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## THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TOURISTS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN PRILEP MUNICIPALITY BEFORE, DURING AND AFTER THE PERIOD OF THE PANDEMIC COVID-19

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**Abstract:** This scientific paper will present the number of domestic and foreign tourists as well as their overnight stays in the Republic of North Macedonia and the municipality of Prilep in the period before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic from 2018 to 2022. The scientific paper will also show the number of affiliation of tourists by country who visited the municipality of Prilep in the period after the COVID-19 pandemic in 2022. In the year of 2018 we have domestic and foreign tourist with the number in total 1 126 935 with domestic was 419 590 and of foreign was 707 345, the number from the statistics for the year 2019 in total was 1 184 963 with domestic the number was 427 370 and of foreign visitors the number was 757 593. For the year 2020 the statistics show the total number for visits for the Republic of North Macedonia was 467 514 with domestic visitors the number was 349 308 and out of foreign visitors the number is 118 206, as for the year of 2021 the total number of visitors was 702 463 with domestic visitors the number was 408 500 and of foreign visitors the number was 293 963. For the municipality of Prilep the number for 2019 of visitors was 12 296, which the number for domestic visitors was 6 505 and of foreign was 5 791, for the years of 2021 and 2022 the number dropped. The guests were greatly loved the visits of the republic of North Macedonia, they loved the culture and the people and of course the food of this country, and the rich history that comes with it, the land which is full of cultural monuments. Gastronomy of the municipality of Prilep is exquisite with is known outside of RNM as dishes like shirden, tavce gravce and of course the grill meat.

**Keywords:** tourism, guests, overnight stays, financial benefit.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

In the scientific paper, after a long time since the previous census which was held in the distant 2002, in our country the Republic of North Macedonia in 2021 a new census was held after 21 years.

*Figure 1: Geographical position of the Municipality of Prilep in RS Macedonia*



Source: Wikipedia. (2023, November 27). Prilep. Wikipedia.  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prilep>

According to the new census in 2021, the municipality of Prilep has 69,125 inhabitants. According to gender, 34,208 (49.5%) residents are men, 38,817 (50.4%) are women, with an average density of the municipality of 58 residents per 1km<sup>2</sup>. The municipality of Prilep occupies an area of 1,194.44 km<sup>2</sup>, in the municipality there are 58 rural settlements plus the city of Prilep.

*Map 2.: Cartographic representation of the settlements and their atari in the municipality of Prilep*



Source: Source: Wikipedia. (2023, November 27). Prilep. Wikipedia.  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prilep>

*Picture 1.: View of the municipal building of the city of Prilep*



Source: Source: Wikipedia. (2023, November 27). Prilep. Wikipedia.  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prilep>

This is a good opportunity to present new data on the role and significance of tourist movements before covid, during and after the covid-19 pandemic in the Republic of North Macedonia and the municipality of Prilep, as well as the number and origin by country of foreign tourists in the post-pandemic period COVID-19.

1. Number of domestic and foreign tourists in the Republic of North Macedonia and the Municipality of Prilep

The scientific paper will present the total number of domestic and foreign tourists who visited our country and the municipality of Prilep, as well as the number of overnight stays.

**Table 1.: Presentation of domestic and foreign tourist visits and realized overnight stays in the Republic of North Macedonia and the municipality of Prilep before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Year	Number of tourists in the Republic of North Macedonia			Number of nights in the Republic of North Macedonia		
	Total	Homemade	Foreign	Total	Homemade	Foreign
2018	1 126 935	419 590	707 345	3 176 808	1 685 273	1 491 535
2019	1 184 963	427 370	757 593	3 262 398	1 684 627	1 577 771
2020	467 514	349 308	118 206	1 697 535	1 444 605	252 930
2021	702 463	408 500	293 963	2 313 543	1 643 083	670 460
Year	Number of tourists in the municipality of Prilep			Number of nights in the municipality of Prilep		
	Total	Homemade	Foreign	Total	Homemade	Foreign
2018	12 296	6 505	5 791	22 094	6 505	15 589
2019	9 272	3 577	5 695	20 601	6 081	14 520
2020	2 414	1 457	957	5 292	2 614	2 678
2021	4 653	2 130	2 523	9 594	3 566	6 028
2022	5 857	2 252	3 605	15 703	3 572	12 131

Source: Statistical annual KN. Of the Republic of North Macedonia, 2022, Tourism, 14.02, p.611.

## 1. NUMBER OF TOURISTS

The number of tourists in Republic of North Macedonia in a year with domestic and foreign visitors is in large numbers with a decrease during the period of Covid-19 where it decreases, while the number of overnight stays in the Republic of North Macedonia is in large numbers, it varies but not with a large decrease even during the period of Covid -19, an increase in the number is expected in the coming years.

While the number of tourists in the municipality of Prilep is in a smaller percentage and this city has been seen according to the statistics that it was visited by both domestic and foreign visitors with a decrease during the period of Covid-19 which was expected, while the number of overnight stays in the municipality of Prilep is in a larger number with equivalent declines during the period of Covid-19.

**Table 2.: Number of tourists by country of origin in the investigated municipality of Prilep, in 2019 and 2022**

State	2019/Municipality Prilep 2019	2022/Municipality Prilep 2022
	Number of tourists	Number of tourists
Slovenia	158	59
The Netherlands	134	68
Serbia	833	405
Germany	478	301
Greece	654	512
Cyprus	1	0
USA	144	50
United Kingdom	128	45
Bulgaria	431	198
Australia	200	68
Other countries of Australia and Oceania	1	0
Bosnia and Herzegovina	49	30
Switzerland	118	27
Belgium	98	55
Russian Federation	55	33
France	93	32



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Albania	156	20
Kosovo	60	5
Romania	106	100
Hungary	96	52
Croatia	123	69
Norway	17	53
Denmark	20	13
Sweden	67	61
Poland	45	76
Italy	301	175
Malta	22	0
Checkia	100	56
South Korea	15	13
Spain	63	22
Austria	87	70
Montenegro	18	17
Other South and Central American countries	13	5
Canada	41	16
Estonia	20	16
Other Asian countries	31	31
Turkey	310	335
Finland	14	12
China	153	16
Ukraine	80	138
Other European countries	2	10
Other African countries	4	19
New Zealand	1	0
Ireland	2	7
Lithuania	22	21
Luxemburg	2	5
Portugal	18	11
Izrael	37	25
Denmark	20	13
Slovakia	40	233
Japan	8	1
Belarus	2	0
Island	0	4
Latvia	17	4
South Africa	1	0
Brazil	2	4
Other North American countries	7	4
<b>Вкупно/Total</b>	<b>5 718</b>	<b>3 611</b>

Source: State Statistics Office of RS Macedonia.

[https://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat\\_TurizamUgostitel\\_Turizam\\_TuristiNokevanja/125\\_Turizam\\_Op\\_BrTurNok\\_ml.px/?rxid=e1e7c3ce-81f5-4d6f-bc9c-5d5193df92d3](https://makstat.stat.gov.mk/PXWeb/pxweb/mk/MakStat/MakStat_TurizamUgostitel_Turizam_TuristiNokevanja/125_Turizam_Op_BrTurNok_ml.px/?rxid=e1e7c3ce-81f5-4d6f-bc9c-5d5193df92d3)

Most tourists in 2019 visited Prilep from countries such as Germany, Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, Turkey, while in 2022 most tourists visited Prilep from countries such as Germany, Greece, Turkey, Serbia and Bulgaria.

*Picture of the city traffic of the city of Prilep*



Source: Wikipedia. (2023, November 27). Prilep. Wikipedia.  
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Prilep>

## 2. CONCLUSION

Considering the statistics shown in the tables, it can be said that the number of tourists could grow considering the period of Covid-19, certainly with the promotion of our country throughout Europe and the world. The number of visitors will increase in the coming years, visitors were pleased with the culture and the rich history of our country and the municipality of Prilep, food not like any other in the world, natural beauty like mountains, rivers, woods.

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