

TERRORISM AND TOURIST INDUSTRY – MEDIA INFLUENCES IN SHAPING RISK PERCEPTIONS

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Abstract: Since before the end of the Cold War, terrorism acts have had major effects on tourism industry. Tight linkages between terrorism and tourism do not exist in the absence of media attention. Terrorist acts are media events par excellence. Being predominantly profit oriented, some media are irresponsible in reporting on terrorist acts. However media have strong influence on risk perception among tourist, and consequently tourist industry. Risks from activities that evoke fear, terror, or anxiety, like terrorism, are perceived to be greater than risks from activities that do not arouse such feelings or emotions. The way the terrorist act is presented in mass media will shape the perceptions of potential tourists to certain tourist destinations, countries and whole regions and therefore influence tourist industry. Having this in mind, managers in tourist industry should use all necessary crisis communication tools and techniques in order to restore image of stability in tourist destinations affected by terrorist attacks.

Keywords: terrorism, risk perception, tourist industry, crisis communication.