

Modern tendencies in tourism and the analysis of tourist traffic in the Southern and Eastern Serbia Region

Savremene tendencije u turizmu i analiza turističkog prometa u regionu Južna i Istočna Srbija

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Abstract

Tourism development in modern conditions is very much dependent on different changes occurring in relation to demand, global challenges and problems that greatly affect this particular sector. Certain changes have a rather positive effect on tourism while others affect it in a negative way. These days, tourism is characterized by a dynamic growth in the level of tourist traffic as well as by global challenges that also affect the tourist traffic. Due to its geographical position, extraordinary nature and significantly cultural heritage, the south and east of Serbia are considered an interesting tourist destination. However, the region's competitiveness as a tourist destination is not at a satisfactory level. The aim of this paper is to provide an overview of modern tendencies in tourism development and to perform analysis the movement of tourists in this particular area. Through looking at the current situation, the identification of incentive and restrictive factors in tourism development and the monitoring of tourist traffic, will be highlighted activities that should enable faster development of tourism, raising the level of competitiveness of destinations, increasing tourist traffic and managing tourism on the basis of sustainable development.

Keywords: tourist, tourist traffic, Southern and Eastern Serbia

Sažetak

Razvoj turizma u savremenim uslovima uslovljen je različitim promenama na strani turističke tražnje, globalnim izazovima i problemima koji imaju snažan uticaj na ovaj sektor. Određene promene pozitivno utiču na turističku delatnost, dok pojedine okolnosti imaju negativan uticaj. Danas, turizam karakterišu dinamičan rast turističkog prometa, ali i globalni izazovi koji utiču na turistički promet. Region Južna i Istočna Srbija predstavlja interesantnu turističku destinaciju, imajući u vidu geografski položaj regiona, izuzetne prirodne lepote i značajno kulturno nasleđe. Konkurentnost regiona kao turističke destinacije, međutim, nije na zadovoljavajućem nivou. Cilj ovog rada je sagledavanje savremenih tendencija u razvoju turizma i analiza turističkih kretanja na ovom području. Kroz sagledavanje postojećeg stanja, identifikaciju podsticajnih i ograničavajućih faktora razvoja turizma i praćenje turističkog prometa biće naglašene aktivnosti koje treba da omoguće brži razvoj turizma, podizanje nivoa konkurentnosti destinacija, povećanje turističkog prometa i upravljanje turizmom na osnovama održivog razvoja.

Ključne reči: turizam, turistički promet, Južna i Istočna Srbija

1. Introduction

There are numerous interesting and still unexplored destinations in the south and east of Serbia. The very region, owing to its geographical position (a crossroad), favorable climate, rich historical heritage, culture and tradition, represents an interesting tourist destination. Tourism is an economic activity that directly or indirectly

contributes to the development of rural areas (López-Sanz et al., 2021) and can play a key role in the revitalization of this areas. There are several factors that affect the development of tourism including destination accessibility, infrastructure, investor interest, etc. Rural areas are, in terms of these aspects, often in an underprivileged situation when compared to urban and developed areas. Recent years are characterized by an

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increase in interest in destinations in rural areas due to which these destinations have an economic and social perspective. In this sense, it is important to pay special attention to each area, its resources and ways of managing the development of tourism without the risk of degrading the area (Gavrila-Paven et al., 2015). Economic development of such regions is an extremely important and a pressing issue in many countries, particularly in those rural areas which are facing depopulation, migration of young people, high level of unemployment thus limiting the possibility for economic development of such regions (Almeida et al., 2021). Certain parts of the observed region are facing the same problems. Tourism sector is very much affected by major global trends, i.e., megatrends (Senić et al., 2017, p.18). These changes mostly involve customers' needs and desires but also a continuous development of offer in order to respond requirements of specific tourist demand (Borović et al., 2022). This leads to changes in how tourism-related activities are realized and to an emergency of new forms of tourism. Modern conditions lead to an increased segmentation of the tourist market. There is an increase in demand for specific tourist products (Stojanović, 2014). Selective forms of tourism are also becoming very popular. This comes about as a result of a growing need for discovering and becoming familiar with new, unique destinations which are not fully explored. Those specific characteristics of certain areas are what draws the attention of modern tourists. In this part of Serbia there are various and specific tourist values which, through the process of tourism valorization and an adequate destination management, can become an attractive segment of the regional tourist offer.

2. Characteristics of tourism development in modern conditions

Tourism takes on new dimensions in the first years of the 21st century (Stojanović, 2014, p. 739). Numerous countries and particularly their underdeveloped regions, believe tourism to be a sector for gaining benefits (Stamenković et al., 2016). Tourism is an important factor of social and economic development because it leads to the growth of employment, incomes, development of infrastructure (Stojanović et al., 2016), development of economic activities related to tourism, increase in investment activity, etc. Tourism is a consequence of local and regional development but also their important factor (Pindžo et al., 2021).

In modern conditions of tourism development, consumer is placed at the center of attention so that the tourist offer is constantly adjusted to the customer's needs (Stojanović, 2014). In modern conditions tourists are well-informed and increasingly demanding. Moreover, a modern tourist is not only interested in relaxation, recreation and fun, but is eager to obtain new knowledge and experience. Travels aimed at obtaining new knowledge and experience, have, among other things, had an effect on the emergence and affirmation of different types of tourist activity. Changes in the tourist demand have led to an affirmation of new, selective forms of tourism. Tourism is closely connected to the surroundings i.e.; the surroundings represent a

fundamental element of tourists' experience. Tourists choose attractive and novel surroundings which can provide certain tourist activities (Senić et al., 2017). In view of these types of tendencies, on one hand, and the potential of the observed area, on the other hand, it is important to pay a great deal of attention to the creation of tourist offer of destinations in this region.

Destinations, particularly those in underdeveloped regions are quite often at a loss when it comes to determinants the competitiveness of tourist destinations. However, these destinations are precisely the ones with a dominant need for the strengthening of their competitive positions. This is a consequence of insufficient knowledge of factors that determine the competitive position of a tourist destination (Stamenković et al., 2017). There are several factors that affect the choice of a destination and its competitiveness (Đeri et al., 2018) and which are of crucial importance when it comes to looking at competitiveness as a key issue (Stamenković et al., 2018). The very strategy of positioning a tourist destination should be aimed at the harmonization of its position with the needs of the target market. Moreover, it is important that all elements of marketing mix are connected so that the particular combination of those elements is in line with the target market (Ubavić, 2016; Perić et al., 2018). Technological advancements of the modern age have enabled tourists to access a great deal of information on potential tourist destinations, which facilitates the choice of their tourist destination (Stojanović, 2014, p. 738).

Southern and Eastern Serbia is an area that has an exceptional potential for realization of tourist activities. The intersection of different cultures and civilizations has made this region famous for its rich cultural-historical heritage. Placing this heritage into the function of coordinated and integral development of tourism is aimed at enriching tourist offer, attracting a new milieu of consumers and achieving significant results in this area (Ilić, 2018). Favorable climate, diverse flora and fauna, distinctive geomorphological and hydrographic tourist values enable the creation of an attractive tourist offer for specific market segments. Numerous thermo-mineral springs in this region and diverse landscapes (Mihajlović et al., 2020), make this area unmatched to any other. Through the identification, classification and evaluation of tourist resources, it is possible to determine the degree of „conversion“ into a tourist attraction (Navarro, 2015, p. 483).

According to the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia 2016-2025, some of the main weaknesses which impede tourism development in Serbia (p. 30, 31), as well as in the area that we are observing include:

- Failure to recognize tourism as an important factor for the decrease of unemployment rate, increase of the rate of economic growth and regional development;
- Neglect of modern trends on the international tourist market;
- Passive attitude towards tourism;

- Insufficient number of incentive measures, non-financial and financial support to business entities in tourism and entities related to tourism;
- Underdeveloped tourist identity;
- Insufficient investments;
- Lack of general infrastructure in underdeveloped regions;
- Inadequate management of the tourism sector;
- Insufficient cooperation between the private and public sectors in creation of products and in establishing a complete value chain;
- Lack of innovations and entrepreneurial projects;
- Insufficient support at the local level to the process of tourism planning and development.

Contemporary tourism has gone through both qualitative and quantitative changes (Stojanović, 2014, p. 741) which have consequently led to a change in tourist demand and offer and a change in the dynamics of tourist movements. New trends in tourism arise as a result of positive circumstances such as emergence of new technology and development of the society, but also as a result of negative circumstances (climate changes, natural disasters, terrorism, economic crisis, political crisis, pandemics, epidemics, etc.). COVID-19 pandemic at the beginning of 2020 has made people question their way of life and change their everyday activities. Due to closing of borders, domestic travel has played a key role in the saving of tourism sector. The realization of tourist activity within the borders of one's own country has been a strategy to preserve the domestic tourism activity at times of crisis. People mostly chose near-by destinations as they believed that these places close to home were safe to visit. Outdoor activities were one of the top tourist activities at this critical time (Aldao et al., 2022). In such conditions, localities in the eastern and southern parts of Serbia become particularly popular. During the pandemic, certain attractions and destinations in the region were fully affirmed due to the fact that they are situated in a natural environment, in an unpolluted or in an environment polluted to a smaller degree where the risk of virus spread was not high.

In the context of tourism, the psychological response of tourists during the pandemic, received special attention (Cheng et al., 2022). At the same time, we should also consider different types of inequalities which existed throughout the crisis and which were even more pronounced at those times and which will certainly continue to linger on even once the crisis is over. The crisis offers a unique opportunity to reflect on travels and tourism development in the future (Lew et al., 2020). This development must be in line with the aims of sustainable tourism development. In order to achieve this, certain policies that have a positive effect on tourism (from an economic, social and cultural aspect) must be implemented (López-Sanz et al., 2021).

The main principle of innovation activities in tourism are the creation of new types of tourist products as well as application of modern technology in the presentation of the traditional offer (Krasnokutskiy et al., 2016, p. 261). It

is important to develop programs which will form part of an attractive tourist offer. In terms of tourists' involvement, these could be programs in which tourists become active participants (tourists are directly involved in the realization of certain activities which stimulate their creativity) and programs in which tourists are relatively passive observers, i.e., audience (Gigova, 2016, p. 22). What is particularly important is the application of a consistent approach in the process of planning which includes all determinants of a construction of a competitive position of a particular tourist area joined with the formulation and implementation of an adequate marketing and management system of a particular tourist destination (Pindžo et al., 2021).

3. Tourist traffic in the Region from 2010 to 2022

In the following, will be presented the tourist traffic achieved in the period from 2010 to 2022 in the observed Region. The tables will show data on tourists and their overnight stays realized in the time interval from 2010 to 2020 in each district of the Region. Moreover, the analysis will incorporate data on tourist turnover in 2021 as well as the first nine months of 2022. The analysis is based on data from the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia.

Table 1 shows the total number of tourists in each district of the region from 2010 to 2020. If we observe this table, we can notice that the lowest number of tourists for the time period 2010-2015 is registered in Pirot District, and for the time period 2015-2020 in Danube District. The highest number of tourist arrivals in the observed time period is recorded in Nišava District and Zaječar District. Namely, the highest number of tourist arrivals for 2010 and 2011 is recorded in Nišava District while Zaječar District won this title in 2012 and 2013. In 2014 approximately the same number of tourist arrivals was recorded in both of the aforementioned districts. Nišava District has had the most arrivals of tourists in 2015, 2016 and 2017, while Zaječar District is in the lead by the number of tourists during 2018, 2019 and 2020.

The pandemic occurring in 2020 has led to a significant decrease arrival of tourists in each part of the Region. The only exception is Braničevo District which records a slight increase in the number of tourist arrivals (an increase of 0.4% as compared to 2019.) The biggest drop in the number of tourists in 2020 relative to 2019 was recorded Nišava District (65.3%), followed by Danube District (59%), Pčinja District (56.3%), Bor District (54.8%), Jablanica District (53.6%) and Pirot District (48%). A somewhat smaller drop in the number of arrivals in 2020 compared to 2019 was recorded in Toplica District (19.9%), while the smallest drop was in the Zaječar district (2.5%).

Table 2 shows the number of overnight stays by individual districts of the Region that tourists realized in the time period 2010-2020. The lowest number of overnight stays for the previously mentioned time period is recorded in 2010 and 2013 in Pirot District while the lowest number of overnight stays for all other years of the observed

period is recorded in Danube District. Zaječar district is the first in terms of overnight stays during the entire period under review, among other things thanks to the fact that Sokobanja, one of the most visited spas in Serbia, belongs to that district. In second place, during the largest part of the analyzed period, was the Nišava District. The exception are years 2013 and 2014 when the Bor District was in second place in terms of the number of overnight stays, as well as in 2020 when the Braničevo District was in second place according to overnight stays of tourists. As previously mentioned, the year 2020 is characterized by a drastic drop in tourist traffic in almost all districts.

The only exceptions are Zaječar District where in 2020 there were 9% more overnight stays than in 2019 and Braničevo District, which records an 36.15% increase in the number of overnight stays in 2020 as compared to the previous year. The highest drop of overnight stays in 2020 compared to 2019 is recorded in Nišava District (61.32%), Danube District (51.28%), Bor District (46.73%), Pčinja District (41%), Pirot District (37.45%) and Jablanica District (32.9%). The lowest drop in the number of overnight stays this year was recorded in the Toplica District (26.15%).

Table 1. Tourist arrivals from 2010 to 2020 (by districts)

YEAR	Pčinja District	Jablanica District	Toplica District	Nišava District	Pirot District	Zaječar District	Bor District	Braničevo District	Danube District
2010	24.442	20.891	23.377	90.783	8.266	70.790	66.477	22.131	25.396
2011	24.511	20.781	28.547	91.618	9.361	75.282	69.307	24.690	17.952
2012	21.689	20.539	27.887	79.631	9.455	82.177	68.023	30.490	13.815
2013	21.055	23.416	24.208	64.990	9.181	82.659	59.449	32.569	17.282
2014	22.282	22.397	22.990	70.413	11.432	70.769	56.789	39.885	12.572
2015	18.333	20.790	27.170	83.292	11.589	81.309	63.524	45.154	10.617
2016	25.047	22.649	27.856	98.361	15.908	80.792	70.258	44.955	11.558
2017	25.848	27.053	29.950	117.141	23.195	92.093	82.847	52.232	17.413
2018	26.207	30.173	31.620	130.485	25.038	149.269	78.946	56.294	19.385
2019	31.678	34.579	31.516	141.537	28.720	178.848	88.392	53.319	21.704
2020	13.843	16.055	25.255	49.063	14.935	174.439	39.960	53.511	8.900

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011-2021

Table 2. Overnight stays of tourists by districts in Southern and Eastern Serbia from 2010 to 2020

YEAR	Pčinja District	Jablanica District	Toplica District	Nišava District	Pirot District	Zaječar District	Bor District	Braničevo District	Danube District
2010	116.137	88.650	118.841	317.370	18.610	403.158	173.606	46.559	31.776
2011	109.110	82.075	141.891	302.658	31.674	439.313	172.440	49.466	21.894
2012	88.105	73.036	151.360	290.984	26.367	431.066	164.169	65.673	24.674
2013	80.978	81.546	133.303	126.393	18.556	426.906	146.528	70.840	21.127
2014	64.803	72.910	135.179	134.990	28.319	319.554	136.252	86.159	17.782
2015	62.536	70.279	157.013	158.919	24.393	319.909	146.759	106.524	20.666
2016	77.282	75.550	166.259	177.951	31.457	327.055	144.864	109.520	18.605
2017	78.364	83.807	176.812	202.994	48.413	378.302	189.345	128.726	23.779
2018	82.019	90.681	177.368	225.388	47.556	637.205	185.396	142.392	25.831
2019	89.386	116.502	181.077	249.626	48.231	759.748	208.655	133.475	31.957
2020	52.767	78.202	133.723	96.558	30.167	828.668	111.143	181.732	15.568

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011-2021

Table 3. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Pčinja District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	19.974	4.468	24.442	107.008	9.129	116.137
2011	19.704	4.807	24.511	99.311	9.799	109.110
2012	16.596	5.093	21.689	79.130	8.975	88.105
2013	15.948	5.107	21.055	71.838	9.140	80.978
2014	16.319	5.963	22.282	55.838	8.965	64.803
2015	13.746	4.587	18.333	54.613	7.923	62.536
2016	18.206	6.841	25.047	64.438	12.844	77.282
2017	17.697	8.151	25.848	63.460	14.904	78.364
2018	18.213	7.994	26.207	67.533	14.486	82.019
2019	22.183	9.495	31.678	68.589	20.797	89.386
2020	11.803	2.040	13.843	45.527	7.240	52.767

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 - 2021

Based on the data from Table 3 we notice a decrease tourists overnight stays in the Pčinja District from 2010 do 2015. After that, this district recorded an increase in the number of tourists and overnight stays until 2020, when there was a significant decrease. The most overnight stays in this district were achieved in 2010.

Based on the official data presented in the table 4, it can be seen that the Jablanica District had the most overnight stays in 2019 (116,502 overnight stays). Both in the Pčinja District and Jablanica District in the entire observed period is larger participation of domestic tourists in tourist arrivals and overnight stays.

Table 4. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Jablanica District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	13.596	7.295	20.891	79.308	9.342	88.650
2011	13.754	7.027	20.781	72.734	9.341	82.075
2012	11.692	8.847	20.539	57.966	15.070	73.036
2013	12.706	10.710	23.416	66.595	14.951	81.546
2014	12.850	9.547	22.397	58.822	14.088	72.910
2015	13.114	7.676	20.790	58.238	12.041	70.279
2016	12.568	10.081	22.649	59.852	15.698	75.550
2017	15.586	11.467	27.053	67.065	16.742	83.807
2018	16.619	13.554	30.173	65.581	25.100	90.681
2019	19.987	14.592	34.579	86.500	30.002	116.502
2020	12.662	3.393	16.055	61.246	16.956	78.202

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Table 5. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Toplica District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	21.742	1.635	23.377	114.698	4.143	118.841
2011	25.206	3.341	28.547	134.461	7.430	141.891
2012	24.458	3.429	27.887	142.221	9.139	151.360
2013	21.722	2.486	24.208	124.998	8.305	133.303
2014	20.023	2.967	22.990	124.855	10.324	135.179
2015	22.535	4.635	27.170	142.733	14.280	157.013
2016	24.152	3.704	27.856	153.502	12.757	166.259
2017	24.948	5.002	29.950	160.367	16.445	176.812
2018	26.279	5.341	31.620	159.880	17.488	177.368
2019	26.083	5.433	31.516	162.947	18.130	181.077
2020	22.235	3.020	25.255	125.174	8.549	133.723

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Table 6. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Nišava District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	53.561	37.222	90.783	261.795	55.575	317.370
2011	55.207	36.411	91.618	251.788	50.870	302.658
2012	47.551	32.080	79.631	239.298	51.686	290.984
2013	34.498	30.492	64.990	76.118	50.275	126.393
2014	32.642	37.771	70.413	76.007	58.983	134.990
2015	36.868	46.424	83.292	88.200	70.719	158.919
2016	42.714	55.647	98.361	95.209	82.742	177.951
2017	48.449	68.692	117.141	98.991	104.003	202.994
2018	51.846	78.639	130.485	107.107	118.281	225.388
2019	56.326	85.211	141.537	109.708	139.918	249.626
2020	25.869	23.194	49.063	56.604	39.954	96.558

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Nišava District records a drop in the number of arrivals from 2011 to 2013, a continuous increase in this number is recorded from 2013 onward. In this area, until 2014 was recorded a higher participation of domestic tourists, but from 2014 to 2020 was noticeable a higher participation of foreign tourists in the total number of tourist arrivals (2019 records the highest number of foreign tourists).

From 2010 to 2013, we can observe a drop in the total number of overnight stays in this region. After that, from 2013 to 2020 there is a noticeable increase. The share of overnight stays made by domestic tourists is greater than that of foreign tourists up until 2017. From 2017 to 2020, the number of foreign tourists' overnight stays is higher than the number of overnight stays made by domestic

tourists (Table 6). The lowest traffic of foreign tourists in this district was achieved in 2020.

Data presented in Table 7, show that Pirot District has been experiencing a continuous increase in the number of tourist arrivals in the second decade of the 21st century. However, the breakout of COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, has had a detrimental effect on this trend. To be more specific, the number of tourists in 2020, has decreased

significantly (a drop of 48%). From 2016 to 2020, the participation of foreign tourists is greater when it comes to arrivals. The lowest number of overnight stays is recorded in 2010 and the highest number of overnight stays is recorded in 2017. With the exception of 2010, 2011, 2015 and 2020, the number of overnight stays made by foreign tourists is higher to that made by domestic tourists.

Table 7. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Pirot District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	5.676	2.590	8.266	14.170	4.440	18.610
2011	7.176	2.185	9.361	26.891	4.783	31.674
2012	4.889	4.566	9.455	10.043	16.324	26.367
2013	4.958	4.223	9.181	9.175	9.381	18.556
2014	6.022	5.410	11.432	11.704	16.615	28.319
2015	6.177	5.412	11.589	12.363	12.030	24.393
2016	7.686	8.222	15.908	15.069	16.388	31.457
2017	10.353	12.842	23.195	22.076	26.337	48.413
2018	11.079	13.959	25.038	23.401	24.155	47.556
2019	12.634	16.086	28.720	22.792	25.439	48.231
2020	9.579	5.356	14.935	20.336	9.831	30.167

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Table 8. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Zaječar District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	66.473	4.317	70.790	392.928	10.230	403.158
2011	71.477	3.805	75.282	429.534	9.779	439.313
2012	77.171	5.006	82.177	420.237	10.829	431.066
2013	74.839	7.820	82.659	410.546	16.360	426.906
2014	61.094	9.675	70.769	294.485	25.069	319.554
2015	66.663	14.646	81.309	287.724	32.185	319.909
2016	66.258	14.534	80.792	295.919	31.136	327.055
2017	78.542	13.551	92.093	345.226	33.076	378.302
2018	123.284	25.985	149.269	570.133	67.072	637.205
2019	147.812	31.036	178.848	659.307	100.441	759.748
2020	165.857	8.582	174.439	780.813	47.855	828.668

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

In terms of the number of tourist arrivals in Zaječar District, there is a significant increase in the number of tourist arrivals in 2018. The data show a higher percentage of domestic tourists (both arrivals and overnight stays)

than that of foreign tourists (Table 8). It is important to mention that Zaječar District is the leading district in this Region according to the number of tourist overnight stays.

Table 9. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Bor District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	58.818	7.659	66.477	155.774	17.832	173.606
2011	59.593	9.714	69.307	149.710	22.730	172.440
2012	59.523	8.500	68.023	145.365	18.804	164.169
2013	49.608	9.841	59.449	124.323	22.205	146.528
2014	45.631	11.158	56.789	105.997	30.255	136.252
2015	50.479	13.045	63.524	113.803	32.956	146.759
2016	57.392	12.866	70.258	115.052	29.812	144.864
2017	67.870	14.977	82.847	153.915	35.430	189.345
2018	64.356	14.590	78.946	149.132	36.264	185.396
2019	68.577	19.815	88.392	166.542	42.113	208.655
2020	33.983	5.977	39.960	96.394	14.749	111.143

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

According to the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia, the year 2019 has been exceptionally good for Bor District as it recorded the highest number of tourists. The total number of tourist arrivals in Bor District

in 2019 was 88,392. In Bor district is also evident a higher participation of arrivals and overnight stays made by domestic tourists (Table 9).

Table 10. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Braničevo District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	19.606	2.525	22.131	41.478	5.081	46.559
2011	21.533	3.157	24.690	38.775	10.691	49.466
2012	25.861	4.629	30.490	53.057	12.616	65.673
2013	28.231	4.338	32.569	62.624	8.216	70.840
2014	33.186	6.699	39.885	69.769	16.390	86.159
2015	37.857	7.297	45.154	89.766	16.758	106.524
2016	39.041	5.914	44.955	94.793	14.727	109.520
2017	43.450	8.782	52.232	106.578	22.148	128.726
2018	45.380	10.914	56.294	114.765	27.627	142.392
2019	43.181	10.138	53.319	107.015	26.460	133.475
2020	51.484	2.027	53.511	176.353	5.379	181.732

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Table 11. The movement of the number of tourists and overnight stays in Danube District from 2010 to 2020

Years	Tourists			Overnight stays		
	Domestic	Foreign	Total	Domestic	Foreign	Total
2010	14.954	10.442	25.396	18.251	13.525	31.776
2011	11.850	6.102	17.952	13.899	7.995	21.894
2012	7.332	6.483	13.815	16.174	8.500	24.674
2013	9.163	8.119	17.282	11.214	9.913	21.127
2014	5.246	7.326	12.572	7.845	9.937	17.782
2015	5.471	5.146	10.617	8.245	12.421	20.666
2016	6.741	4.817	11.558	8.961	9.644	18.605
2017	5.656	11.757	17.413	10.018	13.761	23.779
2018	5.609	13.776	19.385	10.386	15.445	25.831
2019	7.171	14.533	21.704	11.378	20.579	31.957
2020	5.834	3.066	8.900	10.631	4.937	15.568

Source: Data from the publications Opštine i regioni u Republici Srbiji 2011 – 2021

Danube District has seen an increase in arrivals from 2015 to 2020 when tourist visits decrease significantly (59% drop in 2020 as compared to 2019). In 2014, 2017, 2018 and 2019 this district recorded a higher number of foreign tourists' arrivals. From 2014 to 2020 foreign tourists had a greater participation when it comes to overnight stays (Table 11).

The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia is said to have had a 498,246 tourist arrivals in 2021 which is around 25% more than the number achieved in 2020. This Region in 2021 recorded 1,788,846 overnight stays which is an increase of 17% as compared to the data for 2020 (Saopštenje Statistika ugostiteljstva i turizma, broj 16, 2022). During the first nine months of 2022, the Region recorded 522,223 tourist arrivals (40% more than the same period of 2021) and 1,802,268 tourist overnights which is around 22% more than the same period of 2021 (Saopštenje statistika ugostiteljstva i turizma, broj 290, 2022). This stands to show that after 2020 (year of the pandemic) districts on the territory of this Region record an increase in visits and overnight stays. This is also the result of measures aimed at increasing tourist movements within the borders of the country. After 2020 domestic tourism has showed a tendency of intensive recovery which ultimately represents a chance for the south and east

of Serbia for a quicker recovery from all economic and social consequences of the crisis.

4. Conclusion

A better and a more extensive knowledge of trends in tourism development ultimately leads to a higher chance of defining appropriate strategies to achieve competitive advantage (Senić et al., 2017). A one-of-a-kind tourist product is what all modern tourists yearn for as they move away from a mass and saturated tourist market and towards non-standard tourist products. On the other hand, creating a unique offer enables the development of a flexible offer which will meet the requirements of specific market segments (Borović et al., 2022). Insufficiently developed general and tourist infrastructure make it difficult to create a quality and recognizable tourist offer in this Region. Deficiencies in this area limit development, so that enhance and modernization of infra and suprastructure in tourism is essential importance (Ilić et al., 2019). Also, until now, an outdated and inadequate marketing approach has been mostly used in the promotion of the locality and contents that this region has in tourist offer. A successful approach to tourism development implies well-designed and implemented marketing activities that should to present tourists the

specifics of tourist contents certain parts of the region (Ilić et al., 2019) and the region as a whole. A well-planned development of tourism in the region can have positive effect on the income of locals, unemployment rate, the migration of the population (Dašić et al., 2020), preservation of both culture and tradition, enhancement of destination image and overall image of the region, enhancement of tourist turnover and better economic development of the region. Additionally, it is important that the tourism development is in line with the principles of sustainable development. Strategic planning and forecasting enable finding solutions to such problems in the long run. In doing so, the process of cooperation is very important, in which systemic thinking plays a key role (Postma et al., 2021). The creation of recognizable tourist attractions requires enthusiasm of all tourism shareholders, good marketing and cooperation with local self-government (Bugarin et al., 2021). The potential for the tourist activities in the south and east of Serbia is extremely important. The attention of all tourism shareholders should be vested in the development of specific tourist products, the creation of an attractive tourist contents and a recognizable tourist locality in the region. This is achievable through education and continuous training of tourism staff, enhancement of tourist infrastructure and suprastructure, expansion and modernization of accommodation capacities, identification of specific advantages of tourist destinations, differentiation of tourist offer within tourist destinations, i.e., through the establishment and implementation of an adequate destination management system in the Region.

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