Findings of the questionnaire survey, my observations as participant, interviews with sport tourists and traffic count reflect the appearance and practice of sport tourism, while deep interviews with the people concerned and the analysis of documents written for the regional development of the areas show the weighing and acceptance of sport tourism in the regional policies.

While writing my thesis I followed the steps as indicated below. Having decided on the topic (sport tourism) I *defined the two areas* to be surveyed. Szigetköz was evident as I have several decades of sport tourist experience in connection with the Mosoni-Danube. I wished to find an area with a natural landscape different from this flat region, to be able to point out the dominant sport activities dependant on the given features. That is the reason I chose Írótkő Nature Park in Alpokalja. The fact that I chose a voluntary association and not a geographically set area was due to the extent of the areas.

The next step was *collecting data for studying the literature* of sport tourism. This topic is not well researched in Hungary, so besides the existing Hungarian literature, I also studied the university libraries of Cologne, Magdeburg, Cardiff and London, and due to my personal relations I could also have access to books, journals and studies from the USA.

The lack of Hungarian literature on sport tourism can be attributed to the fact that in Hungary this type of tourism started to spread only in the past few years, and has not raised the interest of researchers either on the side of tourism, or sport sciences. Even internationally speaking, articles and books have been published only in the past few years, and this literature has not been translated into Hungarian yet. In Hungary there is no specialised journal for this field, even though in the quarterly „Iskolai Testnevelés és Sport” (Physical education and sports in the school) there is a column

entitled „Utazás, sport, turizmus” (Travelling, sport, tourism), which publishes sport tourism related articles. The international journal of the topic is „Journal of Sport Tourism”, a web-based journal in English, founded in 1993, which is accessible via the internet. (<http://www.sptourist.net>).

For my *empiric research*, as the following step, I started the investigating process *by gathering data*. My main means was the *questionnaire survey*, the most used method in social sciences. The way of observation, i.e. the questionnaire survey covered the visitors, both tourists and day trippers in Szigetköz and Írottkő Nature Park in July and August in the years 2000 and 2004. The random sampling method does not represent the whole population of the country, nevertheless as all individuals had the same chance to become a sample in the two areas during the period of sampling, thus the surveyed can be considered representative for the visitor population of Szigetköz and Írottkő Nature Park. Filling in the questionnaire was mostly administered personally. On my way I addressed the tourists staying in the area, e.g. at sport events, in restaurants, or on the road. I also deposited questionnaires to be filled in at the suppliers (e.g. hotel, camping-site, go-kart field, etc.), which I collected on a general basis.

The questionnaires were self-administered. Whether the individuals considered themselves sport tourists or not was decided by them. I also included a definition of sport tourist to facilitate the choice. Upon this definition sport tourist is a person whose motivation for travel or main/frequent activity at the destination is sports. Active sport tourists pursue sports, passive tourists are supporters/spectators. Surveying the tourists and day trippers in the given periods was continuous. On the other hand, getting in touch with the suppliers and asking them to fill in the questionnaire was personal. Nevertheless, the suppliers were less than willing to provide information during the data collection, so the suppliers sample in Szigetköz was inconsiderable. In Írottkő Nature Park, on the other hand, all suppliers active during the survey got into the sampling. Achieving a greater number of the surveyed tourists and day trippers was impeded on the one hand by the unfavourable weather resulting in a smaller number of visitors e.g. in Szigetköz, and on the other hand the frequent unwillingness of the tourists.

Exploring and analysing the nature of sport tourism, its dimensional situation, and its supply-demand relations in Hungary are still to be specified by future researches. Its complexity, variety and nature does not allow for a complete generalisation, it can be described only in terms of its social and geographical environment in a given area or region

A many-fold approach of the topic calls for a variety of methods. During my research I was looking for the spatial and temporal apparition of sport tourism in two separate, independent areas with different landscape

features. I did not choose different environments in order to compare the sport tourism of the areas, as the natural environment in itself already determines the sport facilities based on them. I intended to answer the question what kind of sport tourism products these different areas could offer, what demands in the given areas the tourists demonstrate, representing the demand side of sport tourism?

As sport tourism is flourishing as a global trend I supposed that this type of tourism was growing stronger in Hungary as well, and expected considerable increase (in these two micro-regions) in the results of the survey carried out four years later. On the supply side I also expected a visible opening to the direction of sport tourism.

Concerning the tourists, the data collected covered among others their travel habits, sporting habits at home, their state of health, their sport activities during the journey, their satisfaction in connection with sport activities, their demands in connection with them (gaps), their social situation, etc. As to day trippers, I primarily inquired about their sport activities, their satisfaction and possible demands in connection with the sport activities, and their social status.

Concerning the suppliers, I intended to know if they offered sport tourism services, if they had sport tourist guests and whether they planned to expand their services towards sport tourism.

The questionnaires for tourists and day trippers were prepared in five other languages than Hungarian (English, German, Slovakian, Slovenian and Croatian), as both surveyed areas are situated near the border, so I expected visitors from the neighbouring countries as well, hoping for a wider spectrum for the surveyed areas. Data collection was rendered more difficult by the fact that it was voluntary and naturally during the period of the holidays, so many refused to fill in the questionnaire taking some minutes. The low number of the samples was also influenced by the unfavourable weather, not very characteristic of summer (Table 1).

Table 1. Division of the surveyed

<i>Area</i>	<i>The surveyed</i>	<i>year 2000 capita</i>	<i>year 2004 capita</i>
Szigetköz	Tourist	193	104
	Day tripper	90	56
	Supplier	36	35
Írottkő Nature Park	Tourist	107	162
	Day tripper	37	70
	Supplier	12	11

3. Summary of the findings

In my paper I wish to summarise the findings of my work along the three topics characteristic of the whole, namely studying the literature, analysing documents and the empiric research.

The literature investigated is primarily based on foreign resources. The generalities were very useful while elaborating the topic, however their statements were not always valid in Hungarian settings. As sport tourism itself is a recent discipline even internationally, and has been studied by several academics of various disciplines at multidisciplinary levels, it was difficult to find a common principle during the investigation.

The topic of the investigated and cited articles well reflect this direction-finding presently characteristic of academics carrying out research on sport tourism. A really complex, diversified, multidisciplinary tourism type must be investigated at a scientific level, complying with the needs of several disciplines. One can feel the need from the scholars' side, and the push from the practical side for a separate discipline.

Despite all difficulties, I tried to structure the foreign literature to be able to provide an accurate and stable account of the information before starting the analysis of the personally structured questionnaires.

1. The most important finding on the theoretical side of the thesis is *pointing out the complexity of sport tourism*, along with its social-economic-cultural and personal conditions. The changes in society, in social values and in the way of life create the need to pursue sport activities at the same time as travelling, the destination for which are chosen by the travelers according to their own possibilities. The importance of cultural definiteness is defined by the unity of three aspects: social situation with the 'matching' sport activities as a consequence of the tourists' social status, culture and physical culture. It has become evident that today's tourists do not accept an invariable range of products, deteriorating or stagnating infrastructure. Their activities are more personally tailored, and more demanding, they wish to make the best of the time available, for which they require professional assistance to a greater extent.

Being able to address sport tourism flourishing internationally, preparing the destinations for the new challenges, and complying with the new demands all require a better knowledge of the internal and external environment and nature of sport tourism. National destinations must also be prepared to face this challenge. However, the theoretical knowledge of sport tourism is still a gap in Hungarian literature. That is why I consider the studying of foreign sport tourism literature, its grouping according to topics, making it accessible for Hungarian scholars, thus enriching the national

scientific literature, as the other significant theoretical result of my dissertation. The studied articles, papers and books originate from Anglo-Saxon sources, but the German and Croatian literature is also worth mentioning. The considerable amount of literature of the above mentioned countries well reflect sport tourism practices in the countries, and indirectly the range of sport tourism products as well.

2. The second topic of the paper considers Hungarian tourism *development documents*. During the analysis I mainly focused on the programmes involving sport tourism, directly or indirectly. As a summary it can be concluded that they reveal the decrease of the state's role both in tourism development and in leisure sport support. Although they consider their economic impacts, but even the National Development Plan (NDP) provides only propositions for the representatives of the field. The regional programme is a bit more concrete when it encourages – in order to win the title 'leading recreational region' – the development and utilization of possibilities and facilities of 'active tourism' by exploiting endogen resources.

Development plans and programmes at lower levels also encourage the use and exploit of own resources, their integration into the circulation of tourism, but they have no means for capital inflow, they can only provide suggestions. It will be possible to raise certain funds by winning regional competitions for projects incorporated in the plans.

Sport is even in a worth position than tourism. Even though the government regards sport, based on the NDP, as an element of a new way of life, and states that sport has started its way towards the market, but the support of leisure sport activities is confined mainly to moral support. Recreation-motivated leisure sport activities are encouraged, contributed by the state by providing infrastructural background and educating professionals. Organisation of sports competitions involving huge numbers of people are encouraged, which will by all means play an important role in the prosperity of sport tourism and in creating the country's image. Regarding sport activities in Szigetköz, possibilities provided by the river must be exploited, while in Írott-kő Nature Park the variable landscape feature should be made the main motivation of sport activities.

3. *The findings of my empiric research* came up to my expectations, although they also provided some surprising elements as well. The number of the surveyed is not very high, nevertheless I believe that regarding the weather of the surveyed period, the extension of the areas and their sport tourist attractions, the sample rate well represents sport tourism in the areas. The empirical research repeated four years later do not reflect trends, not even in terms of the surveyed areas. Yet I would say that the direction of the changes can be explained by the quality of the sport tourism products

and of the suppliers' services in the areas.

I did not intend to make a comparison between the two surveyed areas in terms of sport tourism, yet when analysing the findings a need arose to put certain characteristic features of the surveyed areas into parallel.

3.1. *On the demand side*, knowing the international trends of tourism (including sport tourism), I expected an increasing popularity of sport tourism in the surveyed areas. It was verified to an extent, during the second survey the number of returning guests was higher by some percentage, yet their proportion in the overall tourist presence was below 50%. On the contrary, as the findings of the survey carried out four years later reveal, the number of sport tourists decreased in Szigetköz, while in Írottkő Nature Park their number increased nearly to the same extent. The number of active sport tourists decreased nearly by 19% in Szigetköz, while it stayed invariable in Írottkő Nature Park. The number of passive tourists increased in both areas, in the Nature Park nearly by 15%. The above changes in the proportions can be explained by the range of sport tourism products. In Szigetköz it is still the services based on the natural landscape that expect sportspeople, while in the Nature Park a national mountain bike competition series is organised, which attracts solvent demand into the area (Table 2-3).

Table 2. Tourist types in Szigetköz

Frequency of visit	Tourists	year 2000 n = 193		year 2004 n = 104	
		capita	%	capita	%
Tourist visiting for the first time	Total	111	57,5	57	54,8
	Active sport tourist	81	73,0	30	52,6
	Passive sport tourist	5	4,5	5	8,8
	Total sport tourist	86	77,5	35	61,4
	Not sport tourist	25	22,5	22	38,6
Tourist not visiting for the first time	Total	82	42,4	47	45,2
	Active sport tourist	52	63,4	22	46,8
	Passive sport tourist	3	3,7	4	8,5
	Total sport tourist	55	67,1	26	55,3
	Not sport tourist	27	32,9	21	44,7
During the survey	Total	193	100,0	104	100,0
	Active sport tourist	134	68,9	52	50,0
	Passive sport tourist	9	4,1	9	8,6
	Total sport tourist	143	73,0	61	58,6
	Not sport tourist	50	27,0	43	41,4

Table 3. Tourist types in Íróttkő Nature Park

Frequency of visit	Tourists	year 2000 n = 107		year 2004 n = 162	
		capita	%	capita	%
Tourist visiting for the first time	Total	57	53,3	86	53,1
	Active sport tourist	18	31,6	25	29,1
	Passive sport tourist	0	0,0	11	12,8
	Total sport tourist	18	31,6	36	41,9
	Not sport tourist	39	68,4	50	58,1
Tourist not visiting for the first time	Total	50	46,7	76	46,9
	Active sport tourist	17	34,0	26	34,2
	Passive sport tourist	1	2,0	12	15,8
	Total sport tourist	18	36,0	38	50,0
	Not sport tourist	32	64,0	38	50,0
During the survey	Total	107	100,0	162	100,0
	Active sport tourist	35	32,7	51	31,5
	Passive sport tourist	1	0,9	23	14,2
	Total sport tourist	36	33,6	74	45,7
	Not sport tourist	71	66,4	88	54,3

Amongst tourist in both areas the sport activities based on the natural landscape were dominant. In Szigetköz the three most popular sports amongst tourists were water sports, cycling and horse riding, while amongst day trippers they were cycling, fishing and water sports in both years. In Íróttkő Nature Park tourists favoured cycling, hiking and horse riding in the given order, while day trippers in a significantly high proportion favoured horse riding above all in 2004 as well, followed by cycling and hiking. Besides the above mentioned sports there were only few other types of sports characteristic in the Nature Park. Sport activities did not show a wide scale either in Szigetköz, or in the Nature Park.

A considerable gap in the areas sport tourism is the lack of traditional sport competition series, there are no constructed sport institutions or sport facilities that could attract the events. From this respect the Nature Park is ahead by organising mountain bike competition series and the Nature Park Organisation also organises nature discovery tours. Possibly it is due to this fact that while in Szigetköz the number of participants in sport tourism decreased, in Íróttkő Nature Park it increased. The main attractions of the two areas can be seen in *Figure1-Table 4.* in terms of the opinions of the surveyed tourists

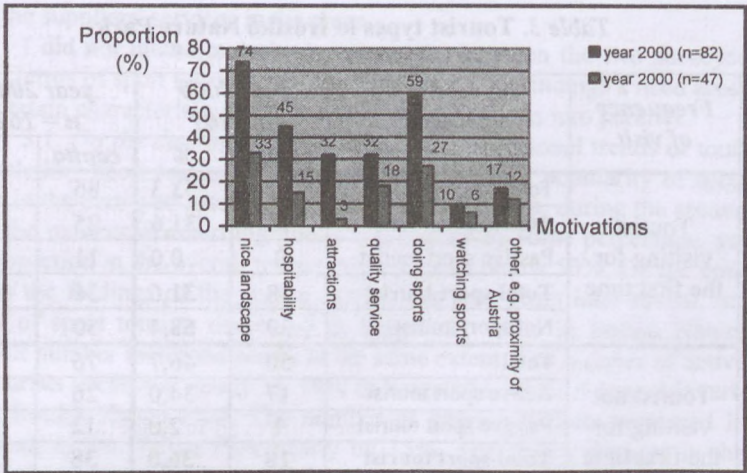


Figure 1. Attractions in Szigetköz amongst returning tourists

Table 4. Components of attractions in Írótkő Nature Park

<i>Attractions</i>	<i>year 2000</i>	<i>year 2004</i>
	<i>n = 50</i>	<i>n = 76</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Nice environment, landscape	88	64,9
Sport facilities	-	36,8
Kind people	12	31,2
Tourist attractions	-	31,2
Good service	-	22,7
Supporting at sport events	-	17,1
Other, e.g. proximity of Burgenland	-	11,8

Sport activities of the day trippers are similar to that of the tourists. However in Szigetköz tourists preferred water sports, while day trippers favoured cycling. In the Nature Park tourist preferred touring in the nature, while day trippers mainly pursued horse riding and cycling. There were no changes in these orders in the two years of the surveys.

In Szigetköz the length of stay of sport tourists were longer (5,0 and 6,1 days) than in the Nature Park (4,9 and 3,7 days). This can evidently

be contributed to the one week long Rajka-Győr river tours. The average age of sport tourists decreased in Szigetköz (from 32,4 to 25,8 years), as well as in Alpokalja (from 34,3 to 25,63 years). Sport-related visitors of both areas can be described, and at the same time summarised, as mainly urban males coming with company to Szigetköz, and with family to the Írott-kő Nature Park. The dominant rate of university education moved towards secondary education among sport tourists, but in both areas and both periods white-collar workers were characteristic. Their financial background could be considered moderate on the average.

3.2. *On the supply side*, services scarcely started to open towards sport tourism, since during the four years sport tourists were welcome with nearly invariable services (Tables 5-6).

Table 5. Services surveyed in Szigetköz

<i>Description</i>	<i>year 2000</i>	<i>year 2004</i>
	<i>n = 36</i>	<i>n = 35</i>
	<i>pc</i>	<i>pc</i>
Accommodation (camping, hotel, etc.)	26	25
Restaurant, catering	17	24
Equestrian services	7	5
Water sports services	6	3
Indoor sport facilities	4	2
Information, program organisation	3	2
Skittles, golf, tennis	-	2
Cycling services	1	-
Fishing, hunting	4	-

Table 6. Services in Írott-kő Nature Park

<i>Services</i>	<i>year 2000</i>	<i>year 2004</i>
	<i>n = 12</i>	<i>n = 11</i>
	<i>frequency</i>	<i>frequency</i>
Accommodation	9	7
Restaurant, catering	4	4
Equestrian services	2	2
Information, program organisation	1	2
Cycling services	4	2
Indoor sport facilities (skittles)	1	1

3.3. *Comparing the findings* with the global trends of sport tourism it can be briefly concluded that the great mega-trends have not manifested so far in the two surveyed areas. The number of sport tourists have not increased considerably, the tourists visiting the destinations did not belong to the more aged generation, the duration of their stay did not decrease, and they did not represent the more solvent social stratum. However it was also valid in Hungary (similarly to the global trends) that the most preferred sport activities were those pursued in the nature. Also, the representatives of sport tourism were urban white-collar males with university degree. With the mountain bike competition extreme sports also represented themselves in the Nature Park.

I believe that the findings of the investigation of sport tourism in Szigetköz and the Nature Park reflect the social definition of sport activities. As neither area possesses considerable infra- and suprastructure, nor significant sport events, and sport-related services are based on the natural environment, they cannot expect a more solvent demand than moderate, thus the attractions of the areas are not able to overreach the borders of the region.

I find it interesting (in addition) to compare the demands of sport tourists with the development plans of the suppliers in terms of sport activities. Although common ideas meet in both areas to a certain degree, in Szigetköz sport tourism decreased, while in Írott-kő Nature Park it increased. I have no data to explain the phenomenon, however I suppose that regardless water sport tourists Szigetköz is more characterised by transfer tourism, while Írott-kő Nature Park is rather a final destination for tourists interested in various sport activities. Suppliers interested in sport tourism services could start a successful business if they provided sport activities demanded by the visitors. For the time being the lack of funds hinders finding a satisfactory meeting point between demand and supply in terms of tourism.

3.4. As to the *possible uses of the findings*, important factors have been revealed by the emerged demands. Namely, that tourists welcome sport activities pursued in the nature and organised or led by sport professionals. That is why we need to educate our sport professionals along this line as well, as their professionalism is already demanded by the suppliers. This is a joint task of both tourism and education in future sport professional training.

3.5. The *statements* derived from the analysis of sport tourism in these two small Hungarian areas naturally *cannot be generalised* to a greater extent, they are valid only in terms of these two areas. Thus the information provided can be useful for the private entities and organisations involved in sport tourism only in these two areas.

Although the number of sport tourists have not increased to the

same extent as in global terms, municipalities and organisations involved in sport tourism must consider the phenomenon, because if they are not prepared for the reception of sport tourists than possible harms caused in the nature can endanger the principle of sustainability and the future of the landscape. A considerable negative factor of both areas that neither provides a definite attractive force overreaching the national borders. However, if we consider the better infrastructure of Csallóköz and Burgenland providing the same sport activities, it is no wonder.

4. Possible uses of the findings

I wish to underline the uses of the findings at three social areas. One is *educational policy*, for which tourists are sending clear and unambiguous messages as they reveal that the presence and help of a sport professional would greatly improve their holiday stay at the destinations. With the help of the sport professionals their stay would be more organised, they would learn new sports activities, and –after the evaluation (and control) of their physical activities – would get useful information on the sport activities of the period of their stay, which way of life they could continue in their home environment. For this reason tourism professionals should be provided with the necessary sport knowledge regarding the new trends in tourism, a higher percentage of aging (or physically defect) tourists and the spread of extreme sports at tourist destinations. The same demand arises on the side of sport professionals as well, who should be provided with tourism knowledge to be able to understand the system of tourism, and to improve quality services on the supply side.

Another usage area of the paper is at the *supplier side of the tourism* system. The „demand list” of tourists in the surveyed areas is a clear message towards the suppliers concerning the favoured sport activities of the tourists coming to the areas, besides the existing services. This arising demand would concern mainly the existing suppliers, nevertheless private persons and non-governmental organisations interested in sport tourism, as well as municipalities could also find useful guides concerning the development directions.

Thirdly, the findings could be used for *regional development programs* at micro-regional or regional level. Primarily the findings analysing the demands of the tourists in connection with the destinations could be of any importance. If the educational policy, the suppliers and the decision makers together could take the tourists’ demands into consideration, then the development of sport tourism would head for the right direction both in terms of economics and tourism.

5. Publications

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Editing activity: Editor of the column „*Utazás, sport, turizmus*” in the journal *Iskolai testnevelés és sport*.

