

ALTERNATIVE FORMS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE MUNICIPALITY OF BEROVO

Abstract: The aim of this paper is to present and analyse the alternative forms for development of tourism in the municipality of Berovo. These forms of tourism are developed from the tourist resources available to the municipality of Berovo and include mountain climate-healing tourism weekend-picnic, hunting, fishing, transit and rural, religious and manifest tourism.

Having in mind the complexity of tourism itself, it is important to analyse its various elements like geographical position, natural-geographical features combined with significant monumental anthropogenic values to find the real value of the place analysed.

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Introduction

The Berovo Municipality, which is located in the eastern part of the Republic of Macedonia, has a mountainous character of a region with a temperate continental climate. The mean annual temperature at altitude of 800 meters is 11.1°C, and in Berovo it is 8.7°C. An important climatic element are rainfalls, whose average annual amount is 672 mm/m³ or 118 rainy days per year, average air humidity is 76%, average annual cloudiness is 5.3 tenths, average sunshine duration is 2 347 hours per year or 6,4 hours a day, and fog is a rare occurrence with 8.4 foggy days in the year.

The Berovo Lake is a very important hydrographic and tourist facility built in 1970 on the Ratevska River in the area of the Line. The lake is located only 7 km from the city of Berovo.

The municipality of Berovo has a rich cultural heritage such as well-preserved, old, renovated or renovated churches in the settlements that it has in almost all settlements, with different historical and cultural-artistic value.

Alternative forms for the development of tourism in the municipality of Berovo

In the Nestorska's article (2012), Identification of the tourism potential through a regional approach in the Republic of Macedonia¹, the results of the conducted analysis of the potential tourism development in the stated regions of the country are presented.² Here special emphasis is put on the development of strategic forms of tourism such as village and mountain tourism, natural and cultural treasures, etc. The identified potentials that need to be taken into consideration, the possibilities of the regions for the development of certain types of tourism, but with the compulsory attention to their sustainability are the following:

–Potential for mountain tourism and recreational activities in mountainous areas by undertaking activities: marking of ski trails in the mountains where the opportunities prevail; construction of cabins and ski lifts; defining, establishing and equipping points for viewing; establishing mountain and Alpine paths; establishment of educational and recreational paths; organizing and equipping bird / animal surveillance sites; establishing a logistics center in mountain and hunting activities; opening centers for presentation of the mountain and its tourist values; determining locations for mountain homes, hunting lodges and other types of shelters and catering facilities.

–Potentials for initiating transit tourism: locating tourist information centers; equipping the infrastructure for staying guests; locating the capacities for catering and accommodation of the most important and common roads; horticultural arrangement of surfaces; appropriate sanitary and hygienic facilities; gift shop.

–Eco-tourism activities: measures and activities for maximum protection of the areas; defining and differentiating the eco-tourism units in the region; establishment of educational and recreational paths; encouraging survival activities in nature; encouraging the production of organic food.

–Promotion activities for caving tourism: providing access to caves; setting up and editing information boards in front of caves for educational and cultural activities; arranging and equipping caves for visiting; field animation through lighting and audio effects; encouraging the activities of travel agencies to create a speleological tourist offer; providing a speleological guide and a service for ease of stay.

Berovo Lake (Ratevsko Lake) is an artificial lake located in the Maleshevia near the village of Ratevo, 6 km from Berovo and 1000 m above sea level. ³If you want to escape the city noise, stressful everyday life, traffic jams, and feel peace, tranquility and beautiful untouched nature, the Berovo Lake is the right destination. The shores of the lake are abundant with lush pine trees and deciduous forest, while the plains are spreading terrains with colorful flowers, wild berries and various teas. Bird watching, herbal tourism, landscaping and forest ambience are just some of the alternative forms that have great potential for development. For the development of mountain biking, hiking and trim movements, around the lake is built a cycling-hiking trail, and there is also the possibility of sport fishing. Along the lake, there are numerous villas that can be rented, beautiful terrain for picnics, recreation and sports. Likewise, camping along the lake and visitors can enjoy the freshness of nature in the open air. Due to the favorable location and pure untouched nature, numerous lakeside houses, beautiful picnic areas, recreation and sports are located beside the lake, and in the attractive picnic places Ablanica and Suvi Laki can be spent only at night in private villas and holiday homes. Lately, the lake is visited by organized foreign tourists. Berovo as a tourist site that constantly strives for the development of alternative tourism, daily enriches its tourist offer, which is crucial for tourists who would like to spend their time right here. Motosafari is one of the most sought after alternative forms in this region, with which visitors meet their wishes for excitement and adrenaline.

1 Nestoroska, I. (2012). Identifying the tourist potentials in the Republic of Macedonia through a regional approach, *Procedures-Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 44, 95-103, Ohrid.

2 National Strategy for Sustainable Development in the Republic of Macedonia, 2009-2030, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning of the Republic of Macedonia, 2009.

3 Visitberovo (2018): Visit Berovo. Retrieved on September 11, 2018. <http://visitberovo.mk/>

Ablanica is a tourist settlement spread on both sides of Bregalnica, which is located 2 km from Berovo. Ablanica is a tourist settlement that abounds with the most attractive archaeological sites in the municipality, and has great potential for the development of speleological tourism. The church "St. Petka" with a unique fresco painting and iconostasis made by local artists is interesting for visiting. At the moment there are over 150 weekend houses in Ablanica, and some of them are private accommodation facilities in the municipality. Ablanica is also connected with the tourist settlement Ravna Reka in the Municipality of Pehcevo with a 4 km walk, and through it passes Berovo-Ablanica-Berovo Lake. In cooperation with the Center for Development of the East Planning Region, the Municipality of Berovo and the partners Municipality of Pehcevo, the Municipality of Delchevo and the Municipality of Zrnovci, within the "Iron Curtain Trail", a tourist and recreational trail Berovo-Ablanica was built in a length of 3 km starting at Berovo at 860 m above sea level and the end point in the tourist settlement Ablanica. The trail runs through beautiful and picturesque landscapes with a richness of medicinal herbs and forest fruits, and merges the two tourist settlements Ravna Reka and Berovo Lake. On the track there are several gazebos with tables and benches where one can rest and pass one part of the time for viewing the picturesque panorama. Within the same project supported by the GTZ RED Program for Regional Economic Development in Macedonia on behalf of the German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, Ethno Room was built in Zrnovci and the area of Ilin Kamen is located near the village of Zvegor in Delchevo. The tourist settlement Suvi Laki is located 20 km from Berovo and 30 km from Strumica. The settlement Suvi Lakki is 3, 5 km long and covers an area of 80 ha. Suvi Laki, which is completely urbanized in 1978, has 500 holiday homes, 2 children's resorts and provides for the construction of another hundred weekend and commercial buildings. Due to the great popularity of the settlement, the development of speleological tourism, as well as for the needs of the tourists, the church "St. Cyril and Methodi". Passing along the Suvi Laki, after just 5 km drive to Berovo, hidden behind the surrounding hills of Malesh, rich in rivers and clean air, is the area of Bela Voda. Foreign visitors who visit this settlement say that the state has a rich tourist offer, but more promotion and investments are needed. In this complex with several weekend houses for rent, tourists can enjoy horse riding of the several freestones that are part of the offer. As a proposal from the southeast and eastern mountainous region, it is planned to build an adventure park which will include: a children's playground, a children's playground for the disabled, a mini adventure park and a cycling park.

Conclusion

According to the conducted analyzes, it can be concluded that the municipality of Berovo has very good conditions for developing the analyzed forms of tourism. However, some of the conducted analysis shows that we have a great challenge in the development of these alternative forms of tourism for the municipality of Berovo. The challenge comes from many factors, among which the most important are the socio-economic policy, the lack of resources and professional staff, tourism professionals, etc.

Municipality of Berovo has optimal conditions for implementation of eco tourism. These are: uninhabited natural eco systems; biodiversity (endemic species, medicinal herbs, mushrooms, forest fruits); attractive relief forms; favorable climatic conditions; healthy food (known Berovo Cheese, Berovo's potatoes, mountain honey, etc.); historical and cultural sights (monasteries and churches); infrastructure (accommodation facilities, traffic links); border township and industrial facilities that don't constitute a threat to the environment middle.

Alternative tourism and alternative forms are what the municipality is striving for for potential tourism development. What is offered to visitors is accommodation in an authentic building, traditional cuisine with many local specialties, prepared from eco products and products of organic origin, as well as adventure, mountaineering, mountain biking, hunting and fishing, calm watering, picnic with a grill by the lake, a meal with a three-century tradition.

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