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A NEW TREND IN TOURISM: BLEISURE

VĂDUVA LOREDANA^{1*}, ALBULESCU MIHAELA², MARIN DIANA¹, PETROMAN CORNELIA¹, VĂLUŞESCU DANIELA², PETROMAN I.¹

¹ Banat's University of Life Sciences "King Mihai I", Faculty of Management and Rural Tourism, Timisoara

² Development Research Station for Raising Sheep and Goats, S.C.D.C.O.C. Caransebeş

*Corresponding author's e-mail: loredana_heber@yahoo.com

Abstract: *Bleisure (from business and leisure) is a new trend in tourism in which people link their business travel with leisure travel. (more exactly, with leisure elements). Bleisure travel can be pre-planned (clients schedule their vacation within the same period of a job-related trip once the work engagements – exchanges of experience, meetings, professional conferences, training sessions – are over) or some tourist experiences may be offered by companies during the job-related trips. Bleisure is a growing trend among "digital nomads" / millennials (freelancers, online workers) due to facilities as accommodation, chargers, and wi-fi on buses.*

• Introduction

Back in 2008, Leiper, Witsel & Hobson made a comparative analysis between business tourism / travel and leisure tourism / travel and found that there are ten differences between them: core difference, duration of the trip, expenses and tax implications, focus of the experience, frequency of the trips, interests being served, manager of the trip, mental process linking the tourist with the destination, needs underlying the motivations for travelling, and type of experience. Six of these differences (the ones in bold italic) are "areas where leisure travel and business travel are generically different".

However, the three authors mention that "some trips mix business and leisure" (ibidem, 2) – "the practice of going on a trip when some time is spent on business and some in diverse forms of recreation such as sightseeing, shopping, relaxing in a resort or playing sport [for a few hours free after daily work commitments, or for a day or more free after commitments are complete, before returning to their homes in other cities]" (idem) – without giving a name to this practice which, obviously, turns out to be a good example of bleisure (< business + leisure).

This paper presents bleisure from different perspectives: bleisure definition, bleisure typology, bleisure traveller, bleisure traveller's motivation, bleisure travel beneficiaries, and bleisure leisure activities.

Bleisure has been defined as: "travel or another activity that combines business and leisure" (Wiktionary); "the blended travel in which business travellers stay longer at their destination and/or bring along a friend or family members"; "combining leisure with professional business obligations when abroad"; "shunning the all-work-and-no-fun toil of business trips by mixing them with leisure time"; "a trend of business people to add on some sightseeing to a trip" (Cambridge Dictionary); "adaptation of leisure by business people to their travels"; "combining business and leisure"; "time in the boardroom paired with time at the beach"; "part business travel, part leisure travel [...] combining a work trip with an extended vacation before, during or after the work event".

• Material and method

The material used in this paper consists in a very small number of articles on bleisure, which points to the novelty of the concept (it was first mentioned in 2009). The research method is bibliographic.

• Results and discussions

Beneficiaries of Bleisure. Are beneficiaries of bleisure:

- The bleisure traveller, because he can bring family or friends with him; he can develop his career; he can improve his well-being; he can make a compromise between work duties and leisure time; he can save on travel expenses while considering that he can travel to exciting destinations, he might bring friends or family along, he might have friends or family in the area, the additional costs required to extend the trip are not high, the number of additional nights he may stay at the destination (1-2 nights), and the trip is close to the weekend; he does not have a lot of regular vacations; he can pay less for his family or friends;

- The bleisure traveller's company / organisation, because bleisure "improves the knowledge about the culture of the location he is visiting thus simplifying business negotiations"; bleisure makes employees "happier and, therefore, more productive"; bleisure makes hotels offer discounted rates; bleisure provides "an opportunity to recruit new workers and retain current ones";

- The bleisure traveller's family / friends, who can enjoy more family time together and do interesting things together; and who have an opportunity to save the work life – home life dilemma;

- The tourism services providers (accommodation, activities, attractions, culture, food & beverage, transportation) who get higher revenues (from additional services, extra nights, higher occupancy rates in weekends) in after adapting to bleisure tourism / travel by adjusting and tailoring their services, thus "offering new services and amenities to make it easy for travellers to move from work to fun": adding both flexible workspaces and meeting rooms and places to unwind and unplug; partnering with travel agencies and tour-operators "to create immersive experiences like full-day tours and well-rounded excursions"; serving all types of customers throughout the week and providing tailored service ("complimentary snacks and soft drinks from the mini bar," free meals for children aged no more than 12, kids' concierge) and recommendations (art, culture, economics, environment, folk, history, nature, transportation), no matter the day of the week.

• Conclusions

The following concluding remarks can be made after the study of bleisure: bleisure is a new trend in tourism – it was officially born in 2009; even though business tourism / travel and leisure tourism / travel are two different things, they fathered bleisure, a growing trend among "digital nomads" / millennials (freelancers, online workers) due to facilities as accommodation, chargers, and wi-fi on buses;