

LIGHTHOUSES AS A PART OF TOURIST OFFER BEING SPECIFIC TOURIST DESTINATION

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Abstract:

This paper presents Croatian lighthouses as a unique tourist category on Croatian and European tourist market and its contribution to Croatian tourist offer in general

JEL classification: I83

Keywords: lighthouse, tourist offer

1. INTRODUCTION

Lighthouses on Croatian part of the Adriatic are beautiful stone buildings inherited from Austrian – Hungarian monarchy. Lighthouses are objects that serve for navigation at sea. They emit lights for orientation and safeness of sailing, especially at night and in severe weather conditions. Lighthouses are usually built on hardly accessible solitude Adriatic places exposed to extreme influences of sea and wind. Their longevity should have been assured by thick white stone walls and they should have had enough space to put up numerous crew.

Lights that were used by ancient sailors for the purpose of warning on dangerous reefs were obtained from wood and from the 16th century from coal. Two centuries later, coal was replaced by gas and later on by electricity. Through further development of technology, at the end of 90ies of the last century lighthouses became automatically operated and abandoned by their crew. Many of them became ruined through years.

The lack of financial means for maintaining of lighthouses that are fully or partially abandoned led to an idea to incorporate them into tourist offer by building of apartments. Commercialization of such facilities will make profit and earn financial means necessary for their maintenance. Furthermore, exploitation of lighthouses through tourist activity contributes to their

protection and revitalization. Their involvement in tourist offer would not obstruct their primary role in assuring the safety of sailing.

This paper presents Croatian lighthouses as a unique tourist category on Croatian and European tourist market and its contribution to Croatian tourist offer in general. This activity is carried out by the company Plovput Ltd. owned by the Republic of Croatia. This company is also maintaining waterways on the eastern side of the Adriatic Sea.

Plovput Ltd. is the first one to realize the meaning of marketing for the non-profit institutions, thus applying and developing marketing methods from the profit sector domain (Non-profit sector refers to organizations that in their primary activity do not make profit, working in the area that cannot be always organized in a commercial way. If making profit, such organizations do not distribute it. They have their own management board. This term usually refers to organizations that provide different public services. Non-profit making is in relation to privileged taxation status and receiving donations as tax benefits). Marketing methods for promotion of Adriatic lighthouses in the function of sustainable tourism (Definition from Travis and Ceballos-Lascurain: Održivi turizam, 1993) help maintain protected nature resources and cultural heritage.

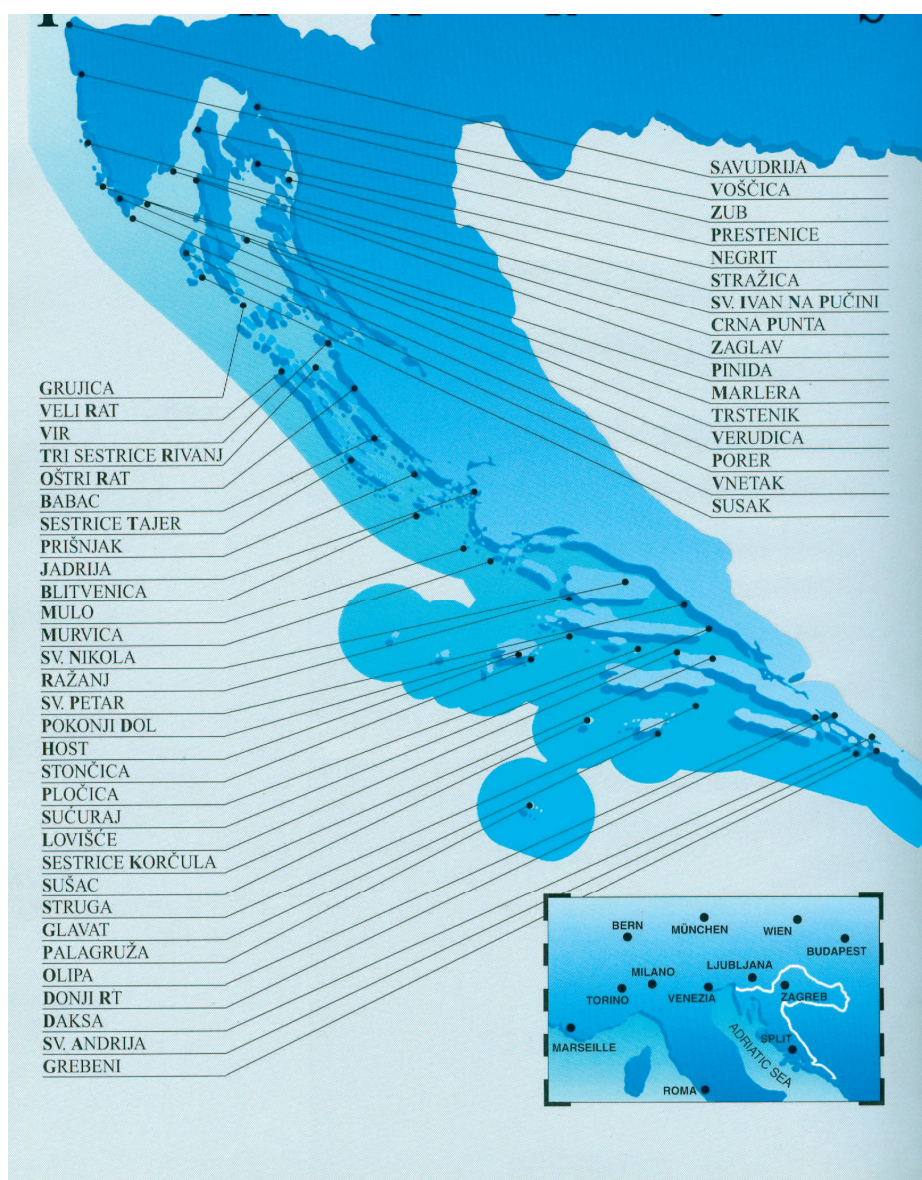
2. HISTORICAL AND GEOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF CROATIAN LIGHTHOUSES

Eastern Mediterranean is a cradle of Western civilization. Phoenicians as the first sailors and merchants were predecessors of Greek and Roman civilizations. Fire lit at harbor gates, on hills and similar elevated places was serving as orientation for navigators. The first and most known lighthouse is Pharos, the one of seven miracle of the world. It was the highest building of its time which light could be seen from a distance of up to 50 km from the Alexandrian coast.

In Antique times, Greeks and Romans built lighthouses on Eastern Adriatic coast, i.e. on the islands of Hvar and Vis, on the Marjan peninsula and on the entry into the Salona harbor, all of which were necessary if considering developed trade and sailing on these ways.

In the Middle Ages, so called „church lights” served as lighthouses and sailing navigation and were maintained by monks. These lights were lit usually on church towers situated on the coast. They were dedicated mostly to St. Nicolas, a patron saint of sailors.

In the period from 1805-1918, all navigation positions relevant for navigation safety were marked by some sort of sea indicators, which were serving for sea traffic in times of the Austrian Hungarian monarchy. The idea to build lighthouses on the Adriatic Sea originated from the state minister, count Metternich. The first lighthouse was constructed in 1818 at the Southern-Western point of the Croatian coast, the Savudrija cape. In the following eighty years there were 65 lighthouses built on islands and capes. During the 2nd World War many lighthouses were damaged or destroyed and many housekeeping families were killed or disappeared. Nowadays there are 48 operating lighthouses in the Republic of Croatia, as shown on the following picture: **Savudrija** (at the Savudrija cape), **Zub** (between Novigrad and Poreč), **St. John on the open sea** (on the island in front of Rovinj), **Pinida** (the island of Veli Brijun), **Verudica** (Pula), **Poror** (on the cliff near Premantura), **Marlera** (between Medulin and Ližnjan), **Crna Punta** (near Rabac), **Susak** (on the island of Susak), **Vnetak** (on the island of Unije), **Zaglav** (small island in the middle of the Western side of the island of Cres), **Prestenice** (island of Cres), **Oštro-Kraljevica** (cape Oštro), **Vošćica** (the North of the island of Krk), **Negrit** (the southern side of the island of Krk), **Stražica** (the island of Prvić), **Trstenik** (on the same named island), **Grujica** (on the same named island), **Veli rat** (Dugi otok), **Vir** (on the same named island), **Tri sestrice** (Rivanj), **Oštri rat** (Punta mika), **Sestrice Tajer** (Kornati), **Babac** (on the same named island), **Prišnjak** (small island near Murter), **Jadrija** (Šibenik), **Blitvenica** (on the same named island), **Mulo** (on the cliff near Rogoznica/Šibenik), **Murvica** (on the same named island), **Ražanj** (on the island of Brač), **Pokonji dol** (on the same named island near Hvar), **Stončica** (the island of Vis), **Host** (on the same named island at the entry into the harbor of Vis), **St. Peter** (Makarska), **St. Nicolas** (Pučišća on the island of Brač), **Sućuraj** (the island of Hvar), **Lovišće** (Pelješac), **Pločica** (on the same named island near the island of Korčula), **Sušac** (on the same named island), **Palagruža** (on the same named island), **Struga** (the island of Lastovo), **Glavat** (on the same named island in the Lastovo channel), **Sestrice Korčula** (Eastern of Korčule), **Olipa** (on the same named island within the Elaphiti islands), **Donji Rt** (Slano), **Daksa** (on the same named island at the entry into the harbor of Gruž), **Grebeni** (same named cliff near Dubrovnik) and **St. Andreas** (on the same named island). All 48 lighthouses have an area of 10.398 sq.m., of which 83% is a living area and 17% refers to by-side facilities.



3. THE PROJECT „STONE LIGHTS”

Plovput Ltd. Split is a commercial company owned by the Republic of Croatia that takes care of waterways of inner sea and territorial sea within the Republic of Croatia, builds and maintains facilities needed for navigation safety, among which there are lighthouses as well. (Plovput Ltd. works on principles of social responsibility of corporate sector: responsibility of corporate sector towards their employees, stakeholders and owners, management boards, consumers and suppliers, natural environment, communities in which they carry out their activity or sale their services on the US market are usually called corporate philanthropy; in British tradition it is described by the term corporate citizenship, while in the European context the common term is corporate social responsibility. Although there are slight differences in these terms, they are used synonymously.)

From Northern to Southern part of the Adriatic there are scattered lighthouses with massive towers and large stone buildings. Since they were built in the 19th century, lighthouses were maintained by housekeeping families. Men took care of technical craftwork and women cleaned the house and maintained the environment. By becoming automatically operated in the 90's of the last century, the need for housekeeping families became reduced, so lighthouses lost their housing purpose.

Although lighthouses are cultural and historical monuments, the state did not allocate means for their maintenance, so Plovput Ltd. took over the management of the lighthouses. They started a project called „Stone Lights”, based on positive experiences in lighthouse maintenance, integrating history, ecology and tourism. The project intention was to commercialize lighthouses and assure means for their maintenance and restoration. In contemporary time of noise and stress, holiday in a lighthouse provides a unique experience of sun, sea, solitude and peace, which is impossible to have in an everyday life. (<http://www.poslovna-znanja.hr/default.aspx?id=27>)

It was necessary to determine potentials of commercial exploitation based on market arguments, and taking into consideration the size, building conditions, accommodation capacities, position and attractiveness of the building, necessary investments, investment cost benefit, etc. After having completed the analysis, the company started to include lighthouses in their tourist offer. Up to present, they are offering accommodation in 12 lighthouses: Savudrija, Rt Zub, St. John, Porer, Veli rat, Prišnjak, St. Peter, Pločica, Struga, Sušac, Palagruža i St. Andreas, which have a total of 21 apartments. The intention is to extend the offer through inclusion of even more lighthouses. In 2009 all lighthouses are rated 3-star, except for the lighthouses Veli rat and St. Peter that have 2 stars.

Pre-season lasts from May 30 – July 5, full season lasts from July 05 – August 30, and post-season lasts from August 30 – September 20. Prices depend on the season period. Accommodation can be booked for a minimum of one week in the season period, while in other times of the year it can be booked for a minimum of three days (except for Palagruža and Sušac). The price for lighthouse rent includes accommodation in an apartment and an extra accommodation in case a transfer to the lighthouse is not possible due to some unforeseen events. Groceries should be provided by guests themselves. Rent of a boat or organization of excursions can be arranged with a lighthouse keeper at extra charge (at the lighthouses St. John, Veli rat, Sušac, Palagruža, Struga) or with persons in charge for transfer (Porer, Pločica, Prišnjak). Transfer to a lighthouse on the island of Palagruža is provided by Plovput Ltd., while to other lighthouses it is provided by other companies or persons. All lighthouses are connected with a network of mobile phone signals.

4. MARKETING OF THE LIGHTHOUSE TOURIST OFFER

The Adriatic Sea is an authentic civilization cradle from 4000 b.C. to date. It is one of the bluest and the clearest seas in the world. It is also a very warm sea with average temperature of 15 °C in the winter period, and of 22-27 °C in summer. Average air temperature in the Adriatic region is 17 °C, there are 2600 sunny hours on average per year. Croatian Adriatic region is one of the most cloudless parts in Europe. Summer periods are especially pleasant as daily air temperature does not exceed 33°C because of mistral wind. Winter periods are clam and slightly rainy with moist south wind, Sirocco, which blows from South-West and Bora, which is dry and cold wind from North-East.

Climatic and culturological characteristics of Eastern part of the Adriatic are offering great conditions for tourism development. Having in mind all positive facts of the region, the project “Stone Lights” was easily promoted as a specific tourist offer. Promotion intensity was gradually reduced to become publicized only on company’s web pages, as well as on web pages of some tourist agencies that are offering arrangements for holidays on lighthouses. Promotion is also organized through some tourist fairs. Competitiveness is not very strong, as lighthouses as a part of tourist offer are present only in Great Britain and in the Netherlands that have cold seas, thus offering only solitude on lighthouses with exception of sun and sea experience.

There is a clear need to exploit lighthouses through more aggressive marketing activity. However, there is a defensive strategy, as only a small number of lighthouses offers tourist accommodation and this capacity cannot be increased until ownership relations with the Republic of Croatia are not resolved. Related to the promotion of lighthouses in tourism, it should be emphasized that they are attractive in the summer season, however in the post-season period and in

winter promotion should be directed towards potential tourists from Northern Europe, especially yachtsmen and anglers.

Although lighthouses involved in the tourist offer differ in their attractiveness, size, number of apartments, vicinity of tourist destinations and traffic infrastructure, in a marketing sense it is necessary to differentiate the offer (Kotler et al;2006,624) with respect to facilities that are offered to tourists. This is the way to strengthen promotion of lighthouses for tourism purposes, as lighthouses are grouped on a tourist market and offered as such to specific tourist categories. Lighthouses are divided into three groups:

1) Lighthouses at the open sea are located on far-away islands and cliffs, providing solitude and peace to modern Robinsons. While situated on such islands, the dream of having your own island becomes true. Tourists enjoy sea, fishing, diving, exploring the sea world, etc. Lighthouses are usually rented by guests that are aware of wildness charms.

The following lighthouses are offered to tourists:

- St. John on the open sea
- Porer
- Sušac
- Palagruža
- Pločica
- Prišnjak

Palagruža and Sušac can be pointed out as being the most attractive in this group.

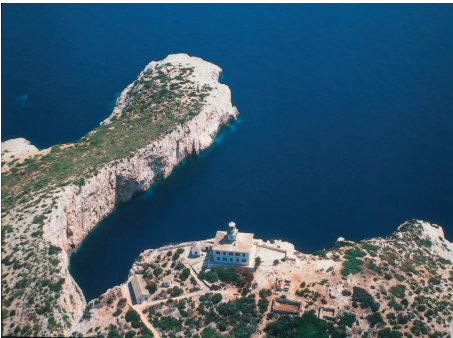
Palagruža



The most distant Croatian island Palagruža is located in the middle of the Adriatic Sea, between Croatian and Italian coast. It is 52 km away from the Italian coast. Palagruža is rich in historical heritage, flora and fauna species. It is situated 68 NM to the south of Split and 26 NM of the island of Lastovo. The island is 1400 m long, 300 m wide, and 90 m high. The lighthouse was built in 1875 on the top of the island. It consists of one-store building with a lighthouse tower in the middle of the building reaching 109.70 m above sea level. There are two paths leading

up to the lighthouse. It houses meteorological station because of its specific climatic conditions.

Sušac



The lighthouse is built on the southern side of the same-named uninhabited island of 6 sq.km, 13 NM to the west of the island of Lastovo, and 23 NM of the island of Hvar. The southern side of the island is extremely steep and rocky, while the northern side is shallow. The lighthouse is a one-store stone building built in 1878 with a tower at 80m above sea level. Nearby there is a berth where smaller boats

can be pulled out of the sea.

2) Lighthouses situated on the islands away from island villages are offered to those tourists that wish to have solitude, peace, time for bath and fishing, but also a possibility to go easily to urban villages. They can go shopping and contact with domestic people. Such lighthouses are interesting for the development of nautical tourism.

There are two such lighthouses:

- Veli rat on the island of Dugi otok
- Struga on the island of Lastovo

Veli rat



The lighthouse is located 20 NM to the west of Zadar, on the north-west of the Dugi otok cape. There is a village Veli rat some three km away from the lighthouse, in a long bay of Pantera at the eastern side of the cape. The lighthouse is built in 1849, consisting of ground-floor building with a 40-meter high tower, large backyard and a chapel. It is surrounded by pine forest, many bays and beaches and a berth.

Struga



The lighthouse is located on the same-named cape, in the middle of the southern side of the island of Lastovo, 55 NM away from Split and Dubrovnik. It is 5 km away from the largest village on the island of Lastovo and 15 km from ferryboat port Ubla. The lighthouse was built in 1839 and consists of a large ground-floor building and 20 m high tower, emitting light at 104 m above sea level. There is

also a by-side storeroom.

3) Lighthouses on mainland close to urban villages are old attractive buildings providing a specific accommodation, seclusion, great beaches, but also all conveniences of urban places. As they are located on the mainland tourists can reach them by cars, having a possibility to move around for sightseeing.

Such lighthouses are:

- Savudrija
- Rt Zub
- St. Peter

Savudrija



Savudrija is the oldest lighthouse on the Adriatic Sea built in 1818. It is also known to be the first lighthouse operated by gas through combustion of coal. It is located near the Slovenian border, 9 km away from Umag and 56 km from Trieste. It is the southernmost and the westernmost Croatian lighthouse, located 36.5 m above sea level with a 29 m high tower. It has three separated buildings with

a fenced garden.

St. Peter



St. Peter lighthouse is located on the cape of the St. Peter peninsula at the entry into Makarska harbor, being only 800 m away from the centre of Makarska. It is surrounded by sea and beaches. The lighthouse is a stone, ground-floor building with a low tower in the middle at 11m above sea level. The building is also surrounded by a terrace.

5. ECONOMIC ASPECTS OF TOURIST ACTIVITY

5.1. Costs of tourist activities in the lighthouses

Expenses for renting of apartments in lighthouses are relatively high, as the transfers to and from them significantly increase these expenses. Lighthouses located on the mainland and nearby inhabited villages are better exploited. Lighthouses located on the mainland are connected to local water supply network thus having water supply costs significantly reduced. Water supply expenses on some island lighthouses take up to 50% of the income, while these expenses for lighthouses on the mainland take up only 15 – 20 % of the income.

Lighthouses for renting are burdened with equipment expenses, then expenses for investments, regular maintenance, transport and staff. Maintenance expenses are to be pointed out as lighthouse inventory decays rapidly because of exposure to weather conditions and salt. Amortization rate is thus increased, which affects profit gain.

All apartments in lighthouses are equipped in the same way, and larger pieces of equipment that need electricity (refrigerators, stoves) are operated by propane gas. Other devices in apartments are TV and special lighting devices that use energy saving light bulbs. Joint equipment is a water pump that pumps water from a reservoir to the highest level, from which the water is then distributed on floor units. All electric devices in facilities that are not supplied

with electric network use solar energy and accumulators and also have a possibility to use wind generators.

5.2. Basic economic indicators of tourist activity in 2007

After seven years of experience with tourist activity, the company Plovput Ltd. (<http://www.plovput.hr/onama/djelatnosti/tabid/101/language/en-US/Default.aspx>) can assess its expenses and income and overall financial success. In 2007 the company gained income of 1,618.000.00 HRK and had expense of 1,350.000.00 HRK, which resulted in the profit of 268.000.00 HRK. With respect to invested financial means for renovation of apartments, cost-effectiveness is quite low. The gained profit is partially used by the company for covering of lighthouse maintenance expenses. Employees in the lighthouses are engaged more effectively.

The following table presents an overview of income and expense in 2007 and afterwards there is a chapter on basic economic indicators of success in tourism.

ANALYSIS OF INCOMES AND EXPENSES FROM TOURIST ACTIVITY IN 2007 in HRK

<i>PP PULA</i>	<i>No. of apartment s/ no. of beds</i>	<i>INCOME</i>	<i>AMORTIZATION EXPENSE</i>	<i>INSURANCE</i>	<i>MAINTENANCE EXPENSES (based on a contract – external performers, employees, craftsmen)</i>	<i>GROSS SALARIES (all contributions included) and wages for workers</i>	<i>OTHER EXPENSES (electricity, water, maintenance material, gas, small inventory, TV pay, travel costs, phone costs...)</i>	<i>TRANSFER OF TOURISTS (TO AND FROM THE LIGHTHOUSE)</i>
PS RT SAVUDRIJA	1/4	131.438	5.054	It refers to the insurance of tourists from the moment of their embark on boat to the moment of their disembark (transfer). Irrelevant of their function as tourist facilities, lighthouses are insured as facilities of sea navigation and these expenses are not included in the analysis.	16.146	**	11.150	
SVJET. ZGR. EX PS RT ZUB	1/6	145.861	8.794		27.554		12.370	
PS HRID SV. IVAN NA PUČINI	2/8	98.692	10.491		7.384		11.564	
PS HRID PORER	2/8	57.282	7.179		4.747		9.031	
PP ZADAR								
PS VELI RAT	2/7	227.882	8.973		16.974		28.254	
PP ŠIBENIK								
PS ISLAND PRIŠNJAK	1/4	96.577	8.582		10.442		10.092	
PP SPLIT								
PS PENINSULA ST. PETER *	1/4	96.831	3.151		8.100		11.897	
PP DUBROVNIK								
PS ISLAND SUŠAC *	2/8	84.402	5.365		4.474		6.630	
PS ISLAND PALAGRUŽ A *	2/8	138.595	5.731		8.944		17.803	66.027***
PS RT STRUGA *	4/14	204.912	13.883		22.575		18.299	
PS ISLAND PLOČICA *	2/14	163.841	9.234		12.916		16.706	
APARTMENT RENT ON THE BASIS OF THE CONTRACT								
PS ISLANDTRI SESTRICE – PP ZADAR		29.494	-		-			
PS HOST – PP SPLIT		79.633	12.744		-		340	
PS ISLAND ST. ANDREAS – PP DUBROVNIK		62.633	9.474		-		2.408	
	20/85	1.618.073	108.655	7.327	140.256	871.622	156.544	66.027

RECAPITULATION OF THE ABOVE TABLE:

INCOME 1.618.073	EXPENSE 1.350.431	PROFIT 267.642
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Tourist agencies' mediation of 10-15% is already deducted from the presented income. Amortization expense refers to equipment and investment value (works performed for apartment renovation).

* Based on the Article 12 of the Law on Income Taxation, cultural monuments are not subject to amortization, so the expenses for renovation of tourist apartments is not being amortized. Data used for amortization refer to equipment.

** Analysis of salaries for employees involved in the tourist activity refers to gross salaries and other wages exempt from tax that are paid out according to the Law on Income Taxation.

Stated expenses are fixed, so if not being engaged in tourist activity, the employees would be involved in the company's main activity. Their engagement in tourist exploitation of lighthouses provides additional financial means that are necessary for the company to cover a part of expenses for maintenance of lighthouses.

*** Tourist transfer expense: 75 hours * 120 EUR = 9.000 EUR * 7.33632 = 66.027 HRK.

BASIC ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF TOURIST ACTIVITY EFFECTIVENESS

Cost-effectiveness (e) = total income (invoiced value of provided services)/expense

Parameter value: total income = 1.618.073 HRK

total expense = 1.350.431 HRK

$e > 1$ = business is cost-effective

$e < 1$ = business is not cost-effective

$e = 1$ business is on the verge of being cost-effective.

Calculation: $e = 1.618.073 / 1.350.431 = 1.20$ $e > 1$

Based on the obtained result, tourist activity is cost-effective.

Cost-effectiveness (r) = business result/invested capital * 100

Parameter value: business result (profit) = 267.642 HRK

Value of basic means for performance of tourist activity = 4.723.428 HRK

Calculation: $r (\%) = 267.642 / 4.723.428 * 100 = 5.66\%$

Obtained result indicates how many units of business result are realized per a unit of invested capital.

6. POSSIBILITIES FOR TOURIST OFFER DEVELOPMENT

While considering possibilities for tourist offer development in lighthouses, Plovput Ltd. examined the following legal models:

- mid-term tenancy of revitalized facility by a national, foreign legal or private subject,
- short-term tenancy of revitalized facility by a national, foreign legal or private subject,
- contractual short-term or long-term lease of particular facility to health institution for educational or research purpose,
- establishment of protected nature parks on some locations.

Apartment rent or long-term tenancy depends on the selection of tender that can be either Plovput Ltd. or other. It is hard to determine profitability of each lighthouse through assessing the expected period of investment return because each lighthouse is a specific facility. Prices for rent of apartments that are of the same size and equally equipped have different prices because these prices depend on lighthouse attractiveness and location. At this time it is not possible to define the way of tourist capacities exploitation or the period of lighthouses' restoration. Investments in restoration of some lighthouses are questionable because of long period of investment return. It can be concluded that investment return is a basis for determination of priorities with respect to further tourist offer development.

7. CONCLUSION

Automatization of lighthouses led to their abandoning by housekeeping families and consequently to their decay. Realization of the project "Stone Lights" resulted in incorporation of lighthouses into tourist offer. Through this by-side activity, the company Plovput Ltd. Split takes care of the lighthouses and gains an extra profit that is further used for maintenance and revitalization of lighthouses that serve primarily for navigation safety.

Cultural-historical valorization of lighthouses and their incorporation into overall tourist offer contributed to Croatian tourist image. There is a more aggressive tourist promotion needed in order to realize better exploitation of lighthouse facilities. While some lighthouses offer solitude on isolated islands, others provide insights into domicile life style on islands, and some offer accommodation on the mainland and possibilities of sightseeing in the nearby area.

Economic aspect of lighthouse apartment renting is specific as expenses are raised in proportion to distance of a lighthouse from the mainland, and water supply costs are quite high on islands. Expenses for maintenance are also high because of specific climatic conditions, i.e. because of wind and salt that cause rapid decay of the inventory. Although tourist activity realized through renting of lighthouse apartments is cost-effective, their exploitation is even more

important because of the gained profit that is further invested in maintenance of other lighthouses that serve for navigation safety.

There is still no comprehensive tourist offer of lighthouses because of relatively small number of lighthouses on the tourist market. In order to create more complete offer, there are additional investments needed in order to increase capacities and to determine lighthouses as a specific tourist destination in Croatia, especially if knowing that there is no real competitor in Europe.

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