

**ANALYSIS OF THE HOSPITALITY LAW OF REPUBLIC OF
MACEDONIA WITH ACCENT ON THE CATEGORY
NATIONAL RESTAURANT – “MEANA”¹**

Danijela Miloshoska, PhD

Faculty for tourism and hospitality-Ohrid

dancesmilevska@yahoo.com

Ivica Smilkovski, PhD

Faculty for tourism and hospitality-Ohrid

Jordan Kocevski, PhD

Abstract

Revising the law regulative in the area of hospitality is necessary as a result of the needs of the guests and tourists visiting the Republic of Macedonia.

As a result of the needs of the guests and tourists who are visiting the Republic of Macedonia the necessity of revising the law regulative in the area of hospitality becomes immanent. According to the Law for changing and amending of the Law for hospitality of 2012 a new category of hospitality facility, national restaurant– “meana”, was added. The changes from that period, pointing out the new category, are the main subject of analysis in this paper. The scope is to detect the inconsistencies, if any, which appear in the practical application of this regulative by analysis of the current one. That will be the foundation for a discussion on how to improve the same. In that direction the authors will state their opinion, comments and suggestions which can be used for future reference.

Key words: National restaurant – “meana”, Hospitality Law, tourism, hospitality

INTRODUCTION

The dynamics of modern life are dictating changes in the wishes and demands of the guests and tourists. The tourism and the hospitality industry need to find a way to answer their needs, which are becoming more complex and diverse. A hospitality facility, whether for accommodation or food and

¹ professional paper

beverages, facing this kind of surroundings has to be prepared to do the necessary changes as an answer to the needs forced by the global changes in the sector. This is even more stressed by the fact that each hospitality facility is facing global competition.

Although the commercial subjects working in the department of tourism and hospitality are the ones who need to adopt, follow and implement these changes, one of the most important facts for their successful functioning is the state with its law regulative in the field of hospitality and tourism. Each country needs to continuously revise the current law in these fields to see how much and if they are in step with the actual situation. These changes are especially visible in the hospitality industry because the business subjects of the sector are focused on satisfying the growing needs and wishes of the tourists and the guests. They can be directed toward finding new types of services, whether it is food and beverage or accommodation, a different experience, new excitement, which can be on the border of the current legislative. Often the guests are asking for a service, product or accommodation that is not included in the host country law.

The guests and tourists visiting R. of Macedonia are imposing the necessity of revising the legal legislative in the area of hospitality. The Law for changing and amending of the Hospitality Law from 2012 has added a new category of hospitality facility for food and beverage, national restaurant – “meana”. The changes and the new category are the subject of analysis in this paper.

THEORETICAL APPROACH TO THE NATIONAL CUISINE

Since 1862 Brillat-Savarin (2011) will say: “Tell me what you eat, and I’ll tell you who you are”, by which he had started the topic of cuisine as identity and opened a discussion about the connection of food to a specific geographic territory and nation.

The term “national” cuisine is connecting the cuisine with a political border. It should be considered that the cuisines and nations are artificial forms of the human evolution, which refer to material objects, such as: land, nature, geographic locations and the products in those places etc. In this concept the food is revealing something about the food, while the nations about the places/ locations. The cuisines are part of a Country because they are referring to the material products (e.g. butter, spices), the same way that nations are inhabiting specific locations –parts of the planet Earth. This is stressed because the phrase “national cuisine” (national + cuisine) is pointing out the connection between the food and location even more, by which the relations of exclusivity, identity, even nationalism are being exaggerated.

According to the anthropologist Sydney Mintz (1966) “the national cuisine is a contradictory term... often, the national cuisine is a holistic trick based on the food of people that are leaving in a political system, such as France or Spain”.

E. N. Anderson (2005) is stressing that an absolute precision shouldn't be insisted on during the process of defining the national cuisine. He thinks that this kind of precision can be considered as a challenge from experts in the field who are capable of easily denying the detailed definition. According to him there are two groups of approaches when defining a national cuisine:

Quantitative method –to give an extended definition that will include all the meals and food that one cuisine includes. This will produce a long list of recipes that are included in a national cuisine.

Descriptive method –to give a simple rule that will point out the main characteristics of a cuisine and that would include more cases as a general frame without insisting on perfection.

This paper accepts Anderson's opinion that the second approach is better and simpler.

One of the most spread and accepted approaches within the second method is the “aroma principal”. This has been developed by the couple Elizabeth and Paul Rozin who combined their different fields of knowledge, Pol as a world known expert on the smell sense and Elizabeth as a talented chef, in successfully creating this principal (E. Rozin 1983). In her book “Ethnic cuisine: The Flavour-Principle Cookbook; How to create the authentic flavors of 30 international cuisines; More than 300 recipes” of 1983, she starts from the assumption that the cuisine, same as many chefs, can be recognized by the combination of spices, meaning the aroma of a specific meal that is considered as its recognizable characteristic comes from using a combination of spices and their quantities, as well as a specific combination of its ingredients. Each national cuisine has its own, unique and recognizable aroma that comes from those combinations. The spices and ingredients (and their combinations) are the signature of the meal, which signature becomes characteristic for a certain national cuisine. According to them any meal (even a new meal for one political territory) that has the signature of a national cuisine can be considered part of that national cuisine.

Using this method as main, starting from the attention given to the spices and main cooking ingredients Anderson (2005) points out that one can define hierarchies of world culinary regions. He is suggesting seven culinary macro regions which include numerous nations and regional cuisines: North Europe, Mediterranean Europe, Latin America (excluding Mexico and Brazil), Near East (Morocco to Afghanistan), South Asia, South-east Asia and China.

In this categorization Brazil, Mexico, Japan, Ethiopia and some other countries can't be part of the macro regions because of the uniqueness of their cuisines. He stresses that on some territories there was interaction between the cultures and that is why the problem of adding them to a macro region appears, most of all because of the fact that their cuisine has the elements of most of the macro regions. As such area he states the Balkans, whose cuisine has influences of the South European, Mediterranean and the Near East cuisine.

The fact that these "signatures" of a national cuisine can be very fast and dramatically changed should be considered when defining ones cuisine. This means that the use of new aromas (spices, herbs etc.) that will represent the national cuisine can happen. The reasons for this kind of changes can be many, but the most important is the change of the taste of the individuals as a group. The change of taste is the most often reason for changing the national food ways, but it is also the most complex one because the taste is a subjective factor, special for each individual. On the other hand there is one general, collective taste that is transferred to each individual living in the specific society. The best sign for that is the will not to experiment with new tastes and holding on the traditional ways of food preparing. By doing so the tastes of individuals are becoming unified. Accepting new taste takes time and even more time for it to become a part of the national food way and the general practice. For example, in Macedonia the combination of sweet-and-sour sauce is unacceptable, while the same is one of the main characteristic of the Chinese specialties. In this concept the changes of the French cuisine during the XVII and XVIII century can be pointed out: the cuisine of that period was mostly founded on the widely spread spices (salt, black pepper) and it was changed by the influence of the oriental spices (ginger and saffron); while during the XVIII century the change of quality use of spices is implemented, meaning the spice is used to bring out the taste of the meal rather than dominate; so that by the end of the previous century it grew into the perfection of combination which is the main characteristic of the French Haute cuisine.

On this subject Kocevski (2014) has concluded that although the difficulties of defining one national cuisine of a country remain, it is possible if the different tastes and their often change is considered. What makes one national cuisine today doesn't mean that it will be part of the same cuisine after ten, fifty or hundred years. Considering all the factors that influence the national cuisine, Kocevski (2014: 76) gives the following definition:

The national cuisine is the cuisine² characteristic for a country which represents the current taste of the residents of that country.

ANALYSIS OF THE CATEGORY “NATIONAL RESTAURANT – MEANA” AS PART OF THE HOSPITALITY LAW OF REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

The hospitality workers are doing their job according to the national legislative, as well as the accepted hospitality policies and customs, and depending on the types and ways of giving hospitality services in the appropriate types of facilities.

The hospitality facilities can be divided into:

- Hospitality facilities for accommodation and
- Hospitality facilities for food.

The name of the facility is determined by the type of services that are mostly offered in it.

The hospitality facilities depending on the type of hospitality services take names according to the National classification of fields.

The name of the hospitality facility can be changed if it fulfills the conditions for giving other types of services in the hospitality facility.

The hospitality facilities for food can be:

- Restaurants (restaurants, guest houses, self-service restaurants, express restaurants, kiosks, diary restaurants, restaurants gardens, summer gardens, kebab shops, bistro, pizzeria, fast food facilities etc.);
- Bars (coffee shop, night bar, coffee bar, cabaret, disco club, disco-club on open space, pub etc);
- National restaurant –meana;
- Canteen and
- Other hospitality facilities for food.

Special mark is given for the facility national restaurant-meana. To get this mark the hospitality facility needs to fulfill the following criteria:

- Approved categorization that is still valid;
- The offered food in the menu should be at least 70% home, traditional meals compared to the international, while the offered wine and other beverages in the list should be 80% wine and other beverages produced in Republic of Macedonia compared to the international wines and other beverages;

²Kocevski (2014) defines cuisine as: “specific set of practices and traditions in cooking, often connected to a specific culture or a time period of history”

- When making the exterior and interior of the facility natural materials should be used, as well as motives from the home traditional culture, folk instruments, folk wearing, traditional cutlery and similar;
- The uniform of the staff should have application and motives from the traditional wearing; and
- The music that will be performed in the hospitality facility needs to be traditional and acoustic.

When one is considering this type of hospitality facility for food it is necessary to think about the special condition of categorization, because the conditions that are given for their exterior and interior are not completely according to the given Restaurant categorization by law. Good example for this is point 3, the category of Services from the Categorization, which is about the wine list. According to the Categorization to get four stars (the best category) the restaurant needs to offer 20 types of top quality wines of which at least 10 should be international wines, meaning 50% of the wine list. While point two of the criteria of getting the mark for “national restaurant – meana” the wine and beverage list needs to be consisted of at least 80% wines and beverages with Macedonian origin. Therefore the “national restaurant – meana” won’t be able to have this mark and four stars at the same time.

The criteria stated in the Hospitality Law are more elaborated within the rulebook made by the Ministry of economics.

The criterion of having 70% national meals in the menu of the “national restaurant-meana” can be considered as an appropriate percent when it comes to this category. However a revision is necessary when it comes to the List of traditional meal stated in the rulebook. Few of the aspect that need revision are going to be stated below:

The very small number of traditional meals within the List (only 21) can be considered as the biggest weakness. Anderson’s opinion on this topic is that the list of national food should be very long. By giving only 21 meals the long tradition in cooking and the Macedonian cuisine that was built during centuries of time is shortened to this number. If one looks at the cookbooks of one of the most popular chefs in Macedonia, who also have their own TV Shows, Adrijana Alacki (2010) and Nebojsa Vukovic, Phd (2012), one can see that their books are consisted of significantly larger number than the one of the list. “Macedonian traditional cookbook” (Македонски традиционален готвач) by Alacki us consisted of 176 recipes formed in 9 categories, while Vukovic’s “Home cook” (Домашен готвач) has more than 800 recipes. Therefore it can be concluded that the current number of traditional meals in the List is unjustly excluding a large number of recipes.

Although the List of traditional meals is giving the meals that should be included in the menu of the “national restaurant-meana” at some places (point 14, 16, 17, 18 and 21) categories are given instead of specific meals. A decision should be made on whether this is a list that uses the quantitative method or it is a list made by using the descriptive method. The combined way in which the List has been made gives more room to some categories of meals, like the salads (point 14), to be included in larger numbers, while on the other hand a vast number of meals and categories are not mentioned at all or included in small numbers (e.g. the meal “shkembechorba” has been included while the other types of stews and soups are not even mentioned).

The use of the descriptive method within some categories is not precise and can create inconsistencies and confusion. The 14th point of the list (Salads made by home ingredients) gives room for international salads to be presented as part of the Macedonian national cuisine, although they are not part of it. Good example is the Caesar salad, which can be completely made by using “home ingredients”, as stated in the list. The 18th point (Barbeque prepared on Macedonian way) also need further elaboration, because the BBQ is considered as universal category, present everywhere in the world and whose preparation is also universal: piece of meat cooked on barbeque. The 21st point (Traditional home sweet meals) is too general. In our cuisine a significant part of the deserts have oriental (Turkish) origin, such as baklava or tulumba, which at the same time can be considered as part of the Macedonian cuisine. This category, defined as it is, doesn't explain whether this type of deserts can or can't be included in the menu of the “meana”.

Some categories of food have been included as individual recipes, while they are part of categories that have been included in the List, by which the number of meals on the List gets even thinner. Good example is the specialty “sharskapleskavica” which is prepared on Barbeque and as such it should have been included in the category Barbeque prepared on Macedonian way, instead of taking it out. The same can be said for the “Shirden” and “Kukurek” which are part of the 16th point of the List, Home prepared meals of intestines.

Some of the meals on the List have origin that can be questioned. Some of them are Sharskapleskavica whose origin is from Serbia, Chomlek whose different variants are present all over the Balkan Peninsula and whose origin is most probably Turkish.

The meals stated within the List should represent the whole Macedonian cuisine, while within it meals from specific areas and regions of Macedonia are dominating, while others are not even mentioned. For example the meal Prilepjanija is given, while the meal “janija” from other regions is excluded (eg. Strumickajanija). Shirden and Kukurek are meals characteristic for the

city of Prilep (Cuculeski, 2008). This means that 1/7 of the total given meals on the list are from this town.

In the theoretical approach toward defining the national cuisine the flaws of defining by giving an exact list were pointed out. The previous stated arguments about the List unfortunately have those flaws. Therefore it is better to approach the list by using only a descriptive method when defining the cuisine and recipes which it includes. This means precisely defining the characteristics of the Macedonian national cuisine, which can be used as a foundation for deciding which meals can be considered a part of it. The same approach can be used for the separate categories of food (e.g. hot starters, main dishes, salads etc.) which will give a clear picture about what can and can't be served in the national restaurant – meana. This approach can be supported by a list, but as Anderson (2005) states the list should be long and following the example of the previously mentioned Macedonian chefs when it refers to the Macedonian traditional cuisine.

Considering the wine lists having 80% domestic wines and alcohol drinks can be viewed as positive. There is space to think about the other alcoholic drinks and whether they should be separated from the wines. This can result with having only 80% of domestic wines while having none of the other Macedonian alcohol beverages, while the 20% can be only imported. This situation can be avoided if this standard is given separate for the wines and the other alcohol beverages.

The second criterion of the Law place a very important question: what about the non-alcoholic beverages? Macedonia has so many traditional drinks that deserve the same treatment as the alcoholic beverages and food. It shouldn't be allowed for a national restaurant whose offer will be based on non-alcoholic drink that are world brands only (like Coca Cola and Pepsi), to exist. Therefore the second criterion for getting the mark “national restaurant – meana” should include the non-alcoholic beverages.

The third criterion of the Law is described in details in the Rulebook, where all the allowed materials for the exterior of the object are stated, as well as a detailed description of what can be included in the interior.

The criterion that refers to the uniform and music of the facility, stated in the Hospitality Law, is acceptable. It is interesting to note that these two aspects are not mentioned in the Rulebook, which can lead to the conclusion that they are not necessary for getting the mark “national restaurant – meana”.

CONCLUSION

Although the companies in the field of tourism and hospitality are the ones that need to follow and adapt to the needs of the tourists and guests, one of the most important factors for their successful functioning is the state through its legislative in the field. The hospitality subjects are working according to the national regulative, as well as according to the special hospitality customs and depending on the type and ways of giving services in the appropriate facilities. The analysis on the Hospitality Law and regulative that refers to the National restaurant – meana have brought up to attention few aspects>

When we speak about the National restaurant – meana it is necessary to think about having different conditions for categorization, because the conditions stated for their exterior and interior design are not fully compatible with the current Categorization for restaurants.

The 70% of national meals in the menu of the “national restaurant – meana” as a condition is appropriate. But when the List of traditional meals is analyzed, which is stated in the Rulebook, needs to be reviewed.

The third criterion of the Law is described in details in the Rulebook, where all the acceptable materials for exterior and interior design are given as a more detailed description of what is acceptable.

The fourth and fifth criteria of the Law that are stressing out the importance of uniform and music in the facility are appropriate. It is interesting to mention that these two criteria are not mentioned in the Rulebook, which can be misleading when applying for the mark of “national restaurant – meana”.

In conclusion from the analysis it is obvious that there are some weak points that can result in difficulties in getting the mark for this category of facility. Also the investment in changing an existing restaurant to get this mark can be very high, especially those which refer to the exterior and interior design of the facility. The difficulties in getting this mark are visible given the fact that since the Law was enforced till the beginning of 2015 there isn't any restaurant registered as a national restaurant – meana. The support that the Government of R. Macedonia is giving for registering a hospitality facility under this category through a Public call for Subventions for hospitality facilities in getting the mark National restaurant – meana (from 26th of January , Public paper of RM) talks about that fact as well.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

ANDERSON, E. N. (2005) *Everyone Eats: Understanding Food and Culture*, New York & London: New York University Press

- BRILLAT-SAVARIN, J.-A. (2011), *Philosophy of taste*, online: The University of Adaleide
- CAPLAN, P. (1997) Approaches to the study of food, health and identity, in: CAPLAN, P. (ed) *Food, Health and Identity*, London: Routledge; (1-31)
- ENOTES (n.d.), *Gastronomy* [WWW]. eNotes.com Inc. Available from: <http://www.enotes.com/gastronomy-reference/gastronomy>
- HARRIS, P.; LYON, D. и MCLAUGHLIN, S. (2005) *The meaning of food*, Guilford, Connecticut: Globe Pequot
- KELLNER, D. (1992) "Popular Culture and construction of Postmodern Identities" in Lash S. & Friedman J. (editors) *Modernity and Identity*, Blackwell: Oxford
- MITCHELL, L. (2013), *Bradt Travel Guides*, p. 83
- MINTZ, W. and DuBOIS, C. M. (2002) The Anthropology of Food and Eating. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, vol. 31, pp. 99-119
- PIETRYKOWSKI, B. (2004) You Are What You Eat: The Social Economy of the Slow Food Movement. *Review of social economy*, vol.62, no. 3
- RAIČEVIĆ, M. (1999) *Slave: žitiја, tropari, slavskaiaposnajela, Gramatik*.
- ROZIN, E. (1992) *Ethnic Cuisine: The Flavour-Principle Cookbook; How to create the authentic flavors of 30 international cuisines; More than 300 recipes*, Penguin Books
- WARDE, A. (1997) *Consumption, Food and Taste*. London: Sage
- АЛИЧКИ, А. (2010) *Македонски традиционален готвач*, Скопје
- ВУКОВИЌ, Н. (2012) *Домашен готвач*, Скопје: Младинска куќа
- КАЈГАНА (2015) *Субвенции за национални ресторани-меани*, [WWW] Available from: <http://www.kajgana.com/subvencii-za-nacionalni-restauranti-meani>
- КОРУНОВСКИ, С. и КОЦЕВСКИ, Ј. (2005) *Храна и култура*, Охрид: Институт за истражување на туризмот при Факултетот за туризам и угостителство
- КОЦЕВСКИ Ј. (2014) *Националната кујна како етно-културен идентитет во туризмот*, докторски труд, Факултет за туризам и угостителство -Охрид
- МАРТИНОСКА, С. (2008) *Ресторански менаџмент*, Охрид: Институт за истражување на туризмот при Факултетот за туризам и угостителство
- МИНИСТЕРСТВО ЗА ЕКОНОМИЈА (2014) Правилник за формата и содржината на образецот на ознаката национален ресторан-меана и начинот и поблиските критериуми за добивање на ознаката национален ресторан-меана, *Службен весник на РМ*, бр. 149, 13.10.2014
- МИНИСТЕРСТВО ЗА ЕКОНОМИЈА (2015) ЈАВЕН ПОВИК за Субвенции за угостителските објекти за добивање на ознаката за

Националните ресторани-меани, *Службен весник на РМ*, бр. 146, 26.01.2015

РЕЧКОСКА, Г.П. (2012) *Познавање на стоки со наука за исхрана*, трето издание, Охрид: Институт за истражување на туризмот при Факултетот за туризам и угостителство

ЦУЦУЛЕВСКИ, В. (2008) *Национална гастронологија*, Охрид: Институт за истражување на туризмот при Факултетот за туризам и угостителство