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### Sharing economy in tourism industry

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#### Abstract

The aim of this article is to present the manifestations of the sharing economy on the tourism market. The sharing economy is one of the relatively new trends in the economy. In the last dozen or so years, it has resulted in the appearance of a significant number of projects on the tourism market, the essence of which is intermediation in the exchange of goods and services between consumers. In

particular, this applies to services such as accommodation, catering, transport and guides. The dynamic development of these projects on the tourism market brings with it a number of problems related to the need for appropriate legal regulations. Regardless of these problems, the forecasts for profits from activities within the sharing economy trend are extremely promising.

**Keywords:** Sharing Economy, Peer-To-Peer Economy, Collaborative Consumption, Access-Based Consumption, Exchange of Goods and Services

#### Introduction

Sharing economy is a relatively new trend in the economy, consisting in the direct exchange of goods and services between consumers who communicate via special websites. This term is used to describe the entire spectrum of Internet projects that have a chance to revolutionize the global market for the exchange of goods and services. According to A. Stephany, the sharing economy derives value from taking underutilized assets and making them available online for the community, which leads to a reduction in the need to own these assets. The sharing economy defined in this way is based on five basic pillars: value, underutilized resources, online availability, community and reduced demand for ownership.

In the area of the broadly understood sharing economy, there are a number of concepts that are often used interchangeably.

Belk, for example, arguing against the statement that you are what you have, notes that in the age of the Internet, people have a number of opportunities to express their individuality and identity without engaging in the act of owning goods or services. He cites a number of areas of consumer research, including: called sharing economy, collaborative consumption, access-based consumption. Belk, focusing on the concept of collaborative consumption, defines the phenomenon of coordinating the processes of acquiring and distributing resources in exchange for a fee or other type of remuneration, and by another type of remuneration the author understands barter, the rental of products or services in exchange for non-monetary remuneration. Therefore, in Belk's understanding, collaborative consumption does not include forms of sharing in which the overriding idea is not to receive remuneration in any form<sup>1</sup> and occupies an intermediate place between the idea of sharing goods and services on a non-profit basis and market exchange (Belk, 2015).

In turn, Bardghi and Eckhardt integrate the concepts of sharing and collaborative consumption by using the term access-based consumption. This term describes transactions that take place via the market, but in which there is no transfer of ownership. Consumers gain temporary access to goods or services, and in those special cases where market intermediation occurs, they are willing to pay a specific price for this access. Consumers are interested in gaining access to goods, services or networks that they would not be able to own or that they consciously give up owning due to spatial or environmental constraints. Compared to owning goods, consumers experience benefits by gaining temporary access to goods and services or entering the network based on rental or other temporary access fees (Bardghi and Eckhardt, 2012).

The sharing economy therefore manifests itself on the market in various forms and structures. It may be both non-profit and profitable for one of the cooperating parties. Above all, however, it involves an exchange between one person and another, which is why we often talk about the peer-to-peer (P-2-P) economy.

This phenomenon has gained popularity since the beginning of the 21st century, when in the first decade a number of projects were created, which are now dynamically developing on all continents.

According to Schumpeter, the modern sharing economy comes from the music sharing program Napster, created in 1999, which, as a P-2-P venture, became an inspiration for an economy based on the exchange of goods with other people.

Today, the idea of the sharing economy enables people to earn over \$15 billion a year by renting or selling what they own: from cars and houses to free time and money. This sum is considered just the beginning. According to PricewaterhouseCoopers, profits from projects based on the sharing economy will increase to USD 335 billion by 2025 (Stephany, 2015)<sup>[4]</sup>.

The aim of this article is to present the manifestations of the sharing economy and the prospects for the development of this phenomenon on the tourism market based on the latest publications devoted to this issue (in particular reports on current trends in tourism, publications from the business press), as well as websites of projects operating in accordance with this idea.

### Sharing Economy in Tourism

Tourism is one of the areas where this trend is developing dynamically. Over the last dozen or so years, it has resulted in the appearance of a significant number of projects on the tourism market, the essence of which is intermediation in the exchange of goods and services between consumers. This applies primarily to accommodation, transport and catering services, as well as guide and pilot services. The dominant number of these ventures were established in the first decade of the 21st century in the USA and they gradually expanded their activities to other countries, covering all continents.

In particular, in tourism, in the context of the sharing economy, phenomena such as (Stephany, 2015)<sup>[4]</sup> are present:

1. Short-term rental - short-term rental of houses, apartments, rooms, etc. by their owners to interested parties, through platforms on which both parties - renters and guests - register (offered, among others, by the platforms Airbnb, HomeAway, Onefinestay, HouseTrip, Roomorama).
2. Home-swapping – i.e. exchange of houses (e.g. HomeExchange, Knok, Love Home Swap), most often between registered website participants.
3. Ridesharing - an alternative method of transporting people in which car owners offer transport to other people. It comes in two forms: short-distance and long-distance transport. Short-distance transport is shared rides within cities, which are an alternative to taxis (e.g. Uber, Lyft, Yongche). Long-distance transport on longer routes between cities is an alternative to rail and coach journeys. They are also called carpooling (e.g. Carpooling.com, BlaBlaCar, GoCarShare).

According to the World Travel Market Trends Report, the number of accommodation rental offers in Europe has increased significantly in recent years and has become more diversified thanks to the expansion of booking platforms such as Airbnb, HouseTrip and HomeAway, which now meet a wide range of consumer requirements. Offers of tours, guide services and other unique travel experiences are also available through platforms such as Touristlink and Vayable, through which travelers can contact local residents. Car sharing services are also a dynamically growing trend in Europe. In August 2013, Blablacar.com had over 3 million

members in 10 European countries, with 600,000 members traveling monthly. TripAdvisor has implemented this concept by acquiring the FlipKey platform, as well as by including HouseTrip and Airbnb on its list of trusted accommodation partners.

Growing popularity in Europe is also observed in the use of catering services offered by residents of holiday destinations, in particular through platforms such as Eatwith.com or Bookalokal.com, which connect tourists and people providing food services in their homes. This form of interaction between residents of the destination and tourists is perceived as an opportunity to gain valuable experiences and a broader perspective of the places visited.

Much confusion on the hotel and transport services market was caused by the emergence and development of companies such as Airbnb (in the hotel sector) and Uber (in the transport sector), which mobilized millions of micro-entrepreneurs in the process of providing services. Both companies are already present in Poland. The enormous popularity of companies representing the sharing economy trend goes hand in hand with a number of critical voices towards them from experts. One of the basic ones is the fact that alternative ways of exchanging goods and capital in most countries remain beyond state control, which may lead to abuses. According to specialists, these companies have transferred the logic of WEB 2.0, the essence of which is sharing content on the Internet, and they act as intermediaries in real estate, money or property transactions, hiding the monopolistic aspect of their activities. This criticism applies in particular to such large entities as Uber or Airbnb, which are powerful companies adapted to the requirements of the digital world. In the practice of their operations, they also use outsourcing - in the sense of transferring the entire risk and costs of running the business to the people providing the services. Experts' concerns concern the danger of monopolistic practices and the destruction of the local economy.

### Summary

Regardless of experts' concerns about the social impact of companies in the sharing economy, companies such as Uber and Airbnb are currently arousing great interest from investors. Airbnb founder Brian Chesky became the first billionaire of the collaborative economy. The company is valued at USD 10 billion (Maciejewski, 2015). Uber, in turn, became the highest valued start-up of 2014. In December 2014, it was worth \$41 billion. TIME magazine calls the sharing economy one of the 10 ideas that change the world. Pulitzer Prize winner Thomas L. Friedman calls it the real deal. The growth potential of businesses based on this trend over the next 10 years is highly promising. The forecasted over twenty-fold increase in profits from these activities will certainly result in the launch of new Internet platforms enabling the exchange of goods and services between people, especially since these processes are based on the dynamic development of modern technologies, the development of social networks, as well as a more effective allocation of resources. and the desire to save them by sharing. Tourism, as a field inextricably linked to openness to new experiences, will certainly continue to be an attractive area for seeking opportunities to connect websites that have the potential to offer goods and services and the need to use unique, tailor-made services that provide the opportunity to get to know the places visited by tourists. the

prism of the experiences of their inhabitants.

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