

# ACCESSIBLE TOURISM IN THE HUNGARIAN-CROATIAN BORDER REGION - PRESENTATION OF THE ACCESSABILITY IN BARANYA AND OSIJEK-BARANJA COUNTIES

## PRISTUPAČNI TURIZAM U MAĐARSKO-HRVATSKOJ POGRANIČNOJ REGIJI - PREDSTAVLJANJE PRISTUPAČNOSTI U BARANJSKOJ I OSJEČKO-BARANJSKOJ ŽUPANIJI

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### SUMMARY

*The central aim of the paper is to introduce the development opportunities of tourism from the perspective of the concept of accessible tourism, examining the key elements that shape the future of accessible tourism through the example of Baranya County (Hungary) and Osijek-Baranja County (Croatian). It is also aimed to foster other research activities related to the field and show a development direction from the perspective of accessible tourism.*

*Providing accessibility is an interdisciplinary science, which develops not only as a research field, but as an industrial and service development practice. Accessible tourism provides touristic products, services and environment which satisfy all members of the population, including those who live with any kind of disabilities, or challenges. Accessibility does not only mean the elimination of physical obstacles, but it is a broad social need for the establishment of equal opportunities, and it is also a potential economic factor of tourism, as the target groups are one of the largest users of the off-season.*

**Key words:** accessible tourism, accessibility, Baranya County, Osijek-Baranja County  
**Ključne riječi:** pristupačni turizam, pristupačnost, Baranjska županija, Osječko-baranjska županija

### INTRODUCTION

One of the most important basic theses of an inclusive and sustainable society is that everyone can be not only a member of society, but also actively involved in it some way, and can enjoy the social, economic, and cultural goods and their benefits. Along the lines of this thesis, this paper tries to give a real picture of the accessibility of tourist attractions and tourist services in Baranya County (Hungary) and Osijek-Baranja County (Croatia). The main goal of the study is to explore accessibility of the attrac-

tions and sites, by comparing the options provided by tourism service providers and the needs of consumers along predefined indicators.

## 1. DIRECTION OF RESEARCH

Before revealing the results of the research, it is necessary to clarify the concept of accessible tourism that the accessibility is a term used in the same meaning as the availability of the tourist attraction or service. Based on current literatures, accessibility should be understood as an attraction that is not only available but also accessible, however this is not the same as physical accessibility.

According to the general definition the barrier-free tourism means that tourist destinations, services and products are equally accessible to everyone including the disabled, the temporarily disabled, the elderly, children, and the multi-generational families (Office of Parliament, 2017). The accessible destination means the implementation of independence, equality and human dignity during the tourist experiences as well (GONDA-RAFFAY, 2020; 5).

Improving the living conditions of people with physical or mental impairment thereby the establishment of accessibility in all sectors is a continuous task as well as various technical or other available solutions and social expectations also boost this.

The development concepts and the various calls for tenders have already direction for this kind of changes as an obligation and in addition, there are more and more relevant regulations in the legal environment. The aim of the National Strategy for Equalization of Opportunities for Person with Disabilities of Croatia is to make Croatian society as sensitive and adapted as possible. This is especially true for tourism development, but it is much more complex and thus more complicated to implement.

According to the European Commission, accessibility in tourism allows and empowers people, particularly those with specific needs, to enjoy and access their tourist experiences and accessibility are an integral part of the sector's sustainability (European Parliament 2015; 82). This means not only social responsibility, but the development of accessibility is also supported by economic arguments. The physical availability, providing exact information, their availability, understanding the special needs of people with disabilities and adapting to them all improve the quality of tourist services, thus their enjoyment and ultimately the quality of life of local communities.

Although European directives play a significant role nowadays, there are no specific directives for tourism, no common policy framework at EU level that would regulate and control tourist services even though that about 15% of the global population, which represents approximately more than one billion people (WHO & the World Bank, 2011), have some kind of disability. The fifth of 40-49 years olds declare themselves to be disabled in Hungary, their proportion increases rapidly over the age of 50 and in the age of group over 60 most people have disability. (Central Statistical Office 2018).

Clearly, it is not possible for everyone to participate in the tourism in some form, but this large segment has significant potential both in terms of business and leisure travel. In addition to the number of people with disabilities, one of the largest target groups for barrier-free tourism is the older age group. In Europe, more than 90 million people are currently over 65 years old, and by 2050, nearly 35% of the population will be senior citizens (Eurostat 2022).

At the same time, seniors – pensioners and older people whose children live independently – are one of the most important demographical groups with greatest buying power (ZSARNOCZKY 2016; 105), and in view of their retired status, they have much more free time throughout the year than the active-age people. These facts findings clearly indicate that the senior group is increasingly becoming one of the driving forces of accessible tourism, and this will have a significant impact on all areas of tourism sector particularly on accessibility.

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

As a result of social expectations and social pressure it is a clear fact that everyone has the right to travel regardless of their own physical limitations, "because enjoying the fullness of life is a right for everyone" (VÉGH 2005; 16).

Tourism therefore plays an important role in improving the quality of life of each individual. (MÁTÉ 2021; 41). In the view of above can be concluded that the right to exist of barrier-free tourism is also out of question, as more and more people with disabilities want to participate in tourism which represents a not insignificant number of tourists from a market point of view (GONDA–RAFFAY 2021; 20). Accessibility is vital for them because ignoring their specific needs might impede them to participate actively in tourism (GONDA, 2021; 1). Tourism should not only be considered from an economic point of view but also a social and cultural phenomenon that fundamentally affects the quality of life of the member of society (FARKAS-RAFFAY 2022; 95). Based on its social justification it is legitimate to declare that the results from the accessibility will benefit the entire society (ZSARNÓCZKY – ZSARNÓCZKY-DULHÁZI, 2019; 87). Based on expert opinion on accessibility, in the field of travel in the traditional sense and applied solution the basic principle must be enforced that people with disabilities are just as many participants in travel as the humans without disabilities (GONDA-RAFFAY 2021; 35). Based on the principle of equal access can be clearly stated that in addition to the accessibility of the necessary daily activities, disabled people also want to travel just like everyone else and they need but also right to be able to participate in the “happy journey” in tourism itself (GONDA-RAFFAY 2021; 35), because traveling basically makes the traveller happy. To reach this happy “I” state, during the journey, in his own being, in the world of his own disability (FARKAS et.al 2022; 320), must have experiences that make him happiness accessible. In the case of people with disabilities it is particularly important that the tourism contributes to obtaining the full experience and improving the quality of life thereby compensating for their existing difficulties (FARKAS et al. 2022; 321). Among other benefits, it is necessary to invest in tourist infrastructure so that the people with disabilities can equally enjoy all activities in the destination (GREGORIC ET AL. 2019, 906), and requires the acceptance of the new paradigm of accessibility (FARKAS et al. 2022, 3766).

The target group of inclusive tourism is any person with a temporary or permanent form of disability (GONDOS 2019; 40), but in addition to the group of persons with disabilities, there are elderly people, foreigners, local residents and all persons who can be classified here due to some or even temporary life situation (children, people arrived with strollers, post- accident conditions, people with allergies) thus everyone equally involved in the creation, development and participation in accessible tourism (GONDOS 2019; 69). All persons must be treated with equal respect (POKÓ 2022, 210).

Some of the latest tourism trends can be linked to social and demographic changes (CSAPÓ–TÖRŐCSIK 2020; 6), in which an exponential increase in the share of seniors can be observed. The older age group also has different expectations, thus the market segment of those looking for accessibility is not seen as a homogenous group since people have different special demands on services depending on the type and extent of their psychological limitations, disabilities, or their age (GONDA–RAFFAY 2020; 155). It can be concluded that barrier-free tourism is not only a solution for people with disabilities, creating the conditions of this ensures equal opportunities for everyone. There are numerous examples of how the lack of accessible public transport options can be a barrier in the tourism not only for disabled people (VISKOVIĆ-KOMAC 2021, 99). In some elements of the needs of disabled and senior as a target groups, significant differences can be found compared to the characteristics measured in the general population sample (RAFFAY-GONDA 2020; 3), and on further different empirical research has become clear that people with disabilities face various problems during their travels.

In view of this, ignoring the needs of this target group will result in making it impossible for people with disabilities to travel or holiday (ERNSZT et al. 2019; 78), thus many people prefer the option of “non travelling” a stay-away form, during which the person does not participate in the trip for a various reason. People with disabilities or physical limitations can be considered classic dropouts as most of them do not participate in the travel due to the lack of opportunities (TÖRŐCSIK–CSAPÓ 2018; 881).

Based on the theories outlined above, the need to make physical and online spaces accessible is unquestionable but this must go beyond the fulfilment of needs of disabled people (ANGLER 2021; 80). The literature agrees that barrier-free accessibility goes beyond the physical accessibility, it means creating necessary conditions to ensure a high level of experiences, including the provision of tourist attractions, leisure activities and other services (RAFFAY-DANYI - ERNSZT 2021; 8).

From this point of view, we agree that during the travelling the traveller existence includes the need for accessibility with all its extensions, that is overall, technical accessibility can be seen as an ontological factor (FARKAS et al. 2023; 5). Few domestic publications deal with accessibility of the supply side and with motivation of disabled people to choose accommodation (DUDÁS et al. 2020; 2), even though significant number of people with reduced mobility are prevented by their disability from visiting a tourist attraction, gaining an experience, or accessing a tourist services which proportion is even higher in the case of visual disability.

The tourism surveys and studies dealing with accessibility clearly emphasize the importance of accessible tourism which is not only the ethical duty of the profession but also an economic interest because travellers with disabilities have serious market potential (GONDA 2021; 845).

Complex and regional thinking is a primary requirement in the 21st century when we are talking about tourism development (SPIEGLER-GONDA 2012). Regardless of the health status of travellers, tourism must follow world trends in supply and demand to meet the needs of all tourists (GREGORIC ET AL. 2019).

According to our hypothesis formulated after the assessment of literature, destination areas and accommodations neither in Hungary, nor in Croatia are not fully or adequately prepared to welcome people with disabilities, accordingly, disability prevents the implementation of travel plans and experiences (ERNSZT et al. 2019; 81), but there is a clear improvement in accessibility and equal availability (GONDA-RAFFAY 2021; 36).

### 3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

During the survey, the interpretation of accessibility encompassed a broader aspect than the concept of accessibility included in legislation. From the point of view of tourism, the target group can be all persons who do not necessarily belong to the scope defined by law (Act No. 26 of 1998 on the Rights and Ensuring the Equal Opportunities of People with Disabilities § 4. (a)) but they have special needs when approaching tourist sites for any reasons (e.g. strollers) and even temporarily.

The needs of several target groups appeared on the evaluation sheets, such as different groups of people with disabilities (mobility-impaired, hearing-impaired, visually impaired, people with mental illness) and persons with limited ability to access the attractions (elderly people with limited mobility, people temporary limited mobility, families with strollers).

Considering every aspect of the attractions, a multi-stage evaluation system was developed where the main analysis units were the following:

- pre-visit information
- on-site information
- accessible external area
- approach routes and parking lot
- circulation within the building
- reception
- other facilities

The surveys of the accessibility of tourist attractions in Baranya County and Osijek-Baranja County were carried out in the framework of the INTERREG V-A Hungary-Croatia Cross-border Cooperation Programme with identification number HUHR/1901/3.1.1/0102 in relation to 36 priority tourist locations and 102 tourist accommodations and services in Hungary side and 100 touristic sites in Croatian side. These latter locations were classified 10 different units depending on their functions.

#### 3.1 Research of tourist attractions in the Hungarian border region (Research No.1)

To test the hypothesis of the research, qualitative research was conducted in the case of 36 tourist attractions, which based on international practice, applied a methodology developed by defining unique aspect and scalability. To perform the evaluation, a structured assessment sheet that typical of quantitative research was elaborated.

The following aspects were considered when compiling the list of affected tourist sites.

- In term of tourism, prominent locations were selected which visited by significant number of tourists.
- Different types of locations with different attractions were included in the survey.
- The locations are geographically scattered within Baranya County
- The built tourist attractions and buildings come from several architectural periods.

The survey was taking place at pre-arranged terminus, in the form of on-site inspections where in addition to visiting the locations, various electronic information interfaces, information sources, web-sites, downloadable smartphone applications, and information materials available at the locations were also the subject of the assessment. The complex interpretation of accessibility was a particularly important aspect when compiling the content of the evaluation sheet. If the accessibility is met for only one element of any area, even if this means a priority solution – as it happens at several locations – then the accessibility of these services, experiences and attractions is not available in the overall assessment. Thanks to the legislative changing, the accessibility of parking lots and entrances has already been implemented, access to the locations can be solved in most places but the difficulties of moving inside the buildings or the lack of available interactive content prevent the most important element, the gaining of experiences at tourist locations.

During the analysis of accessibility, it had to consider that possibility of developments is limited or only partially possible for most of the tourist sites, due to the listed nature of the buildings or the locations of the attractions thus in some cases, the “non relevant” remark were included in the evaluation and the various features were considered in the scoring.

In the Hungarian side the evaluation method was two stages. The facts and data discovered during the on-site inspection were measured on a five-point scale, where lowest value is when the evaluation criteria are not met at all, and the highest point is when they are met so the accessibility is achieved. The sub-criterion defined in Table 1. have different weights to show the importance of the given analysis unit.

**Table 1:** Sub-criterions

Name of main criterion	Sub criterion with the greatest wight within the main criterion	Sub-criterion weight
Pre-visit information	The website is accessible according to the guidelines of W3C consortium	50%
On-site information	The information includes the following: inscriptions, pictograms/ figures, maps, Braille inscriptions, audio-guides (e.g. fixed, mobile application, device), video guide, hearing aids, easy-to-read printed information	40%
Accessible external area	There are clearly marked routes in the area of attraction, lines and rails to guide people with mobility and vision impairments	20%
Approach routes and parking lot	Access to the facility by public transport: accessibility of transport and station, accessibility of the road from the station to the attraction and availability of public transport, information on the accessibility of public transport on the website of the public service providers and the attraction, availability of information about reaching the attraction in accessible form at station, accessibility of pedestrian crossing	20%
Circulation within the building	Barrier-free horizontal and vertical circulation within the building	10% of all sub-criterion
Reception	the reception is a well-lit area that is close to the entrance and barrier-free	50%
Other facilities	The design, lighting, height and contrast of the rooms ensure the safe and comfortable access for people with mobility, vision and hearing impairments	30%

**Source:** Edited by the authors

### 3.1.1 Results of research No.1

Based on the data in Table 2, which summarize the presentation of the results of the survey can be determined which areas require intervention, thereby defining the directions for development. In addition, from the results of the survey can major conclusions can be drawn regarding to accessibility of the county’s most significant tourist destinations.

The aggregated results have distorting effect because in the case of several locations, attractions, and services it is not possible to fulfil the accessibility criterion due to their location or characteristics, because the tourist location itself would be a victim of the harmful consequences created by humans. Examples to support this are the stalactite cave of Abaliget or the tufa cave of Tettye, where touching the walls would result in the destruction of the natural heritage or making the Szársomlyó (hiking route) barrier-free would endanger the unique wildlife at the European level. Accordingly, it is not recommended to strive for maximum results in the case of aggregated values.

### 3.2. Research of accommodation and service providers in the Hungarian border region (Research No.2)

In the area of accessible tourism, 102 services – accommodation, restaurants, other tourist institutions – were included in the quantitative research, using an online questionnaire. Based on the results of the survey (Figure 2) only 21% of the participating organizations provide online information about the accessibility of the given facilities, in the case of other service providers, there is no way to find information online. Accessible online presence is even rarer, more than 90% of respondents do not have an accessible website. The further questions related to accessibility, parking, and access to the building, based on which half of the providers are accessible from this point of view. The same ration applies to the access of rooms and movement within the building. Despite this, only 18% have barrier-free rooms, although given the wide range of service providers participating in the survey, this question was not relevant for the third of the respondents.

#### 3.2.1. Results of research No.2

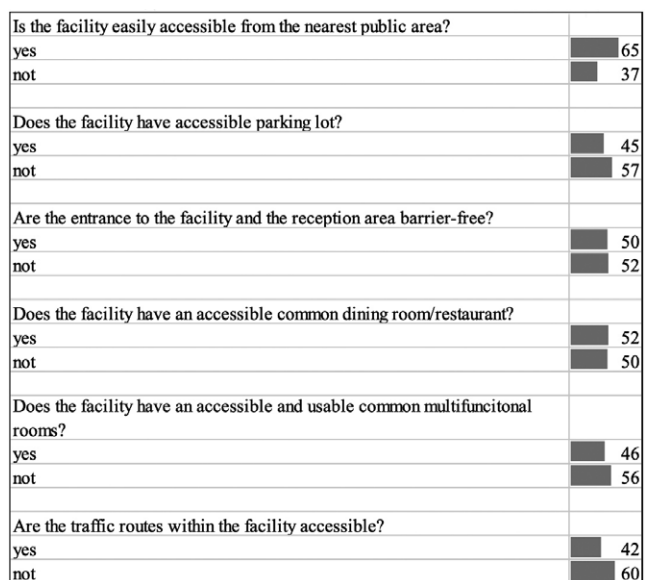
The service providers of the region are unable on their own to create the supply of accommodations that can meet the demand (MARTON ET AL. 2021) and this characterizes the whole region.

Nearly 80% of those who filled out the questionnaire are not at all prepared to welcome either hearing-impaired or visually impaired guests. Furthermore, only 40% of service providers consider it important and prepared themselves to welcome guests with respiratory difficulties or allergies. In addition, a significant number of service providers do not have necessary aids for persons with disabilities. There is similar situation related to the level of preparedness of the employees, most of them stated that they did not

**Table 2:** The average results of the survey by criteria

Name of criteria	The average of the evaluation
Pre-visit information	2,08
On-site information	2,92
Accessible external area	2,97
Approach routes and parking lot	3,44
Circulation within the building	3
Reception	2,72
Other facilities	2,82

**Source:** Edited by the authors



**Figure 2:** Presentation of the results of survey, N=102

**Source:** Edited by the authors

have capacity to it and neither the employees were not prepared to welcome guests with disabilities nor to provide them with information. In the case of limited conditions associated with old age, less than half of the respondents are able to welcome such guests. Despite the preliminary hypotheses, only the 63% of the service providers are able to welcome children.

As a result of the survey can be concluded that there are significant deficiencies in terms of accessibility of tourist services, but to a different extent for each aspect and element. Despite the legal obligations, the available application resources, subsidies and the development intention, most locations are characterised by the shortcomings and difficulties.

### 3.3 Research of tourist attractions, service providers and accommodations in the Croatian border area (Research No.3)

The method used the same criteria as in Hungary, but the implementation was different. During a comprehensive analysis of the accessibility of accommodations and attractions in the Osijek-Baranja County in Croatia, one hundred tourist sites were included in 28 settlements, including larger and medium-sized cities, as well as in more isolated rural areas. Almost all selected objects are being located up to 50 kilometres in diameter from Osijek, as the cultural and economic centre of the Osijek-Baranja County. Depending on their activities, the hundred tourist units were classified into ten groups: municipal sites (12 pcs), sacred sites (3 pcs), cultural heritage (14 pcs), natural heritage (6), eco-tourism centres/estates (3), wineries and charcuteries (14 pcs), private accommodation (14 pcs), village guest-houses/peasant households (10 pcs), hotels (12 pcs), restaurants and bars (12 pcs).

The evaluation included three interdependent analysis units, a categorization form, an evaluation sheet, and a summary document. First, the tourist sites were categorized as mentioned above, then during a personal evaluation, the sites were given scores based on 16 key accessibility criteria (table 3), which were described on an evaluation sheet. Putting these evaluation sheets into a document with textually evaluation created the individual evaluation of tourist attractions.

**Table 3:** Predefined criteria

All guests/visitors have access to all relevant online and on-site information	Guests/visitors with hearing impairment have access to trained staff and/or required equipment
All guests/visitors have public road access to the location	Guests/visitors with visual impairment have access to tactile surfaces, trained staff and/or required equipment
There is an accessible/easily accessed car park with an access path to/from the location	Guests/visitors with intellectual disabilities have access to trained staff and/or additional and adapted content
All guests/visitors have access to the entrance and the reception area of the location	Guests/visitors with allergies have access to trained staff and adapted services
All guests/visitors have access to the dining room and/or the bar	There is an accessible bedroom with required equipment and standard accessibility features
There is an accessible and functional communal toilet on/near the location	There is a barrier-free bathroom with required equipment and standard accessibility features
All guests/visitors have access to common areas and/or multifunctional rooms	All guests/visitors have access to assistive equipment and/or standard accessibility features
Access routes are clear and functional and spatial communication is barrier-free	Staff has experience with people with disabilities and/or there is commitment to accessibility improvements

**Source:** Edited by the authors

The survey cannot be clearly interpreted in the same way in each category because it is not possible to define same degree of accessibility in the case of a service with accommodation as, for example, in the case of an open space, where no special service needs to be provided, only the accessibility of the area. Some attractions can meet fewer criteria than others and therefore receive less points. Accordingly, the analysis has been based on the six scales listed below, with the smallest incorporating just nine out of the total 16 criteria (in that case, the attraction can only 9 criteria) and the largest covering them all (attraction fulfils 16 out of 16). Each criteria receives point, that depends on the quality of accessibility

and is divided into five different colours stars, where the red star worth one point, orange two, yellow three, blue four and green five points. Theoretically, the number of points achieved by an object within the smallest scale is nine, if each criteria receives 1 point ( $9*1=9$ ), and the maximum number of points within this scale is 45, if each criteria receives 5 points ( $9*5=45$ ). On the largest scale, a minimum point is 16 ( $16\text{ criteria}*1\text{ point}=16$ ), while the absolute maximum of points is 80 ( $16*5=80$ ). The scores in the scales were determined proportionally as a grading method, so if an attraction on a Scale 1 receives a total of 25 points, this place is rated with a yellow star. Although these proportional scales range from 45 to 80, it is important to bear in mind that the collected points always follow the same scoring pattern, as presented below.

Scale 1 (9 criteria/16)	Scale 2 (12 criteria /16)	Scale 3 (13 criteria /16)
9-15= ★★★★★	12-18= ★★★★★	13-19= ★★★★★
16-24= ★★★★★	19-30= ★★★★★	20-32= ★★★★★
25-33= ★★★★★	34-42= ★★★★★	33-45= ★★★★★
34-39= ★★★★★	43-51= ★★★★★	46-55= ★★★★★
40-45= ★★★★★	52-60= ★★★★★	56-65= ★★★★★
Scale 4 (14criteria /16)	Scale 5 (15 criteria /16)	Scale 6 (16 criteria /16)
14-20= ★★★★★	15-21= ★★★★★	16-22= ★★★★★
21-34= ★★★★★	22-36= ★★★★★	23-38= ★★★★★
35-48= ★★★★★	37-51= ★★★★★	39-54= ★★★★★
49-59= ★★★★★	53-63= ★★★★★	55-67= ★★★★★
60-70= ★★★★★	64-75= ★★★★★	68-80= ★★★★★

**Table 4:** Different scales for evaluation sheet

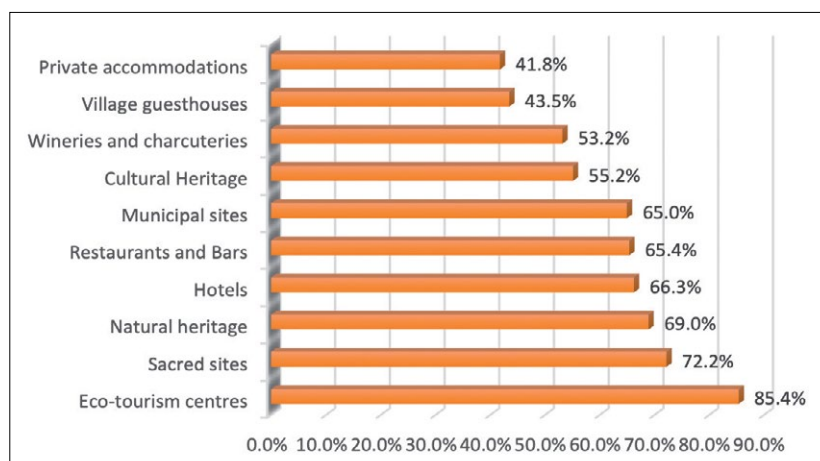
**Source:** Edited by the authors

The 1-5 scoring has limitations, as two attractions can be rated with blue stars, but since they are not in the same scale, their scores do not match. Despite the apparent contradictions of the evaluation, they provide adequate information about the availability of various attractions. After the evaluating the tourist locations, we summarized them in a table, giving the scores and the grades.

### 3.3.1 Results of research No.3

Based on the evaluations, 4 locations were rated red colours (one stars), 32 locations were orange (two stars), 35 locations were yellow (3 stars), 24 locations were blue (four stars) and 5 locations were green (five stars). In addition, out of the absolute 6.845 points, the locations scored 3.922 points, giving an average score of 39,22 points and a success rate of 57,30%, which corresponds to the three stars value.

According to the types of locations, the best values were achieved by the eco-tourism centres, and the worst by private accommodations. Ranking of locations are the following: 1. eco-tourism centres/



**Figure 1:** Average success rate in Croatian

**Source:** Edited by the author



estates (85,42%), 2. Sacred sites (72,22%), 3. natural heritage (68,95%), 4. hotels (66,28%), 5. restaurants and bars (65,44%), 6. municipal sites (65,00%), cultural heritage (55,15%), wineries and charcuteries (53,19%), village guesthouses/peasant households (43,50%), private accommodation (41,80%).

It can be concluded that below the four-star ratings there are accessibility problems that require interventions and development. Therefore, accessibility development is necessary for a total of 71 attractions/places out of 100. The biggest shortcomings can be found in the case of private accommodations, village guesthouses, wineries, and cultural heritages. The eco-tourism centres, sacred sites, natural heritages and hotels are the most accessible touristic locations.

### 3.4 General assessment and suggestions

The evaluation of the results showed several shortcomings that can serve as the basis for the further analysis and research:

#### *Complex, lack of a holistic approach*

The most important basic condition of the accessibility is the application of a complex, comprehensive approach which enables the expansion of accessibility to as many areas as possible and the introduction of the best solutions to meet the needs of different target groups. The complex, comprehensive approach is the basis of the future developments, so that these aspects are incorporated and continuously applied in the longer term. The survey shows that the accessible tourism typically and primarily means physical accessibility and the complex approach exists in the case of few tourist attractions, in most cases the emphasis is on a few of the different aspects, primarily, as mentioned above, the accessibility of external and the circulation within the building.

#### *Deficiencies in the pre-visit information and orientation opportunities*

Assessing the orientation options, the assessment of websites was the most emphasized element, considering that this platform is the most suitable for accessibility and the recommendations also apply to it. After evaluating the results, it can be concluded that although accessibility data can be found in most places, they are implemented at different levels and quality by the service providers, and most of them do not use barrier-free solutions at all or only to a minimal extent (e.g. high-contrast resolution).

#### *Deficiencies related to physical accessibility*

Accessibility in accordance with the basic regulations can be found in basically all locations but these are localized developments that do not contribute to the provision of tourist services. Access to the locations or to the locations itself is resolved but the accessibility of the entire tourist site has not been resolved, thus the visitor is not able to get the tourist experiences.

#### *Deficiencies related to the needs of the blind and visually impaired as a target group*

Based on the results of the survey can be concluded that the accessibility for the visually impaired is very poor and in the case of many attractions it is completely absent.

## 4. CONCLUSION

The changes in our society, the changing needs, the changing economic and cultural environment present new challenges to the tourism industry. The accessible tourism, the principle of tourism for everyone, also contains many opportunities which are worth focusing on not only due to the social pressure but economic interest as well. The service provider which implements development that improve accessibility will gain financial advantages as well as reputation that can be interpret as a marketing tool in the market.

Analysis summarizing the need of people with disabilities or the elderly and conveying the opinion of this target group are relatively new research area in the field of tourism, which basically perform analyses based on the needs of the demand side and give suggestions. This survey examines the existing conditions, possibilities, and various solutions in the target area of the tourist sites of Baranya County and Osijek-Baranja County on the supply side of tourism.

In the generic sense, the tourist attractions comply with the legal requirements, the necessary physical accessibility has been implemented almost everywhere, nevertheless most locations cannot be considered fully accessible.

Some locations performed outstandingly compared to the others, which can be interpreted as best practices. Among these, there are those where good solutions are applied even their limited conditions, which indicates that barrier-free tourism is an option available to everyone at the location of most tourist experiences. Summarizing can be concluded that there is a clear trend towards the accessibility, but there is no awareness behind it, especially for the people with sensory disabilities. Although there is a clear change on the part of service providers, there is no significant progress in the absence of adequate training and know-how. Many service providers are open to the development of accessibility and welcome of people with disabilities, but the accessible tourism strategy must be consciously developed and applied, otherwise there will only notable exceptions in this area.

From the results and experiences of the research, that proposals can be made that can serve as a basis for further development directions:

First, it would be necessary to develop and introduce methodological frameworks. Most of these do not mean high costs and in many cases the lack of financial resources is not the most relevant obstacles.

The complex, holistic approach has significant relevance from the point of view of development of accessible tourism because if this type of development is only implemented in certain areas, good initiatives and good practices will be ineffective without achieving substantial improvements.

To improve the accessibility, it is essential to be aware of different needs of people and how to meet those needs.

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**SAŽETAK**

Glavni je cilj rada predstaviti razvojne mogućnosti turizma iz perspektive koncepta pristupačnog turizma, ispitujući ključne elemente koji oblikuju budućnost pristupačnog turizma kroz primjer Baranjske županije (Mađarska) i Osječko-baranjske županije (Hrvatska). Također je cilj potaknuti druga istraživanja vezana uz ovo područje i pokazati smjer razvoja iz perspektive pristupačnog turizma. Omogućavanje pristupačnosti je interdisciplinarna znanost koja se razvija ne samo kao istraživačko područje, već i kao industrijska i uslužna razvojna praksa. Pristupačni turizam pruža turističke proizvode, usluge i okruženje koje zadovoljava sve ljude, uključujući one koji žive s bilo kojom vrstom invaliditeta ili posebnih potreba. Pristupačnost ne znači samo uklanjanje fizičkih prepreka, nego je to široka društvena potreba za uspostavljanjem jednakih mogućnosti, a također je i potencijalni ekonomski čimbenik turizma jer su ciljane skupine jedni od najvećih korisnika izvan sezone.