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TURIZAM U FUNKCIJI RAZVOJA DOMAĆEG POLJOPRIVREDNO-PREHRAMBENOG SEKTORA

TOURISM IN THE FUNCTION OF DEVELOPING
THE DOMESTIC AGRI-FOOD SECTOR





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ANALIZA BROJA NOĆENJA KAO RAZVOJNI POKAZATELJ TURIZMA REPUBLIKE SRBIJE

Apstrakt: Od svojih pojavnih oblika do savremenog tumačenja, turizam je pretrpeo značajne promene. Uslovljen mnogim faktorima u čijoj se osnovi nalazi ljudska potreba za upoznavanjem drugih kultura i relaksacijom, poslednjih decenija je u potpunosti sagledan njegov doprinos ekonomskom razvoju. Pored toga su definisane i njegove slabosti i ranjivost na krizne periode čiji su svi svedoci poslednjih godina. Rad se bavi analizom turističkog prometa kroz praćenje broja noćenja domaćih i stranih turista u Republici Srbiji u proteklih pet godina. Praćenjem kvartalnih promena je primećena veća osetljivost stranih turista u odnosu na domaće čije su reakcije sporije i ne toliko intezivne. Pored toga je izvršena analiza broj noćenja prema izabranim turističkim mestima. Podaci pokazuju da je u centrima gradskog turizma dominantno učešće stranih turista za razliku od banja i planina. Baš zato su centri gradskog turizma bili najpogođeniji krizom izazvanom pandemijom COVID-19. Potrošnja stranih turista ima multiplikvan efekat na ekonomski razvoj pa je poreklo stranih turista bilo takođe predmet analize. Krizni period uz dodatna geopolitička dešavanja su u 2022. godini apsolutno izmenili poreklo turista ali i začajno povećala njihov broj. Pored velike osetljivosti turizam kao delatnost pokazuje i sposobnost brzog oporavka pa vrlo ćesto ostvareni pad biva kompenzovan još većim rastom u postkriznom periodu.

Ključne riječi: turizam, domaći turisti, strani turisti, noćenja turista.

ANALYSIS OF THE NUMBER OF OVERNIGHTS AS AN SERBIAN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT INDICATOR

Abstract: From appearances form to its modern interpretation, tourism has significantly changed. Conditioned by many factors, it is fundamentally based on the human need to explore other cultures and to relax. Its contribution to economic development has been fully understood in recent decades. In addition, its weaknesses and vulnerability to crisis periods, of which all are witnesses in recent years, are also defined. The paper deals with the analysis of tourist traffic by monitoring the number of overnight stays of domestic and foreign tourists in the Republic of Serbia in the past five years. By monitoring the quarterly changes, it was noticed that foreign tourists are more sensitive than domestic tourists, whose reactions are slower and not so intense. In addition, an analysis was made of the number of overnight stays according to the selected tourist spots. The data shows that in the centers of urban tourism, the dominant participation of foreign tourists is in contrast to spas and mountains. This is precisely why the centers of urban tour ism were the most affected by the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The consumption of foreign tourists has a multiplying effect on economic development, so the origin of foreign tourists was also a subject of analysis. The crisis period along with additional geopolitical events in 2022 absolutely changed the origin of tourists, but also significantly increased their number. In addition to high sensitivity, tourism as an activity, also shows the ability to quickly recover, so very often the realized decline is compensated by greater growth in the post-crisis period.

Key words: tourism, domestic tourists, foreign tourists, tourist overnight stays.

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1. INTRODUCTION

The fundamental motives of all tourist visits are culturally determined. In the background and in the basis of each one is necessity for acquisition additional knowledge and experiences that have multiple positive effects. Since tourism as a phenomenon, not as an industry, arose with the first travels inspired by the above-mentioned motives, it is difficult to determine precisely when they were first realized. With the first industrial revolution, the development of rail and ship traffic, tourism takes its presentday characteristics (Milenkovski et al., 2020). The first mass travels, the mixing of cultures and customs have influenced on the shape of modern world (Bianchi, 2018). During all that time, tourism developed, new forms and new types of tourism were created, but have also directly and indirectly influenced the overall economic development. Today, it is not only reified in legal norms but it is an integral part of the development strategies of all countries (Aref & Reduzan, 2017). Undisputed tourism potentials must be, first of all, adequately valorized and put into the function of economic development through adequate investment activity (Ding, 2016). However, tourism should not be seen as a consequence of economic development, but as one of its levers (Hacia, 2019). The effects of tourism development can be seen directly and indirectly through the development of all activities that are closely related to it (Hacia, 2016). However, it should be had in mind that the tertiary sector is the most sensitive to crisis periods. The COVID-19 pandemic has left behind major consequences in all sectors, first of all in the tourism sector (Milovanović et al., 2021; Luković & Stojković, 2020). The global decline in tourist visits was inevitable, especially since travels were not only limited and conditional but also prohibited. In addition, the inevitable financial crisis left consequences on the real sector as well, so tourism is additionally threatened from that point of view as well. (Aliperti et al., 2019). The cessation of work of a large number of travel agencies, the closing of hotel chains, millions of unemployed are a reminder of the global importance that tourism has. Also, it should be emphasized that tourism has the possibility to be revitalized faster than all other activities (Dwyer et al., 2006). In human nature is to travel and the modern lifestyle imposes this as a need of great importance. The subject of this work will be an analysis of the state of tourism in the Republic of Serbia in the past five years. In this sense was monitored the change in the number of overnight stays by foreign and domestic tourists. The importance of foreign tourist visits is exceptional, especially considering the effect of multiplying the inflow of foreign capital (Assaf et al., 2022). Quarterly changes in the number of overnight stays by domestic and foreign tourists were observed, as well as the attractiveness of certain destinations in the covered period. In addition, it was also analyzed the changes in trends as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic (Abbas et al., 2021). In the last decade, the Republic of Serbia has recorded a constant growth in the number of foreign tourists, which is higher than the growth of domestic tourists. Speaking of foreign tourists, it should be borne in mind that they are not only foreign residents of neighboring countries, but the residents from all over the world. The share of foreign tourists who are residents of neighboring countries is not even dominant, and it was at the beginning of the XXI and even more significant at the end of the XX century. All this points out the Republic of Serbia as a globally interesting tourist destination This claim is supported by the data from 2022. Global geopolitical events also have big contribution to this, which can only multiplie the positive effects (Seabra & Bhatt, 2022). However we cannot talk about globally uniform development because there are huge disparities. Regardless of the reached level of development or underdevelopment, its perspective is a permanent category. Not only the development of tourism, but also the closely related economic development depends on the government's willingness to realize it.



2. ANALYSIS OF THE DOMESTIC AND FOREIGN TOURISTS OVERNIGHT CHANGES

Expansive growth of tourist visits in Serbia begins in 2015 with incentive measures for the tourism development. As the result of such measures, was achieved not only the increase of the number of domestic tourists, but also a marked interest of foreign tourists. Constant growth was maintained until 2019, when was recorded the number of overnight stays exceeded 10 million. The global pandemic of COVID-19 has affected the sharp drop in tourist traffic (Chang et al., 2021; Zhong et al., 2021). Table 1 presents the quarterly changes in overnight stays by domestic and foreign tourists. Changes are expressed in index points and refers to the same period (quarter) of the previous year.

Table 1. Tourist overnight stays (comparison with the same quarter of the previous year) in the period 2018-2022.

Year	Quarter	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists	In total
2018		109,2	113,5	110,7
2019		101,3	108,3	103,9
2020	Q1	101,5	93,2	98,3
2021		91,9	48,3	76,1
2022		122,2	270,1	156,3
2018		113,6	114,5	113,9
2019		107,6	106,4	107,2
2020	Q2	39,3	8,9	28,1
2021		188,5	535,8	228,4
2022		130,8	253,8	164,1
2018		110,2	118,6	113,4
2019		105,4	105,8	105,6
2020	Q3	113,0	17,9	74,9
2021		103,6	412,6	133,3
2022		117,2	157,5	129,2
2018		106,7	112,3	109,1
2019		113,6	120,6	116,6
2020	Q4	71,1	30,2	52,8
2021		123,5	220,0	148,2
2022		151,4	204,7	171,7

Source: Author's adaptation based on statistical bulletins of RZS (2018-2022)

Looking at the first quarter for all years of the observed period, it can be noticed constant growth of overnight stays of domestic tourists until 2021. In the mentioned year, there was a decrease in the number of overnight stays by domestic tourists, which is negligible compared to the decrease in the number of overnight stays by foreign tourists. Also, it is important to emphasize that the crisis in the tourism sector was first felt in the visits of foreign tourists, bearing in mind that already in 2020, a decline was



recorded in the first quarter, which in the following year, in 2021, was even more drastic. Overall, for the first quarter of the observed period, the noticeable drop in foreign tourists overnight stays in 2020 was compensated by the increase of domestic tourists. For this reason, the overall decrease in the number of overnight stays is almost negligible. In 2022 a completely different situation occurred, so the first quarter was marked by a huge index growth in the number of overnight stays by foreign tourists. For the second quarter of the observed period, there is an evident decrease in the number of overnight stays in 2020 among domestic and foreign tourists, where again a significant decrease in foreign tourists should be highlighted. The next year, 2021, is marked by a sudden index growth of foreign as well as domestic tourists overnight stays. What is even more significant is that this growth continued in 2022, where the exceptional index growth in the number of overnight stays by foreign tourists should be highlighted. In the third quarter of the observed period, there was no decrease in the number of overnight stays by domestic tourists, in contrast to foreign tourists, where a record decrease was recorded in 2020, which was nevertheless compensated by a huge growth the following year, which fully compensated for the earlier decrease. For the fourth quarter of the observed period, it is possible to draw the same conclusion as for the second and it refers to the identical trend of the index of domestic and foreign tourists. Finally, it should be noted that the number of overnight stays by domestic tourists was in decline in the second quarter of 2020, the first and the fourth quarter of 2021. In this sense, the movement of the index is much more stable than in the example of foreign tourists. There, the oscillations are not only larger, but also realized in a larger number of quarters. The previously highlighted vulnerability of tourism to crisis periods is even more significant when talking about foreign tourists and realized traffic. Nevertheless, a rapid "recovery" of interest and growth is evident. This fact is of exceptional importance, especially since the consumption of foreign tourists has a multiplied effect on GDP.

The development of tourism and its types is primarily conditioned by the geographical position, ie comparative advantages (Perić et al., 2018; Ritchie et al., 2014). The potential for the development of tourism in Serbia lies in spa, mountain, city and rural tourism. In addition, a large number of events throughout the year that attract a significant number of tourists from the country and the surrounding area should also be highlighted. Table 2 analyzes the visits of certain localities and compares the changes in the number of overnight stays by domestic and foreign tourists.

Table 2. Tourist overnight stays by selected tourist destinations (in thousands) in the period 2018-2022.

		2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Spa	domestic tourists	2.223	2.476	2.036	2.335	2.701
	foreign tourists	316	392	11	258	353
Belgrade	domestic tourists	325	378	241	354	428
	foreign tourists	2.003	2.123	487	1.128	2.974
Novi Sad	domestic tourists	112	126	78	129	154
	foreign tourists	289	354	81	139	171
Mountains	domestic tourists	1.654	1.875	1.503	1.697	2.373
	foreign tourists	257	346	196	269	428
Other tourist places	domestic tourists	913	1.002	702	1.112	2.501
	foreign tourists	423	638	214	785	4.195

Source: Author's adaptation based on statistical bulletins of RZS (2018-2022)



Speaking of Belgrade and Novi Sad, as the most significant representatives of city tourism, should be emphasized that the majority of tourists to these locations are foreign tourists. This becomes especially important in crisis periods, bearing in mind the aforementioned vulnerability and sensitivity of foreign tourists to crisis periods. This is obvious from the table 2 data, because 2020 is the year of a multiple drop in the number of foreign tourists in Belgrade and Novi Sad. This resulted in a large drop in income from tourism. In the same tourist centers, there was also a decrease in the number of domestic tourists in the mentioned year, which is significantly lower than the decrease in the number of foreign tourists. In the following two years, there was an increase in the number of foreign tourists, but this growth is not sufficient, so it is not at the level of the initial year of the observed period in Novi Sad. In Belgrade, in 2021 and 2022, there was a large increase in the number of foreign tourists as well as domestic ones, which only strengthened the position of Belgrade as the center of city tourism.

Serbia has a large number of spas with obvious disparities in their development. Therefore, the largest number of visits by domestic and foreign tourists go to Vrnjačka Banja and Soko Banja. In contrast to the centers of city tourism, in the spas the majority of participants are domestic tourists. With the exception of 2020, in all years there has been an increase in the number of visits, which also refers to foreign tourists. A significant number of tourists visit mountain centers in Serbia. Almost 50% of tourists visit Zlatibor and Kopaonik as centers of mountain tourism. In the observed period, comparing the first and the last year, the highest growth in the number of overnight stays was achieved in the mountain centers. They experienced a special expansion during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic as the primary choice, above all, of domestic tourists. As a result, an increasing investment activity directed at other mountain centers is noticeable, the positive consequences of which will only be seen in the coming period.

Table 3. Foreign tourists overnights by country of origin (in thousands) in the period 2018-2022.

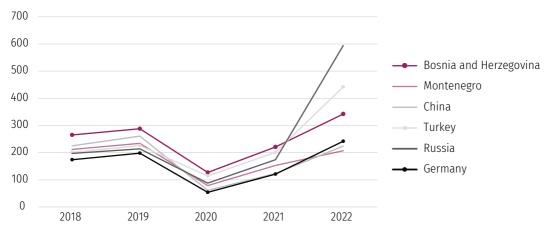
	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
Bosnia and Herzegovina	265	288	127	221	342
Rank	1	1	1	1	3
Montenegro	212	234	79	153	207
Rank	3	3	4	4	6
China	225	261	61	123	224
Rank	2	2	5	5	5
Turkey	201	226	114	201	442
Rank	4	4	2	2	2
Russia	197	214	88	174	594
Rank	5	5	3	3	1
Germany	174	198	54	121	242
Rank	6	6	6	6	4

Source: Author's adaptation based on statistical bulletins of RZS (2018-2022)



In the observed period, the Republic of Serbia achieved an overall increase in the number of overnight stays by both domestic and foreign tourists. Table 3 shows some of the countries for which Serbia is an interesting tourist destination. Comparing the beginning and the last year of the observed period, there is a noticeable increase in the number in almost all states. Tourists from Bosnia and Herzegovina are dominant in the selected sample. In all years, they take the first place compared to other countries. Serbia was an extremely interesting destination for tourists from China in 2018 and 2019, when the number of overnight stays by tourists from China was almost at the same level as from Bosnia and Herzegovina. For those two years, the number of overnight stays by tourists from China is in second place, right after the number of overnight stays by tourists from Bosnia and Herzegovina. Already in the following year, the largest drop in the number of tourist overnight stays was achieved in comparison with tourists from other countries, so China took the 5th place in the list of 6 countries. Germany was the only country with less overnight stays than China. The reasons should be sought in the COVID-19 pandemic, which left behind another consequence. Namely, China is the country from which fewer tourists came in 2022 than in 2018. The same is the case with Montenegro, whose ranking fell from 3rd place to 6th place. In the last year of the observed period, there were even more overnight stays by tourists from Germany than from Montenegro. The largest absolute growth in the number of overnight stays was achieved by tourists from Russia, so the number tripled in the last year compared to the beginning of the observed period. In addition, Russia was in 5th place in terms of overnight stays in 2018, while in 2022 it took a convincing first place. The reasons for the enormous growth can be interpreted in multiple ways. It can be said with great certainty that the main factor is the current geopolitical situation that has been going on for more than a year in the East. Also, this growth in the number of "tourists" can be taken with a retention, because the question is what are the main motives. It is evident that these arrivals must be registered and by the nature of things it is only logical to place them in the category of tourists. In fact, they essentially are, because while staying in Serbia they are using the opportunity to meet the culture and customs, spend their money and in that sense are no different from other tourists. What can perhaps differentiate them are the motives of the visit, which are certainly not statistically shown in this sense, but neither have they been examined. Not only did the number of overnight stays by tourists from Russia increase sharply, but it also more than doubled when looking at overnight stays by tourists from Turkey. After Russia, which occupied the convincing first place in 2022, there is Turkey with almost twice the number of overnight stays than that of tourists from China and Germany.

Graph 1. Graphic representation of the number of overnight stays by foreign tourists in selected countries in the period 2018-2022.



Source: Based on the data from Table 3



Graph 1 is the representation of the data from Table 3. An almost identical trend is evident for all countries, which indicates the identical reaction of tourists regardless of the country of origin. This confirms the previously defined vulnerability of tourism to crises periods. The growth in the number of tourists from Russia should also be viewed from several angles. At the basis of human existence is the need to eliminate risks and to provide the safe way of life. The need for relaxation and relief from stress are, among other things, one of the main motives for tourist trips. Put in this way, even this increase in the number of overnight stays can be viewed through the prism of visits that are, above all, tourist-motivated. In addition, it is to be expected that the growth in the number of tourists and the number of overnight stays will continue to increase, especially if we take into account the global growth of the world population, but also the pace of life, which singles out tourist trips as one of the most important social needs that must be met.



3. CONCLUSION

The development of tourism is a permanent process whose beginnings can be linked to a period even before its conceptual definition. As the massiveness is one of its most significant determinants, it should be emphasized that such characteristics has since the time of the first industrial revolution. From then until today, it has developed in every sense with all its vulnerabilities that tourism policy holders have to face. Its global character abolishes borders and the number of foreign tourists is one of the indicators of its development. It should be pointed out that the benefits of foreign tourists overnights are multiple and the most significant is the economic one. The inflow of foreign money has a multiplied effect on not only the additional development of tourism, but also on its economic development. Therefore, it is important not only to monitor the number of foreign tourists and the number of overnight stays, but also to encourage these types of visits with policy measures. As contemporaries of the turbulent global phenomena of recent years, from the COVID-19 pandemic to the current geopolitical events, we are obliged to draw lessons that will eliminate any possible shortcomings. The favorable geographical position of the Republic of Serbia and its natural characteristics enable certain comparative advantages in the development of certain types of tourism. Judging by the total number of overnight stays it can be spoken about the uniform development of spa, city and mountain tourism. However, it is a worrying fact that the number of overnight stays by city tourists is more than 90% in two cities: Novi Sad and Belgrade. The situation is similar with spa tourism, where we are actually talking about the tourism of Vrnjačka Banja and Soko Banja. Additionally, over 80% of mountain tourism is represented by two mountains: Kopaonik and Zlatibor. Unknown types of tourism are equally developed, but the capacities available to the Republic of Serbia are largely unused. Capital investment activity is necessary for the tourist mapping of the certain destination, but also the awareness that tourism should not be viewed as a consequence of development, but as one of its levers. The COVID-19 pandemic has shown once again the sensitivity of tourism to any type of crisis. The visits and overnight stays of foreign tourists have almost immediately reacted, the bankruptcy and collapse of a large number of travel agencies, the growth of unemployment and the disappearance of some hotel chains. On the other hand, the recovery is faster than in any other sector and the growth is almost exponential. This is, among other things, a consequence of human nature and the need for changes and familiarization with other cultural and historical contents. The variability of tourism is also evident in the post-crisis period, which emphasized different trends. The number of tourists from Turkey and Russia is increasing, which was completely different and difficult to predict in 2018. In that period, there was great interest from tourists from China, which was still growing slightly in 2022, but still not at the level of 2018. These are the circumstances to which one must adapt and create an offer in accordance with the needs of dominant tourists, which must, on the other hand, be interesting to everyone. Along with the decrease in the number of overnight stays by foreign tourists, there was also a decrease in the number of overnight stays by domestic tourists, but in a smaller percentage. In spas and mountains, this drop was even insignificant. This speaks in favor of the fact that domestic tourists are less sensitive in the crisis period and are the most important for the preservation of the tourism sector. The growth of the world's population, the modern way of life and business of modern man is facing increasingly challenging problems. That is why the need for travel and vacation will constantly increase, which makes tourism, globally, still, as it will always do, a very promising activity. Whether all those perspectives will be used, the time ahead will show. Those who noticed it even earlier are already enjoying all kinds of benefits, especially economic ones.



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