

KONSTANTIN
PRESLAVSKY
UNIVERSITY
SHUMEN



ШУМЕНСКИ УНИВЕРСИТЕТ
“ЕПИСКОП КОНСТАНТИН ПРЕСЛАВСКИ”

VI Научна конференция с международно участие
ГЕОГРАФИЯ,
РЕГИОНАЛНО РАЗВИТИЕ И ТУРИЗЪМ
Посветена на 60-годишнината от началото на обучението
по география във висшето образование в Шумен

8 – 10 ноември 2024

СБОРНИК С РЕЗЮМЕТА

VI Scientific conference with international participation
GEOGRAPHY,
REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT AND TOURISM
Dedicated to the 60th anniversary of the beginning of training
in geography in higher education in Shumen

8 – 10 November 2024

BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

Университетско издателство „Епископ Константин Преславски“

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ПРИРОДЕН ПОТЕНЦИАЛ НА ИЗТОЧНИЯ РЕГИОН В КОСОВО

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Ключови думи: *разнообразие, възможност, туризъм, управление, общност*

Резюме

Източният регион на Косово, известен със своите богати пейзажи и изобилие от природни ресурси, притежава голям потенциал за устойчиво икономическо и туристическо развитие. Настоящото проучване изследва този

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потенциал, като се фокусира върху природните ресурси, ландшафта и екологичните атракции, които могат да допринесат за развитието на туризма и местната икономика. С богатото си биоразнообразие, живописни планини и чисти реки източният регион на Косово предлага широка гама от възможности за туристически дейности. Горските му територии и природните резервати имат специална стойност за опазване на биоразнообразието и устойчив туризъм.

Текстът има за цел да анализира природните богатства на региона, да идентифицира предизвикателствата и възможностите за тяхното устойчиво използване и да предложи стратегии за насърчаване на природния туризъм като средство за икономическо развитие и благосъстояние на местната общност. Резултатите показват, че с подходящо планиране и управление регионът може да се превърне във важна дестинация за природния туризъм на Балканите. Анализът на природния потенциал включва оценка на националните паркове, планинските райони, реките и минералните ресурси, които се намират в този регион. Проучването подчертава значението на опазването и устойчивото управление на тези ресурси за насърчаване на устойчивото икономическо и туристическо развитие.

NATURAL POTENTIAL IN THE EASTERN REGION OF KOSOVO

Perparim Qahili, Cane Koteski
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Key words: *relief, opportunity, tourism, management, community*

Abstract

The Eastern region of Kosovo, known for its rich landscapes and abundant natural resources, represents an area with great potential for sustainable economic and touristic development. This study explores the natural potential of the Eastern Region of Kosovo, focusing on natural resources, landscapes and ecological attractions that can contribute to the development of tourism and the local economy. The Eastern region of Kosovo, known for its rich biodiversity, picturesque mountains and clear rivers, offers a wide range of opportunities for tourist activities such as hiking, camping, and water sports. Also, forest areas and natural reserves carry a special value for biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism. This paper aims to analyze the region's natural assets, identify challenges and opportunities for their sustainable use, and propose strategies for promoting natural tourism as a means of economic development and local community well-being. The results show that with adequate planning and management, the Eastern Region of Kosovo can become an important destination for natural tourism in the Balkans. The analysis of natural potential includes the assessment of national parks, mountain

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areas, rivers and mineral resources that are present in this region. The study highlights the importance of conservation and sustainable management of these resources to promote sustainable economic and tourism development.

NATURAL POTENTIAL IN THE EASTERN REGION OF KOSOVO

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ABSTRACT

The Eastern region of Kosovo, known for its rich landscapes and abundant natural resources, is an area with great potential for sustainable economic and tourism development.

This study explores the natural potential of the Eastern region of Kosovo, focusing on natural resources, landscapes and ecological attractions that can contribute to the development of tourism and the local economy. The Eastern region of Kosovo, known for its rich biodiversity, picturesque mountains and clear rivers, offers a wide range of opportunities for tourism activities such as hiking, camping and water sports. Also, forest areas and nature reserves bring special value for biodiversity conservation and sustainable tourism. This paper aims to analyze the natural assets of the region, identify challenges and opportunities for their sustainable use and propose strategies for promoting nature-based tourism as a means of economic development and well-being of the local community. The results show that with appropriate planning and management, the Eastern region of Kosovo can be transformed into an important nature-based tourism destination in the Balkans. The analysis of natural potential includes an assessment of the national parks, mountain areas, rivers and mineral resources present in this region. The study highlights the importance of preserving and sustainably managing these resources to promote sustainable economic and tourism development.

Keywords: facilitation, opportunity, tourism, management, community.

Introduction

The Eastern region of the Republic of Kosovo encompasses an important part of our country, where the special geographical combination, cultural heritage and economic potential constitute a territory known for its natural beauty and close economic and social ties with neighboring regions. This area is characterized by diverse natural landscapes, with mountains, rivers and fertile fields, especially that of Morava, which create ideal conditions for the development of agriculture and livestock. Historically and culturally, the Eastern region of Kosovo has a rich heritage reflected in monuments, churches, mosques and fortresses, which

testify to the early and continuous presence of early civilizations. This region is also known for the hospitality of its inhabitants and the promotion of traditional Albanian values. With the development of infrastructure and tourism, the Eastern region of Kosovo represents an excellent opportunity for investment, as well as for the promotion of local culture and untouched nature, becoming an attractive destination for local and foreign visitors. The Eastern region of Kosovo represents one of the richest and most diverse natural areas of the country. This region lies in a rich landscape with mountains (Shari, Karadak, Koznik, Žegovci, etc.), rivers (Morava and Binche rivers, Ibr, Drenica, Lepenci, Neredime, etc.), forests and many fertile fields (Kosovo). Plains, Morava, Lap, Drenica, etc.), creating a unique mosaic of the country's natural resources. The natural wealth of this area not only offers rich biodiversity, but also represents a great potential for economic and tourism development. In this context, the analysis of the natural potential of the eastern region of Kosovo becomes necessary to understand the opportunities and challenges related to the sustainable use of these resources.

The aim of this study is to shed light on the main natural resources of the region, to examine their impact on sustainable development and to provide recommendations for the effective management of these resources in the future. Thus, the eastern region of Kosovo represents a rich natural wealth with a huge potential for economic and tourism development. This analysis includes a detailed look at water resources, biodiversity and opportunities for ecotourism development in the region. By exploring these aspects, we aim to highlight the importance of an integrated approach to the conservation and development of the natural potential of the Eastern region of Kosovo, thereby contributing to improving the quality of life of local communities and preserving the natural environment for future generations. The evaluation of primary geographical-natural and geographical-cultural tourism potentials, the evaluation of secondary potentials and the analysis of tertiary potentials are the main objectives of the tourism analyses of this study.

Geographical location

The Republic of Kosovo has a central geographical position on the Balkan Peninsula and is part of Southeast Europe, located at northern latitudes from 41°50'53" to 43°15'42" and eastern longitudes from 20°01'30" to 21°48'02". Such a geographical position of the Republic of Kosovo is considered to be of particular strategic importance from an economic, cultural and geopolitical aspect, in our region, but also in the world. Based on the position of the Republic of Kosovo, the level of turnover should be satisfactory. The central position of the Balkans theoretically created the opportunity to be a country through which, if not more, then at least once should be passed¹.

¹ SEETO, Comprehensive Network Development Plan 2012, Multi-Annual Plan 2012-2016 (Common Problems-Common Solutions), December 2011.

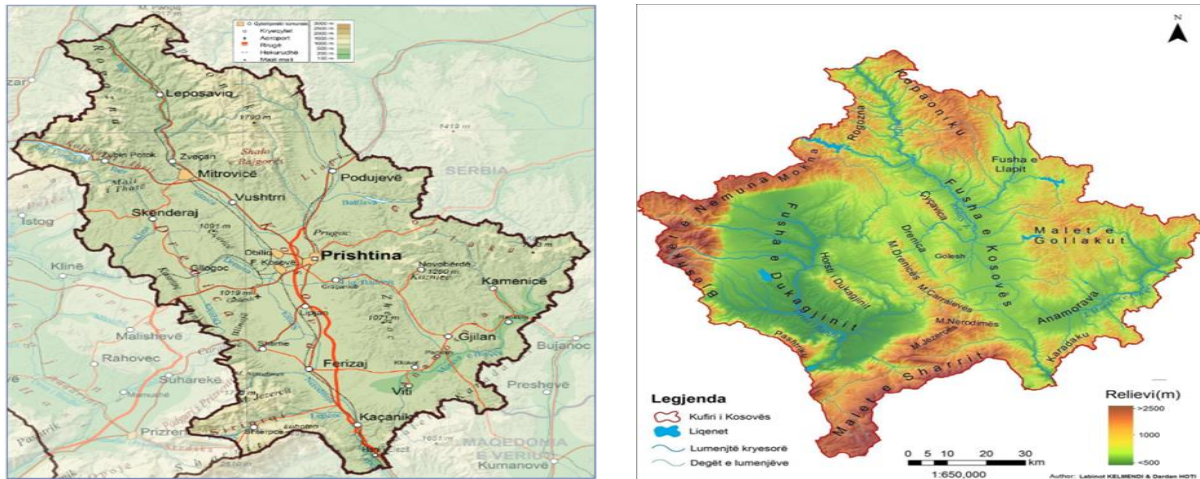


Figure 1: The Republic of Kosovo on the right, while on the left the Eastern region of Kosovo.

The position of the Eastern region of Kosovo should be treated as an important factor in the development of tourism. The fundamental importance of the geographical position of the Eastern region of Kosovo stems from the functions of connecting the attractive and host factors of the tourist offer and the important connections with the tourist centers that influence the tourist flows inside and outside the country. The Republic of Kosovo and the Republic of Albania border the Bješke e Nemuna and Bješke e Šari. The Republic of Kosovo and Montenegro border the Gjeravica to the Mokna mountain, while from the Šarska Gorge with Macedonia, and the Kopaonik mountains in the northern and eastern part with Serbia. This entire natural border appears as a great potential in the development of tourism, especially mountain tourism, but also hunting and mountaineering. Tourism, a social and economic activity, is characterized by a high level of elasticity. Shipping costs are significant. International demand is strongly influenced by fluctuations in transportation costs. Therefore, transportation is a key element in the tourism industry. Transportation is a special activity and economic branch of a country, which deals with the transportation of goods, people, energy and news from one country to another². The demand for international and even national transport infrastructure means a very large number of people (tourists) who want to move efficiently, quickly and freely without physical and administrative obstacles. Transport has been influenced by tourism and vice versa, the development of transport has had corresponding effects on tourism and its progress. To begin with, improved infrastructure has stimulated tourism, and the expansion of tourism has stimulated transport. Access is the main function that affects tourist transport³.

Natural conditions

Relief Mountains as a tourist value, The diversity of natural features of mountains affects their different tourist attractiveness. In this regard, mountains are divided into the following groups according to their basic tourist functions:

- ❖ National mountain parks are mountains that represent complex tourist motifs with several types of tourist attractions, as well as various opportunities for

² Musa Gashi, Fundamentals of Tourism, organization of texts and teaching aids of the KSA of Kosovo, Pristina, 1986.

³ Rodrigue, JP, Geography of Transport Systems, Routledge, New York and London, 2009.

tourist movement. The part of Shar Planina represents the area of our national parks that are available to local and foreign tourists.

- ❖ Sports-eventual slopes are those that allow the practice of winter sports (our case is the Brezovica ski center, which has a large tourist capacity). We can divide them into two groups: those that allow competitions in the summer half and those that allow sports organizations on snow. Various race tracks, sports facilities, quality accommodation for competitors, parking space for the vehicles of competitors and spectators and timely and detailed information about the type and level of competition are necessary for mountain sports events.
- ❖ Excursion-recreational mountains, as a rule, have a favorable position in relation to urban settlements and regions with a higher population density. The development of excursion tourism contributes to good transport connections and organized picnic areas at lower and higher altitudes. This group of mountains can generally be classified as all the mountains of the Republic of Kosovo.

Mountain tourism in Kosovo is considered one of the country's biggest tourist attractions and attracts local and foreign tourists every year. The first efforts are also being made to improve the infrastructure and security in this sector. This brings increased income for the residents of these areas, various tourism operators, and all of this has also affected the growth of the country's economy, the most recent example being Prevala, Jezerci in Ferizaj, Stanishori in Gjilan, etc. The nature of Kosovo is filled with various mountain views ranging from low to high altitudes. They occupy a significant part of the country's surface. However, these areas, in addition to natural beauties, also carry ancient history, tradition and fanatically inherited values. These elements make mountain tourism more attractive and with exceptional tourist opportunities.

The mountainous areas of Kosovo such as the Albanian Alps (Eastern Albanian Alps), Shar Planina with the mountains Jezerci, Nerodime and Karraleva, Kopaunik, Crna Planina Skopje (Karadaku), the hilly-mountainous block Golaku and the central mountains of Kosovo are the units whose units are most represented by forest vegetation. The correlation between the height and the extent of low and high forest vegetation in Kosovo is very high and positive. This can be analyzed from the analytical and comparative view of the coverage and relief maps, although it is also observed with field observations.

Climate

The climate of the Republic of Kosovo is related to its geographical position, distance from the Adriatic Sea, relief and properties of the masses, which influence it. Located in the middle latitudes, the climate of Kosovo depends on the amount of heat coming from the Sun, the proximity of the Adriatic Sea, the Vardar Valley, the opening to the north, the altitude above 400 m, the extent of the high mountains in the west, south-north and the low and medium mountains in the east and southeast.

Based on the prevailing climatic conditions, Kosovo is divided into three climatic zones:

- ❖ The climate zone of the Kosovo plain

- ❖ The climate zone of the Dukagjin plain
- ❖ The climate zone of the mountainous regions⁴.

Kosovo has a small territory, but it has a climate with different characteristics, its climate mainly depends on the geographical position estimated by the latitude and the variable relief in and around it. Located in the middle latitudes, namely south of the middle belt, the climate of Kosovo is also influenced by the proximity to the Mediterranean, the proximity of the Vardar Valley, the partial opening in the north, the altitude above 400 meters, the extent of the mountains. of the peripheral highlands in the west, south and north and low and medium mountains in the east and southeast. From the above, the climate of Kosovo, under the influence of macro and micro factors, differs in the western part from the northern and eastern part, in its lowland and hilly-mountainous areas. Extreme temperatures are also important for the climate of a country. Thus, the lowest temperatures drop to -32.5 °C (recorded in Gjilan on 25.01.1963), while the highest reach 39 °C (Prishtina, 26.07.1963)⁵. These changes represent an amplitude of about 70oC. The occurrence of negative temperatures also occurs during the month of May, but there are also cases in June. While in the autumn frosts, or rather negative temperatures, sometimes appear in the month of September.

Hydrography

The waters of Kosovo in Suka e Derman on the Nerodima mountain are divided and flow into three basins: the Adriatic, Aegean and Black Sea. The rivers also serve for the development of tourism, the natural attractiveness that the rivers have in their valleys. The tourist importance of the rivers, in addition to focusing on their use for bathing, the development of sports, such as swimming, fishing and the like, those with canyons, gorges and waterfalls that they possess, represent attractive attributes for the development of tourism. The rivers of Kosovo are known for their attractiveness and natural aesthetics, which can be used for the development of tourism such as: Mirusha, Burimi and Drini and Bardi, Nerodimja etc. with their incredible natural attractiveness, they are quite interesting attractions for tourists. In almost all geographical bays and at different heights above sea level there are lakes, which are important for the development of tourism, especially in continental countries that do not have a sea. According to the type of lakes, glacial, fluvial and relict (artificial) lakes are distinguished. Glacial lakes are the most beautiful of all types because they are found in mountainous areas and are an integral part of the attractions of mountain ranges and are not called "the eyes of the mountains" for nothing. Kosovo is rich in these three types of lakes. In Kosovo, there are mainly glacial lakes in the Albanian Alps and on the Shar Planina Mountain.

⁴ Annual sediment flows from the main rivers of Kosovo, 2018

⁵ Group of authors, Geography of Kosovo, p. 24, part of Ruždi Plana, "Minimum and maximum recorded air temperature values in Kosovo", ETMM, Pristina 1997.

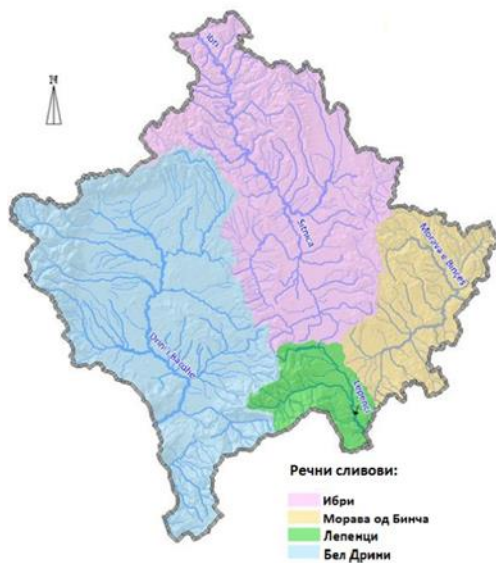


Figure 2: River basins in Kosovo.
Source: Kosovo Agency of Statistics



Figure 3: Shrinking artificial lakes in Kosovo.

There are 16 lakes on Shar Planina, including:

- ❖ Lake Livadi;
- ❖ Lake Bogovinsko;
- ❖ Black Lake;
- ❖ Lake Jažičko;
- ❖ Lake Superior, etc.

Natural Motives for the Development of Tourism in the Republic of Kosovo

In the Republic of Kosovo, there are opportunities for the construction of many winter tourism centers, which can provide very good conditions for the development of winter sports tourism, according to international standards, one of the destinations is Brezpvica on Shar Mountain in the Eastern Region of Kosovo. Then, gorges, canyons and caves (Marble Cave in the village of Gadime, Lipjan Municipality) as tourist motifs are attractions that represent narrow relief forms of mountains that have vertical sides. The aesthetics and curiosity of gorges make them attractive for tourism, mountain passes are included in the category of gorges. The Albanian Alps and the Shari massif are the richest regions with gorges, caves and canyons, the most popular gorges in Kosovo are: Rugova Gorge, Kachanica Gorge, Karraleva Gorge, Ibri, etc. Rugova Gorge with its natural beauties is the most popular gorge in the region and beyond. In Kosovo, the most famous canyon is the Mirusha Canyon, which has a system of 13 waterfalls and 16 large and small lakes of magnificent beauty. We can conclude that for a large number of tourists, natural factors in tourist destinations represent or are important motives for undertaking tourist trips. Today's man, especially in economically developed countries such as (USA; Germany; Great Britain; France; Japan) who live in conditions that are, among other things, characterized by a high degree of pollution of the natural environment and pollution from significantly coming from motor and urban pollution. In other words, this means that the place or environment where they work and live, where they are often rightly recruited from

large cities that are overpopulated and polluted, are not suitable for undertaking tourist trips. Geographical position with all its relief, climatic, hydrological, cultural, etc. its geopolitical and geostrategic position, as well as its historical past, have influenced and permanently influence the creation of the tourist position of the Republic of Kosovo⁶.



Picture 4: Arbr Xhaferi Highway, Kachanicka Gorge. Picture 5: Ujman Lake, an attraction in itself.

Expressed and conditioned by many natural, economic, political and social factors, tourism occurs with different developments in time and certain geographical spaces. Under these conditions, many countries, areas or regions anywhere in the world are characterized by different levels of tourism development. In many of them, tourism is one of the most developed activities, in many others it has not yet been used as such an opportunity, although the primary potentials promise a lot in this direction. The Balkan Peninsula is one of the regions included early in the trends of tourism development. As a geotourism part of the Mediterranean, this region has many important tourism developments and transformations. Kosovo, located in the center of the Balkan Peninsula, is a very important space that should be included in the tourism development of the region.



Figure 6: Summer in Prevale, Shar Figuri Figure 7: Winter in Prevale,

Shar Planina Tourism can be seen as an economic activity that produces a range of positive and negative impacts, but sustainable tourism strives to achieve the best balance between economic benefits and social and environmental costs. In order to successfully plan

⁶ Zimmeri.Z, (2020), Tourism and Hospitality

and develop tourism, the economic impacts, environmental and social aspects of tourism must be well understood.

Conclusion

The eastern region of Kosovo represents one of the main arteries of the country, as it converges in a part where there is a great natural potential in economic development and tourism as part of it. It also represents an extraordinary potential for the development of natural and sustainable tourism. The natural assets of this region, including impressive mountain landscapes and clean and flowing rivers in mountainous terrain and very attractive for tourists, create ideal conditions for various tourist activities, from hiking to camping and water sports.

And in order to exploit this potential, it is essential that these resources are treated with care through a sustainable approach and proper management of protected areas and natural attractions in the country. Some suggestions:

- To create areas protected by law
- Encouraging the development of ecotourism
- Organizing ecological and nature meetings or events
- Investing in infrastructure
- Creating tourist guides for the development of mountain and cultural tourism
- Creating ecological educational centers

In conclusion, we can conclude that the Eastern region of Kosovo has great potential both in terms of tourism, as well as natural and anthropogenic potential in the development of the country in general, suitable terrain, favorable climate, geographical position, population size (labor force) have a positive impact), hydrography (river network and especially mountain lakes as special tourist attractions), etc.

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