

Mountaineering and Its Contribution to Croatian Tourism

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Summary

The author discusses the influence that mountaineering as an organized activity can have in the wider community. This mainly refers to the segment of tourism and expansion of tourist offer, and then to the other dimensions of influence that the author divided into 6 basic categories. Mountaineering has something to offer to each of them, and there is visible room for an additional significant step forward that could, with a designed approach, soon be realized. If this is achieved in return we can get healthy, self-actualized, environmentally conscious and happy citizens, which as such may be the best invitation for all tourists.

KEY WORDS: mountaineering, tourism, expansion of tourist offer, dimensions of impact

1. INTRODUCTION

We could say with certainty that mountaineering is a whole world in itself.

And as much as it is perceived as such by carefree mountaineers themselves, as well as those who (often as volunteers) participate in organization of hiking tours, they all create a special activity that can, and already does, participate in the creation of strong social, economic and environmental development of the wider community.

In Croatia we often say that this is a country of great unused opportunities that is yet to discover its intrinsic wealth. Or, if it is discovered, it is still not used to its full extent. This truth is applicable to almost all aspects of social life, which of course includes mountaineering.

And at the very beginning it should be pointed out that although we easily dismiss our famous mountaineering history, it is a part of our pledge for the future.

Inevitable is the fact that the first mountaineering book in the world entitled "Mountains" was written by our Peter Zoranic from Nin near Zadar in which he described the climbs on Velebit and Dinara. This is also the first Croatian poetic novel which, among other things, explains the origin of the name Velebit.

In addition, in 1874 the first Croatian Mountaineering Society (CMS) ¹ was founded and on that date we became the ninth nation in the world to have organized mountaineering; much

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older than many alpine nations. This data further fascinates given our population and the fact that the Republic of Croatia is the only southern European country that does not have mountains over 2,000 meters.²

In addition, we should also mention the fact that our climber, travel writer, film director and member of the Croatian Mountain Rescue Service (HGSS), Stipe Bozic, was the second man to climb Mount Everest twice, the highest peak in the world (in 1979 and 1989), and the Republic of Croatia is the first country in the world that has more women than men who have climbed Mount Everest with the ratio of 4:1 (our mountain climbers are sisters Darija and Iris Bostjancic and Milena Sijan and Ena Vrbek).

From these data, besides evoking the "days of our glory", it is of great importance to identify socially relevant moments that can help us to better understand our present and more importantly, contribute to building a more successful future. All the aforementioned achievements are the result of action of strong, brave and enterprising individuals whose results can very easily be designated as "our" success and presented as a part of our shared national history.³

It is therefore the intention of this paper to identify and point out the potential offered by Croatian mountaineering and contribute to the elaboration of the idea that mountaineering is not only a pleasure for individual enthusiasts but a result of organized activity that has its own rules of procedure.

2. MOUNTAINEERING IN CROATIA

Mountaineering could be defined as an organized activity of people moving across the mountains for personal pleasure. (Caplar, 2012, p. 13)

From these definitions derive essential determinants that confirm the basic thesis of this paper, which is that it is useful to achieve professionalization of mountaineering as a craft. The pleasure of mountaineering is not thereby diminished nor is spontaneity questioned; there is a professionalization of a multidisciplinary activity at work. Personal pleasure derived from mountaineering, although not always and fully, is partially also a motive and a direct consequence of organized mountaineering. Although we could agree with the idea that the novelty and certain unpredictability of what awaits a mountaineer on a mountain trip is exactly why they decided to go to the mountain - which directly contributes to the feeling of excitement, adventurous spirit and adrenaline - all this may not be and it is not contrary to the efforts of professionalism and professional approach to organized mountaineering.

Certainly, mountaineers will always be people who love the mountains and find beauty in nature. To do this, they will not need any certificate or permit of a professional association. Mountaineering is not nor should it be limited by the rules or ideologies. (Pole, 2007, p. 30) It is neither objective nor idea. The fundamental purpose of professionalization of mountaineering is systematic training and informing of mountaineers, maintenance and care of our mountains

¹ The initiative for the establishment of the CMS – started from a conversation of a university professor from Graz Johannes Frischauf with Ivan Mazuranic and Buds Budisavljevic in Ogulin, after he was impressed by the beauty of Klek in 1874. In 2014 the present Croatian Mountaineering Association (CMA), successor of the CMS celebrates the 140th anniversary of its establishment.

² The highest peak of Croatia is Sinjal (also known as peak Dinara) on Mount Dinara.

³ This phenomenon is also present today. It is widely known that, for example, sports achievements of the family Kostelic are celebrated as a national success (e.g. in phrases like "Croatia won the gold or silver medal at the Olympic Games") and on the road to success this family has generally trained on their own cost in conditions that were secured exclusively by the family budget, of course, with an infinite personal will and enthusiasm of family members. Only when this success was accompanied by medals (i.e., the end of the road to success) did the numerous sponsors appear, and from this partially comes the "The Snow Queen" - slalom race of the World Ski Championships, as a project of the City of Zagreb, the largest city in the state.

and mountain trails, shelters, houses and mountain huts and monitoring the entire range of multidisciplinary activities and activities associated with mountaineering.

Such efforts are already a part of our reality. Finally, this was the main idea of the establishment of the first Croatian Mountaineering Society. From then until today we have formed more than 300 mountaineering societies and clubs⁴ in Croatia with more than 27,000 registered mountaineers, built over 150 mountain houses and lodges and we maintain more than 6,000 km of hiking trails. Some of these mountaineering societies, whose conditions and opportunities allow it, organize special training which will be further discussed in this paper. In general mountaineering societies together with nature parks, national parks and public enterprises (e.g. Croatian Forests, Croatian army ...) take care of our mountains and mountain trails, and activities initiated by mountaineering societies are often backed by local fire departments or emergency departments.

It is important to note that neither mountaineering nor specialized activities that are directly or indirectly associated with mountaineering (as mountain guides service and HGSS⁵) are recognized in the national occupational classification as separate activities. The result of this is that such important activities on which human lives are often literally dependent (and whose actions take place in situations of emergencies), work on voluntary basis, and the funding is uncertain and without any permanent items in the state budget or the budget of local governments, which further contributes to the discretionary political decisions because regardless of professional or volunteering form of organization, these activities have a certain cost (the overhead as a constant cost and additional costs of actions that they take on an almost daily basis).⁶

Volunteering as a form of action is humane, efficient, cost effective for taxpayers and as a practice recognized in the European Union countries. Therefore, the model used by the Republic of Croatia is no exception but the rule. Professionalization mentioned in this paper is not connected (or at least does not need to be) to the model for financing organizations and agencies, but it certainly reflects the need to further strengthen those activities that contribute to the professional development of stakeholders, and perhaps may lead to their financial strengthening and their more powerful and better recognition in society.

3. MOUNTAINEERING AND TOURISM

Tourism is defined as *a set of activities that arise from those travels whose objective is not to conduct any economic activity.* (Hunziker, Walter; Krapf, Kurt, 1942)

In doing so, there arises a kind of paradox because tourism is an economic activity. People who travel with no intention of doing any economic activity do exactly that for all those who participate in the organization of their non-commercial travel. And just like there is a rule in economy that someone's spending is someone's else's income, so in the case of tourism someone's holiday is someone's else's a source of labor.

⁴ Work of mountaineering societies is defined by the Associations Act (as non-profit organizations) and the Sports Act, and the work of members of the mountaineering societies is defined by the Volunteering Act and the Act on the Provision of Tourism Services.

⁵ HGSS was founded in 1950 as an internal service of the CMA (main mountaineering organization in Croatia) and today has grown into a public organization that cares about the safety of citizens 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

⁶ Rescue interventions by the HGSS are the most media exposed segment of their activity, but they represent only a small part of the overall activity, and most of the effort and energy is invested in preventive work to reduce the need for rescues (where there are threats to human life and property) to a minimum. HGSS itself talked about the advantages and disadvantages of voluntary i.e. professional work of these institutions. Text is available at the following website: <http://www.gss.hr/novosti/o-gorskoj-sluzbi-spasavanja-o-volonterstvu-i-placanju-akcija-spasavanja-reakcija-na-clanak-turiste-ce-spasavanje-s-planina-stajati-1000-eura>

Active holiday (which is sometimes in the narrow sense called adventure tourism)⁷, includes numerous and diverse forms of dealing with a specific physical activity. This is a comprehensive and potentially extremely creative segment within the so-called *specific forms of tourism*. In active holidays offer we can find the following sub-segments: *biking, snowboarding, picking fruit, bungee jumping, canyoning, photo safaris, golf, walking in snowshoes on the snowy slopes, exploring caves, horseback riding, sailing, jet skiing, kayaking and canoeing, camping, karting and kart cross, the sea kayaking, kite boarding, ballooning, helicopter or glider flying, hunting, motocross and enduro riding, snowmobiles, motor flying, off road driving, orientation, paintball, paragliding and hang-gliding, dog carts, quad riding, rafting, fishing, sledding and bobsled, skiing, parachuting, rock climbing, rafting, archery, survival training, rowing on the surf board, wind surfing, zip line, hiking and of course mountaineering.*

As we can notice, active vacation can be realized in the air, on land, at sea and under ground, and in recent times as part of an elite tourism there are also so called space tourism programs which enable customers - tourists to stay in space stations, where they can feel the weightlessness as well as experience the planet Earth from an entirely new view angle. Thus, active vacation is present wherever humans dwell, reach and leave their traces.

Mountaineering can therefore, due to its characteristics which are similar to active vacation, be classified as an offer from the segment of specific forms of tourism.

But so far the facts described still do not reveal why people engage in active vacation that may result in direct physical injury or even be life-threatening. The question arises: Is not vacation a time, as the phrase says, when people should relax and not "provoke (un)happiness"? Also, why someone exposes himself/herself to potentially perilous situations when security is one of the basic requirements of people as biological beings? Perhaps the answers to these questions can be found in the works of the well-known and respected American psychologist of Jewish origin, Abraham Maslow (1908 - 1970), and his now famous theory on the hierarchy of human needs.

Figure no. 1 shown the structured pyramid of human needs as they were imagined by A. Maslow. It should be emphasized that meeting the needs goes from the bottom up, i.e., it is first necessary to meet the physiological needs to start to meet the need for security. When these needs are met we may move on to meet the social needs and all the way to the realization of the need for self-actualization.

⁷ The concept of active vacation is broader than the concept of adventure tourism because it may also include those segments of tourism which are related to visiting events or locations in urban areas, rather than just going to the countryside or visiting sports fields.

ABRAHAM MASLOW HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

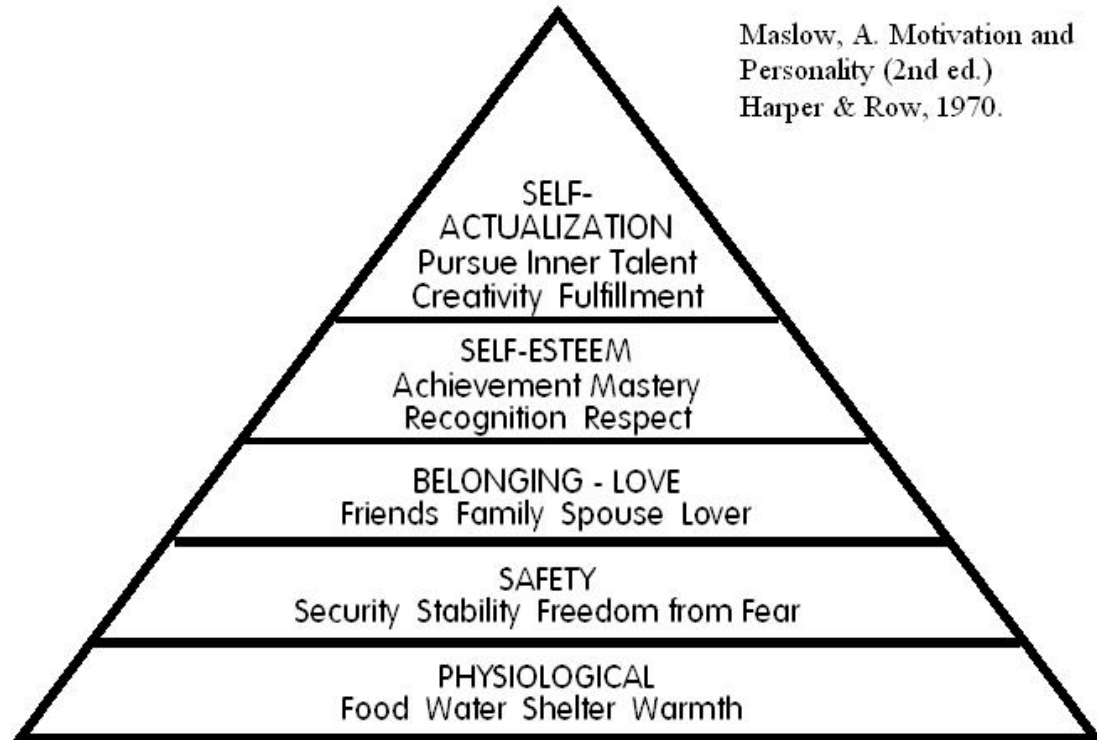


Figure No. 1

If we connect the structure of human needs with the behaviors of the people involved in the tourism process we can gain very interesting and socially relevant knowledge about human nature and the nature of tourism and the principles that are used within the tourism industry.

The need for personal safety (which can be defined as the absence of a sense of threat) is a fundamental human need that should be met immediately after satisfying basic physiological needs, such as the availability of food and beverages. Why then do tourists flock and pay dearly to have themselves led into a situation where that need is not provided?

The answer lies in the socio-economic indicators of tourist population i.e. in the fact that almost 90% of the total world population is excluded from tourism to begin with. The tourism industry in the world with its travel arrangements is not addressing to the population that works for \$ 1 a day⁸ or those who do not have sufficient resources to meet their basic needs (homeless people, hungry and thirsty people). Tourist travel can be afforded only by those who already have pre-met needs of first and second level in Maslow's hierarchy. It is interesting to recognize that the tourist industry mainly offers tourists satisfaction, according to the hierarchy, of their higher human needs (sections 3, 4 and 5 of Maslow's pyramid). Tourism⁹ offers people the fulfillment of *social needs* (to be an accepted member of a sports and recreation club, to be a member of a mountaineering society whose members are going on excursions together, and whose identity is accepted as a part of their own identity). Tourism also offers to meet the *needs for self-esteem* (e.g., it stems from the success achieved by conquering a mountain peak, the pleasure derived from good orientation in nature and being able to help others, which creates an atmosphere of

⁸ According to the World Bank data, there are currently 1.1 billion people living on less than one dollar a day.

⁹ In this paper I will use examples from the mountaineering practice, but these rules apply to all the segments of general and specific forms of tourism.

acceptance by others). And finally, tourism enables the realization of the *need for self-actualization* through the development of your own potential (at the level of physical ability or level of social and emotional intelligence) all of which leads to fulfillment and personal development. For people strengthened in this way who lead full lives, "provoking" security risks, i.e. the deliberate creation of non-security, primarily represents (more or less) controlled challenge that, if all goes well, represents a new opportunity to meet the higher levels of human needs. And so this pattern, like a perpetual motion machine, is continuously repeated in human life.

All these qualities are an integral part of tourism and mountaineering, which can therefore be considered a form of tourism activity.

4. MOUNTAINEERING AND ITS DIMENSIONS OF INFLUENCE

Quality mountaineering activity requires an entire infrastructure to be developed in a society. This equally applies to physical infrastructure (roads, maintained mountain trails, decorated chalets and mountain huts, available first aid stations, the entire supply chain, etc.), as well as the institutional infrastructure (the coverage of the entire territory with functional mountaineering clubs, with clearly defined jurisdiction – from a guide services to preserving the environment, professional educational service and service for international co-operation and a clear, unambiguous and constructive legislative framework that properly regulates the mountaineering activity). If all this is true, then mountaineering is at the same time able to offer a service that has an impact on the development of different dimensions of social life.

The term *dimension of influence* means all those aspects of social life in which mountaineering can make a contribution.

I have divided the comprehensiveness of mountaineering impact into 6 basic dimensions:

4. 1. SOCIAL DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

Author of several books on mountaineering in Croatia and an active mountaineer, Alan Caplar, writes in his book *The Mountain Guide of Croatia*: "All mountaineers go into the mountains because they love it. Mountains provide endless delights to everyone who has the ability to perceive them, experience them and take them inside." (Caplar, 2011, p. 11)

Likewise, the authors Matej and Davor Perkov write in their paper *Development of Mountain Tourism in Croatia*: "Mountaineering encompasses all human activities directly and indirectly related to independent movement of individuals in mountainous regions. This is not just aimless wandering in the hills, but the manner and style of life, a whole range of activities that make a life of a modern man more enjoyable, interesting and above all beautiful." (Perkov M. and Perkov D. 2013., p. 122)

These picturesque views and observations show that the personal experience of beauty and pleasure is the main driver of people in their decision to go into the mountains. You can go into the mountains alone, individually and then mountaineering fully represents the encounter of an individual with its environment, which can contribute to their own personal introspection, triggered by the stay in a natural environment.

You can go into the mountains with your family, or with various company,¹⁰ regardless of whether this company is a result of your own choosing or more a set of circumstances.

And as Adam Smith in his famous book, *The Wealth of Nations* argues that the economic cycles are the result of our individual selfish efforts and actions¹¹ (and we can extend this claim

¹⁰ It is an old mountain rule that, in principle, you should not go to the mountains alone. Likewise, there is an unwritten rule that, for example, it is advisable to always go scuba diving in pairs. These attitudes stem from a precautionary measure. Here the focus is actually the issue of personal safety, and not the beauty of experience.

and argue that it is at the same time talking about our general sociability), also through mountaineering (as a result of our personal efforts to make us feel comfortable and good and to get closer to our ideal of life connected with nature), creates a whole whirl of opportunities to build new social networks. Among mountaineers we have both old and young; fast and slow ones; experienced and less experienced; high and low; left and right and those who are just looking for their way; those highly educated, and those who are not; employed and unemployed; married and unmarried; members of different orientations in all kinds of issues. However, in the mountains they are all first and foremost – mountaineers. This creates a social network that overcomes all of the potential differences among people and creates a new common identity as a source and a pledge for creating friendships, and even more than that. This is an important message that could be useful in all segments of society. But it is rarely used.

4. 2. ECONOMIC DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

So far, it was clearly indicated that the activity of mountaineering is closely related to tourism. Therefore, it is necessary to observe the economic dimension of mountaineering through the prism of economic impact that tourism has on the overall economic picture of the community. Tourism is a specific activity that is within the national economy usually treated as an export in the area of services (tertiary sector), because it contributes to the inflow of foreign capital into the country, which has a positive effect on the balance of payments, and has a beneficial effect on employment and local population during the tourist season. And this is where the methodological problem arises because not all tourism can be viewed as export.¹² Regardless, the fact remains that tourism as an industry creates a significant latent and manifested impact on the local economy. The manifested part can easily be seen and statistically quite accurately measured through earned income; mainly through the number of overnight stays (business volume), average daily spending of guests (room and board and extra services) and other. Latent (covert) effect occurs by running the entire economy so that it can service the needs of tourists. This part of the impact is not so easy to measure precisely because it involves the increased production of total assets that a certain society can produce (from food production - to feeding the increased number of people in a given area, to the construction industry - to build accommodation, both interior and exterior). In this case the calculations are considerably more complex because the researcher operates only with intermediate variables, and also we must deduct all the consumed goods and services that are imported from abroad and not produced in the country.

According to the World Economic Forum report for the year 2013¹³, the Republic of Croatia was at a rather high 35th place according to the Tourism Competitiveness Index, while on the scale of total global competitiveness we are 75th out of 140 analyzed countries. However, there is limited room for optimism because this report suggests that we are lagging behind compared to our main tourist competitors.¹⁴ Good placement was achieved mainly because of the good tourist infrastructure (built highways and access roads to tourist areas, number of hotel rooms

¹¹ Adam Smith uses examples of butchers, brewers and bakers and says that they create their products, and we are served by them, not because of our well-being, but primarily because of their own (whether selfish?) interests. By doing this their service do not become less valuable or less necessary. And this *invisible hand* of the market triggered by particular interest creates interaction between people in which common good is created, and only as a byproduct; additional social benefits.

¹² Tourist activity of the local population should be excluded from tourism as an export, as well as tourist consumption of goods and services imported in the country.

¹³ The report can be found at: <http://www.weforum.org/reports>

¹⁴ We consider our main tourism competitors to be Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Montenegro, France, Greece, Italy, Malta, Germany, Portugal, Spain, Turkey and the United Kingdom.

in relation to population, developed network of ATMs) and a relatively high share of tourism services export in the gross domestic product (GDP).

The share of tourism in our GDP can be seen from the Figure No. 2.

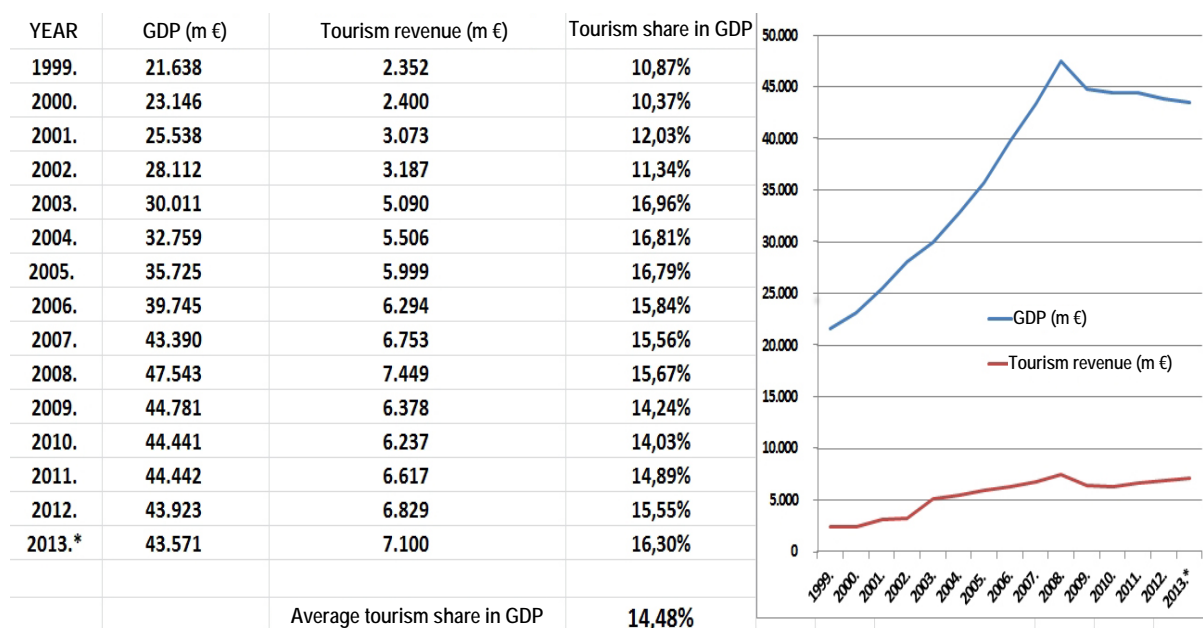


Figure No. 2

Explanation of statistical data and their sources:

Croatian GDP data are from the annual CNB newsletter.

Data on tourism revenues are from the annual report of the Ministry of Tourism.

(Data on GDP varies between CNB and the Ministry of Tourism as a source of data up to the year 2007. After the 2007 data is identical for both sources.)

Calculation of the share of tourism revenues in GDP are the author's analysis of statistical data.

* Data on GDP for the year 2013 has been estimated based on the assumed GDP decline in the amount of 0.8% compared to the previous year, and the data on income from tourism for the year 2013 are an estimate of the Minister of Tourism on the growth in tourism revenues by 4% compared to the previous year.

The average share of tourism in GDP of 14.5% represents a significant share that tourism has in the national economy. However, there is no country in the world that lives exclusively from tourism and it is in the economic and social sense of utmost importance to determine the extent to which we wish to rely on tourism as a source of national wealth, because tourism is a sensitive economic sector that largely depends on the perception of safety and ecological preservation of the destination.¹⁵

Unfortunately, none of the relevant institutions (Ministry of Tourism, the Central Bureau of Statistics, Institute of Tourism, CMA, CMGA, Association of travel agencies and others) provide statistics on mountaineering as a segment of tourism in Croatia. This is true for at least two reasons. First, the institutions which, by their job description, should perform these statistics do not do it. And second, mountaineering is obviously still not enough and adequately

¹⁵ Security is increasingly becoming a valuable resource of Croatian tourism which is difficult to gain and very easy to lose. Also, it takes only one ecological oil tanker accident in the closed sea like the Adriatic or a stronger earthquake (and we are in a very geologically unstable area), to get us into serious difficulties in the tourism sector.

recognized as a separate segment of the Croatian tourist offer and in that sense this is the proof that there is still much room for the development of mountaineering activities.

What we can assume, based on data on the number of members of our mountain societies and the response to organized tours, is that only up to 1% of the population of Croatia chooses mountaineering as a form of pastime.¹⁶ We would make a big step forward if we would further animate and consequently increase the number of local people that go on tours to our mountains. We should make a separate analysis of foreign tourist mountaineers - their habits, needs, desires, capabilities and numbers.

4. 3. ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

Mountaineers are generally a highly eco-conscious segment of the population. This is also true for at least two reasons. The first is that the people involved in mountaineering go into nature at their sole discretion and for personal choice as its admirers and caring keepers. The second reason is that many mountaineers (especially those registered in mountaineering societies) are trained within the framework of various training programs organized by mountaineering societies that further address and emphasize the importance of preserving the natural environment. Moreover, it is a fact that the members of mountaineering societies (sometimes in collaboration with other public institutions and enterprises in the country) are often involved in organizing cleaning campaigns, trail marking or reforestation at many of our natural sites and by doing this they get acquainted with their own country in a unique way. By cleaning and maintaining the natural environment, besides caring for it, mountaineers also make their stay in nature more beautiful and safer.

4. 4. SPORT AND RECREATION DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

Thanks to the development of modern technology and the busy, stressful and sedentary lifestyle (many are sitting at work, sitting at home and sitting in their cars while driving to and from work), we are witnessing that our developed societies have become *chained to the screen*. A significant part of our time is spent in front of the computer and television or using the mobile phone. Many diseases are related with such a lifestyle, primarily related to the cardiovascular and cerebrovascular diseases and the metabolic syndrome diseases (often called the syndrome X), which include a number of fatal problems like obesity, hypertension, dyslipidemia and diabetes. It is significant that these diseases are generally marked as diseases of self-destruction, which means that their cause is the lifestyle that a person can change and therefore has a significant control over them. Just half an hour of physical activity and movement a day reduces the risk of aforementioned diseases and related health complications by more than 80%.

Mountaineers also die, but the quality of their lives and health throughout their lifetime is much higher compared to the general population. Whether we are talking about occasional and especially regular mountaineering, it is a physical activity that triggers the whole body and is along with swimming considered to be the most comprehensive physical activity. Since mountaineering tours usually last for several hours (or even days) it is an opportunity to improve physical strength and endurance. In particular we should note that the positive psychological effects of such physical activities in conjunction with the "return to nature" makes people calmer, more stable and more prepared to deal with many situations.

¹⁶ We have about 28,000 registered mountaineers. This figure can be increased with members of their close family and further, with their friends and unregistered mountaineers to 43,000 people. As Croatia has 4.3 million inhabitants, this would represent only 1% of the total population.

It is important to note the fact that although the mountaineering is closely associated with a sport lifestyle, few mountaineers will tell you that mountaineering is a sport. One of the most important characteristics of sport is the concept of competition and winning. And although it is said that it is not important to win but to take part,¹⁷ athletes are mainly driven by the Olympic motto of *faster, higher and stronger*.¹⁸ Mountaineers are, contrary to this attitude, not competing with anyone. Also, mountaineers are no challengers or rivals that need to be beaten, and mountaineers are not defeating any nature which surrounds them, but primarily admiring it. Mountaineer can possibly conquer himself by overcoming his fears and physical limitations.

4. 5. PROFESSIONAL - EDUCATIONAL DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

Professional - educational activities which are continuously carried out by the Croatian Mountaineering Association, tour guide services within the CMA, individual hiking societies, Croatian Mountain Guides Association (CMGA)¹⁹ and other related institutions, and especially all those volunteers who participate in the work of the aforementioned organizations are a fundamental source for the creation of mountaineering as an independent activity.

The main forms of training that can be had within these organizations are:

- a) *general mountaineering school* - basic educational program for the future, "hikers with a diploma"
- b) *professional programs, courses and trainings* in the field of: sport climbing, alpinism, caving, ski mountaineering, orientation running, ice climbing courses, guide courses, trail marking courses, tracking dogs training and other
- c) *seminars* in different areas that are associated with mountain activities in a broader sense: Seminars on crossing rivers, guiding practices, communication skills, sport psychology, sports physiology, the use of modern equipment and many others.

Thanks to the selfless efforts of all the participants in the professional - educational segment it is indeed possible to acquire lifelong mountaineering education.

In addition to initiating and conducting the aforementioned forms of education, CMA publishes a magazine called the *Croatian Mountaineer*, a monthly magazine which publishes all the latest news, insights, information and expert reviews related to our mountains and activities on these mountains.

We should also mention a segment that besides its professional - educational dimension could equally be a part of the environmental dimension of mountaineering, and this is creating and maintaining the so-called *Croatian mountaineering tour*. Croatian mountaineering tour consists of checkpoints linked into a meaningful whole and visitors who fulfill specific requirements are rewarded by the mountaineering society that cares about the checkpoint. (Caplar, 2011, p. 18) Today in Croatia there are hundreds of active tours which also means that there is at least the same number of designed i.e. conceptualized mountain routes and each of them may constitute a separate tourist attraction It is an enormous potential that is very much a result of professional work and ecological maintenance of our mountains and most of all the enthusiasm of unnamed individuals.

¹⁷ This "consoling" saying was conceived by a Bishop from Pennsylvania, Ethelbert Talbot, while preaching a mass for the participants of the Olympic Games in London in 1908.

¹⁸ In its Latin original motto reads: „Citius, altius, fortius!“

¹⁹ CMGA is the first and only independent professional association of guides in Croatia, founded on the 30th November 1996.

4. 6. INTERNATIONAL DIMENSION OF MOUNTAINEERING

Our maintained mountains are not here only for Croatian citizens but for all the people of good will. Of course, they are also climbed by foreign guests and in this way mountaineering, just like tourism in general, represents our open doors for international cooperation and meeting people from all over the world. This is a value *per se*.

In addition to these facts there is a need and effort to institutional link the domicile mountaineering organizations with international organizations of the same character. Thus CMA is a member of the International Mountaineering and Climbing Federation (UIAA)²⁰, the International Federation of Sport Climbing (IFSC), the International Ski Mountaineering Federation (ISMF) and the European Forum.

Similarly, the CMGA has been an active member of the Union of International Mountain Leader Associations (UIMLA) since 2009.

All these memberships are a proof of professional work by our organizations and their recognition at the international level, which is extremely important to continually be up to date with world events in this area of activity.

5. CONCLUSION

Mountaineering offers plenty of opportunities for those who know how to recognize them. Both at the individual level and at the level of general social values. Republic of Croatia has the great fortune to have an outstanding natural diversity on its national territory, although it is small in size. In this sense, our mountains are an essential segment that seems only to be discovered recently. We must be fast, efficient and environmentally friendly without patronizing because this wealth has with the Croatian accession to the European Union become the European wealth. Mountaineering makes one become a part of a special lifestyle that is becoming more in demand and a kind of luxury because of the fast way in which people live their technologically enriched lives. Recognizing this fact on one hand allows us to develop a whole new branch of tourism, while on the other hand it has a beneficial effect on us and relationships we develop with our surroundings. Therefore, mountaineering is a value in its own right that does not get worn with frequent use, but enriches us further.

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²⁰ UIAA is also a member of the International Olympic Committee (IOC). CMA became a member of the UIAA in 1991, before the international recognition of Croatian, as the first Croatian sports federation that has become a member of an international association.

INTERNET RESOURCES

1. <http://www.gss.hr/> - Croatian Mountain Rescue Service
2. <http://www.hnb.hr/> - Croatian National Bank
3. <http://www.hps.hr/> - Croatian Mountaineering Association
4. <http://www.mint.hr/> - Croatian Ministry of Tourism
5. <http://www.sgvh.hr/> - Croatian Mountain Guides Association
6. <http://www.weforum.org/> - World Economic Forum
7. <http://www.worldbank.org/> - World Bank