

THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND PUBLIC POLICY SMTEs and the Role of Government and Public Policy in Libya

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ABSTRACT

The tourism industry in Libya consists of many small and medium sized tourism enterprises (SMTEs), with various activities ranging from tour operators to café and restaurants. The majority of these businesses operates independently and do not belong a large chain. All of these enterprises fall under the umbrella of the General People's Committee for Tourism (Ministry of Tourism), which was established in 2003 to replace the General Board for Tourism and Antiquities. The Ministry of Tourism is a Government and public sector body holding authority for public policy and development instruments for tourism-related industries. There are also public sector organizations involved in running the Libyan tourism industry below the Ministry.

The Committee was established with the aim to provided a comprehensive strategy for the development of tourism in the country and to progress its implementation. The objectives are to implement the tourism master plan, which was approved by the General People's Congress in 1998 as well as carrying out marketing and promotion of the country. This is as a destination for international tourism festivals and fairs, and to encourage intra-regional tourism through national festivals, which are organized in more than five of the Regional Municipalities. The General People's Committee for Tourism also considering a new tourism law that will take into account comments made by parties related to the tourism industry including a new classification of tourism establishments especially accommodation outlets.

The research reported involved the use of methods to access the policy environment, which currently exists in the tourism industry in Libya. The paper draws primarily on existing research, secondary data sources and a short questionnaire to key policy makers. Secondary data sources include literature in the area, which consists of both published and "gray" material (including reports from national and international bodies, universities and consultants). In addition, data has bee obtained from key policy makers involved with the Libya SMTE sector. In order to determine the nature of public policy and development instruments in relations to SMTEs, a questionnaire survey was distributed to key tourism organizations. The findings from this are to be reported in the paper and these show the importance of public policy and the development instruments in the running of the tourism industry. From the analysis of the results of the survey, the role of government and public policy in relation to SMTEs is determined and those aspects that are important for the sustainable development of the Libyan tourism industry are reported.