



From Cooperation to Collaboration: A Case of Sport and Tourism Sectors in Croatia

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Research rationale

- Croatia is a country known for its long tradition of tourism development
- Croatia is also known as country outstanding in sport achievements
- Tourism and sport sector represent comparative advantages of Croatia and basis for sustainable development
- Ministry for Tourism and Sport of Republic of Croatia was established in 2020 – **cooperation between the sectors was evaluated as insufficient**

Theoretical background: what we learned?

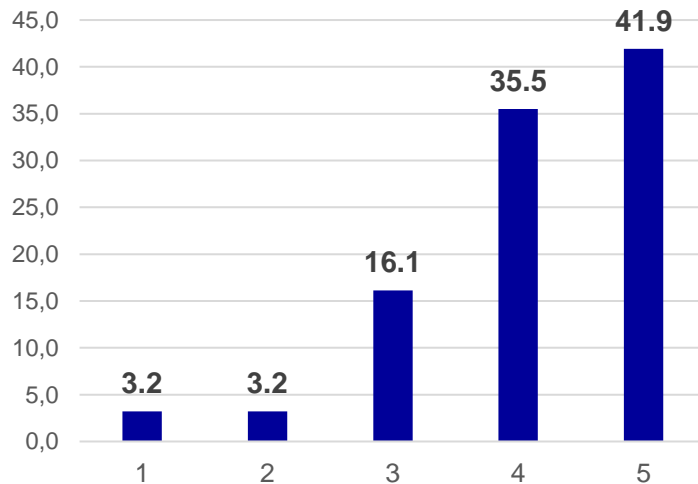
- Scope of collaboration is wide and stakeholders diverse (Mollah, Cuskelly and Hill, 2021)
- Majority of studies concluded that the effects of sport tourism collaboration were not known and that appropriate leadership could better coordinate many stakeholders
- Lack of time and incompatible goals were the most important barriers to cooperation (Wasche, 2015)
- We decided to conduct primary research based on **network science approach** (Baggio, 2011) with the main questions:
 - Scope and intensity of already established cooperation
 - Barriers for better cooperation and collaboration
 - Type of organizational modality that should be the most effective.

Research design

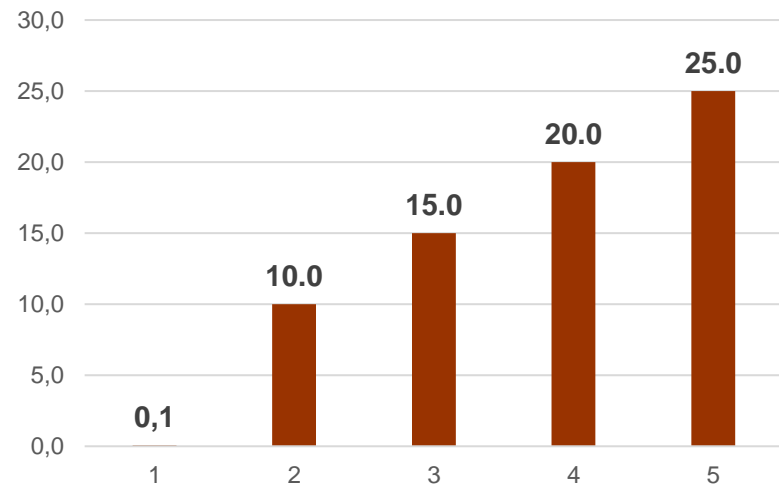
- Croatia is divided on 21 county; each has tourism board and sport association responsible for the region
- **SAMPLE** included sport and tourism org. with the largest towns as they have same system of tourism boards and sport associations
- **On-line questionnaire** was sent to 42 sport and 42 tourism org.; 20 sport associations responded (48%) and 30 tourism boards (response rate of 71%)
- **Qualitative and univariate quantitative analysis** was performed (8 closed and 2 open-ended questions)

Research findings; importance of sport for tourism destinations

TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS



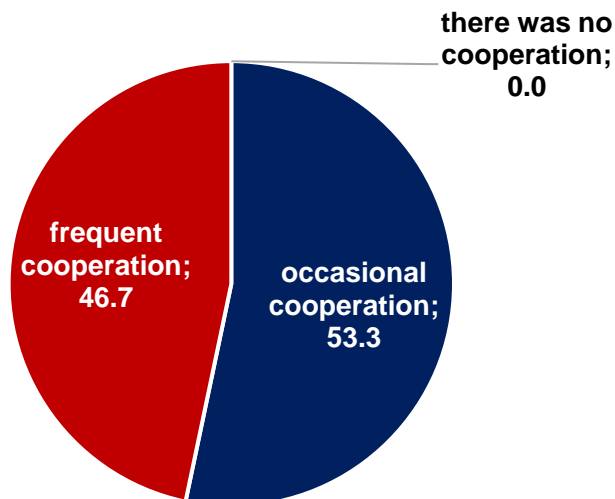
SPORT ASSOCIATIONS



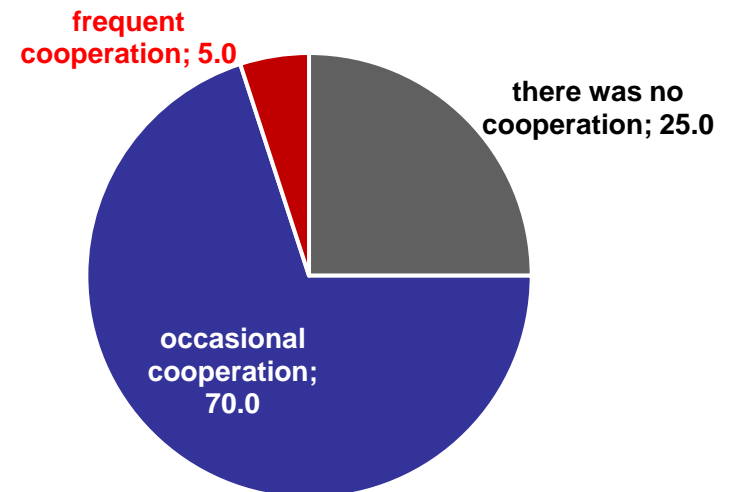
1 – not important
5 – extremely important

Research findings; evaluation of established cooperation

TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS

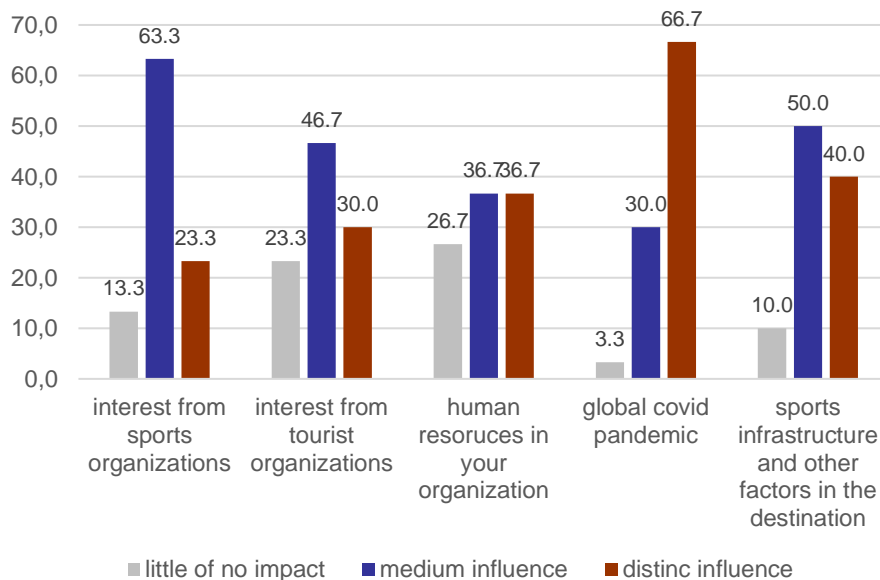


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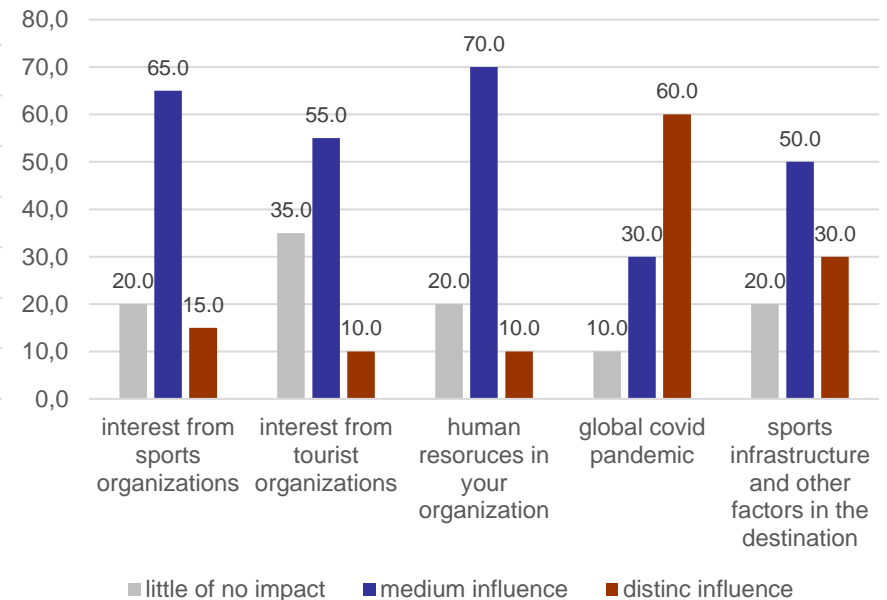


Research findings; barriers to cooperation

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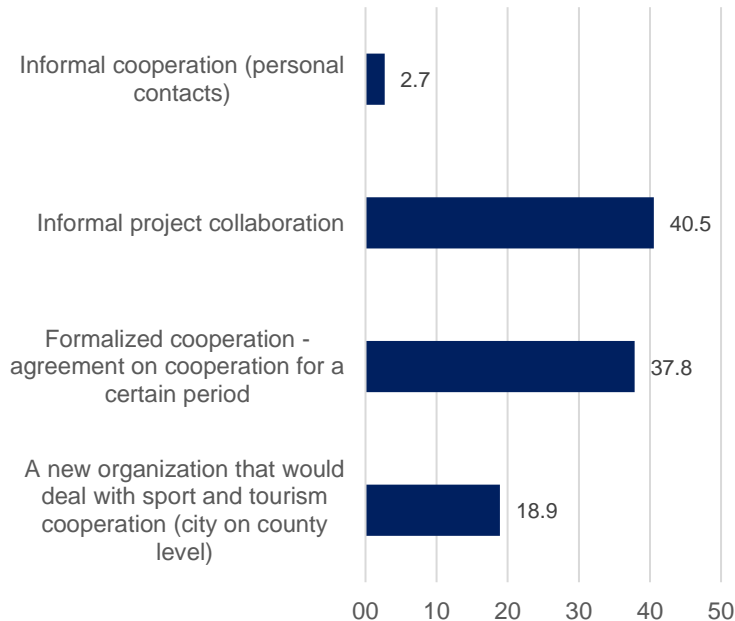


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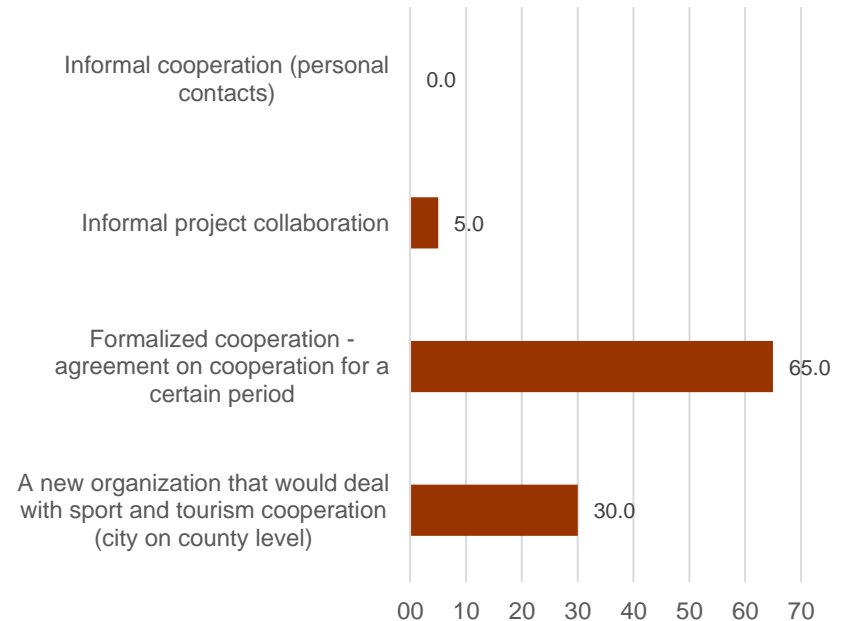


Research findings; modalities of future collaboration

TOURISM ORGANIZATIONS



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Contribution and implications

- The research illustrated same opinion of the sectors about the need for more stronger cooperation, but also strong 'hesitation' from tourism sector to initiate new or different type of collaboration
- From our experiences with both sectors - without clear responsibilities and tasks, the cooperation would not be improved – more formal ways of collaboration is needed
- System of counties that supports, both tourism and sport associations gives a lot of opportunities, but still sport associations lack resources (lack of HR)

Contribution and implications

- **BENEFITS OF FUTURE COOPERATION** are not 'visible' to both sectors – the benefits should be emphasized on county and national level
- **TOURISM** can learn more about the various sports technologies and demand trends and include those into 'active holidays offer' that usually prolongs the season, together with sport manifestations and sport preparations
- **SPORT** could find more possibilities for better organization of sport manifestations and better promote characteristics of respected sports and destinations and find new financial sources for the projects; work more on upgrading sport infrastructure together with tourism sector



Thank you for attention!
Questions??!