

## TOURIST ATTRACTIONS IDENTIFICATION OF LIPTOVSKÝ MIKULÁŠ FOR THE NEEDS OF URBAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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### Keywords:

- Urban tourism importance,
- Analysis of tourism development potential,
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### Abstract:

**Background:** Regional development is important task for many countries. Slovakia is no exception. In term of tourism development, region Liptov plays important role. Liptov is an exceptional region of Slovakia with extraordinary primary potential. Even this potential is used and tourism statistics increase, its centre, the town of Liptovský Mikuláš was stagnating. In this case it is more than needed (based on this regional potential) to create and use the possibilities of tourism development in terms of urban tourism. **Material and methods:** The methods used for the paper needs were descriptive and interpretive case studies. The main information of tourism development potential was obtained through the methods of field research and desk research- as the method of literary abstraction. **Results:** The abstraction enabled to point out the concrete elements of the possible development of tourism in the urban environment. On these fundamentals, the potential of urban tourism was defined. Using the method of induction, later concrete proposals of this kind of development were offered. **Conclusions:** Even the significant potential of the region, its main centre was stagnating for a long period. Nevertheless, it is suitable for urban tourism development with orientation to several tourism segments. It is more than needed use its cultural together with historical base on which different tourism products can be established.

### INTRODUCTION

Gúčík [2000] characterizes urban tourism as a form of visitor's stay in a city that can be motivated by tourist activities or business. Visitor motivation can be culture, education, shopping, visiting relatives or business, participation at a trade fair or conference. Šambronská [2015a] and Gúčík [2000] report that urban tourism is usually part of other forms of tourism. Urban tourism often takes the form of a weekend stay - a city break, and goes hand in hand with cultural, congress and religious tourism [Ryglová, Burian and Vajčnerová 2011, Šambronská 2015a]. Law [1993] understands urban tourism to mean a complex set of activities that are associated with an urban environment and which allow cities to attract visitors. Cave and Jolliffe [2012] report that the term urban tourism includes the activities of foreign, domestic visitors and residents in the city. At the same time, they describe that urban tourism can mean activities not only in large cities with millions of inhabitants but also in small towns, where cities can act as tourist destinations or serve as entry gates into a tourist-attractive area. Cities around the world are making a huge effort to attract as many tourists as possible, maximizing revenue from urban tourism.

### **Urban tourism and its offer**

World Tourism Organization UNWTO [2012] states that urban tourism is closely linked to short, often weekend stays and that for a city break destination to be a success, it is necessary to meet certain assumptions. Kuhn and Tomas [2011] recall that today's tourists are experienced and demanding. According to Šambronská [2015b], an interesting historical or cultural offer, easily accessible information about the city or destinations and good transport accessibility is of interest to visitors. Hayllar, Griffin and Edwards [2008] report that cities are attractive for tourists due to the concentration, variety and quality of attractions and activities that can be seen and realized in the city. The diversity of the city is an opportunity to attract a wide range of visitors, older and more educated tourists appreciate the cultural and historical sights of the towns and vice versa young people can reach the offer of entertainment and sporting events.

Urban tourism is, according to Kmec [2003], like other forms of tourism, based on existing primary and secondary offerings.

1. **The primary offer in urban tourism** represents the elements of cultural-historical and natural potential that lie on the territory of the city. The cultural and historical potential of Kmeco [2003] features castles, chateaus, sacral buildings, historical centres of cities and architectural monuments. The geographic location of the city, climatic and hydrological conditions, and the existence of zoological and botanical gardens Kmeco [2003] describe as a natural potential. He adds that many cities have an important function of organized events, whether cultural, social, sports or business events.
2. **Secondary offer of urban tourism** includes superstructure (accommodation and catering facilities) and tourism infrastructure such as museums, galleries, tourist information centres, travel agencies, trade and entertainment centres. In addition, existing social and technical infrastructure [Kmeco 2003] is needed in order to develop urban tourism.

In connection with the premise that cities are destined for work, and rural areas for recreation, Cave and Jolliff [2012] urban tourism is also needed to incorporate a piece of nature into the urban environment. City parks, greenery, water areas or interesting scenery serve as a convenient and welcome addition to visiting historical sites. Although Kmeco [2003] adds that urban tourism has an increasing tendency in Europe and Slovakia, the development of tourism in cities according to Fore [2016] is influenced by the following factors:

- Attractive material historical monuments (from buildings like churches, houses, former factories to healing springs in spa towns);
- socio-economic conditions (cultural, economic and political factors),
- facilities necessary for tourism (accommodation, catering, leisure, sports, medical, entertainment and other facilities);
- transport accessibility (not only arrival and departure from the destination, but also orientation and marking for cars and cyclists, parking and cycling routes),
- offering services such as business, culture, education or healthcare,
- the atmosphere of the city, the uniqueness called "genius loci" as well as the willingness and liveliness of services providers and locals.

### **Basic characteristics of the destination and its potential**

The town of Liptovský Mikuláš lies in the north of Slovakia, in the middle of Liptovská kotlina, surrounded by the Western Tatras in the north, the Low Tatras in the south

and the Choč Mountains in the northwest [PHSR LM 2015]. It stretches over an area of 70.1 km<sup>2</sup> and flows through the river Váh, which flows into the water reservoir Liptovská Mara [LM City, ICM LM 2008] at its western edge. It lies at an altitude of 576 m n. m., which makes it the 10th highest situated city in Slovakia. It is the economic, administrative and cultural centre of the Upper and Middle Liptov and an important centre of tourism and Slovak sports [Komárová et al., 2007].

Liptovský Mikuláš is the gateway to the Western and Low Tatras and is called and "the city between the mountains" [Droppa 1968: 10]. The city between the mountains is just one of the attributes of Liptovský Mikuláš as well as the City of Culture and Associations, the City of the Leather Industry, or the official title City of the Olympic Winners (LM City, ICM LM 2008). It has sixteen town districts - Andice, Benice, Bodice, Demanova, Il'anova, Liptovská Ondrašová, Nábrežie-Vrbica, Okoličné, Palúdzka, Ploštín, Podbreziny, Ráztoky, Staré Mesto, Stošice, Svätý Štefan a Vitálišovce.

The town is situated on the main road to Žilina - Prešov and the railway line Žilina - Košice. The airports are in the cities of Bratislava, Košice, Poprad, Žilina and Sliac and the nearest airport is in Poprad - 56 km [LM City, ICM LM 2008].

In the immediate vicinity of the town there are Liptovská Mara, Aquapark Tatralandia, Liptovský Trnovec, Žiarska valley, Demänovská valley and Jánska valley [PHSR LM 2015]. Proximity of the Žiarska valley in the Western Tatras, Demänovská valley with caves and the Jasná Low Tatras Ski Resort, Jánska valley with thermal springs, the Aquapark Tatralandia and a city rich history make Liptovský Mikuláš an important and exceptional tourism destination.

Table 1 Basic data of Liptovský Mikuláš

<b>Self-governing region</b>	Žilina
<b>District</b>	Liptovský Mikuláš
<b>Population</b> (as of 18.03.2018)	31 083

Source: own processing up to <https://egov.mikulas.sk/>

It belongs to the middle-sized towns of Slovakia and functions as an administrative, economic and cultural center not only of Liptov, but also of the district [PHSR of LM 2015]. Liptovský Mikuláš belongs to the developed industrial areas. The town industries include production of food and beverages, traditional processing of leather and production of leather products, production of machinery and equipment, production of electrical and optical equipment, processing of wood and production of wood products. The largest employers in the city include COOP Jednota Liptovský Mikuláš - consumer cooperative, Liptovská nemocnica with polyclinic Liptovský Mikuláš and IKEA Industry Slovakia s.r.o. An important employer is also Tatry mountain resorts, a.s., wholesale CBA VEREX, a.s., SlovTan Contract Tannery spol. Ltd. - Leather Industry, Road Construction Liptovský Mikuláš, spol. Ltd. and Liptovské pekárny a cukrárne VČELA - Lippek k.s. [PHSR of Liptovský Mikuláš 2015].

## AIM OF THE WORK

The main objective of the paper is to identify the potential of Liptovský Mikuláš for the needs of the development of urban tourism and the characteristics of the cooperation of the subjects involved in the development of tourism in the city.

## **MATERIAL AND THE METHODOLOGY**

For the purposes of the paper several methods were used. As the main methods on which theoretical part was built were field research together with desk research. Field research focused to actual possibilities that the town provides and the desk research cumulated by the method of literature abstraction the theoretical base. By the methods of descriptive and interpretive case studies, the potential could be identified. Using the method of induction new products of urban development were proposed.

Study design was created based on needs of urban tourism development in Slovak conditions. Many town dispose by great potential that may attract tourism participants but they need help in products creation. This is the example of the town of Liptovský Mikuláš. Its location and potential the surround the town is so significant that developing the activities for tourists may help the town to increase its statistics.

Data collection was realized based of cumulating strategic document that are mentioned in the list of references. On the data obtained from them, future development proposals were offered. Statistical analysis in this type of case studies based on field and desk research with combination of literature abstraction was not needed. Information obtained for the purposes of this paper had mainly theoretical, not statistical character. For the data interpretation the method of deduction was used. It pointed out the most important elements of town development and later the products were offered. Manuscript preparation was elaborated by the team of authors. Literature search consisted mainly on the development documents of the region, of the town and the most significant organisation developing tourism in the region called Cluster Liptov. These documents brought clear identification of the activities held in present and showed where is the space to create more products that may help the town to attract the tourists.

### **Identification of entities involved in the development of tourism in the city**

Local government plays an important role in case of the town of Liptovský Mikuláš. Local government in cooperation with organizations in its area of responsibility defines the marketing strategy of the town in the tourism field. It covers the management of the product packages of the town, generates analyses and statistics and provides most of the cultural and sporting events. In order for the tourism industry to be able to develop successfully, tourism operators must cooperate with each other, have clearly defined competencies and responsibilities and a unified marketing and communication strategy [PHSR of LM 2015]. There is no separate department of tourism development at Liptovský Mikuláš Municipal Authority (town hall), but one of the municipal councils is the Committee of Tourism and Business.

Table 2 Tourism entities in the city

Tourism entities in the city	
<b>Information centre of Liptovský Mikuláš</b>	<p>The information centre was established in December 1992 as the first information centre in Slovakia [Kellová 2014]. ICC is the contributing organization of the town of Liptovský Mikuláš and the main town marketing organization in the field of domestic and active tourism. Provides information services about the city and the region to visitors and the local population, provides marketing and communication of the town in the field of tourism, creation and realization of its own products and provision of commercial complementary services. ICC is a partner of the public and private sector and provides for the coordination of urban tourism on a partnership basis with other tourism entities products provided by ICC LM:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Liptovský Mikuláš 7x in different ways</li> <li>b) Product package "Liptovský Mikuláš for families with children"</li> <li>c) The Church of St. Mikuláš with Audio guide</li> <li>d) Synagogue audio guide [City Council in Liptovský Mikuláš 2017b]</li> </ul>
<b>Regional Tourism Organization(RTO) Liptov</b>	<p>The city is a member of the regional organization of the Region of Liptov, which provides regional marketing strategy, regional product package - Liptov Region Card, central reservation system of accommodation and marketing communication of the region. RTO The Liptov Region was established in 2012 and merged with Liptovský Ján Turizmus and Jasná in 2014. This unified organization of destination management in the region under the LIPTOV brand [RTO Liptov Region 2017a] began.</p>
<b>Cluster Liptov</b>	<p>The Cluster Liptov Tourism Association was established in 2008 as the first organization of destination management in Slovakia. Cluster vision was to build a European recognizable tourist destination from Liptov. [Cluster Liptov 2009]. From 1.12.2011 entered into force Act no. 91/2010 on tourism support, according to which self-governments and entrepreneurs in tourism can establish regional tourism organizations. The Cluster of Liptov coexists with the ROT (Regional Tourism Organization), they have distributed activities and cooperate until the funds from the EU funds that Cluster acquired [Liptovský Mikuláš Municipal Council 2012] have been exhausted.</p>
<b>Association „Living Square“</b>	<p>The "Living Square" civic association was established in 2015 in order to revive and increase the visitors to the historical centre of Liptovský Mikuláš. The association wants to contribute to improving the quality of life in the city for all ages and social groups of residents and visitors and eye and meeting their leisure time needs. The CA's activities include the organization of cultural, social, sporting, gastronomic and other leisure activities and the introduction of mutual cooperation between commercial and non-commercial entities operating in the historical core of the city as well as the inhabitants living in this part of the city [PHSR LM 2015].</p>

Source: Kellová 2014, City Council in Liptovský Mikuláš 2017b, RTO Liptov Region 2017a, Cluster Liptov 2009, Liptovský Mikuláš Municipal Council 2012 and PHSR LM 2015

In addition to the above-mentioned organizations, Town hall departments - the Marketing and Business Department and the Youth, Sports and Culture Department and several cultural institutions - also participate in the development of tourism products and management in the city. The cultural institutions of the city are mainly the Museum of Jan Král, the House of Culture, but also the Liptov Gallery of Peter Michal Bohuna, the Liptov Cultural Centre and the Cultural Centre of Hole to the World.

## **Current products of urban tourism in Liptovský Mikuláš**

### **1. St. Nicholas Summer**

The idea of realizing the project with the intention of using and reviving the reconstructed pedestrian zone in the town centre and concentrating on it a large part of the summer events was created in 2007. Subsequently, it was developed into the product "St. Nicholas Summer", which was created in order to present the local culture and customs during 8 thematic weekends. Great attention is paid to the promotion of Nicholas' Summer, mainly through promotional materials, posters, advertising banners, as well as regional television, regional print and the town's website [Žilina self-governing region 2008].

The main goals of St. Nicholas Summer include:

- Make the town centre more attractive for residents, visitors and tourists,
- To provide the target groups with unrepeatable experiences, a unique atmosphere, attractive cultural activities and an opportunity to learn local culture and customs [Žilina self-governing region 2008].

### **2. Tourist application Liptovský Mikuláš**

The Tourist Application of Liptovský Mikuláš offers guides in two sacral monuments (St. Nicholas Church, Synagogue), 12 top attractions of the historical centre, product packages for families with children, pupils and students, sportsmen and seniors, thematic sightseeing tours through the city, calendar of events and accommodation and catering equipment. Users navigate the application using interactive maps and Bluetooth 4.0 Low Energy beacons located in each historical monument. The app is available for Android and iPhone devices and is available in English and Polish in addition to the English. City visitors can download free of charge the tourist app of Liptovský Mikuláš to their mobile device. It is needed to turn on Bluetooth and then just leave to navigate comfortably to 12 top historical centre attractions, tourists can choose a tailor-made program, event or restaurant [City Council in Liptovský Mikuláš, 2017a].

### **3. Liptov Region Card**

The Liptov Region Card is a regional and loyalty discount card that allows the holder to get a discount of 5-100% of partner tours, attractions and facilities. The Liptov Region Card project (LRC) was created on the initiative of the Liptov Cluster in 2009. In 2014, the project changed, when the RTO Liptov Region, in cooperation with the Liptov Region, started to distribute the LRC free to the property owners who pay the tax for each lodger to the local municipal office. A regional register of hotels has been incorporated into the software, which gives the city authorities an overview of the number of accommodation units. Thanks to the project and the introduction of incentives for property owners who provide LRC clients free, the amount of the collected hotel tax has been increased. During winter season 2017/2018, cardholders have the option of taking discounts on 54 facilities in Liptov. User of a card is given bonus points after using one of the benefits, which they can

also obtain for providing a review of services and accommodation at one of the partner accommodation facilities in the region [RTO Liptov 2017a; 2017d].

#### **4. Ski & Aqua bus, City bus**

During the winter season, skiers and holidaymakers can comfortably travel to the slopes or Aquaparks using the Ski & Aqua Bus. Buses connect the resorts Jasná, Malinô Brdo, Tatralandia, Bešeňová, Lúčky Spa, Liptovský Mikuláš, Liptovský Ján and Ružomberok. Every Wednesday for evening entertainment in Liptovský Mikuláš guests are taken from Jasná City bus. Bus transport is free for LRC card holders [RTO Liptov 2017e].

#### **5. Wednesday Evenings in the historic town center**

The Information Centre in cooperation with the City, the Janka Kráľa Museum, the Living Square Association and the RTO The Liptov Region prepares winter evening programs in the historic centre, which are temporarily connected with the City bus from Jasná. In 2017, the program began with a visit to the Church of St. Mikuláš and the historical centre with a tourist guide, when the visitors were briefly introduced the most important moments of history, personalities and the traditions of the city. Followed by the special animation program Let's get caught in the Janka Kráľa Museum and the Nicholas Martyr, where the visitors are stolen from by "real robbers". They can also search for the treasures of the legendary thief Jánošík, throw a coin and take a picture in historical costumes. The program ends by the invitation to selected gastronomic establishments involved in the project, which were open until 24:00. [Municipal Council in Liptovský Mikuláš, 2017a]. As part of the Nicholas Summer, every Friday there usually is a fun way showing the city's history with animation programs Let's get caught and Nicholas is having fun. In 2018, evening evenings in the historical centre of the city continue with the program Beware. In the Jan Kráľa Museum, every Wednesday evening, there are figures linked to the history of the city - Juraj Jánošík, the most famous Habsburg master Jožko Píto and the steam turbine engineer Aurel Stodola with his pupil Albert Einstein. The history of the town is shown to the visitors by its patron, St. Nicholas. The program ends with a tasting of the traditional herbal liqueur Demänovka and an invitation to the gastronomic establishments in the centre [Museum Janka Kráľa 2018].

#### **6. Liptov star**

In the year 2016, the fourth year of the project called Liptovská hviezda was carried out. This means a rating of restaurants and cafes in cooperation with quality experts. Based on the anonymous evaluation of facilities through a professional agency, 12 of the 22 sites involved were awarded. Awarded equipment can use the Liptovská hviezda (star) quality certificate for two years. The Golden Liptovská hviezda (star) were awarded two cafes in the centre of Liptovský Mikuláš - Aurelica Coffee and the Central Perk Café. Silver Liptovská star got 2 restaurants from Liptovský Mikuláš - Restart Burger and Pávík Pávík. By the Bronze Liptovská hviezda (star) was awarded the CaffèIN café and the Atlas Restaurant [OOCR Liptov 2017a; 2017f].

#### **7. Treasures of Liptov**

Treasures of Liptov is a fun and adventure game aimed at getting to know and discovering the region, especially for families with children. Treasures of Liptov are divided into 7 categories; in 2017 the project cooperated with 51 tourist attractions of Liptov. After completing 5 tasks and passing the coupon at designated places during the summer season, the children were entered in the attractive raffle with prizes for all of family [RTO Liptov Region 2017g].

Organized events in the city. The Central Information Centre is created by the City of Liptovský Mikuláš. Around 30 subjects are involved in the creation of a comprehensive calendar of cultural, sporting and social events organized in the area of Liptovský Mikuláš. Annually, about 800 events are published, they are published in the Mikuláš monthly [City Council in Liptovský Mikuláš, 2017a]. Table 2 lists those that are repeated every year.

Table 3 Regular events in Liptovský Mikuláš

<b>Month</b>	<b>Event title</b>
January	New Year's Concert
February	Shrovetide in the city, National Week of Marriage
March	Celebration of the International Women's Day, Festival of the Constellation of Mountains
April	April Liptov Ride, Liptov International Slalom
May	1st Celebration, First Mile of Liptov, Family Day, International Tatra Slalom
June	Belopotocký's Mikuláš, Stoličné dni
July	Nicholas Summer Night run, Liptovfest, Nicholas Jazz Festival
August	St. Nicholas Summer, Street Music Night, Mosty Gesharim, Oldtimer Rally Tatras, Children's Folklore Festival Pod skalkou - Ploštín
September	Švábkafest, Mikulášska pohoda, Walking Day - Up Váhom, Váhom valley, Enviroride
October	Ivan Stodola Theater Festival, October at the Fest, The Last Mile of Liptov
November	Liptovská zabijáčka, Festival PAN, Lampionový sprievod
December	Nicholas Fair, Christmas Markets, Advent Concerts

Source: own processing according to LM's Consolidated Annual Report for 2016

## **RESULTS**

Based on the previous fields and desk research of which results can be seen in previous chapters of the paper, the aim was to propose new tourism products that can be used in the future to support the urban tourism development in mentioned town. New tourism products were proposed based on the exceptional elements from cultural and historical field as well as on the availability of the place.

### **New activities of urban tourism development in Liptovský Mikuláš**

As mentioned, the town of Liptovský Mikuláš is the centre of Liptov, but it should focus on what is unique in comparison with other towns and why tourists coming to the region should visit it. Here are some suggestions that come from this analysis.



### **1. Utilization of the connection with the town Liptovský Mikuláš – Nicholas' House**

What the other cities cannot imitate is the name of the city and its connection with the figure of St. Nicholas. The history of the city and the present city centre is inherently connected with the St. Nicholas dome. The name of the city is derived from the patron of dome. Where else should St. Nicholas has home, if not in Liptovský Mikuláš? Therefore, our first proposal is to create a St. Nicholas House that would not be built on just one shock event but to be used year-round. The inspiration was the town of Rovaniemi in Finland, which is the home of Santa Claus, as well as creative workshops for children during the Christmas markets in Vienna. Since there is not enough room to build a larger Nicholas house in the city centre all year round, we suggest using one of the historic homes that are located on the Liberation Square. The Janko Kráľ Museum is housed in two buildings and on the ground floor of one of them, there is a clothing store. These spaces would be suitable for this proposal, due to their location and cooperation with the Museum.

It would be a new fun-educational attraction designed for children, where the kids together with their parents or teachers would have opportunity to visit St. Nicholas, his helper angel and devil throughout the year. Marketing campaign with a slogan Mikuláš could be targeted not only on Slovak visitors but also on visitors from abroad. Find out the home of St. Nicholas could be the name and so on for the newly created game of Treasures of Liptov, which would include attractiveness on the territory of the city. The information centre of the town of Liptovský Mikuláš could expand the offer of its sightseeing routes on the route called " Nicholas, at the end of which a sweet reward would be prepared for children in the Nicholas House. For creative workshops, would require adequate equipment. (for example, a baking oven for cookies, creative stuff, tables and chairs, etc.) Children could learn to cook, decorate, draw, try different art techniques or sew, embroider, crochet, go to the monument St. Nicholas, etc.

### **2. Linking tourism to cultural heritage and urban tourism**

Year 2018 is a European Year of Cultural Heritage and its aim is to encourage people to become more interested in and appreciate the value of cultural heritage and the need to preserve it for future generations [Ministry of Culture, SR 2018]. As part of this year's celebration of the richness and diversity of Europe's cultural heritage, our next proposal is to create a product for visitors from Israel, visitors of Jewish religion or Jewish descent. Visitors who come to a certain country to identify where they come from are also considered participants of this type of tourism. For over two centuries, Liptovský Mikuláš was the centre of the Jewish community in Liptov, for 85 years it was the seat of Rabbinic school. In recent years, there has been an increase in visitors from Israel, and in the months of July and August. In 2017, more than 3000 visitors visited the Nicholas Synagogue. Since cultural heritage tourism is associated with the management and protection of cultural heritage values, it would be appropriate to restore the original Jewish cemetery in the city. In the synagogue, free Wi-Fi is available to the visitor, and the audio guide of a synagogue is the part of the Liptovský Mikuláš tourist application. Due to the growing interest of visitors from Israel, it would be appropriate to translate the promotional material and audio guide to Hebrew. A visit to the Jewish cemetery would be linked to an existing tour of the Mikuláš Jews. This sightseeing route is a reminder of the significant Nicholas Jewish families and is associated with a visit to the synagogue. In the synagogue, a permanent exhibition is staged that presents the stories and fates of the Nicholas Jewish community. One of the characteristics of cultural heritage tourism is that it provides funding for its preservation for future generations. Funds raised from this product should then be invested in the restoration and conservation of these cultural heritage sites. Creating a product for Jewish visitors would require the co-operation of multiple partners in the city. In addition to the information centre of the town of Liptovský

Mikuláš and the Janko Král' Museum, which administers the synagogue, it would be necessary to include also an accommodation and catering facilities that would satisfy the requirements of this client and which would be included during the summer season or in the specified dates.



Figure 1 Design of product promotional material for visitors from Israel

Source: own image processing - your own photo; <http://2.bp.blogspot.com/-TJ0yh6MqPQ0/TkeUn28nEI/AAAAAAAAADhA/zv4GtJNXZoE/s1600/interior+ag+2011.jpg>; <http://zilina-gallery.sk/picture.php?/26568/category/2066>. April 2018

### 3. Linking of creative and urban tourism

In recent years, creativity has been particularly emphasized in urban development. Our next suggestion is therefore to combine urban tourism with creative tourism so that visitors have the opportunity to be co-owners of their own experience. The principle of engaging visitors could be used in several city tours.

Table 4 Combination of creative and urban tourism products

Route A: The traditions of St. Nicholas	Trails visitors to the industrial heritage - garbage, fur, dairy and distillery, characteristic of Liptovský Mikuláš and its surroundings. This sightseeing tour includes a visit to the Janko Král' Museum and creative workshops and tasting of non-alcoholic products.
Route B - The Artists of Mikuláš	Sightseeing tour is part of the visit to the Liptov Gallery of Petr Michal Bohuna and the Basic Art School of Jan Levoslav Bella. Visitors would learn about the famous personalities of Liptovský Mikuláš through their active involvement in the creation of arts with the possibility of playing a musical instrument or to try art techniques- under the guidance of lecturers of the Primary Art School and the Liptov Gallery.

Source: own processing

Although Liptovský Mikuláš is not a large town, in relatively small space it allows visitors to experience a lot. It is characterized by a variety of offers and focuses on constantly improving the quality of services for both visitors and locals. In Liptovský Mikuláš, experienced professionals, as well as young and creative people, are active in the field of tourism. Although there is no separate tourism department at Liptovský Mikuláš, there is no shortage of new ideas in the city, and each of the organizations and institutions brings a new

look at the further development of tourism in and around the city. These bodies are involved in the preparation and implementation of many events and projects, and they plan to continue to working together. The city is also seeing a greater focus on visitors, such as extending the opening hours of the information centre and cultural institutions. In the context of increasing tourist visibility, it is necessary to add quality signs in the city in several world languages, as well as in an accommodation and catering facilities, to create more relaxation zones in the city centre, to add missing benches, to link urban public transport with a historical centre, which would make it easier for visitors to visit while increasing its traffic.

## **CONCLUSION**

Tourism can be one of the sources of economic and social development in tourism attractive but economically stagnant cities and areas. Developing urban tourism helps to raise the living standards of people living in the city, notably by increasing employment, tourism revenue and infrastructure development [UNWTO 2012]. It is undeniable that Slovakia has competitive primary prerequisites for the development of various types and forms of tourism [Kmeco 2003; Kuhn and Tomášová 2011]. Due to the potential of Slovak towns, urban tourism has the prospect of developing successfully in Slovakia as well. This also includes Liptovský Mikuláš, where cultural and historical potentials are located, events are organized and the city is the centre of Liptov, which is surrounded by rich natural potential. The aim of the contribution was to identify the tourist attractiveness of the city of Liptovský Mikuláš for the needs of urban tourism. We have characterized the subjects involved in the creation of products in the city, and their mutual co-developers create a unique destination for urban tourism. Because the product of the urban tourism is relatively easily interchangeable, similar offers can be offered by other Slovak cities, but at the same time, it is important to consider the development of environmentally friendly tourism.

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