

TOURIST POTENTIALS IN THE FUNCTION OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT RASINA DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

The key priority for the development of tourism in the Rasin district is a realistic base of quality tourist attractions and functionality of natural, anthropogenic and material potentials. The wealth of various combasic tourist potentials, with attractive motives and competitive advantages, represents a base that enables the formation of a selectable tourist product based on mountain, spa, cultural, hunting, and rural tourism. The structuring of the tourist product of the Rasin district should be based on evident requirements and expected modern tendencies and trends of domestic and foreign demand, as well as the necessary establishment and functioning of market-oriented and sustainable economic developments to satisfy various tourist needs. Based on the SWOT analysis and defined criteria, the priorities of the first and second categories of tourism development were determined by the available tourist resources and advantages of the Rasin districts. Identifying and defining tourism development priorities is of great practical importance from the point of view of assessing real potential opportunities and the direction of the district's economic development policy to achieve coordinated development.

Keywords: *tourism resources, tourism product, development priorities, economic development, attractiveness*

JEL: Z32

DOI: 10.5937/intrev2204137M

UDC: 338.485:332.145(497.11-15)

COBISS.SR-ID 83812361

INTRODUCTION

The Rasin district has located in the central part of the Republic of Serbia on an area of 2,668 km². It is surrounded by the mountain chains of Jastrebac and Polson mountains, Gledić, Željina, Goča, and the Kopaonik massif. The chains of the Rasin district extend along the border of these mountains. The Rasin district has located at an altitude of 250 m to 2,017 m (Pančićev peak). The administrative center is the municipality of Kruševac, together by Trstenik, Brus, Aleksandrovac, Varvarin, and Čičevac, the Rasin district.

The Rasin district has rich, primary, and complementary tourism potentials, the diversity of which provides an opportunity for the development and making of several types of tourism. Many available tourist potentials have not by developed and valorized to a sufficient extent.

Therefore, it is necessary to identify the advantages and disadvantages of the tourist potential of the Rasin District through a SWOT analysis and, based on that, determine development priorities.

TRAFFIC AND TOURISM POSITION

The transport-tourist position of the Rasin district is favorable. The key road is the main Pojate - Kraljevo, which connects the Rasin district with the E-75, which is part of the Pan-European Corridor 10. Regional paths have a length of 478 km and are local, and of 1,334 connecting urban, rural, and tourist areas on the territory of Rasin district. The total length of roads is 1,878 km. The Rasin district is connected by railway, city Stalać, with the railway Belgrade - Niš - Skoplje - Athens and the railway Niš - Sofia, as well as with the railway Belgrade - Bar. Of particular importance is the road M5 Kruševac - Kraljevo - Čačak - Užice.

TOURIST POTENTIAL

The main tourist potentials of the Rasin district can be classified as Geomorphological, Climatic values, Thermo mineral springs Biodiversity, and Anthropogenic and material touristic value.

Geomorphological tourist potentials are represented by the mountains Kopaonik, Jastrebac Željin, and Goč. The dominant mountain is Kopaonik, with an area of 2,750 km², with the highest peak of 2017 m. This area was declared a National Park in 1981 with an area of 11,800 ha and represents one of the most important centers of biodiversity and endemic flora of Serbia. The climate is alpine, and the snow cover lasts up to 160 days a year. The average annual air temperature is 3.30°C. Kopaonik has 29 alpine ski slopes, 26 ski roads, and two training grounds for beginners. The trails consist of 25 cable cars and two conveyor belts. [1] In addition to Kopaonik, the mountains Jastrebac, Željin, and Goč have tourist value. These mountains are rich in plant and animal life, mineral springs, and a high forest cover. Various forest fruits and games make these mountains attractive for the development of tourism hunting.

By hydrographic tourist potential, the Ribarska spa and the artificial lake Čelije stand out. Ribarska spa is a well-known health resort and rehabilitation center for orthopedic, degenerative, and bone and joint diseases. At a Ribarska spa, there are four hot springs with a temperature of 35 to 41.5°C and two slightly colder springs, one at 16.1°C and the other at 27.5°C. Lake Čelije was built in 1972 and used for water supply. Clearwater, a gentle slope of the coasts, great depths, and a scattered coastline make Lake Čelije attractive for sport fishermen. The most famous of the Rasin Rivers and the South Morava River is rich in fish and very important for the local population as tourist attractions.

The climate in the Rasin district is moderate-continental, except for Kopaonik, which has moderately cold climates. The average air temperatures in the hottest month in the Rasin district are more than 18°C and, in the coldest months, than -30°C. "The amplitude between the absolute minimum and maximum temperature is 71.80°C." [3] Precipitations are most in the summer month, and winds are often local, associated with different levels of high-altitude air heating. From the briefly described characteristics of the climate, it can be concluded that the Rasin district has a favorable climatic condition for the growth of tourism.

Biographical tourism resources represent complementary tourism values and require specific studies to be included in the tourism function. The ecosystem of the plant world consists of grass and forest phytocenosis. For the tourism of the Rasin district, biographical values are significant only within the framework of other tourism values such as relict, endemic and rare species. Their greater importance is manifested through the effect on aesthetic-decorative, tourist-recreational, and climatic peculiarities.

Alongside natural values, anthropogenic tourism values are one of the primary elements for forming an integral and complex tourist product of the Rasin district, which represents part of the complementary tourist potentials of the Rasin district.

Of the archaeological tourist potentials, the city of Lazarus, built in 1371, is the most important historically, culturally, and touristic. The cultural and historical heritage has significantly greater importance for the growth of tourism in the Rasin district. "In Lazarev City Park there are the Monument to Prince Lazarus, the National Museum, the Donjon Tower and the Church of Lazarica." [2] The most important for the development of religious tourism are monasteries and churches from the distant past, of which the Saint Roman Monastery and the Monastery of the Holy Shroud are significant. Bogorodice, Ljubostinja Monastery, and Naupare Monastery. Also, cultural objects should not be such as the Kruševac Folk Museum, the Simić House, the art gallery and the Kruševac National University, the County Museum, etc.

Ethno-social wealth, such as folk costumes, musical folklore, customs, domestic handicrafts, and gastronomic specialties, are the touristic motifs in the Rasin district. The Rasin district has numerous cultural, sports, and other manifestations and events of local and national importance. On getting the impression that most of these manifestations, due to their unbuilt physiognomy, have a local character that should be promoted and made attractive through more aggressive marketing. Gastronomies is still in its infancy small number of nationally specialized restaurants with the modest placement of domiciled specialties.

The towns of Kruševac and Aleksandrovac have different anthropogenic and cultural-historical heritage, and cultural manifestations have tourist values in the Rasin district. In addition, some rural settlements have opportunities for the development of rural tourism, especially those located on the edges of the mentioned mountains.

The development of tourism, for different many other economic activities, is conditioned by the quality of the environment. For development, the primary problems of environmental pollution, air pollution, underground and surface water, land degradation, and inadequate waste management are significant. The condition of the environment in the Rasin district is favorable for development, especially in the Aires of preserved and untouched nature that is, in areas where tourism has yet to develop. However, in areas, especially tourist areas, which are already affected by environmental pollution, the situation is not favorable, so further development measures should be taken, to protect and eliminate the source of pollutants.

Compatible economic and non-economic activities form the basis of the development of tourism, in the Rasin district, which directly and indirectly influences the improvement and structuring of the tourist product. Of the economic activities, the most important are traffic, agriculture, trade, entrepreneurship, communal infrastructure, water supply, superstructure, and industry. The Rasin district is one of the developed areas of the Republic of Serbia, with had developed economic activities, which is exceptionally favorable from the point of view of meeting the needs of the tourism industry for influence inputs, as well as the diverse needs of tourists and residents. Social activities, education, healthcare, culture, and legal and institutional regulation and their greater appreciation in defining tourism supply can indirectly influence the development of tourism in the Rasin district in the future.

SWOT ANALYSIS

The SWOT analysis presented in Table 1, lists the advantages and disadvantages of the tourist potential of the Rasin district.

Table 1. SWOT analysis of the tourist potential of the Rasin district

STRENGTHS	WEAKNESSES
Favorable traffic-geographic position Kopaonik is one of the most visited mountain destinations in Serbia Significant quality and quantity of accommodation capacities It includes the area of the Kopaonik Nat. Park Thermal and mineral springs High degree of biological diversity Sports and recreational facilities Unpolluted air and water An important water regional resource A rich water world Hot and cold water sources Interesting content for all generations Opportunities for recreation and treatment Rich history and existence of cultural and historical heritage Cultural institutions, Holding traditional events Tradition in fruit growing, viticulture and winemaking Existence of adequate space for holding meetings and seminars Župska vintage event and wine fountain (unique in the world) Favorable climatic conditions for the development of agriculture and tourism	Negligibly small participation of foreign tourists Low level of accommodation capacity utilization (about 30% annually) The prices of the services are above average in relation to the level of service Wild dumps Bad plumbing system (lack of water) Wild construction Insufficient accommodation capacity Absence of facilities for supply (food, drink, basic necessities of life) Illegal hunting Lack of environmental awareness of the local population
CHANCES, POSSIBILITIES	THREATS, DANGERS
More and more frequent and shorter vacations Cooperation with other regions in Serbia Population growth in urban areas The trend of vacations based on nature Development of small and medium enterprises based on PPP New and exciting destinations The influence of the Internet on the promotion of destinations Holding events and games on the water Development of event tourism Attracting foreign tourists Weekend vacation near the place of residence Connecting with countries in the region and developing health tourism Activating young people and implementing new ideas Bringing in foreign direct investments Participation in fairs Application of newspapers in tourist infrastructure Opening of new hotels Restoration of old buildings and adaptation of buildings for guest accommodation	Competition with mountain destinations in the wider region Expectations of high quality services Danger of devastation of space Danger of unplanned use of natural resources Very high prices for domestic visitors Danger of environmental pollution An increasing number of new interesting destinations Expectation of service contents Uncontrolled building construction Water turbidity Close to spas with more amenities Expectations of high quality accommodation Disruption of the natural environment by building new buildings Underdeveloped tourist and accommodation facilities Insufficiently developed infrastructure Unfavorable demographic structure (departure of young people) Insufficient training of personnel involved in the provision of services in tourism

Source: Savić, K. (2018). SWOT analysis of the tourist potential of the Rasin district.

The advantages of the Rasin district, in terms of the possibility of tourism development, can be assessed as favorable. By particularly applies to areas of the Rasin district, which have respective tourism potentials that have not been valorized for tourism and are enough measures included in the tourism economy. The disadvantages of the Rasin district are of such a nature that if they are not limited or prevented, they can cause damage and threaten the efficient development of tourism.

PRIORITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Tourism has been on the rise for many years, growing more than the global economy and representing a significant economic branch [4]. Based on the SWOT analysis and the identified tourism potentials, the priorities of tourism development in the Rasin district by identifying more precisely. In defining the priority

criteria for tourism development, the starting point was the institutional framework contained in the Strategy for the Long-Term Tourism Development of the Republic of Serbia and the scientific works of leading authors in the field of regional tourism development in Serbia. At the same time, the development aspect is especially valued, with the aim of:

Giving priority to the most developed tourist centers and zones;

That the most developed centers and zones have competitiveness and some possibility of entering the international tourist market, as well as the perspective of future contribution to the development of domestic and foreign tourism;

In the most developed tourist centers and areas, priority should be given to the revitalization and improve some elements of the material base for completing and improving the tourist product as a factor for quick and efficient entry into the international tourist market. [5]

The established priorities are combinations of long-term local and medium-term development priorities, so they are ranked into two groups. It should be in mind that this division is conditional and relative, firstly due to the limited possibilities of the census and secondly due to the necessary investment funds for the development of tourism.

The selected priorities have been classified into two groups, ranked in one group of the same rank to encourage development, regardless of the overall importance (local, regional or national importance).

I. The first group of priorities:

1. Mountain tourism:

Kopaonik Mountain, with the National Park, represents the respective tourist center with a built national and international reputation. Kopaonik is the most promising tourist center of the Ration district, with already-built tourist and other infrastructure and superstructures. The adopted Spatial Plans envisage further development by the modern demands of tourists, also the correction and elimination of urban and other environmental degradation.

Spa priority centers:

Ribarska spa has favorable spatial-functional, climatic elements, villages, and areas for tourism of special interests, as well as halls for the development of MICE tourism, and represent a promising center for health wellness, recreation, and other forms of tourism.

Hunting tourism on the Jastrebac, Željin and Goč mountains. The mentioned mountains are distinctive by high forest cover and habitats with rich and diverse venison, of which deer, wild boar, rabbits, etc., stand out, which makes them attractive for the development of hunting tourism.

II. Second group of priorities:

Tourist centers and places under development with long-term development priorities are mostly singled out in this group.

City tourist centers:

Kruševac, city with anthropogenic, archaeological, and cultural-historical heritage and ethnic-social wealth of tourist values and proximity to Kopaonik Mountain, Ribarska spa, and Aleksandrovac.

Rural tourism:

Rural tourism in the entire Rasin district is one of the significant factors in the revitalization of villages and the solution to economic and demographic problems. The villagers on the slopes of the mountains, near Ribarska spa, the around Lake Čelije are the most interesting and offer the most opportunities for the development of this branch of tourism

Cultural tourism with “complementary types of tourism such as ethnological and event tourism.” [6]

Tourist routes, localities, centers, areas, and tourist places of the Rasin district are mutually conditioned and connected with the surrounding space, like with each other, providing new elements of importance for the formation of a complex and integral-selective tourist product. At the same time, by should always be borne in mind that these are categories whose tourist values, due to the action of many internal and external factors that are constantly present in the tourist market and subject to change. [7]

CONCLUSION

The Rasin district, with its rich and diverse tourist resources and values, has great potential for tourism development. The foundations of tourism development included diverse, high-quality, and rich natural and anthropogenic tourist values, like available accommodation facilities, a preserved environment, developed economic and non-economic activities, and social factors. In this district, tourism has not developed to the extent it should be, and many tourist potentials by not used. The reason for this is that financial resources are more invested in the development of other economic branches and less in tourism. In addition, the number of beds in accommodation facilities by also reduced.

The development of tourism in the Rasin district should be approached, following modern requirements and trends on the domestic and foreign markets, from the position of structural adjustment, by creating more types and forms of integral-selective tourism. Analogously, priority should give to those forms and kinds of tourism for which there are realistic development terms based on available and high-quality tourist resources, market-initiated and justified from the aspect of the existing and estimated market structure. Despite all the difficulties, the Rasin district can, in the foreseeable future, offer a complementary integral-selective tourist product, which would contribute to the overall economic development. However, it is necessary to adopt programs and plans and secure financial resources, not only from local but also from other sources.

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Article history:

Received 18 March 2022

Accepted 30 May 2022