Tourism Sector – an Unexploited Resource for Restructuring the Libyan Economy

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***Abstract*— The decline of the Libyan economy is due to different reasons, such as the ultimate dependence on the main sources of income (oil and gas) that does not allow developments in other sectors, the impacts of the civil war, which brought years of political instability. Meanwhile, Libya has good geographic, climatic, historical, and social features related to the promotion of the tourist sector and the country could be an excellent destination for tourists, especially because it overlooks the southern coast of the European continent. Tourism is presently is an underestimated sector of the Libyan economy, and it is suggested to take advantage of this source to revive it by infrastructural developments, allowing the establishment of small enterprises, and granting long-term bank loans or investors, by which the sector could start a new direction. It is suggested to revise the domestic policy regarding the economy and to use the experiences of the neighboring countries with more success in the successful tourism and hospitality sector. The goal of the paper is to summarize the present situation of the tourism sector in Libya and to suggest strategic directions of realization by using SOAR analysis.**

I. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is today one of the most important economic and social sectors in the world and plays a key role in national economies. It is a tool to achieve balanced development and address the imbalances plaguing the national economy such as inflation and unemployment. The tourism sector is one of the sectors that can contribute to achieving a steady growth in GDP and to creating jobs. Tourism also is a source of income for the country in hard currency and may attract domestic and foreign private investments, too. By these processes, the country's economy may achieve the main goal and objective of increasing the size of the country's income from foreign exchange as a result of tourists spending [1], [2]. Its importance as an industry and trade has been increased through the media. There are ministries and governmental institutions for regulating and organizing tourism activities in most countries of the world, and there is a wide range of universities, colleges and institutes specialized in tourism and hospitality. Tourism is a frequent topic of researches as well; there is a widespread availability of books and scientific studies and researches relating to the affairs of tourism.

Libya at the present is not a popular destination due to many reasons, although its characteristics (geographic features, historical sites, cuisine, seashore, etc.) could provide excellent opportunities for tourists. Nevertheless, the political instability of the country [3], [4], and the lack of governmental interest in the tourism sector are weak points of the country [5] [6] [7]. The negative governmental interest in tourism is reflected by the shortage of services such as airlines, hotels, tourism programs, and local transport [8].

Tourism could be one of the key industries of Libya as it provides multiple opportunities for economic growth and improved livelihoods [9]. The reasons for developments in tourism are multiple, from job creation and economic development, improvement of infrastructure, increasing domestic consumption and export diversification, cultural heritage and environmental preservation to even empowerment of women and marginalized people [10]. The tourism industry has achieved a leading position worldwide, and it counts as one of the most important sources of income and foreign exchange. However, the positive development of the tourism industry is being threatened by negative events. Incidents have taken place and had economic consequences [11].

Due to the political and economic changes after the Arab Spring, the tourism industry in Libya recorded a huge decline (nearly 40%) in the number of visitors compared to the previous years. Investors became anxious about the political and social situation in the country as violence and strikes have been very common since the revolution [12].

The Minister of Labor of Libya revealed that the government sector is witnessing a functional decline. The number of employees in the country is about 1.8 million employees, while the Libyan population in 2018 is 6.580 million. The Secretary-General, in a statement said, that the size of financial allocations to pay government sector salaries under the budget exceeded 17 billion US dollars, which means that more than half of the budget value goes to pay salaries of workers in the sectors of the state. It was also added that there is a big imbalance in the employment policy and that the ministry has formed an executive committee to study opportunities for integration with the private sector to provide the largest number of job opportunities for Libyan youth. In its annual report for 2017, the Audit Bureau stated that the government sector suffers from overcrowding, despite the success in reducing the number of employees who have duplication of work [13].

In Libya, the main pillars of the economy and main sources of income are oil and natural gas. There is a lack of interest of the state in improvements of the tourism and hospitality industry, although this sector would have locally available sources that could be exploited as sources of income and employment improvements (as it is can be seen in the neighboring countries, Egypt and Tunisia. The aim of the paper is to show how these unexploited sources could be used, as Libya has all the features to be a good touristic destination after the crisis period by improving services in the hospitality sector. A main strategy of the state should be to revive the economy by involving small and medium enterprises working in the tourism industry, which could increase the GDP and decrease the high unemployment rate.

Paper is a result of desk research using mostly secondary data gathered from international statistics databases of the World Tourism Organization, Statista, and other international public economic databases. The limitations of the secondary research are derived from the lack of official Libyan statistical data, as reliable official data are hardly available about the post-revolution period.

For formulating strategic actions to improve the tourism and hospitality sector in Libya, a SOAR analysis was conducted. By using this strategic thinking framework, the development strategies and directions are summarized.

II. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

After 2011, the political processes in Libya became unstable, as the country's governance was influenced by different political powers. Due to the lack of political stability and its consequence, the weak security conditions, Libya presently cannot be considered as a safe destination. On the contrary, there are promising political movements such as the presently conducted Libya's Political Dialogue Forum, which opened on 1 February 2021 in Geneva. The Forum's goal is to choose a new temporary executive to lead the country through a transition until elections scheduled for December. The study did not target analyzing the political issues, the main focus of the research is to provide a general situation analysis and to lay down the strategic steps to be taken for developing the tourism sector. It is very important to prepare the sector's stakeholders for the future steps, to define a scenario for developing the tourism sector, which implementation could be started immediately after the desired peace will come.

The present study did not explore the deeper relationship between public security, the weakness of infrastructure, and the level of tourism. It only focused on a general introduction of Libya's unexploited and less known tourism resources. A parallel research (questionnaire survey) was conducted to explore the knowledge, aspirations, and needs of the potential consumers (i.e., visitors) in order to define the required steps to be done for strengthening the tourism sector in Libya, which findings were used in the SOAR analysis.

Another limitation of the study is that it does not address the COVID situation and its effects on tourism. The pandemic brought a very new situation for the tourism sector all over the world. Tourism activities have dropped significantly, pushing the sector into a serious crisis. Although at the present there is not much difference between the tourism sector of Libya and its neighbors, but this is only the result of the pandemic, the basic differences still exist. On the other hand, the post-COVID situation could bring additional opportunities for Libya if the sector's condition could improve.

III. ECONOMY OF LYBIA, PROBLEMS IN EMPLOYMENT

Libya shows a one-pillared economy, which is represented by oil and gas extraction, which, before the political transition, contributed by 97% to total GDP [14], and it is still more than 50% [15]. In developing of structure and in the reframing of the Libyan economy, the economic, and political policy on various environmental and social factors has moved forward. Presently, and in recent years the political situation is fragile, besides the civil war, the migration from Sub-Saharan African countries also puts a heavy load on the country. The government, therefore, will focus on defense and governmental issues [15]. Libya still suffers from high unemployment which changed only slightly in the past years, radical improvement cannot be detected (Table 1).

TABLE 1
UNEMPLOYMENT RATE IN LIBYA (%) IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN 2000 AND 2019 BASED ON [16] [17]

	Unemployment rate %	
Year	**Total**	**Youth (15-24 years)**
2000	19.03	46.40
2001	19.03	46.69
2002	19.13	47.16
2003	19.14	47.28
2004	19.05	47.52
2005	18.93	47.48
2006	18.67	47.30
2007	18.45	47.09
2008	18.37	47.22
2009	18.88	48.66
2010	19.00	49.09
2011	19.01	49.63
2012	19.03	49.56
2013	19.06	50.39
2014	18.96	50.48
2015	18.88	50.66
2016	18.79	50.63
2017	18.63	50.09
2018	18.47	49.85
2019	18.56	50.47

The numbers are critically high among young employees, from which young people with a university degree represent a 20 percent unemployment rate [15]. This situation may generate future social problems as well because of the migration of young, educated labor. Young people may decide to start their careers outside of the country.

On the 29th of February 2020, the Ministry of Labor in the Al-Wefaq government announced a set of data on the numbers of public sector employees in Libya and job seekers registered in the district offices. According to the data seen by 2018, the state's personnel system registered, by the end of last December, 2,300 million registered workers, according to national figures. According to the Ministry's statistical data, the number of employees in the administrative bodies and agencies has reached more than 1.7 million employees, while more than 599 thousand workers are active outside the administrative sectors.

The Ministry's data summarize the number of job seekers registered in the offices of distributed regions throughout Libya and reported that their number reached more than 118,000 individuals. The Ministry's data revealed that the Western Region includes the largest number of job seekers, with more than 65 thousand individuals and the central region ranked second with the number of job seekers amounting to more than 31.9 thousand individuals. The Southern region represent the third place in terms of the number of job seekers, where more than 13.5 thousand individuals are searching for work, and according to the ministry's announcement, the number of job seekers in the Eastern Region in the past year amounted to 7330 people [18].

An additional problem of employment in Libya is the unbalanced distribution among the main sectors of the economy. Public administration and state-owned companies employ approximately 85% of employees. The presence of international companies is minimal, due to the political and economic instability. The number of private enterprises and entrepreneurs is also low, they represent 9-10% of employees [15]. For further development, this unfavorable employment structure should be developed in order to open the economy of Libya. The vast majority (85%) of the employed population works in the public sector (public administration and public firms) which is higher than the regional standards. The proportion of foreign companies is very low, which is reasoned by the national laws. Self-employment and private firms represent almost the same number (4-5%). Self-employment is rather low, as most of the Libyan citizens are not planning to think in entrepreneurship. These figures are generated by the special, one-pillared structure of the Libyan economy, where state-owned enterprises are dominating.

IV. The Importance of Tourism in Libyan Economy and in the MENA Region

Libya has outstanding. but unexploited resources for a successful tourism sector, but in the past and present, the tourism sector was not well respected by the governments. Libya's main pillar of the economy is gas and oil, but to build the national economy on only one pillar may bring hazards, too. Libya is one of the most hydrocarbon-dependent countries, and according to recent estimations, the oil depletion is near to 20 years [19]. This fact suggests opening new opportunities for economic development and start to use new, underestimated, and unexploited resources such as the tourism and hospitality sector. The tourism industry could be a good potential for economic diversification and it could be used as a second pillar of the Libyan economy besides the oil and gas revenues.

On the contrary, Libya has outstanding values in tourism attractions, but due to the present political instability and the previous and present weak governmental interest in the tourism and hospitality sector's marketing, it is evaluated as a weak point of the country according to global indicators [7] [1].

The geographical, historical, and social features of Libya could help in the competition at the international tourism market, as Libya has:

- unique natural resources (weather, climate, geographic features, special sites as deserts, desert lakes, seashore);
- good weather and climate (temperatures, wind, humidity, rains, plants, and forests);
- attractive historical sites (Archaeological Site of Cyrene, Archaeological Site of Leptis Magna, Archaeological Site of Sabratha, Rock-Art Sites of Tadrart Acacus, Old Town of Ghadamès)
- special tourism attractions (mountains, valleys, rocks and deserts, desert lakes, 2000 km long seaside area);
- part of the Mediterranean culture, closeness to Europe;
- cultural heritage, traditions, cuisine: Libyan culture is a blend and involves roots in Berber, African, Turkish, Arab, and even Italian traditions [15] [20] [21].

The most important attractions are the archaic historical sites of the Greek, Phoenician and Roman era and the Christian and Islamic monuments. This could attract tourists interested in historical tourism, which is considered among the most important patterns of tourism prevalent in the entire world [21].

There are also several tourist places in Libya that could be requested by tourists, including marine tourism and desert tourism. For marine tourism, the Libyan coast extends along the north of the country, overlooks the Mediterranean, and is considered one of the most beautiful beaches in the world. The country could provide good destinations for cruise tours and holiday trips with better-managed infrastructure and supply of services.

Desert tourism plays a special role in tourism, as it affects very special and sensitive living spaces in deserts, but if desert tourism activities are managed and controlled properly, and do not disturb the fragile ecosystem of deserts, it can provide a vehicle for development and poverty reduction in such areas, where resources for other economic activities are missing [22]. Since the Great Desert covers most of Libya, it makes it one of the best desert tourism countries. Moreover, besides the sandy deserts with desert lakes, it is possible to visit mountainous areas too, as the Fezzan region, which is close to the borders with Algeria, Niger, and Chad, has spectacular treasures of rocks.

The climate in Libya, which is characterized by a noticeable mildness throughout the year, is a permanent spring like weather. On the coastline Mediterranean climate and in the south a desert climate is present, so climate makes Libya's weather enjoyable throughout the year.

These above factors can help to promote tourism activity in the country and expand the circle of investment in this sector, which will achieve significant economic growth and reduce the burden on the dependence on oil as a source of national income. Moreover, what makes Libya more attractive as a destination for tourism is that it is not as crowded with tourists.

Nevertheless, Libya is not among the widely chosen tourist destinations. One of the main the reasons of this unfavorable situation is, of course, the lack of safety, due to a fragile political stability. Libya is still at the top list of one of the most dangerous places in the world, together with Syria, Iraq, Yemen, South Sudan, and Afghanistan [23].

Another important problem is the absence of high-quality services such as a lack of airline services, tourism programs, recreational services, reliable public transport, and financial services [8]. According to a tourism report on Africa [10], there is a shortage of high-quality accommodation as well. Libya has only five hotels, which are members of international hotel chains with 1458 rooms, while neighboring countries present a much higher level: Egypt with 18 hotels (6440 rooms), Tunisia with 12 hotels (2440 rooms) and Algeria with 13 hotels (2749 rooms. Libya has fewer hotel chain members than less popular Sub-Saharan African destinations like Ghana and Uganda [10].

As it is seen, Libya's tourism potential is excellent, but when the Libyan tourism sector is compared with other Northern African countries, there are significant differences. For example, the number of tourists in Morocco and Tunisia reach about 6 million per year, in Egypt more than 10 million, and the number of visitors in Libya is only a few hundred thousand people [3].

When we discuss the whole MENA region (The Middle East and North Africa), statistics [24] show that the whole region represented 6% of the world's total arrivals in 2018 and International tourist arrivals grew an estimated 10% in 2018 in destinations over 2017, which is above the world's average, although there are countries in the region that are still less safe. In general, tourism is a major economic pillar in many MENA countries and it is a strategic component in the diversification of oil-based economies Table 2).

Tunisia, the neighbor of Libya continued to consolidate its recovery after the crisis period, and fully recovered to its pre-2011 level, building on the restoration its country image and the implementation of safety and security measures. Morocco is the largest destination in North Africa. It shows signs of continuous stability, and launched measures for (mostly Far Eastern) travelers by starting new air routes, digital marketing campaigns, and visa exemptions.

Egypt also continued its strong rebound gaining tourists from Germany and other European source markets. Egypt launched an innovative "People to People" (P2P) campaign to promote Egyptian culture, heritage, and people that reformed the whole sector [25]. The promotional film, which won the UNWTO Destination Marketing Award in 2019, was a part of the third pillar called "Promotion & Marketing" of the Egypt-Tourism Reform Program, launched by the Ministry of Tourism of Egypt in November 2018 [26].

TABLE 2
INTERNATIONAL TOURIST ARRIVALS MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA (MENA) BASED ON [24]

Country	Years million tourists				In MENA	Change	Av. growth
	2000	2010	2016	2017	2017 % *	17/16 % **	10-17 % ***
Bahrain	0.8	1.0	4.0	4.4	5.5	9.6	23.5
Egypt	5.1	14.1	5.3	8.2	10.3	55.1	-7.5
Iraq	0.1	1.5	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Jordan	1.6	4.2	3.6	3.8	4.8	7.7	-1.3
Kuwait	0.1	0.2	0.2	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Lebanon	0.7	2.2	1.7	1.9	2.3	10.0	-2.2
Libya	0.2	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Oman	0.6	1.4	2.3	2.4	3.0	1.6	7.4
Palestine	0.3	0.5	0.4	0.5	0.6	25.7	-0.5
Qatar	0.4	1.7	2.9	2.3	2.8	-23.2	4.1
Saudi Arabia	6.6	10.9	18.0	16.1	20.3	-10.7	5.8
Syria	2.1	8.5	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
UAE	3.1	7.4	14.9	15.8	19.9	6.2	11.4
Yemen	0.1	1.0	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*	*n/a*
Algeria	0.9	2.1	2.0	2.5	3.1	20.2	2.4
Morocco	4.3	9.3	10.3	11.3	14.3	9.8	2.9
Sudan	0.0	0.5	0.8	0.8	1.0	1.6	7.3
Tunisia	5.1	7.8	5.7	7.1	8.9	23.2	-1.5

* Share within MENA region (%)

** Change between 2016 and 2017 in (%)

*** Average annual growth between 2010 and 2017 (%)

When analyzing these data, it is clear that the main destinations are traditionally Egypt, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), and before the civil war, Syria was also among the most targeted destinations and was in fourth place with 8.5 million arrivals of tourists. UAE shows a significant increase, Saudi Arabia, Morocco, and Tunisia keep their position stable. Egypt after the Arab Spring crisis started to increase again and showed an extraordinary positive change from 2016 to 2017. There are countries without applicable data; Iraq, Libya, Syria. and Yemen which missing results are in relation to their political instability. In the case of Kuwait, the lack of data is due to the lack of information.

Of course, a stable political and economic environment are inevitable requirements for the tourism sector. Critical events and political crises have a severe influence on the marketing success of tourism sector businesses [1]. Natural disasters (tsunamis, volcanic eruptions. etc.), political conflicts (e.g., terrorist attacks, wars and civil wars, etc.). and economic crises (like the crisis of 2008) are some examples of crises events, which affected tourism and the performance of the tourism sector negatively [27] [28] [29]. Studies related to the MENA region and Turkey [30] [31] [32] outlined that the ongoing political instability in the Middle East had significant impact on international tourism to Jordan, Lebanon, and Egypt. Turkey's tourism market was indirectly affected by the political instability of the region [32]. Post-crisis conditions require a well-built strategy from policymakers in order to rebuild the tourism products after such unfavorable situations [1].

V. SOAR ANALYSIS OF LIBYAN TOURISM SECTOR

For finding the best directions of the Libyan tourism sector, a SOAR analysis was conducted. SOAR analysis is a strategic planning framework with an approach that focuses on strengths and seeks to understand the whole system by considering the opinion of the relevant stakeholders [33].

Figure 1. The SOAR framework
Source: own adaptation based on [33]

SOAR is the abbreviation fpr the four pillars - strengths, opportunities, aspirations and results. By the analysis, we seek answers for the questions summarized in Fig. 1.

Strengths mean that an organization should focus on its unique features and greatest achievements, which may guarantee success.

Pillar of *Opportunities* focuses on the new markets for the organization. Opportunities should be considered as goals to be achieved, even challenges should be viewed as a perfect opportunity that might be turned into gains.

Pillar of *Aspirations* is the core tool of SOAR, which describes the initiatives and processes that are needed to be done for success. Strengths and opportunities will act as aspirations, as the original thoughts of strengths and opportunities will generate further thoughts, meditation, and reflective moments.

Results represent the key pillar in this strategic tool, which focuses on giving feedback to the examined organization. It describes whether the organization is on the right way towards the achievement of the goals and how to transform the success vision into a reality. When the goals are achieved, it will motivate the members of the organization to follow the same path and maintain the trend of success similar to the plan-do-check-act cycle of quality assurance systems [34] [35].

The SOAR analysis presented in Table 3 summarizes the answers for the questions formulated for the SOAR framework which initiates further strategic actions.

The strengths are considered among the internal factors. Libya's tourism sector has not been properly exploited by officials in the past and present, despite the state's possession of material and human capabilities to take an interest in this sector in order to help develop the economy. Libya's touristic sites as destinations are unknown to tourists, although the country enjoys its proximity to and opposite to southern Europe. It has a long coast with places for swimming and diving, and a vast desert in which there are lakes and oases that encourage the establishment of tourist activities such as car rallies and sand skiing. The archaeological sites are unique. There is a network of road roads that bring closer access to these places comfortably and at the lowest costs, and many airports with the possibility of reducing travel tickets for tourist groups to encourage them to undertake tourist trips. The climate also represents a process of attracting tourists because it includes the desert climate as well as the climate of the Mediterranean, which is generally represented as a hot, dry, warm summer, rainy in winter.

Opportunities represent external factors and conditions by which the state can improve the tourism sector when taking care of it. Opportunities are given from the different viewpoints of various stakeholders such as tourists, Libyan citizens, entrepreneurs and enterprises, the nation itself and the state.

Aspirations are wide, it is important to generate ideas and work for their realization. The main task is to build the image of Libya as a tourist destination, in order to avoid delays of implementation when the present unstable political situation will be stabilized. In image-building, the role of cultural attachés in the Libyan embassies abroad would increase the situation of tourism sector's acceptance (conferences and seminars as required and related to the tourism and cultural activity) in countries where they are represented as representatives of cultural missions to introduce the cultural heritage and the tourist attractions in which the country is rich.

The state currently aspires to advance this sector due to its economic importance. A first tourism conference was held on September 27, 2017 under the slogan "Tourism: Impact and Challenges", and the second conference on April 18, 2019 under the slogan "Libya is a tourist interface that requires discovery". The results of these conferences confirmed the state should take all necessary measures to advance the tourism sector to revive the economy and reduce the unemployment rate, to reduce the proportion of government sector workers by supporting small and medium projects related to tourism activity.

The state should also seek for the collaboration of investors, like in the neighboring countries, Egypt and Tunisia, where the tourism sector is active and shows a continuous developing trend.

Measurable results are important for evaluating the development process, the firs numbers that could show the development process are a number of visitors and the revenues generated by tourism, wider results are related to changes in national economy by decreasing the unemployment rate, particularly for young people, improving the proportion of tourism sector in revenues and GDP. These changes may lead to restructuring the presently one-pillared economy of Libya. The changes in the attitudes, motivations, and well-being of people both in rural and urban areas cannot be measured directly, but a decrease in the migration of young people would refer to this development.

TABLE 3
SOAR ANALYSIS OF LIBYA'S TOURISM]

STRENGTHS **What are our most important assets?** **What can we build on?**	OPPORTUNITIES **What are our stakeholders asking for?** **What are the market possibilities?**
1. Archaeological sites from ancient Roman, Greek - Phoenician and Islamic era). 2. Coast with a length of 1900 km 3. Large area of desert with oases and desert lakes, mountains, and rocky areas. 4. Good climate with hot, dry summer, warm and rainy in winter, moderate in spring and autumn. Climate is varied with a Mediterranean climate in the north, and a continental desert climate in the south. 5. Favorable geographical location, as it is in the middle of the north of the African continent and its proximity to Southern Europe. 6. Natural environment with undisturbed natural values and areas. 7. Infrastructure network of long paved roads, several seaports and marine harbors, and airports. 8. Health status: the country is free of infectious diseases.	1. Libya's natural and geographic features, historical sites are favorable for being a new tourist destination for foreign tourists. 2. Tourism sector's improvement would bring economic growth for the country. 3. Tourism sector's improvement would increase employment opportunities, particularly youth employment. 4. Tourism activities would strengthen and improve the local population's identity and traditions. 5. Niche market opportunities (eco-tourism, adventurers, halal tourism, historical tourism). 6. Tourism activities may boost rural entrepreneurship. 7. Development of micro, small and medium-sized enterprises 8. Additional services (manufacturing, hospitality, local travel services) would be able to enter into the market. 9. COVID situation changed the tourism sector's structure worldwide, which may bring new opportunities for attracting future possible visitors.
ASPIRATIONS **What processes are needed to be done?** **What are our dreams or wishes?**	RESULTS **What are our important and measurable outcomes?** **What do we want to be known for?**
1. Building image of Libya as tourists' new, exotic destination. 2. Wide collaboration between different stakeholders. 3. Building marketing and promotion strategy for the country's tourism. 4. More public facilities for the foreign visitors 5. Investment in human capital (training, education, entrepreneurship). 6. Investments into infrastructure. 7. Supporting entrepreneurship in rural areas by establishing small and medium enterprises for them and granting long-term youth bank loans with a grace period. 8. Increase the commitment of government and local authorities towards tourism activities and services. 9. Making Libya be a well-known tourism destination. 10. Reducing the high unemployment rate in the country. 11. Reducing the proportion of workers in the public sector. 12. Reviving the economy, increasing the GDP, and reducing the public debt. 13. Mission: introducing tourism-related considerations into the general reconstruction plan of the economy. 14. Trying to get rid of dependence on the export of oil.	1. Improve the overall public's knowlodge about Libya's natural and cultural heritage through a an intensive promotion program. 2. Establishing information and cultural centers for Libya's tourism. 3. Increase in the number of visitors. 4. Increase in tourism-related revenues. 5. Increase in the share of the tourism sector in GDP. 6. Diversification of tourism products (for various groups like age, family status, interest). 7. Competing with the neighboring countries. 8. Improving and maintaining facilities for visitor sites. 9. Decrease of youth unemployment. 10. Improve the livelihood of local people and the nation. 11. Increase of safety measures. 12. Increase the level of infrastructure. 13. Decrease of economic migration of young age groups.

VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Libya, based on the country's geographical, historical and climatic features and could be a good touristic destination, the present lack of success in the tourism sector has multiple reasons.

Due to the present fragile political situation, tourists are afraid of the country, it is considered as one of the most dangerous and unstable places in the world. This problem is to be solved as the country starts to accomplish the stabilization process. Another reason of unsafe conditions is that the road of migration towards the Mediterranean Sea leads through Libya. Well-established security could raise growing interests in Libya as a tourist destination.

Another internal problem is that the sector was not developed in the past, as the GDP's most important source is natural gas and oil. In the future, other pillars of the economy should also be strengthened. The recent governmental strategies for improving and promoting the tourism sector laid down the principles of this process.

A main strategy of the state should be to revive the economy by allowing the establishment of medium and small enterprises working in the tourism industry, which could increase the GDP and decrease the unemployment rate, which is very serious in the young generation. These changes may help to stop the migration of young and educated people out of the country.

The main task is creating confidence in Libya by building political stability, and this will guarantee the safety and security of tourism experts, investors, companies, organizations and tourists. It should be followed by developing a vision and a development plan for the tourism sector that meets the opinion of the citizens and matches the values, possibilities, and needs of the country.

Infrastructural developments are also needed, for example, to improve transportation and telecommunication infrastructure in and around tourist areas. It is also important to involve citizens in this process and to raise awareness among Libyans about the potentials of the tourism sector.

Improvements in tourism marketing are also needed, as it may generate income in other sectors besides tourism, i.e. in manufacturing, services, private transportation, food production, which may boost employment in urban and rural areas as well. It would be a compulsory step for the future to display and promote the touristic attractions of Libya – similarly to its neighbors, Egypt and Tunisia – by promotional campaigns in foreign countries organized by the cultural missions and attachés in foreign countries, and by participating at international tourism conferences.

The inspirations and suggestions given in the conducted SOAR analysis give the framework of building a realistic scenario for tourism-related developments in Libya.

As a final conclusion, the main problems of Libya are connected to political and security factors, which should be considered as the first task to be done. Economic actions cannot be done without providing the necessary political environment, which requires cooperation between the various local and foreign parties to end the current conflict. If the strategic thinking process described in the study is started, and the preparation stages are accomplished in time, then the realization process may start immediately after the crisis ends.

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