

Robert Durica: “Keep it short and simple”

Bratislava Hotels Association (BHA) unites 14 hotels, 4 of them five stars, 9 of them with four stars and just the one with three stars. Their main activity is supporting its members in their business activities, representing their interests and creating binding regulations.

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Photo credits: Bratislava Convention Bureau

We took the opportunity to sit with **Mr. Robert Durica**, Chairman of **Bratislava Hotels Association**, for a brief discussion on their future goals, plans and objectives.

BHA provides services to its members and individuals and represents the interests of its members in relation to the central and regional governments. Their other main tasks are promoting the reputation of the Bratislava hotel facilities and tourism industries, developing principles and recommendations for the service provision, providing legal assistance, counselling services, and coordinating the interests of its members to ensure their cooperation in commercial and promotional activities. Furthermore, they cooperate with foreign associations and hotels, are developing training programmes for the hotel and tourism industries, cooperating with vocational schools and educational

institutions and organising training programmes for employees in hotel management. We have only listed the main services to give you an image of the wide range of responsibilities that BHA holds.

With all that in mind, who could not be amazed by the **hospitality industry** and its seemingly perpetual motion characteristics? It was this key factor that attracted Durica to enter this amazing, constantly changing and dynamic industry. As he himself explained, the magic in the industry is that no matter how bad the times might be, people will always travel – either for business or for leisure purposes.

"Our main goal is to meet periodically with professionals of the hotel industry in Bratislava and exchange ideas and innovations across the industry," explained Durica, when asked about the **main goals and objectives** of the Bratislava Hotels Association. *"Issues related to the employment market and legislation is in general is one of the issues that needs more attention. With closer cooperation with ZHRSR (Hotel and Restaurant Association of the Slovak Republic), which BHA is a member of, all of our goals are more likely to be achieved in a short period of time."*

In Durica's opinion, business travellers should choose Bratislava as their destination for holding events for its **safety** (Slovakia ranked as the 24th most peaceful country out of 163 countries in the **Global Peace Index (GPI)** 2016, released on June 8), **proximity to airports** and extremely **high level of hotel services**. And, as you might already be familiar with – if planning an event in Bratislava – the city is suitable for holding **small to mid-sized events and incentives**.

"Less bureaucracy in the strongly regulated hospitality and tourism industry in Slovakia, and a stable and long-term marketing strategy to promote Slovakia and Bratislava," replied Durica, when asked if there was one area where he would like to see an **immediate improvement**. This is not at all surprising, as the majority of destinations in New Europe are the facing the same bureaucratic challenge. Despite all of the obstacles that destinations have to confront, we believe that creativity and inventiveness are the lifelines to successful progress in the industry.

Mr. Durica really believes in the **"keep it short and simple"** principle, as he's aware that most systems work best if they are kept simple rather than made complicated, and therefore simplicity remains a key goal in setting the future plans for the growth of the Bratislava Hotels Association.