

TOURISM AND THE CHALLENGES OF A SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT IN KOSOVO

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Abstract

Strategic resource of kosovar tourism, is more space with lot of value, so far preserved that in the long run, day by day will have more importance not only in economic aspect, but also in the aspect ecological, social and cultural of life. Geographical location, climate, mountains, gorges, flora and fauna, natural and cultural heritage, are basic elements that make Kosovo a tourist destination for domestic tourists and foreign. Kosovo offers opportunities to develop these types of tourism: Tourism recreation, winter-sports tourism, summer tourism, cultural tourism, rural tourism, hunting and fishing, health tourism, excursions, alpine tourism, transit tourism, cross-border tourism, etc. Kosovo is a tourist destination that possesses the tourist value the affirmative, which represent important potential tourist. Activation should be the instigator of the overall development in the future. Excellent strategic position geographical, in Kosovo enables tourism development and powerful jerk in the international market. Good management of natural resources, which can be found in considerable numbers in Kosovo, will be essential importance for sustainable development. Tourism has significant potential to become fillip of development.

Key words: Tourism, Kosovo, winter, summer, nature, development, sustainable.

JEL classification: D64, L82, L83, O1, O13, Q01, Q22, Q26, Z0.

Entry

Kosovo has many possibilities for tourism development because it has an extensive weaving natural and cultural attractions. Apart from these, special hospitality that has Kosovo could serve to develop fast and sustainable tourism.

Although Kosovo has sufficient tourism resources, the tourism sector is not developed and utilized enough.

Seeing tourism as one of the key areas that will affect the economy of Kosovo, the development of tourism should be seen as one of the priorities of thanks, touristic regions enables this for Kosovo, which are pretty interesting and attractive to visitors.

Kosovo possesses sufficient human resources to prepare and deliver in tourist market a quality product and acceptable international standards. Kosovar youth needs an educational and cultural level to be integrated quickly into the country's touristic industry.

Kosovo has enough qualitative resources for tourism. They offer the possibility of winter tourism and mountain, that recreation - sports, cultural tourism based on our abundant historical, cultural -heritage.

Tourism in Kosovo should be seen as the initiator of the development of economy.

The Tourism Development in Kosovo

Tourism is a social phenomenon, cultural phenomenon, economical phenomenon, through which, it is realised the presentation of the peoples' cultures and it is in the global economy's trend. The Tourism Industry is one activity amongst the modern society activities, simultaneously; an important product is the export and employment producer. Except the economical importance, the tourism plays an important role in the integration in international tourist associations.

The tourism development in Kosovo is a priority for the economical development, concurrently; it is an attractive development field for Kosovo. The development of the tourism in our country should be connected to natural beauties, traditional culture and the climate etc.

Kosovo has a favourite geographical position, and consequently, we could say that it has a potential for its improvement. Even though, Kosovo is a small piece of

land, it offers good chances to the improvement of certain kinds of tourism thanks to its natural beauties.

- Recreational Tourism,
- Winter-sport Tourism,
- Summer Tourism,
- Cultural Tourism,
- Rural Tourism,
- Fishing and Hunting,
- Health Tourism,
- Excursions,
- Alpinism Tourism,
- Speleotourism,
- Transitional Tourism.

The level of Kosovar tourism offer should be according to the modern tourism offer. For the tourism development, Kosovo could have won by cooperation and exchanging experiences with Albania or any other state from the region. In order for the tourism to be improved in Kosovo it must be implemented the plan and strategy composition, which process would ensure the qualitative and quantitative increase of the tourism.

Local tourist circulations, familiar circulations, or group circulations are usually done for recreational purposes, especially either during the summer time, in order to freshen up close to pools, rivers, lakes, or during the winter season in ski centres (Brezovicë and Rugovë) or elsewhere. A huge number of pools were built in Kosovo in the post-war period, which attracts an enormous number of young tourist clients.

The State intervention for the tourism development

In many states, many issues relating to the tourism will be set in a direct or indirect way by the state. The tourism includes different spheres of the life such as: political, economic, cultural or social life. For this issue, the tourist policy defined by the state includes social activities, which belong to the social policy, economical, health, cultural etc. In all these places, the majority of tourist reports and occurrences are regulated by the law, as well as the other activities such as hoteliers, transportations, trade, health, industrial, agricultural activity and so on.

In general, the most important competences of state bodies about the tourism with the Western-European countries and Kosovo neighbouring countries are:

- The plans preparation and the composition about the tourism development,
- The preparation of law provision by the tourism department,
- Monitoring and the implementing of the working provision of the most important tourist organisation,
- The assessment of the prices policies, services, placement and the feeding,
- Ensure the orientation of the tools of financial credits for the hoteliers' development as well as occupations related to informatics activities- propaganda with international interest and organising the tourist representative in the outer world.⁵³⁷

The Tourist Regions in Kosovo

Even though Kosovo has adequate tourist resources, the tourism sector is not developed and used enough.

Kosovo has a chance to develop different kinds of tourism; this makes possibilities to invest and create it an attractive place for the tourists. From the tourist point of view, Kosovo is composed of five tourist regions:

- Tourist Region of Albanian Alps,
- Tourist Region of Sharr Mountain,
- Prishtina Tourist Region,
- Mitrovica Tourist Region (Shalës së Bajgores),
- Anamorava Tourist Region.

The Tourist Region of Albanian Alps, is the richest space for the tourism development, this region is composed of these municipalities: Peja, Deçani, Gjakova, Burimi, Klina, dhe Rahoveci. *The Tourist Region of Sharr*, in this region are the following municipalities: Prizreni, Ferizaj, Kaçaniku, Shtërpca, Sharr, Theranda, Malisheva. *Prishtina Central Tourist Region*, is the epicentre of all tourist of Kosovo development. In this region are the following municipalities: Prishtina, Besiana, Shtime, Drenasi, Lypjani, Kastrioti dhe Fushë Kosova. *Mitrovica Tourist Region*, this region is consisted of the municipalities: Mitrovicë, Skenderaj, Vushtri, Zveçan, Zubin-Potoku, Leposaviqi.

Anamorava Tourist Region, The Gjilan Municipality, Vitia, Dardanë dhe Artanë municipalites compose this tourist.⁵³⁸

The Tourist Region of Albanian Alps and the tourist region of Sharr Mountains are regions, which are distinguished, not just in Kosovo, but in district as well, which regions exist to develop the mountainous tourism, especially the wintering-sport tourism.

The researches done until then show that in just 2 tourist there are more than 20 tourist centres according to the international standards for the winter-sport tourist development.

Three other regions have their specifics, which are attractive for the specific types of the tourism. Kosovo is famous and known with other attractions like: Rugova Outfall, the source of Drini i Bardhë, Mirusha Waterfall, and a considerable number of thermal sources, (Banja e Pejës,

Kllokotit, e Mitrovicës, etc), a number of caves, specifying the Gadime Cave, Bifurcation of the Nerodime river etc.⁵³⁹

Winter tourism – skiing

Great heights that Kosovo owns create opportunities for the development of mountain tourism.

Mountain tourism, conditioned by relief, landscape photography, unfolding of the beauties of the environment, fresh climate, cold water resources, flora and fauna and fresh air. Kosovo's mountainous areas represent natural beauty easily comparable with those that are among the most beautiful in Europe, for that Kosovo needs to work on tourism development in particular of that mountains-winter, thing that can transformed in very profitable branch of the country economy. Brezovica ski terrains are undoubtedly among the best in the region and enable the race to the highest ranking of the International Federation of Skiing. It is worth mentioning and that the road infrastructure that allows easy access to the Brezovica complex exist and maintained. It is solid, also supply with electricity and water, as is generally the case in Kosovo.⁵⁴⁰ The center of Kosovo tourism in winter and summer is Brezovica with Sharr mountains. The ski trails are located 12 km from the village with the same name in the municipality of Shtërpca. With possibilities that Brezovica offers for lovers of skiing, makes that Brezovica be the most visited tourist center during the winter in Kosovo. Ski center space is about 2500 ha, in altitude 1718-2522 m. In this space are the ski slopes with average length of about 4 km and an average of flexibility with 38%. At altitude of 1718 m, in Livadhi i Madh is the newest telpher. The exit station from the telpher is at the height of 2212 m above sea level. The ski center "Brezovica" is open to all lovers of skiing during the four seasons of the year, where in summer, snow-covered surface reduced but still leaves the possibility of exploitation. This center has several hotels that offer quality services to higher categories. Among the most popular hotels is the Hotel Narcis the first category which is located in altitude of 900 m, and is 9 km from the ski trails. At 1700 m altitude located hotel category "B", Molika hotel, located near the ski trails. In this hotel performed services relating to equipment for sliding.⁵⁴¹

Tourist resorts in the region of Sharr

⁵³⁷ Business Administration, socio – economic scientific journal. No.3, Peja, 2001, p. 153.

⁵³⁸ <http://www.telegrafi.com/?id=49&a=179>

⁵³⁹ <http://www.turizmi.com/blog/kosova-dhe-turizmi.html>

⁵⁴⁰ <http://www.telegrafi.com/?id=49&a=179>

⁵⁴¹ <http://www.nasergashi.com/t405-turizmi-ne-kosove>

Average denivelacion of path	The main center of the mountains	Number of skiers	The total capacity of centers
950	Bistrica-Prevallë	13.780	27.000
	Brezovica	7.575	15.000
	Brodi	7.100	14.000
	Radesha	5.150	10.000
	Lubinjë	4.750	9.000
	Brodosavci	4.720	9.000
	Restelica	4.620	9.000
	Shtërpca	3.920	8.000
	Oshlaku	3.190	6.000
	Kara Nikollë	3.180	6.000
	Total	57.985	113.000

Source: The seventh International Conference on Business and Employment "IFK, 2008, Pristina, p. 361.

Bjeshket e Nemuna and Rugova as their most northern region is the ski center of Kosovo and Balkan considering the 3-5 km long paths adopted by nature to achieve stability of snow on height up to 2 km. It is important that the snow does not slide, then avalanches on ski slopes are not present and are points with greater presence of snow from December to April.

Bjeshket e Nemuna are divided into three regions as potential center for tourism development in general and especially the winter.

- The region Bjeshka Belegut with altitude 2200 – 2300 m as a center of opportunity skiing development with a capacity of 17 000 / persons a day.

- Region Bjeshka Lumbardhi, Milishevës and Tigane meadows with quota from 85000 100 000/ persons a day.

- Region Bjeshka Rusolisë, Shtedimi, Hajla and Gropa e Madhe. As a special mass of study is Koprniku, the highest peak called Çferle in altitude 2430 m, with capacity from 15 to 20,000 people. The particularity of this center is that it connects directly to the town of Pec on the southwest side where visitors have the opportunity to savor the day within a clean environment and rare beauties and return evening in the city.⁵⁴²

Tourist center in tourism region of Alpet Shqiptare

Average denivelacion of path	The main center of the mountains	Number of skiers	The total capacity of centers
880	Maja e Rusolisë	19.250	40.000
	Maja e Kurvalës	11.250	22.000
	Bjeshka e Belegut	7.550	15.000
	Koprivnik	6.620	11.000
	Rosa Zogut	5.150	10.000
	Starac	4.150	8.000
	Maja e Strelcit	3.855	7.000
	Hala	3.780	7.000
	Maja e Leqinatit	2.760	5.000
	Maja e Moknës	2.030	4.000
	Total	65.393	129.000

Source: The seventh International Conference on Business and Employment "IFK, 2008, Pristina, p.361.

Some of tourist places in Kosovo

- *Complexes Mountain:* Malet e Sharrit , where the Bjeshket e Nemuna where Rugova and Brezovica distinguished as center of skiing and recreation , Maja e Lubotenit Maja e Gjeravices which is recognized as the highest peak in Kosovo wich reach 2656 meters height, etc..

- *Museum cities:* Prizren, Gjakova, Rahovac, Dragash, Junik ect, have various items with rare architecture from various ages of time, the culture of different civilizations.

- *Historic Places:* Prekazi, Jezerc, Drenica, Koshare, Gillogjani, Krusha.

- *Natyral attractions:* Bifurkacioni i Neredimes, Ujëvara e Mirushës, Burimi i Drinit, Shpella e Gadimës, etj.

- *Thermal Sources:* Banja e Kllokotit, Banja e Pejës, Hotels, Restaurants, Pools, Motels near highway.⁵⁴³

Conclusion

Kosovo Tourism requires a serious approach to raise it to a higher level given the conditions to be met to keep a tourist. For that Kosovo needs to promote and develop sustainable tourism and this will reached by ensuring sustainable management of natural resources. The tourism sector in Kosovo is not developed, but seeing that there exist many potential tourist, tourism will be in the future one of the best options that will make social and economic development of the country.

We can say that tourism development led to the development of other branches of the economy. At the same time, tourism also provides an increased economic standards of life of the country's inhabitants were employed in the tourism sector, ie. development of tourism in the country will affect consumption growth, rising employment, rising incomes and economic growth. So the development of tourism in Kosovo would be a good way to solve some social and economic problems.

To develop the tourism in Kosovo should become the drafting of strategies and policies that will ensure a qualitative and quantitative growth of tourism

⁵⁴³<http://www.rks-gov.net/sq->

[AL/Qytetaret/AmbientiDheNatyra/Pages/Turizmi.aspx](http://www.rks-gov.net/sq-AL/Qytetaret/AmbientiDheNatyra/Pages/Turizmi.aspx)

⁵⁴² <http://www.nasergashi.com/t405-turizmi-ne-kosove>

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