REFERENCES


HOTEL CHAINS IN SLOVAKIA

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Abstract. Slovakia's accession to the EU have been lift travel restrictions on persons and increased demands for quality services, which increased competition in the tourism market, as reflected in hotel industry of SR. Development of tourism in the world and thus in Slovakia is influenced by globalization, which is one of the landmarks of the 21st century. Globalization is a multi-layered process in which the most important role is played by megacorporations, international companies, but this process also involving the small and medium business as well as the tourism industry customers. Globalization starts when the internationalization of economic life develops in the space across the planet.

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Introduction. The globalization creates a new universal lifestyle that interferes with fashion, music, food, human behavior, rest, recreation....Globalization also means increased international division of labor achieved through international fragmentation of production, as well as political trends towards more liberal economic order (Smeral, 1998, 372). It translates not only into institutional market changes (mergers, acquisitions, cooperation agreements, marketing alliances) but also in the strategies of companies in terms of territorial scope, access to foreign markets and distribution network and also finds its reflection in the internal organization of companies (for example outsourcing, individuality, means of communication, the establishment of foreign branches) (Palatková, 2012).

Globalization is a multi-layered process in which the most important role is played by megacorporations, international companies, but this process also involves the small and medium business as well as the tourism industry customers. Tourism has become big business and is operated by the big trusts. In tourism, globalization affects the demand and supply in several ways. The supply factors include, for example, using of computer and reservation systems, reducing transport costs of traveling by airplane and other transportation to chosen destination, new forms of management, exploring new destinations etc. Regarding a demand factor of globalization in tourism, rising of salary and rising of living standards, experience and education of tourists, interested in the new destination, etc. may be included. Characteristic features of the globalization of tourism by Feig (Smeral, 1998) are:

Economy
- Horizontal and vertical integration strategies of tourism enterprises
- Foreign investment in hotels and tourist attractions ("globaltourismmarkets")
- Global players and strategic alliances (air companies, hotels, tour operators)
- Global tourism management
- Global competition of holiday resorts

Technology
- Global booking systems
- Standardized technologies in transport systems

Culture
- Global tourist: uniform traveller behaviour
- Creation of "global tourist village"

Ecology
- Tourism as "global syndrome of ecology problem"
- Climate changes and their effects on destinations
Politics

- Increasing importance of international tourism organizations
- Necessity for global coordination and regulation of passenger circulation
- Sustainable development as quality and dominant idea

By Slovakia’s accession to the EU travel restrictions were lifted and the requirements for service quality have been increased, which has increased competition in the tourism market, as reflected in the hotel industry in Slovakia. Trends in the hotel industry are based on the needs and behavior of the market, respectively clients. In the Western Europe a long-term continuing trend is spending holidays in their own country, which is based on the fact that people not realize vacation only one but two or three times per year. This trend is slowly starting to develop also in Slovakia. The number of domestic guests in Slovak hotels is slowly growing, but still the share of overnight stays of domestic and foreign guests is still around 60:40.

Hotel industry is related with activity of hotels - property used for temporary accommodation for guests, which has more than ten rooms. Except accommodation, catering and ancillary services, entertainment and community services, commercial passenger services and recreational sports services on the active leisure are also provided. It is the service sector, which meets the individual needs of consumers. We see it as part of tourism and it is also a prerequisite for its further development. The development of hotel industry is one of the residence conditions in the frame of tourism development. Tourism and its sub-sector - hotel industry - develop in parallel and influence each other, this dependence is twofold:

1. dependency of tourism on hotel industry – without hotel business, there can be no residential tourism
2. dependency of hotel business on tourism where the important factor is the capacity of hotel business and its development.

Globalization brings many new ways of business and in the hotel business, which is reflected in particular by creating a new domestic hotel chains or the introduction of foreign hotel chains that offer a higher standard of service levels, design, and equipment of hotels, which are reflected in the brand and differentiate types of hotels. Until the socio-political changes of 1989, Slovak hotels were not linked to international information and international reservation systems, with notable exception of the largest hotels, namely Interhotels. After their collapse, the first international hotel company entered to Bratislava market was the company InterContinental Hotels Group, which opened hotel Holiday Inn in Bratislava in 1996.

The current state of hotel industry in Slovakia. Although the hotel business in Slovakia has not a rich history as for example in the United States and European countries like France or Germany, it has achieved a comparable level with the hotel business in neighboring countries. The transformation of the economy after 1989 allowed the changes in this sector. Most large hotels, especially interhotels, became independent (which in this period were used primarily by the foreign clients from the Eastern Bloc countries), for example Interhotel Bratislava, Interhotel Ružomberok Interhotel Tatras Starý Smokovec (which belong to the travel agency
Čedok, which is subject of Ministry of Commerce of Czechoslovakia), as well as other hotels operated by consumer cooperatives, social organizations, such as for example „ROH“, „SZM“. By restitution some hotels have become the property of original owners. In the privatization process, the hotel owners become people who had sufficient funds and often absent professional readiness. Unprofessionalism in such hotel management not only led to a decline in the quality of services offered by the hotel, but often to bankruptcy, and respectively to the change of the hotel owner. Although a number of large and medium class hotels *** and **** preserve and maintain the range and level of service, the transformation led to many changes. New home networks have been created, for example, the largest national network of Sorea hotels was formed in 1993 from hotels and recreation centers of “ROH”, which today operates by 14 hotels in the most attractive areas of Slovakia (High and Low Tatras, “Ľubovnianske Spa”, “Ľiptovský Ján”, Bratislava, Piešťany). Free hotel chain, Slovakia Inn, has been operated since 2001, which includes hotels with keeping strict criteria established by Internet Security Schemes for the desired service standard. The network includes hotels: Hotel SLOVAKIA – convention center Žilina, Hotel CARPATIA Bratislava, Hotel SMREČINA Párnica-Zázrivá, Hotel POD SOKOLÍM – “Vrátna Valley”.

Slovakia with its position in Central Europe has become attractive for foreign investment in the tourism sector. Foreign hotel companies entered to the Slovak hotel industry in the early 90's. The first company, that opened a new hotel in Bratislava – Hotel Forum – today Crowne Plaza and Holiday Inn, was Intercontinental Hotels Group chain. At the beginning of the 21st century multinational hotel companies such as Accor, Carlson and Orea Hotels joined, which also established the first hotels in Bratislava (Mištík, 2007) and later penetrate in other regions of Slovakia.

Slovakia with its small area, but more conveniently located in the heart of Europe and having rich natural and cultural attractions offers to visitors a constantly growing hotel market with increasingly higher quality services. In 2008 3434 accommodation establishments were in Slovakia (with 57 860 rooms with a capacity of 187 698 beds), of which the number of hotels has 596. In these hotels 27 465 rooms were available for visitors with a capacity of 58 357 beds, which benefited more than half (2 357 603 of visitors) guest in the accommodations (4 082 645 million of visitors). Number of overnights in accommodation establishments in Slovakia reached 12 464 104, of which 6 263 042 million overnight relate to hotels. Development of the hotel capacity is shown steady development without major fluctuations, which is characteristic for this sector (Figure 1, Figure 2).

The distribution of hotels in Slovakia is very uneven. They are closely linked to the tourist destinations. Almost half of hotels are concentrated in three regions. Most hotels up to 115 (19%) of the number of hotels in Slovakia are situated in Žilina region with interesting tourist, natural, cultural and historical areas such as Kysuce, Orava and Liptov. Followed by the Žilina region, accounting for 19,57 % of beds (12569 beds) dominated with recreational hotel located in mountainous areas, the major water areas (Orava, Liptovská Mara) or cultural and natural heritage. It is followed by Prešov with 105 hotels (17,1% of the hotels SR), where is located in the...
most beautiful and most visited mountains in Slovakia - High Tatras. The High Tatras concentrate the largest number of hotel beds in the Prešov region, which has big available capacity (16,65% - 10 692 beds) of hotel beds in Slovakia. The third region by the number of hotels is the Bratislava region (88), its capacity is concentrated in the Slovak capital city Bratislava (66 hotels). Except Bratislava, the city hotels are mainly represented in the larger regional cities (Košice, Banská Bystrica, Žilina, Prešov, Trnava, Trenčín, Nitra), satisfy a needs for short-term tourism and congress tourism especially in spa towns (Piešťany, Bojnice, Bardejov, Trenčianske Teplice), where visitors are able to use them for the needs of long-term treatment.

![Figure 1 – Number of hotels in 2011](image1.png) ![Figure 2 – Number of rooms in 2011](image2.png)

The number of foreign clients of hotels reached the figure of 2 110 732 visitors. In the structure of Slovakia's visitors dominant position have guests from the surrounding countries, especially from the Czech Republic (29,1%) and Poland with 14,5%, followed by Germany with 10,4%, Hungary with 5,6%, United Kingdom with 3,8% and Austria with 3,7% (2011).

**Hotel chains in Slovakia.** Economic transformation and globalization has brought new trends also to the hotel ownership structure. Form of business may be independent or may be implemented through lease respectively through franchise agreements. Under the ownership structure hotels in Slovakia are divided into the following groups:

a) Individual - hotel owner is a person or a group of persons, or a company with more than one manager (whether with domestic or foreign capital), for example, Hotel Sitno in Vyhne

b) Franchise "rent" - the hotel is owned by another company than the one which manages its operational activities (e.g. Grandhotel Kempinski High Tatras, which is owned by a Slovak company J & T Hotel Management, but the operator is a German company Kempinski Hotels A.G)

c) Hotel chains - owner and operator is an international hotel chain, for example, Hotel Ibis in Bratislava. Hotel chain consists of two or more hotels.

Standards of global hotel chains significantly improve services for both guests and visitors of hotel. Today visitors use to pay attention by choosing hotels that offer more complex service – they are interested in luxury, comfort, relaxation, but also in the opportunity to combine business duties with a pleasant evening relax in the hotel. This leads to the development especially of hotels that meet all the following conditions - situation in the city center, a warm atmosphere and modern design.
Development of hotels and comparation between them cause a need to establish minimum requirements for international hotel classification. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has recommended to member states the minimum requirements to lead the world towards a single class hotels star labeling with the name of the hotel. This marking is not internationally compatible. Rules are set by the state or individual professional associations (Vavreková, 2007). Determining the class of hotel in Slovakia is based on current legislation (decree no. 277 of June 26, 2008) which ranks hotels to 5 classes from * to *****. In the hotel structure relatively balanced ratio of lower category hotel (* 104 – 17,45% of hotels and ** 149 - 25,0%) and middle category (** 249 – 41,78%) of hotels is observed (figure 2). The frequency of higher category hotels achieves 15,77% (** 91- 15,27% and ***** 3 – 0,6% of hotels in 2011, their number increased to 4 (Table 1, Table 2). In order to achieve maximum profits the category (according to the focus – for example wellness, congress, Spa hotel) is determined by the hotelier himself (Figure 3). New types of hotels were established that globalization has brought about mainly by foreign capital. You can find international hotel chains in Slovakia such as Accor (Ibis), Best Western, InterContinental Hotels (Holiday Inn, Crowne Plaza), Carlson / SAS Rezidor (Radisson), Hotel Kempinski. They are located in the beautifully reconstructed historic buildings or newly constructed modern buildings and provide international standards of quality fortified by Slovak distinctive charm.

Table 1 – Level classes of hotels in Slovakia in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of accommodation</th>
<th>Number of rooms in total</th>
<th>Number of beds in total</th>
<th>of which permanent beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hotels *****</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>8 080</td>
<td>17 451</td>
<td>15 685</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels ****</td>
<td>255</td>
<td>11 502</td>
<td>26 368</td>
<td>22 623</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels ***</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>5 030</td>
<td>11 969</td>
<td>10 530</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hotels **</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>3 318</td>
<td>8 428</td>
<td>7 630</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>27 930</td>
<td>64 216</td>
<td>56 468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2 – Capacity and performances of tourism accommodation establishments by types of hotels in 2011

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Number of accommodation</th>
<th>Number of rooms in total</th>
<th>Number of beds in total</th>
<th>of which permanent beds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mountain hotels*** to *</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>2 196</td>
<td>6 422</td>
<td>5 335</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Congress hotels***** to ***</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1 188</td>
<td>2 550</td>
<td>2 232</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wellness hotels****** to ***</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>443</td>
<td>1 135</td>
<td>939</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spa hotels ***** to ***</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>620</td>
<td>1 131</td>
<td>1 124</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boutique hotely ***** a ****</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>295</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hotels</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>23 333</td>
<td>52 680</td>
<td>46 543</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>613</td>
<td>27 930</td>
<td>64 216</td>
<td>56 468</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Garni hotels reach the lowest level (one *) and are mainly focused on short-term temporary residence. They provide serving breakfast for effortless guests. They are examples of cheap but stylish accommodation in small rooms. Hotels of this type are located mainly in cities, for example, Hotel Garni (Považská Bystrica), Garni Hotel Mado (Bojnice), Garni Hotel Urpin City (Banská Bystrica), Hotel Garni Veronia (Košice), Hotel Garni Oáza (Prešov) and Thorin Garni Hotel (Bratislava). The opposite of this hotel type is a boutique-type hotel that meets the requirements of the hotel of the highest grade ****. They are characterized by luxurious and exclusive interior and less rooms located in historic buildings of the town, respectively in houses with interesting architectural or artistic solution. Small boutique hotels with sophisticated architecture and design are especially popular, where owners feel a personal approach which is based on a personal approach to guests. This type of hotels are located in larger cities such Marrol's Hotel, Hotel Arcadia, Mama's Design & Boutique Hotel, Hotel Tulip House (Bratislava), Hotel Dubná Skala (Žilina), Golden Royal Boutique Hotel, Boutique Hotel Rokoko, Hotel Bristol, Hotel Maraton (Košice) or Hotel Zlatý Klúčik (Nitra). The last is a four-star Abba Bratislava Hotel. The high level hotels are mostly **** hotels located in renovated historic areas such as castles, mansions, town houses (e.g. **** Hotel Château Belá, Liptovský Hrádok Grand Castle **** Hotel U Leva *** in Levoča and others).

There is a tradition of spa hotels in Slovakia that belong to hotel class of *** and more. These hotels provide a range of services assured for the relevant hotel class offering medical care for the guests. They are located in the spa center. These include e.g. Thermia Palace, Balnea Esplanade, Balnea Palace (Piešťany), Aphrodite Hotel, Hotel Veľká Fatra (Rajecké Teplice), Hotel Krym, Hotel Flóra, Hotel Atlantis (Piešťany), Morava Hotel, Hotel Central (Smrdáky), Hotel Astória, Hotel Ozón (Bardejov), Hotel Jantár (Dudince) and Grand Hotel Strand (Vyšné Ružbachy). In addition they also have dozens of special procedures associated with the healing water to prevent such a recovery treatment of musculoskeletal mass. These services
can extend the length guests’ staying. Are Wellness hotels are the new hotel type in spa center and cities that are especially designed for specific short-term stay associated with professional care and rehabilitation of guests. A newer type of hotel includes a wellness hotel, which are not only equipped with sporting and recreational facilities, but also provide a rational diet. To the *** class and upper class include for example Patince Wellness Hotel, Hotel Park (Piešťany), Hotel Comfort (Nitra), Hotel Rubín (Dudince) Hotel Termál (Vyhne), Wellness Hotel Diplomat (Rajecké Teplice) and Hotel Aquacity Mountain View (Poprad), etc.

Another type of hotel, located in a natural environment, are mountain hotels, which are represented by all classes except class of **** stars. They are characteristic mainly for central, northern and northeastern parts of Slovakia. The famous mountain hotels are, for example, the following: Hotel Šachtička (Banská Bystrica) Golf Hotel (Tále), Sport Hotel Donovaly, Hotel Poľana (Hriňová), Hajnice Mountain Hotel (Horný Vadičov) Mountain hotel Mních (Bobrovec), Sliezsky dom pod Gerlachom (High Tatras), Mountain Hotel Hutník (Krompachy), Hotel Polianka (Krpáčovo) or Hotel Podjavorník (Papradno). In the mountain areas also apartment hotels that consist of a minimum of eight apartments are situated. They provide a range of services assured for the relevant hotel class. These include e.g. Apartment Hotel Liptovský Dvor (Liptovský Ján), Apartment Hotel Vili (Tatranská Lomnica), Hotel Vila Grand (High Tatras), Hotel Crocus (Štrbské Pleso). Apartment hotels also have been established in urban environment e.g. Hotel Residence MaMaison (Bratislava), Hotel City Residence (Košice), Hotel Darmoon, Adam Eva Resort (Piešťany) and apartment hotels Tatran and Magura (Donovaly).

The higher-class hotels with more than *** belongs to congressional hotels, located not only in urban but also the recreational environment. These hotels are equipped with negotiating spaces that allow flexibility of their use and the technical conditions for the provision of conference services. This type of hotel is currently experiencing a great surge in Slovakia and is represented by mainly Bratislava hotels: Apollo, Crowne Plaza, Holiday Inn, Austria, Trend Hotel. Hotels of this type are located also in all other parts of Slovakia: Senec Hotel, Capital Hotel (Nitra), Holiday Inn (Žilina), Hotel Patria (Štrbské Pleso) Grandhotel Jasná, Grandhotel Starý Smokovec (Starý Smokovec), Congress Hotel Gala (Sielnica), Doubletree by Hilton (Košice) and Grand Hotel Kempinski High Tatras (Štrbské Pleso).

These new hotels brought foreign capital which is entering to the hotel industry through independent companies or through chains. Making of chain in the hotel industry is also one of globalization elements. Slovakia has been traditionally conservative, especially small and medium-sized hotels have private owners who keep guests through the familiar name of the hotel, which represents a guarantee of quality services. In Slovakia independent hotels dominate, while in the global hotel sector even 30% of all shares in the hotel industry are controlled by hotel chains. It is expected that to 2050 more than 60 % of the hotels will belong to the multinational companies (Gúčik - Šípková, 2004). We know transnational (global) and national hotel chains, which benefit from the advantages of connection to the global distribution systems. Transnational hotel chain is a hotel group connected by one hotel brand, or hotel group acting under multi-brand, so that their brands cover
most market segments and are mutually complementary (Mištík, 2007) under agreements between hotels and the owner of hotel brand rights. The owner of the brand, the hotel company, provides hotel services in such sphere, which is achieved by centralizing cost savings or more efficient. In Slovakia hotel chains are:

a) transnational – hotels with international brand (3,34% of the hotels SR) - are located in attractive regions of Slovakia,

b) national – domestic hotel chains – with a small number of hotels - often are not typical hotel chain.

Transnational hotels are organized in closed or open strings. All hotels that are part of the chain must meet the same level of comfort and service. Hotel chains such as InterContinental Hotels Group (UK), Cendant (U.S.), Accor (F) and Hilton Corporation (U.S.) are famous examples of closed hotel chains. Management of such branded hotels is usually associated with compliance with standardized services, providing a similar product in all of hotels belonging to one brand in several world countries. The second type are called open strings that create untypical international hotel chains, which combine independent hotels and form a consortium under a common brand and a freedom of choice is provided in individual hotels. This type benefits from joining the group. Such hotels retain their Identity and business philosophy. This group includes e.g. Best Western.

Hotels from 10 international hotel chains are situated at Slovak territory, and their number is growing. The first chain, InterContinental Hotels Group, came to Slovakia in 1990, when in the capital city of Bratislava Forum Hotel was built, which was converted into a Crowne Plaza Bratislava under a management contract in 2005. Chain is characterized by multi-brand operation. Since 1995 the brand Holiday Inn operates in Bratislava under a franchise agreement. Holliday Inn is a brand of mid-level hotels. The second hotel of this brand is located in Žilina. InterContinental Hotels Group chain in Slovakia has available capacity of 525 rooms including 133 rooms in Žilina. Unlike the InterContinental Hotels Group, hotel chain Best Western International operates in the global marketplace under one brand of Best Western. Its hotels are independent, mostly minor. This hotel chain in Slovakia has the largest number of hotels, located in Bratislava (Hotel West the member of Best Western since 1999) and Bučeková (2007), but represented also in several cities - Palace Hotel Polom – Žilina – Tulipán Hotel - Tatranská Lomnica, Hotel Teledom & Conference Center – Košice, Hotel Reduta – Lučenec, Hotel Karpátia – Humenné and Capital Hotel in Nitra. Total capacity is the 273 rooms.

The famous Starwood Hotels and Resorts chain consists of luxury hotels and unites various brands. In 1999 it launched the brand of W Hotels, which became the first successful hotel chain in the segment of boutique hotels. In 2005 Starwood has changed the strategy from the owner of estate towards franchising and hotel management. On the territory of Slovakia string came in 2010. It is represented by one Sheraton Hotel in Bratislava with 211 rooms. The chain CarlsonHotels is also represented by one hotel. It belongs to the most famous hotels in Slovakia Carlton **** with 168 rooms. In the Europe, for most brands of the company's have exclusive franchise rights. The Rezidor Group subsidiary is based in Brussels. MaMaison Hotels & Residences chain is focused on embacous clients, and
consists of mainly medium-high luxury hotels of boutique & business class conference hotels, as well as residential all-suites hotel, meeting and exceeding the requirements of international standards. In Slovakia, it is represented by a small hotel near Bratislava – MaMaison Residence Šulekovo with 32 rooms, which was built on ecological principles, which is specific for this international network. Such international chain as Kempinski Hotels and Resorts is one of the oldest in Europe (1897). Brand represents the hotels that are oriented to embasious clients in the field of recreation and tourism employment. It is represented by **** Kempinski Hotel River Park in Bratislava. This city conference hotel was opened in 2010. Hotel Grand Kempinski High Tatras in Štrbské Pleso belongs to a luxury mountainous hotel, which was built in 2009.

The relatively young chain is AccorHotels. This hotel chain is a known leader in the segment of cheap hotels, and manages a number of brands, for example, Accor, Ibis, Mercure, Sofitel, Motel 6, Etap and RedRoofInn. On the territory of Slovakia is only one hotel in this chain - Hotel Ibis in Bratislava with 120 rooms, this chain was obtained by the Hungarian subsidiary company AccorHotels. Since 2010 the Mercure brand is represented in the capital city of Slovakia.

The atypical international hotel chain is Small Luxury Hotels of the World that does not produce typical international hotel chain, but rather an association of hotels, occupying common standards and trends. In Slovakia this association provides two hotels in Bratislava -Marrol (54 rooms) and Albrecht (12 rooms). The international companies have their hotels OreaHotels in Slovakia, which is one of the largest hotel chains in the Czech Republic, which followed the tradition of union hotels, represented by Club Hotel in Bratislava. Hotel Group Summit Hotels & Resorts is part of an international hotel chain Preferred Hotel Group, which has established two congressional Gate Hotel **** in Bratislava with a capacity of 116 rooms. The international companies have their hotels OreaHotels in Slovakia, which is one of the largest hotel chains in the Czech Republic, which followed the tradition of union hotels, represented by Club Hotel in Bratislava. The latest hotel chains include Spanish network Abba Hotels, which located, apart from London and Berlin, its hotel in Bratislava (2011). Specific situation in Slovakia have a group of Danubius Hotels Group, which belongs to one of the largest networks of hotels operating in Central Europe. Since 2002 it took major hotels from the biggest spa in Piešťany in Slovakia - Danubius Health Spa Resort Thermia Palace hotel, Danubius Health Spa Resort Balnea Esplanade Hotel, Danubius Health Spa Resort Balnea Palace Hotel Piešťany, as well as smaller hotels in Smrdáky.

Conclusion. Entry of foreign capital and especially multinational hotel chains in the Slovak hotel industry also in Slovakia is starting to show elements of the globalization of the industry. Foreign hotel chains use their expansion as various investment options, for example construction of modern hotels respectively reconstruction of historic buildings such as castles, curias, bourgeois houses etc. for hotels especially in areas with significant tourism potential, whether cultural, historical or natural. It is in the rural areas there is a fusion of traditional style with modern recreational facilities (such as wellness centers, different types of spas, tennis courts, gym, swimming pools ... etc.) thus hoteliers try to bring as much to the
requirements of visitors. Chains are oriented to hotels with middle to high class luxury like boutique, business & conference hotel as well as residential all-suites hotels that are oriented to demanding clients, particularly in the area of recreation and business trip.

Hotel chains are more attractive for visitors, have available the latest technology and the most effective methods of marketing, especially programs for loyal customers, allowing them to maintain constant clients and get out of unfavorable period, such as crisis, earlier than independent hotels with the standard service, offering average quality.

In Slovakia hotels are concentrated mainly in the capital city - Bratislava, where there are more than 20 foreign chains. For foreign chains are interesting also High Tatras and the second metropolis in the east of Slovakia - Košice. The most significant spatial dispersion in the territory of Slovakia has the Best Western International chain, which has its hotels in major cities. Their number in Slovakia, which has a rich natural and cultural-historical potential is still growing.

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