

## **Sustainable tourism important factor for Kosovo's economy**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Tourism has the orientation base in the most complex activities of modern society. It represents the most important branch of the economy in some developed countries but also in some transition countries. Tourism is an important export product and employment generator. So it is beautifully complex because it involves a wide mix of phenomena and reports that arise at the time of the traveler. Tourism is associated with many activities that include not only economically but also social, cultural and ecological aspects of life. In Kosovo tourism is an important branch of the economy. This industry in the country has realized 8 - 10% of the country's social product. All factors that have had a direct impact such as: hotel, gastronomy including factors that have had an indirect impact such as agriculture, construction etc. are included. Therefore, the qualitative planning of space is one of the most important prerequisites for the long-term and sustainable development of tourism in Kosovo. In order to develop sustainable tourism in Kosovo, many national parks have become operational. Alp Mountains, National Park and Sharr National Park. Both play a role in tourism development on the one hand and environmental sustainability on the other. These represent good potentials for tourism development and environmental sustainability.

**Key words:** Kosovo, Alp Mountains, Sharr Mountains, Tourism, Sustainability, Economic Development.

### **TOURIST POTENTIALS AND TOURISM OFFER DEVELOPMENT**

Tourism resources in Kosovo represent spaces of great value. These values have been preserved which in future will be of great importance for tourism development. These values are widespread in all Kosovo countries. Beautiful and attractive nature is present in the mountainous regions and tourist transit directions including large cities, baths, natural and cultural heritage sites with hunting areas and villages. Importantly, we also have two National Parks such as: Alp Mountains, National Park and Sharr National Park. Based on current trends and projected trends of international tourist demand, real opportunities may be presented in the tourist market high mountains with regional centers in international transit routes. It also includes natural and cultural heritage complexes of great value and in the most important hunting sites. During the development of tourism, attention should also be paid to the preservation of the environment for the development of sustainable tourism. At the first stage, attention will be paid to the development of the tourist product to its natural potentials, i.e. to all those who wish to visit the many natural beauties in the tourist offer. These visits are expected to take place both in summer and in winter season. Based on the natural and climatic conditions of the country it follows that the first winter tourist capacities should be organized in mountainous regions

and ski areas with gradual extension to higher places and towards the creation of large and complex winter-tourist centers. Based on this, the offer of such tourism may be in favor of satisfying diverse guests within the framework of general tourism development, gradually increasing in the tourism market, but with a lower risk in investment. Based on the territory of Kosovo, which shows that the tourist and socio-economic markets represent a good basis for tourism development on the one hand and environmental protection on the other. All these are some of the parameters that influence tourism development and environmental preservation. Without a preserved environment we cannot have developed tourism.

### **TOURIST REGION ALP MOUNTAINS**

It is one of the most important areas for tourism development that includes the municipalities: Peja, Istog, Deçan, Junik, Klina and Gjakova. This is potentially the most important tourist region of Kosovo. The many natural beauties are of high quality, which present great opportunities for visitors to visit all seasons of the year including numerous cultural monuments. This tourist region includes the Alp Mountains, which have also been declared a National Park with a polycentric character as such and its development is increasing in size every day. This area includes the areas and canyons of Drini i Bardhe, Peja Lumëbardh, Deçan Lumëbardh, Erenik River, Klina River, Istog River, Mirusha River. It also encompasses numerous mountain lakes. This whole is also rich in thermal waters. The Alp Mountains region itself will be used to organize the entire tourist offering with a year-round business (especially in the summer and winter season). In addition to developing all kinds of winter sports at altitudes above 1,000 m. Ideal offer opportunities for summer mountain tourism (hiking, mountaineering) as well as health tourism development. The mountainous region of the Alp Mountains is a larger tourist area than the Sharr region. Therefore there are conditions for the formation of some areas (the present area of Decan and Peja) that would join the mountainous centers of Rusolia, Kurvala, Bogdashi, Kopaonik, Belegu Mountains, etc. from Gjeravica in the south, to Mokna and Hajla in north.

Because it's much natural beauty, the Alp Mountains can be classified in the region with mountainous tourism potential which offers us the opportunity to form complete tourist offers that rely on the great potential with numerous attractions which creates opportunities for the development of a product. Successful tourist with the tremendously attractive potentials of the mountain massif.

In addition, the development of skiing represents the development of a very successful tourism product. Comparisons are made based on the following table on the basis of the ski slopes.

Mountains	Main Massif Centers	Overall assessment of potential centers	% of denim of the Albanian Alps	% of the denunciation of the mountains in the region
Albanian Alps (Average Pathfinder 880 m)	Rusolia	19,250	25,0	10,0
	Kurvalla	11,250	14,0	5,8
	Stërnac	8,925	12,0	4,5
	Bogdash	7,550	10,0	3,8
	Bjeshka e Belegut	4,750	6,5	2,5
Shari (average height 925 m)	Bistra	10,250	14,0	5,0
	Popova Shapka	10,100	13,0	5,0
	Piribeg	7,165	10,0	4,0
	Brezovica	7,757	10,0	4,0
Trigllavi (average median 790 m)	Trigllav	7,685	35,7	3,6
	Pokluka	4,550	21,0	2,3
	Bohinj	4,340	20,0	2,2

Note: According to G. Gurmanit: height difference average one meter equals one skier. e.g. the pinnacle of Rusolia in length overall capacities are bigger, which means that the ski terrain, within a 19,250 skiers can ski at once!

According to the following table shows that the most important ski trails have the tourist region of the Albanian Alps and then others? This is the best indicator that the tourist region of the Albanian Alps (Alp Mountains) can develop tourism, especially winter tourism, but also preserve the living environment. Because without a preserved environment we cannot even develop tourism. In a word, sustainable tourism development represents important values for the development of society.

Touristic potentials based on natural features including terrain, water resources, beautiful landscapes, biogeographical diversity. The Alp Mountains are the most unique massif in the Western Balkans. Delimitation and potential capacity of the ski trails (65,396 m and as many skiers in one hour), with other facilities and conditions for the development of winter sports tourism. Particularly impressive geomorphologic phenomena with very obvious aesthetic attributes that arouse curiosity are: Rugova Gorge, White Drin Fountain, Mirusha Waterfall, Radavc Cave, rocky ridges, Koparunik Peak. Climate conditions also have a great impact on the development of tourism. Dividing into climatic zones (mainly continental, subalpine and mountainous) helps develop two-season tourism (summer and winter) and enables climatic healing (with aero therapy and heliotherapy) at different altitudes. There are suitable not only climatic but also geographical conditions (extensive forest and meadow complexes, hydrographic richness, natural beauty, etc.) where sanatoriums, treatment centers, recreation centers and athletic training centers can be built. Fauna is also an important component of tourism development, which is of great trophic value (brown

bear, wild boar, wild goat, large poultry, etc.). Are quite attractive, but need to be technically adjusted and protected in order to get more involved successful in hunting tourism development Peja, Deçan and Iber are full of important fish species that, besides the beauty of the landscape, provide exceptional conditions for the development of fishing tourism. In addition to the natural motifs, the Albanian Alps (Alp Mountains) are also rich in anthropogenic tourist motifs. The following can be distinguished: The rich and varied heritage of monuments (prehistoric discoveries), Serbian medieval churches, monuments of Islamic architecture (mosques, baths, bridges and inns), Ethnographic and folklore wealth (Rugova dress, dances and songs) folklore, traditional customs, etc.), interesting environmental motifs and landscapes (Gjakova Bazaar, Peja Grand Bazaar, rural settlements, towers, hillsides etc.), other cultural-historical features of tradition and other features. Due to the great potential tourism value of the Alp Mountains are declared National Park. Its importance is manifold. On the one hand tourism is developed where the part is visited by a considerable number of tourists throughout the year. But the other side gives us the sense that the beautiful nature of this whole must be preserved and preserved. Given the structure of tourism products and tourism trends and requirements, the Alp Mountains can develop numerous and varied branches of tourism, such as: winter-sports tourism, recreational health, health-curative, recreational excursion, hunting, fishing, peasant, climber, spelotourism, etc. In accordance with natural conditions, priority should be given to the development of some selective branches of tourism such as: rural tourism, ecological tourism, health tourism, mountaineering, recreational tourism, hunting and fishing tourism etc. In the process of construction and organization of mountain tourism contents special attention should be paid to the preservation and improvement of the existing ecological system of Alp Mountains. Any violation of the balance would have a negative impact on the possibilities of tourist valorization. Therefore, the organization of the national park in the Alp Mountains region is an important step in the organized optimal use of the potential opportunities of this region.

The destination and function of the Alp Mountains should not only be determined within Kosovo, but also within this area, the sectors and localities in which tourism will be the function or one of the most important development functions. In the near future plans should be developed which will be harmonized with the plans for tourism development of the Albanian Alps (Alp Mountains), which belong to Montenegro and Albania. Based on the classification of tourist areas and localities we should take into account some of the conditions and criteria such as: Geographical position, ranking of tourist resources, opportunities for two season tourism development, morphological features, road infrastructure, water supply and electricity, aesthetic elements, ecological requirements and complementary tourist attractions. In the classification of localities and tourist centers, the presence of a particular value or, at least, three to four complementary tourist values, is taken as a decisive factor.

Within the Alp Mountains, according to the richness and variety of the resource potential, these tourist areas can be distinguished. Peja – source area (Istog) and Deçan area. The Peja part of the Alp Mountains can be identified in many existing localities: Kopraniq, Rusolia, Zhlebi, Peak of Neqina, Radavci etc. As Peja is near, Kopraniq activation is anticipated in the first phase of winter-sport tourism development in the Peja region. Thanks to the proximity of Peja the skiing areas in Copernicus have been thoroughly studied. The Deçan part of the Alp Mountains, considering the distribution, structure and qualitative-quantitative characteristics of the tourist resources, can be distinguished the following centers and localities: Deçan, (the main summer tourism center), Kurvala, the Mountains of Beleg, Maja e Strelc. , Roshkodol, Kozhnjeri, Gjeravica. All of these localities are included in the primary tourist use area, but will be activated consecutively (from places where it is easier to access the most difficult ones). Locations such as Kopraniq, Rusolia, Shtedim and Belegu Mountains with their position, the totality of delevelization and the qualitative potential of the ski slopes, have all the elements to develop as major winter sport tourism centers in the Albanian Alps (Alp Mountains).

## **SHARR TOURISTIC REGION**

Like the aforementioned tourist region, this tourist region is distinguished by its many attractive values for tourism development. Also this tourist area has been declared National Park. By this we mean that on the one hand we attach importance to the development of tourism and on the other we are concerned with the preservation of the environment. This area encompasses the mountainous massif as the most distinct and prominent whole in this part of Kosovo. As we have pointed out, the tourist area of Sharr, along with the Alp Mountains, is the most attractive region of Kosovo, where there are natural spaces with great tourist acceptance power and a high degree of nature conservation, complemented by many elements of social origin, then in this area there are the fields and canyons of white Drini, Prizren Bistrica, Lepenc and their tributaries, cities such as Prizren and Ferizaj. Rural mountainous municipalities such as Gora, Opoja, Sredska and Sirinic as well as traffic corridors with associated equipment and associated services. Since Sharri is located near the Alp Mountains, it should be the first example of a functioning Kosovo tourist model, as one of the areas that should take precedence over the tourist offer in the local and foreign market. The main features of the present and planned tourist offer of this central area in the simultaneous development and progress of two basic forms of tourism activities: transit and motorized tourism, and stationary (ferial) tourism, especially in the primary season (summer and summer). The secondary winter season.

With the construction of the relevant road network, the main tourist flows go through the primary road ring, Gjakova-Prizren-Sharr-Dragash which continues to Pristina or Skopje. The tourist area of Sharr is not a monocentric area because besides Prizren as the most attractive cities on the other side we also have Ferizaj which is famous for its convenient tourist position. Then Dragash, Theranda and Kaçanik. In line with its position in the hierarchy of tourist environments, all of the sites mentioned above will be the starting point in utilizing stationary tourist facilities and other planned contents. The tourist area of Sharr has great opportunities to accommodate many tourists. The planned tourism offer is based on the need to meet different segments of tourist demand throughout the year (especially in the summer and winter season), with the following activities: Winter sports, mountaineering, hunting, fishing, health tourism. Sharr area (from Luboten in the northeast to Brod in the south).

## **CONCLUSION**

Kosovo has tourist resources that represent spaces of great value. Such values have been preserved which in the coming periods will be of great importance for the development of tourism. These values are widespread, I say, in all Kosovo countries. In addition to the many natural beauties and values of cultural heritage we are based in the two National Parks. In the Alp Mountains, National Park and in the Sharr National Park. Both of these parks have great potential for tourism development. In addition to influencing the development of tourism there is also the sustainable preservation of natural conditions which are an important basis for the development of society. Today these attractive tourist areas are visited by a considerable number of tourists. Their number is increasing day by day. This is the best indicator that we are on the right track for sustainable tourism development in these areas. All these are some of the parameters that influence tourism development and environmental preservation. Without a preserved environment we cannot have developed tourism.

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