

## **The Impact of Terrorism on Tourism Development in the Republic of Kosovo**

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### **Abstract**

In the last twenty years, tourism has faced many terrorist attacks or similar crises, so we can ask the question of what is the connection between terrorism and tourism, how does all this affect global tourism. The targets of terrorist attacks in a certain tourist destination can vary, starting from small objects to complex tourist infrastructure, and the basis of the attacks can be political, economic, religious, or other reasons. This research has special theoretical and practical importance for the development of tourism in Kosovo, but from the aspect of the impact of terrorism on tourism, with special reference to the Republic of Kosovo as a tourist destination. Research related to the impact of terrorism on tourism in the Republic of Kosovo will help us to understand, in essence, the negative effects that terrorism can have on the development of tourism in this country. From this research, we are expected to get to know the most important aspects of terrorism and tourism in modern conditions, but also with the legislation in this field and how it can help prevent terrorist acts in tourist facilities in Kosovo.

**Keywords:** Tourism, terrorism, terrorist targets, destination, Kosovo

### **Introduction**

Every day we come across different studies and research in the field of economy (for our needs also in tourism) to find out how terrorism can affect the general economy of a developed or developing country. In this regard, we can conclude that terrorism, in addition to the feeling of fear and destruction, in those countries or states where it occurs, directly affects that country's economy.

As the most important aspects of the impact of terrorist attacks on a country, we can mention the following:

- Destruction of the economy (terrorist activities are measurable, but with great losses and costs in people, spaces, vehicles, businesses, religious buildings, etc. For example, the terrorist attacks in the United States of America on September 11, 2001, at the Trade Center World War II in New York resulted in the loss of thousands of lives, the destruction of billions of dollars worth of property, and the loss of thousands of jobs (Baker, 2014).
- Increased levels of uncertainty in the world markets (although some terrorist attacks happen elsewhere, indirectly all of us are affected by those events. For example, in the then attack in 2001, the world financial markets were closed and this created a great fear for investing in financial markets, or, for example, the same was true of terrorist attacks in Belgium or France, which caused a sense of uncertainty in future investments) (Baker, 2014).
- Negative effects on tourism and foreign direct investments (without a doubt, even tourism cannot escape the negative effects of terrorism, as one of the most important factors for the economic development of countries. For example, this can be explained by the events of the terrorist attack in Nice (France), where

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tourism in this country accounts for 7-8% of the total GDP and after that event, according to the analysis, tourism suffered 30% less tourists (Capt.(N) S. A, Richard W, Stephen H., 2021). The negative effect became much greater if it was known that the transport industry, the commercial system, the distribution system of goods and services, less foreign investments, etc., also suffered there. (Bislami, 2016)

- Rising levels of nationalism/skepticism towards foreigners (in recent times this threat has steadily increased and this relationship is deepening, including the cultures of nations, enterprises, migrant workers, and refugees. This is most evident today in The United States of America, for example, or the recent events in the United Kingdom, where there have been strong anti-globalization and anti-trade sentiments that have in some ways contributed to the disintegration of the EU. Some countries close their borders or burden free international trade, while this, on the other hand, has other negative consequences) (Brondoni, 2016).

On the other hand, protection and security have always been necessary conditions for travel, but the fact is that the changes in the world, in terms of security, are great, mainly due to local wars, terrorist attacks, natural disasters, epidemics, and pandemics, man-made accidents, all of which significantly reduce the safety of tourists (Haziri & Bucaj, 2024).

For this reason, providing a quality tourism experience to tourists, ensuring the safety principles of the tourist destination, and respecting the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism and Sustainable Development, are the main goals of modern tourist destinations.

Safe tourism contributes to the achievement of the social and cultural goals of tourism as an "icon" of strengthening international trust, on the other hand, safety in tourism should be included in the planning and promotion of tourism (Berisha, 2024).

The development of tourism requires the determination of measures aimed at the sustainable and harmonious development of tourism in the interest of those who travel, those who provide services in tourism, and the interest of the local population. The threat to the health and life of tourists in traffic, the risk of criminal attacks during travel, in a hotel or elsewhere, and risks such as fires, food poisoning, and infections, all affect the choice of tourist destination, the length of stay, and recommendations for other tourists. We believe that tourist safety laws should be passed or more strictly enforced. The most common security problems facing tourism today are natural disasters, terrorist attacks, physical injuries, infectious diseases, intolerance of others, drug abuse, robberies, technological accidents, environmental accidents, lack of drinking water, strikes of heat, scams, disappearances of tourists, murders of tourists, as well as kidnappings. Safety in tourism, either for the tourists themselves, or for the providers of tourist services, is a necessity and an assumption for the realization of the tourist activity in the countries (Security, 2010).

### **The Purpose of the Study**

Tourism is an economic activity that consists of several mutually coordinated activities to meet the needs of tourists and visitors. Today, tourism is an economic and international activity that includes economic, political, social, and environmental factors, which have their complex nature and in some cases conflicting relationships. Tourism is characterized by continuous and rapid development and great sensitivity (Sadiku, 2024).

Faced with uncertain internal and external factors, tourism is attracting attention around the world, often in terms of finding and selecting strategies and plans that will adapt to the latest geopolitical, social, economic, technological, and environmental changes (KRASNIQI, 2024).

The biggest threat to the development of tourism in the 21st century is terrorism, with all its forms of action, which causes great loss and damage wherever it occurs. It should be noted that terrorists achieve their ideological, political, or other goals (according to their conviction) precisely through attacks on world-famous tourist destinations, where at some point unreasonable or incomprehensible damage can occur. Thus, the purpose of this study is to explain the connection and impact between terrorist attacks and the development of tourism in a country as a tourist destination, with special reference to Kosovo (Brolen et al., 2007).

The subject of this study is to explain a certain form of terrorism and terrorist attacks on tourist destinations and objects, referring to the situation in Kosovo, as a tourist destination, but bearing in mind that these attacks are based on religious grounds (Latifi, 2024).

### **Research Methodology**

During the research, formulation, and presentation of research results within this study, several research techniques were applied: consultation of professional and scientific literature from various local and international sources, analysis of previous research, field research through surveys and measurements, methods analytical, and statistical methods (WBCJ, 2024).

In this study, we used primary and secondary data and based on them we will try to give certain conclusions and recommendations. The research of this paper is based on the approach of the cabinet (desk research) and in the field (field research), with the help of the survey of concrete subjects of tourism, hotels, and security of Kosovo (Birgit Pikkemaat, Klaus Weiermair, 1998).

### **Research Hypotheses**

1. Terrorism represents a negative factor and hinders the development of tourism and tourist destinations, especially the development of tourism in Kosovo.
2. The prevention of terrorist attacks in tourist destinations in Kosovo is the most important segment in the safety of tourists visiting this country.
3. Terrorist attacks on tourist destinations on any basis endanger ethnic and religious tolerance between communities in Kosovo.

4. The fight against terrorism is an important measure to protect Kosovo's tourism potential.
5. The implementation of safety standards and the safety of tourists during their stay is an important factor for the development of tourism in Kosovo (Michael, & Tibbles, 2024).

### Research results

Regarding the questionnaire for managers of hotels, restaurants, and similar tourist and hospitality facilities, a total of 58 managers (27 hotels, 19 restaurants, and 12 other various tourist entities) were surveyed, from which we received feedback from a total of 42 subjects (OSCE, 2022).

**Tabel 1.**

Question	Question	Question
Response Number of responses	Response Number of responses	Response Number of responses
	Employee 31	
In managing your enterprise, are you a manager or an employee? - Manager (director, leader) - Employee 31	In managing your enterprise, are you a manager or an employee? - Manager (director, leader)	In managing your enterprise, are you a manager or an employee? - Manager (director, leader)
	- Employee 31	- Employee 31
11	11	11

Regarding the management of the entity, out of a total of 42 responses, 31 managers and 11 employees in those entities answered the questionnaire. The largest percentage of respondents were aged 26 to 40, followed by 18 to 25, and the least were middle-aged and older. In terms of work experience, most of the respondents have 11 to 20 years of work experience in tourism and hospitality, while the lowest percentage is the number of those who have 40 years of experience.

**Tabela 2** (OSCE, 2022).

6. Do you work during the season or throughout the year? - During the season - Throughout the year 0	6. Do you work during the season or throughout the year? - During the season	6. Do you work during the season or throughout the year? - During the season
	- Throughout the year 0	- Throughout the year 0
42 Total answers: 42	42 Total answers: 42	42 Total answers: 42
	8. Who are the most frequent guests/visitors in	8. Who are the most frequent

8. Who are the most frequent guests/visitors in your establishment? - Local guests/visitors - Foreign guests/visitors 42	your establishment? - Local guests/visitors	guests/visitors in your establishment? - Local guests/visitors
	- Foreign guests/visitors 42	- Foreign guests/visitors 42
42 Total answers: 84	42 Total answers: 84	42 Total answers: 84
9. Does the facility where you operate meet the safety and protection standards of the guests in which you operate? - Yes, it fills them - No, it doesn't fill them	9. Does the facility where you operate meet the safety and protection standards of the guests in which you operate? - Yes, it fills them	9. Does the facility where you operate meet the safety and protection standards of the guests in which you operate? - Yes, it fills them
	- No, it doesn't fill them	- No, it doesn't fill them

All subjects interviewed work throughout the year. The most frequent guests and visitors are domestic and foreign guests, depending on the place of travel and stay and the purpose of the hotel facility. Only 25 subjects answered that their facilities meet the safety standards, while other respondents answered that they do certain preparatory work in that direction. Certificates (domestic and international) in the field of security have only two hotels, which are categorized with five stars, in the territory of Pristina, while the rest of the subjects do not have such specific documents, but even those who have applied for the fact that they require a higher category. All respondents are familiar with the measures that should be in place in case of possible threats of human nature and/or force majeure.

**Tabela 3.** (OSCE, 2022).

13. Do you cooperate with the competent institutions (local and central) for better security and protection of your guests and tourists? - Yes, we cooperate - No, we do not cooperate 40	13. Do you cooperate with the competent institutions (local and central) for better security and protection of your guests and tourists? - Yes, we cooperate	13. Do you cooperate with the competent institutions (local and central) for better security and protection of your guests and tourists? - Yes, we cooperate
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	- No, we do not cooperate 40	- No, we do not cooperate 40
0	0	0
Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42
14. If you have cooperation, which institution is the most common for cooperation? - Police	14. If you have cooperation, which institution is the most common for cooperation? - Police	14. If you have cooperation, which institution is the most common for cooperation? - Police
- The army - Other security structures	- The army - Other security structures	- The army - Other security structures
- International institutions 37 2	- International institutions 37 2	- International institutions 37 2

These entities cooperate with the competent authorities for the security and protection of guests. The cooperation that exists with the competent authorities is the most common with the police and less with the army, other security structures, or international institutions, assuming that the easiest access and communication of these entities is with the police. None of the subjects surveyed reported any event of a certain threat to life and property, so far there has been no such case. Disturbances of order and peace have occurred in some subjects, with the assumption that the persons involved in problematic situations were in an alcoholic state and verbally clashed.

**Tabela 4. (OSCE, 2022)**

21. Does your company keep records or data on what kind of guests visit and stay in your facilities? - Yes, there is evidence - No, there is no evidence 0	21. Does your company keep records or data on what kind of guests visit and stay in your facilities? - Yes, there is evidence - No, there is no evidence 0	21. Does your company keep records or data on what kind of guests visit and stay in your facilities? - Yes, there is evidence - No, there is no evidence 0
42	42	42
Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42
22. Have you ever suspected as a manager/employee suspicious guests and tourists staying at your facility? - Yes, we doubt it - No, we have no doubts	22. Have you ever suspected as a manager/employee suspicious guests and tourists staying at your	22. Have you ever suspected as a manager/employee suspicious guests and tourists

	facility? - Yes, we doubt it	staying at your facility? - Yes, we doubt it
	- No, we have no doubts	- No, we have no doubts
42	42	42
Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42
23. If you have doubts, do you report it to the police? yes Not 42	23. If you have doubts, do you report it to the police? yes	23. If you have doubts, do you report it to the police? yes
	Not 42	Not 42

Respondents who provide accommodation services (hotels) keep records of what guests and tourists visit and stay at their premises. No manager and no employee suspected suspicious guests or tourists. No manager and no employee suspected suspicious guests or tourists. If they suspect, such suspicion is not based on the ethnic, religious, social, or other affiliation of the guests, so according to this, we think that there is no discrimination in this regard. Most of the respondents think that they trust the authorities and tourists and that they live in a safe place (Institute for Economics and Peace, 2019).

**Tabela 5.** (OSCE, 2022)

26. Do you personally think that you, as a manager/employee, for any reason and your structure could be the target of a terrorist attack or similar threat? - Yes, I believe - No, I don't believe 0	26. Do you personally think that you, as a manager/employee, for any reason and your structure could be the target of a terrorist attack or similar threat? - Yes, I believe	26. Do you personally think that you, as a manager/employee, for any reason and your structure could be the target of a terrorist attack or similar threat? - Yes, I believe
	- No, I don't believe 0	- No, I don't believe 0
42	42	42
Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42
27. Do you, as a manager/employee, have information that threats of terrorist attacks have occurred elsewhere in Kosovo? yes Not 0	27. Do you, as a manager/employee, have information that threats of terrorist attacks have occurred elsewhere in Kosovo? yes	27. Do you, as a manager/employee, have information that threats of terrorist attacks have occurred elsewhere in Kosovo? yes
	Not 0	Not 0
42	42	42
Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42	Total answers: 42

When asked if managers/employees could be the target of a terrorist attack for any reason, all responded that there was no reason for this to happen. According to the respondents, there are always factors that can affect such a situation, because there is no absolute certainty. They have not heard of such events in other tourist destinations or facilities in Kosovo. All managers responded that their facilities are

under constant security surveillance. Most of them think that security against possible terrorist attacks can be evaluated with grade 8, but some think that this level can be evaluated with grades 6, 7, and 10 (Cristina E, 2016).

### **Discussions**

From the total number of participants in this study, 118 respondents answered, 73 belonged to men (61.8%), while 45 belonged to women (38.2%). Most of the respondents were aged 18-34 and some of them did not want to answer.

Tourists and guests, who are the subject of this study, answered that they most often travel to a domestic destination, and less often to a foreign destination.

Half of the subjects surveyed organize their trip and stay personally, sometimes in groups, while the rest through a travel agency (Ukshini, 2022).

Almost 85% of all respondents believe that risk and threat factors, whether human or natural, greatly influence the decision to travel and stay. When making the decision to travel, 92% of respondents are more aware of the threat of terrorist attacks, while other factors influence, but not with such intensity, depending on the individual (Ukshini, 2022).

As a source of information, tourists mainly use television news and reports from electronic and print media, least of all from criminal statistics and radio news. Almost 92% of respondents think that the facility they are staying in is safe for their health and life, while others are not completely sure. The respondents answered that there are obvious security measures in all the facilities where they stayed. Only a small percentage of the respondents believe that these measures for a safe stay are not sufficient and should be improved, that is, completed (UNWTO, 2024).

To the question, have you had any previous experience with a threat or possible attack on you? Of the total number of respondents, only 2% had previous experience of a potential threat and attack. However, none of the respondents had such an experience during their stay in Kosovo, until the moment of answering this questionnaire. When the respondents were asked who should be responsible for security in the country they visit and where they stay, they all answered equally that it is themselves first, then the police and the owner of the facility, and the local authorities at the end. Regarding the degree of feeling safe, 92% think they are very safe, 5% think they are safe enough, 2% think they are not sure in that respect and 1% have no answer to this question. According to them, the Republic of Kosovo as a tourist destination is very safe for travel and stay. Visitors who stay in Kosovo evaluate the security during their stay with "grade 9" (Eulex, 2024).

### **Analysis of the Study**

In this study, we tried to give some suggestions and recommendations, especially for each subject included in the study, which we will present below:

#### **For the Ministry of Internal Affairs**

From the analysis of the study and the findings, let's give some suggestions and recommendations on how to overcome some problems or how to improve some conditions:

- The biggest problem that requires an immediate and indisputable solution is membership in Interpol and other international organizations in the field of security, which can help the most in preventing any threat to the security of the citizens of Kosovo, but also to all those who stay temporarily in this country,



including tourists (domestic and foreign) who visit the touristic places of Kosovo. (Bislimi, 2016).

- The level of radicalism and religious extremism in Kosovo today is low, there are no threats of terrorist attacks.
- Security is regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Kosovo, and every state institution in the field of security has a constitutional obligation to protect its citizens, without any discrimination against a certain ethnic community, nor on religious grounds against religious communities and nor on any other basis.
- According to the competent authorities, tourist facilities are easier targets for attacks, due to their nature, therefore there is very good cooperation with tourist and hospitality entities in terms of protection and security during the stay of guests and tourists.
- According to data from the competent ministry, only categorized hotel facilities have established a certain level of security during the stay of tourists, because they are required by law to respect certain standards (Capt.(N) S. A, Richard W, Stephen H., 2021).

Finally, regarding the security of tourist and hotel facilities in Kosovo from possible terrorist attacks, the competent ministry considers that level to be very high.

### **Important Infrastructure**

Hotel facilities for the accommodation and food of guests and tourists are a very important infrastructure for the development of tourism and any attempt to disrupt it can hurt the overall development of tourism and the economy. According to the data obtained from this research, it can be concluded that these tourist and hotel facilities are easy targets for attacks, but so far no facility has been threatened or attacked by terrorists.

However, in our opinion, certain recommendations or suggestions in the field of security/protection in this part of the tourism/hotel activity should be highlighted or presented here as well:

The cooperation with the competent state bodies (local and central) for the safety of guests and tourists is at a very high level and we propose to continue, with increased quality. That is, there is a system of registration for every tourist who stays in a certain facility, but the system is outdated, so we propose to take measures and activities to improve that system and respond to the modern demands of the tourism industry (Brondoni, 2016).

### **Important infrastructure for Guests and Tourists**

Every year, Kosovo as a tourist destination is visited by many tourists and this number is constantly increasing. According to the data from the conducted research, certain recommendations or suggestions can be given, both for guests and tourists. The research showed that many tourists personally organize their stay in a destination, of course, according to their possibilities and capacities. However, we

believe that travel and accommodation organized by relevant professional enterprises (travel agencies and tour operators) is the best solution, especially when it comes to safety issues. On the other hand, the decision to travel is based on the recommendations of family and friends, so again we believe that previous trips should be organized by professionals, who increase the process of evaluating factors for deciding to travel and stay.

- Every trip, that is, every decision is based on the prediction of risk and threat factors, whether of natural or human nature, so we recommend all those potential tourists take into account and be aware of all those factors that present danger or threat or would constitute a possible danger or threat (especially terrorist acts) because safety comes first.
- We suggest that tourists are interested in other sources of information (government agencies, foreign ministries, embassies or representative offices, travel agencies and tour operators, or other specialized media that only deal with security issues in a certain tourist destination) (William M. Stephen T, 2024).
- In the research, we found that every tourist feels safe while staying in a certain accommodation facility because he noticed that there are obvious security measures (security guards, alarm, cameras, etc.), so we recommend every entity that offers accommodation services to pay more attention to these measures, which meant that every guest or tourist would be very satisfied with the stay.
- The condition of monuments and cultural-historical manifestations/events should be improved because every year there is a greater number of guests who visit these events and/or certain tourist monuments in Kosovo.

## **Conclusions**

The most common security problems facing tourism today are natural disasters, terrorist attacks, physical injuries, infectious diseases, infections, intolerance of others, drug abuse, robberies, technological accidents, environmental accidents, lack of water spills, fractures, heatstroke, fraud, disappearances of tourists, murders of tourists, as well as kidnappings.

Based on field research, we can draw some conclusions:

The fight against terrorism and similar crimes, including terrorism on religious grounds (religious radicalism and extremism), is one of the most important duties and responsibilities of the Kosovo Police.

According to our data in RK (Republic of Kosovo) there are no threats of terrorist attacks (there have been and now the situation is calmer and more stable), regardless of some publications related to religious ideology is the basis of terrorist attacks, but only from people who fought in foreign wars,

In Kosovo, there is very good cooperation between institutions for the detection and prevention of possible threats or attacks, with the aim of not discriminating against a certain ethnic community, nor on religious grounds against religious communities, as far as the issue of security is concerned.

Competent authorities consider that tourist objects are easier targets for attacks, due to their nature, therefore a very good cooperation with tourist-hotel subjects has been established.

Only hotel facilities and categorized hotels have set a certain level of security, because they are obliged by law to respect certain standards, how safe are tourist and hotel facilities in Kosovo from possible or possible terrorist attacks, the competent Ministry considers that the level is very high, but it is still a relative matter, there has not been any terrorist attack on a tourist facility, so it is considered that Kosovo as a tourist destination is quite safe, only a small number of hotel facilities for accommodation are categorized by law, the most frequent guests and visitors are local and foreign, a small number of facilities meet certain safety standards and certificates in the field of safety have only two hotels, which are categorized with five stars,

All the subjects surveyed are familiar with the measures that should exist in case of possible threats of human nature and/or force majeure, so far there have been no threats to the safety of guests and tourists.

Everyone cooperates with the competent bodies for the safety of guests, and most often that cooperation is with the police, there is no case of the threat of terrorist attacks on tourist facilities,

Today, a special attention should be paid to security, because it is one of the basic factors of tourism development. Safety in tourism, whether the safety of the tourists themselves or the providers of tourist services, is a necessity and an assumption for the realization of tourist activity in the country.

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