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Table of Contents

Evidence-Based Management: Old Wine in New Bottles or a Breath of Fresh Air?	1
Inquiry conceived as a Goal-directed activity led by questioning and sensitivity to context	7
Human Resources as One of the Key Factor of Rural Tourism Development	11
Ceramic Art Of The Late Bronze Age In Nakhchivan	14
Leading Factors of Sustainable Rural Tourism Development: Case of Georgia.....	15
Methodological Features of the Calculation of Macroeconomic Indicators at the Regional Level	18
New insights and empirical evidence on the relationship between government spending and good public governance.....	23
Tackling the European ageing challenges: An economic perspective.....	24
Georgian Language as One of the Touristic Attractions	25
Language Barrier in Tourism - an Obstacle or Adventure?: Case of Georgia	30
Evaluation of Supports for Increasing Financial Literacy of Deaf People.....	33
Economic growth, a retrospective over time.....	34
The Lifestyle change effect on the inner space design attributes in Palestinian Houses.....	35
Effects of Reciprocity on Knowledge Sharing Behaviour: The Mediating Role of Organizational Commitment	37
Implications of the employment of young people in Romania on sustainable development	82
Becoming an organic wine drinker. A grounded theory study" Atouso Gzelhbash*	83
Household expenditure on pets's physical needs: Guayaquil-Ecuador.....	84
Community-Based tourist willingness to pay: the case of Santay Island (Ecuador)	85
Competitiveness in tourism – models of tourism competitiveness and their applicability	86
Integration Model of a Digital Proactive Government for the Social Identification of Kazakhstan Citizens	87
Leisure activities and life enjoyment among senior consumers: Longitudinal examination of the role of psychological well-being and cognitive functioning	88
Does rational and efficient management policies of non performing loans have positively influenced the increase of lending volume to the real sector of the economy? Case study: Kosovo (2005 - 2018)	89
Why Consumers Choose Organic Wine: The Perseption Of Producers And Retailers	90
Effect of Mandatory Participation on Turkish Private Pension Insurance System.....	91
Improvement Directions Of The Monetary Policy Of The National Bank Of The Republic Of Moldova With The Purpose Of Development Of The National Economy	92
State debt management and its impact on country performance Case study: Kosovo (2017 - 2019).....	109
Escaping greed and fear by governance: to remedy or to prevent?	110
Multiculturalism And Its Impact On Cultural Tourism - Case Study Zrenjanin Municipality .	111

Import Dependency of Pakistan and Turkey	122
The relationship between FDI and fiscal system in Romania	123
Financing of state preuniversity educational institutions in Romania	124
The influence of environmental taxes on sustainable development in Romania	142
Empirical Link Between FDI And Technology Transfer	143
Theoretical Foundations of Population Migration	144
The measurement of the level of government regulation in the social security system	145
The Role Of Computers In Higher Education.....	147
Measuring Geopolitical Risk	151
Regional regeneration with cooperative (movement) for sustainable development: Governance, and social capital or cooperative (movement)? in Ireland, Japan and Turkey	152
Migrants and the reason for their migration from the Middle East.....	153
The relationship analysis between investments in innovation and macroeconomic performance	154
Correlation Between Corporate Governance Characteristics And Financial Performance Of The Companies	155
Assessing the risk of companies going bankrupt using the economic and financial indicators .	156
The Effects Of Highly-Educated Immigrants On Innovation Activity In Three European Countries	157
The Impact Of Financial Performances – Risks Of Companies Listed On The Stock Exchange Bucharest.....	158
Motivational Process – Way To Enhance Organizations’ Performance	159
Internet technologies to promote sustainable development goal 5-gender equality and female empowerment.....	168
Impact of Macroeconomic Variables on Financial Inclusion: A Comparative Study of Western Europe and Developing Asia	169
The Measurement Of The Level Of Government Regulation In The Pension System	170
Progress of Shooting Foreign Films and Series in Croatia and Serbia: From Humble Beginnings to Tourism Promotion.....	172
CSR Reporting and ethics and in Slovenian banking system.....	181
Determining The Relationship Between Job Satisfaction, Dependence On Tips And Turnover Intentions: The Case Of Hotel Employees	191
Safety Risk Factors: Do They Vary Depending on Hotel Category and Working Department?	192
Efficiency of Italian Serie A Teams by Using Data Envelopment Analysis	202
Accounting and financial reporting during a pandemic.....	222
The impact of COVID-19 on the stock market volatility: Evidence from the South East Europe region.....	223
Rethinking urban planning in a post-COVID-19 Athens	224
Human behavior in relation to urban streets’ form: The case study of Athens, Greece	225

Impact of Macroeconomic Variables on Loan Default: An Empirical Analysis of BRICS Countries	226
Individualism – Collectivism Revisited: A viewpoint of the principles in East-Asian society.....	237
Multiple factorial influences of life satisfaction	238
Failure of German transport policy in the case of Lufthansa: A critical economic approach ...	239
Experiences Of Former Socialist States In The Field Of Financial Decentralization	247
Consumer payments in Poland. Results of survey	248
Managing climate risk: a responsibility for politicians not Central Banks	251
Measuring financial inclusion and financial exclusion	252
The Effect of Internal Control System on the Activity Performance in Municipalities.....	253
The Performance Of Pension Funds And Their Impact On Economic Growth In Oecd Countries	264
Contribution Of Urban Tourism In Development Of A Competitive Tourist Product On The Example Of Novi Sad	265
Analysis Of The Current State Of Nautical Tourism In The Function Of Improving The Tourist Offer Of The City Of Belgrade.....	278
Analysis of financial risk insurance-the case of Romania.....	293
A Study of contributing factors influencing Risk Perception and Its' address.....	294
Factors determining the effectiveness of training in the financial industry: A study on a small EU island state	295
Spatial changes in Athens of crisis: A Comparative Study of commercial activity in three neighborhoods.....	296
The relationship between corporate social responsibility, corporate governance and financial performance of the European companies.....	297
Impact of the COVID-19 on Stock Returns: Evidence From Borsa Istanbul.....	298
The Relationship Between Organizational Identification And Motivation: A Sample Of Textile Enterprise.....	299
Asymmetric causality relationship between the stock market and the exchange rate in BRICS-T	310
Interaction of Finance Sector and Real Sector In Turkish Economy	324
Sustainable Products and Marketing Communications: The Case of an Organic Farm on Instagram	332
Business Life Expectations of University Students: A Research on Generations Y & Z.....	333
NETFLIX as a Daily Life Practice: An Evaluation on Fictionalization of Different Masculinities	342
Teachers 'Views On The Impacts Of Home Visits In Elementary Schools.....	344
Experience of relative poverty connected to usage of Instagram: Meaning of not having	345
The Effects of Brand Value on Destination Trust and Destination Attachment: The Case of Eskişehir	346
Using Literary Assets for Destination Marketing: An Example on Hattat Ahmet Karahisari..	360

The interaction between perceived risk, attitude, and intention to use: An empirical study on Bitcoin as a crypto money	361
Social Capital Facing Economic Competition: The Case of Antakya Long Bazaar	362
Gender Equality Index: The Case of Turkey Garanti Bank	363
Proposal an Index for Supply Security Risk in Imported Energy: The Case of Turkey	364
The Effect of Traditional Performance Evaluation Ratios on the Market Value Added: Application on Informatics Index (XBLSM)	374
Travel motivations of Y and Z Generations.....	375
Political Economy Of The Turkstream Gas Pipe Line In Consideration Of The Current Developments	376
The Role Of Emotional Satisfaction In Gift Giving Behavior: A Qualitative Research	377
Slow Fashion and Consumers' Behavioral Tendencies in the Scope of Sustainability	379
Kurumsal Sosyal Sorumluluk Çalışmalarına Bir Alternatif : Entelektüel Şirket.....	392
Exploring The Internet Of Things Within The New Generation Smart Home Systems: A Qualitative Study	394
Attitudes towards Mobile Learning in Secondary Education	406
Consumers' healthcare service marketing delivery channel preferences and distinctive factor	407
Is anthroposophical approach possible in social work interventions?	414
Do Investors Overreact to Firm Merger and Acquisition Decisions?: A Research on Borsa Istanbul for Period 2007-2015	415
Pre-service Teachers' Approach to Environmental Problems through an Ecological Awareness	428
How much does being unique cost?	429
Suicide attempts among alcohol users: The effect of depression, anxiety, personality and aggression.....	447
The Role of Leader and the Leaders Member Interaction in The Existence of Learning Organizations.....	448
Production Management Export Relationship: A Study on Olive Oil Statistics	449
Global Migraton and Turkey	450
Intergenerational Knowledge Transfer in Family Firms: A Research in Afyonkarahisar Province.....	452
A Research Aimed At Measuring The Relationship Between Organizational Cynicism And Organizational Commitment Health Sciences University Konya Training And Research Hospital Application.....	459
The Effect of Popular Culture on Women's Consumption of Technological Products	477
The Effect Of Religiosity On Hedonic Consumption And Wasteful Consumption Behavior	491
Towards a Better Understanding of Blockchain Based Government and Public Services.....	492
A Different correlation matrix for factor analysis in categorical data: Goodman-Kruskal Lambda	504
A qualitative research to evaluate health tourism potential in Muğla	505

Investigating the Effect of Online Advertising and Consumer Anxiety on Attitude and Behavioral Intention towards Advertising	514
<i>Frankenstein</i> and Humanness: Mary Shelley’s Debate on Science and Nature	515
Exploring The Relationships Between Perceived Justice And Service Recovery Outcomes	524
Leveraged Buyout Regulations Within The Scope Of Turkish Commercial Law	525
Şirketlerin Döviz Kuru Risk Yönetim Becerilerinin Tespit Edilmesine Yönelik Tanımlayıcı Bir Çalışma	526
Determination of Consumers' Attitudes towards E-Commerce Sites According to Their Risk Avoidance Level	535
Analysis of User Attitude Toward Smart City Mobile Applications Through Technology Acceptance Model	553
Social Work With Disadvantaged Groups During The Pandemic Period	554
Augmented Reality (AR) marketing as a remedy for economic recession in the Covid-19 era .	566
The Efficiency of Price Competition Power in Tourism Destination Competitiveness	568
Analyzing The Buying Behavior in Baby Care Products through Theory of Reasoned Action	579
Airline passengers’ travel intention in the Covid-19 era	580
Determination Of Brand Love Dimensions In Automobile Brands And Examination Of These Dimensions In Terms Of Demographic Characteristics Of Consumers	591
Epistemology According to the Kalam of Ahl al-Sunnah	607
Scientific Studies And Sector Practices On Accommodation Enterprises About Corporate Social Responsibility	617
Investigation of Intercultural Sensitivity Levels of Department Managers Working in Hotel Enterprises According to Some Demographic Features	646
Investigating the Effects of Sensory Brand Experience and Employee Empathy on Brand Equity in the Banking Industry	647
The Relationship Of Cointegration Between Some Macroeconomic Factors And Shares Prices: An Empiric Research With The Ardl Bound Testing Approach	648

Analysis Of The Current State Of Nautical Tourism In The Function Of Improving The Tourist Offer Of The City Of Belgrade

Milena Podovac¹, Danijel Drpić², Goran Perić³

Abstract

Introduction: *Nautical tourism represents one of the most developed forms of tourism, the development of which can encourage tourists to use other tourist facilities of the destination in which they dock and temporarily stay during the cruise. This tourism form is important from the economic aspect, bearing in mind that tourists spend significant funds on voyages and cruises. On the other hand, tourists expect a high quality of services during the cruise and they are willing to pay an appropriate price for the added value and authentic experience. The growing tendency of the number of tourists, who opt for this type of travel, indicates the necessity of continuous improvement of the nautical tourism offer in order to satisfy tourists' needs.*

Aim: *The aim of this paper is to analyse the current state of nautical tourism and its importance for the improvement of the tourist offer of the city of Belgrade. Although the tourist offer of the city of Belgrade consists of a large number of tourist products, for which great demand exists, the potentials for the nautical tourism development have not been adequately valorised and used to improve the position of this city on the international tourist market. The paper presents the current state of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade with the aim of defining guidelines for improving the nautical tourism offer.*

Method: *This paper is based on a theoretical analysis of the scientific and professional literature on nautical tourism and secondary data. Official statistical data on tourist turnover, the number of tourists in the ports of the city of Belgrade are presented in the paper.*

Findings: *It was determined in the paper that there are real opportunities for the development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade. A significant potential for the nautical tourism development is the Danube River, whose waterways enable the organization of sailing for tourists. More intensive development of nautical tourism could contribute to achieving greater visibility of the city of Belgrade on the international tourist market and connecting this tourism form with other segments of the tourist offer in order to provide an authentic experience for tourists during their stay in this destination.*

Key Words: *nautical tourism, Belgrade, the Danube river, Republic of Serbia, tourist product.*

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INTRODUCTION

In conditions of intensive competition on the tourist market, tourism is becoming an activity, which is continuously changing and adapting to the needs and requirements of tourist services users. In order to

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take and maintain a competitive position of a destination, it is necessary to use all available potentials to create new tourist products. One way for realizing success on the tourism market can be related to the organization of cruising rivers, lakes and seas, i.e. the development of nautical tourism. Nautical tourism is associated with performing activities in contact with water, along with enjoying in the nature and using different tourist services in different regions (Moreno & Otamendi, 2017). It is a form of tourism implying that tourists travel by water, sea or river with a dock in marinas and ports, which are designed to receive this segment of tourists, as well for their vacation and recreation (Gračan et al., 2016). The basic resources for the development of this form of tourism are hydrographic potentials, with the necessary upgrades in the form of ports, marinas, facilities for providing services for tourists, etc. Nautical tourism has been qualitatively improved over time due to the necessity to fulfil the preferences of nautical tourists, who show interest in experiencing natural attractions of the destination in which they are staying and having an active vacation (Alkier, 2019).

Nautical tourism is recording constant growth, with the demand for this form of tourism being characterized by heterogeneity, economic power and the desire for high-quality tourist offer (Drpić et al., 2019). As one of the fastest growing sectors in the travel industry, nautical tourism is recording steady growth especially between 2009 and 2019, during which the number of tourists increased from 17.8 million to 30 million in 2019. Projections show that by 2022, this type of travel will increase by 6%. After North America, Europe is the largest cruise market in the world, with a large number of cruise tourists coming from Europe (CBI, 2020). Nautical tourism is a very dynamic sector, which is a significant generator of income and employment. In the European Union, the cruise industry generates more than 234,000 jobs and 28 billion euros in revenue annually (European Commission, 2017).

The city of Belgrade is a very important tourist destination for the overall development of tourism in the Republic of Serbia. In addition to being the capital, Belgrade is a destination of multifunctional character, which has a developed structure of tourist products (business, city vacations, cultural, event, etc.). In the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia (Ministry of trade, tourism and telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia, 2016), nautical tourism is classified in the category of tourist products of special importance for the tourism development in the entire country. When it comes to Belgrade, the potentials for the development of nautical tourism in the form of cruising on the Danube River have not yet been completely used for tourist offer improving and strengthening the competitive position of this city on the tourist market. The city of Belgrade can become an interesting destination for participants in nautical tourism, due to the existence of numerous natural and anthropogenic tourist values, which in addition to the existence of ports and smaller marinas, can affect the possibility of longer tourist stays (Štetić et al., 2014). The Danube River is a water pan-European corridor VII which is of strategic importance for the city of Belgrade, with the potential for the development of a large number of economic activities, including tourism (City of Belgrade, 2017). In addition, the Danube river is navigable throughout its course through the Republic of Serbia and it is the basis for the nautical tourism development (Perić et al., 2017). The aim of this paper is to highlight the importance of nautical tourism for the improvement of the tourist offer of the city of Belgrade. The paper analyzes the current state of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade, based on which the guidelines for improving the quality and content of this tourist product are defined, in order to enrich the tourist offer of this destination and provide an authentic experience for tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Nautical tourism is becoming an increasingly important form of tourism (Dragin et al., 2010; Vuksanović et al., 2013; Badurina et al., 2016), which is an integral part of coastal and maritime tourism connecting three sectors: transport, tourism and recreation (Russo & Rindone, 2019). Although it presents a form of tourism today that has acquired a mass character, the first cruises, which were motivated by entertainment and recreation, were realized in the 16th century on the Dutch canals. One of the most significant events in the development of tourist cruising occurred in the 19th century with the appearance of the steamer Charlotte Dundas (Vuksanović et al., 2013). The emergence of air traffic contributed to the intensive tourist cruising development, the result of which made water transport become largely neglected as a form of traffic between emitting and receptive destinations. In addition, ships are now modernized and provide services to tourists which are necessary for their travel (accommodation, food, additional facilities). Cruises, as a form of travel, provide tourists with various forms of recreation and, at the same time, they represent a very simple, safe and cheap alternative to other forms of travel (according to Brida & Zapata, 2010).

Different interpretations of the term nautical tourism are presented in the literature, bearing in mind that this form of tourism has been continuously developing through new forms of water travel. According to Luković (2007a), nautical tourism is defined as a multifunctional tourist activity with a very pronounced maritime component. Multifunctionality as a characteristic of nautical tourism can be explained by the existence of a wide range of activities, which tourists can engage in ports and beyond them (diving, sailing, surfing, rafting, excursions, etc.) (Luković, 2007b). Analysing the contribution of ports to the sustainable nautical tourism development, Kovačić (2003) implies, under this form of tourism, the movement by water sea surfaces for tourist purposes by various vessels (boats, sailboats, motor boats, etc.), cruises and cruises by passenger or other ships. The main difference between nautical tourism and other forms of tourism is navigation, i.e. high mobility of nautical tourists, whereby frequent change of place of residence occurs (Jugović et al., 2013). Exploring the perception of European nautical tourists, depending on the type of nautical tourism and the destination they visit, Lam González et al. (2015) pointed out that nautical tourism can be defined from the aspect of tourist demand as a segment of people whose motive for travel is vacation, recreation and sports at sea or with the intention to realize a certain tourist activity in a destination with a clear nautical component.

The nautical tourism product can be divided into two subgroups: the sea and activities related to the sea and calm waters (rivers and lakes), as well as activities along calm waters. Tourism, which takes place along calm waters, includes navigation on rivers and lakes, which include the use of various nautical tourism infrastructure facilities and other products and services in the function of tourism development (marinas, ports, accommodation, entertainment, etc.) (Ministry of trade, tourism and telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia, 2005). In addition to this classification, nautical tourism can be classified according to a number of criteria such as: the organization of navigation (individual, mass and nautical tourism in convoys); the purpose of navigation (excursion, cruising, sailing, navigation for sports and leisure, underwater navigation and combined and fast tourist transport); the navigation plan (closed sea, rivers and lakes; overseas and oceanic; local, national and international), etc. (Luković, 2007a).

Nautical tourism greatly contributes to the economic development of destinations (Kovačić et al., 2011; Luković, 2012), which have the appropriate infrastructure for the development of this form of tourism. In addition to natural predispositions, the development of nautical tourism requires an

appropriate infrastructure, which requires significant investments and coordinated cooperation of stakeholders. Nautical tourism in Europe is an exceptionally well-developed and dynamic sector with a significant impact on the development of the European economy. With a potential of 70,000 km of coastline and 27,000 km of waterways, Europe is a leading destination for nautical tourism and other forms of recreation on water. In Europe, there are more than 4,500 marinas with 1.75 million berths and a total fleet of 6.3 million vessels. The economic effects of the development of this form of tourism and other water activities are significant primarily for the growth of employment (around 180,000 employees), and for revenues amounting to around € 17 billion (European Boating Industry, 2020). Nautical tourism drives the overall economic development of a country or place by involving various activities in the construction of the necessary infrastructure. In addition to further development and improvement of nautical tourism in order to meet the needs of tourists, an important aspect is considering the ways to achieve sustainability of this form of tourism and reduce the negative impact on the environment and the local community.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT STATE OF NAUTICAL TOURISM IN THE CITY OF BELGRADE

The city of Belgrade is a tourist destination, which has a formed and familiar image on the international tourist market due to an adequate valorisation and use of tourist potentials for create a unique tourist offer. The attractiveness of Belgrade as a tourist destination stems from the existence of a rich cultural and historical heritage and natural values, which attract tourists (Bučić et al., 2015). In addition, it is a multifunctional destination whose offer includes other facilities, such as events, facilities for nightlife and shopping as well as facilities for organizing business events (Podovac, 2016). An important element of the tourist offer of the city of Belgrade is the developed traffic infrastructure, especially in terms of air traffic and the existence of *Nikola Tesla Airport*. The structure of the accommodation offer of the city of Belgrade is very diverse and can satisfy the needs of different types of tourists. The dominant share in the total number of facilities has hotels (112 objects) with the highest percentage share of four-star hotels (37.5%) (City of Belgrade, 2019). The city of Belgrade is the most important destination in the Republic of Serbia, having in mind the statistical data on tourist turnover. According to the data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia (2020), in 2019, 1,205,183 tourists stayed in the city of Belgrade, which is 32.6% of the total tourist turnover recorded in Serbia in the mentioned year. The high percentage share of foreign tourists in the total tourist turnover of the city of Belgrade (about 85% in 2019) (Republic Statistical Office, 2020) indicates a far better competitive position compared to other destinations in the country.

Nautical tourism is one of the very profitable tourist products, which can contribute to the qualitative improvement of the tourist offer of a destination. Although it has been identified as one of the strategically important tourist products, nautical tourism has not yet reached the highest level of development in the city of Belgrade, but also in other important destinations of the Republic of Serbia. The tourist product of cruising and nautical tourism in Belgrade includes: river cruises, private yachts and city river tours (City of Belgrade, 2019). The city of Belgrade abounds in significant hydrographic potential that can be used for more intensive development of nautical tourism. Water resources of the city of Belgrade include large transit rivers (rivers Danube, Sava, Kolubara and Tamiš), small watercourses, lakes and several surface reservoirs, as well as riverbanks with the length of 200 km (City of Belgrade, 2015). However, significant potentials for the nautical tourism development are the

rivers Danube and Sava. As one of the largest rivers in Europe, the Danube flows through Belgrade for 60 km. The Sava River, which has the status of an international waterway, flows 30 km through the city of Belgrade (City of Belgrade, 2020).

The Danube River is the basis of the Danube Corridor. This river is an integral part of the trans-European navigation channel Rhine-Main-Danube, which connects the Atlantic and the Mediterranean. Unlike other European rivers, the specifics of the Danube are reflected in the geostrategic position and navigation and economic importance of the river for the countries through which it flows, such as: Austria, Germany, the Republic of Croatia, the Republic of Serbia, Slovenia, Romania and others. There are about 70 cities along the Danube river, of which Belgrade, Vienna and Budapest have more than a million inhabitants (Maglić & Jugović, 2013). The Port of Belgrade, located in the city of Belgrade, is a complex system, which can receive and provide services to tourists and passengers on ships docking in the port. The International Passenger Port of the Port of Belgrade is located on the right bank of the Sava River. This city port has the capacity to accommodate six passenger ships. The area where the port is located has a favourable geographical position at the intersection of river corridor VII and the land corridor X. In addition, in the immediate vicinity *Nikola Tesla Airport* is located (Port of Belgrade, 2020). Intensive investment in the port infrastructure and the fulfilment of international standards can create conditions for the development of nautical tourism and positioning of the city of Belgrade on the cruise market.

Danube cruises are especially attractive for foreign tourists, who show interest in visiting cultural and historical sites, among which the most visited are the Belgrade Fortress, the Temple of St. Sava, Knez Mihailova Street, and others. Nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade includes sightseeing of this destination from the rivers, where in Belgrade there are companies, which provide to the tourists this type of service with a predefined itinerary (City of Belgrade, 2019). The tourist offer of the city of Belgrade includes different types of organized river cruises with sightseeing of the city accompanied by a tourist guide, using different vessels (Official website of Tourist Organization of city of Belgrade, 2020). One of the ways to promote nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade is the Carnival of Ships event, which has been organized since 2004 in order to popularize the Danube and Sava rivers. The program of this event includes boat parades, activities on water, music and entertainment. Visitors to this event have the opportunity to cruise the Danube and Sava with a tour of the city (Bjeljac & Dimitrić, 2014).

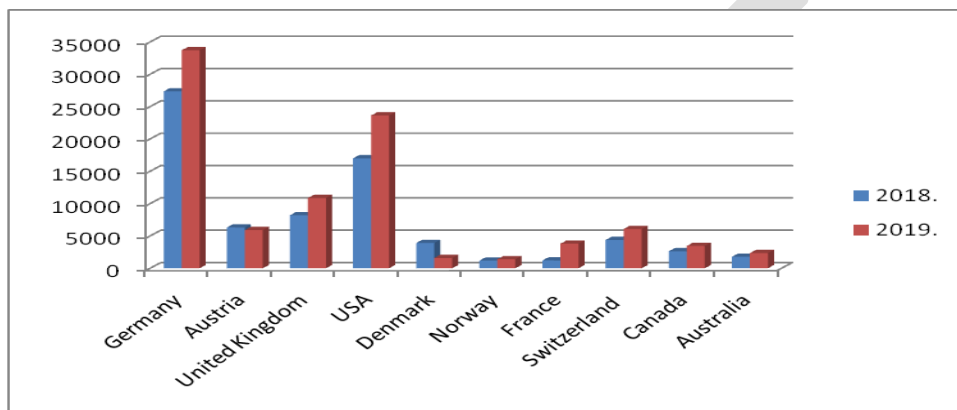
Table 1. Total number of tourists and berths in the port of Belgrade, 2014-2019.

Year	Total number of tourists	Total number of berths
2015.	63.102	494
2016.	66.387	535
2017.	70.377	531
2018.	80.269	594
2019.	100.632	742
Total	380.767	2.896
Index 2019/2015	+59,48%	+50,20%

Source: City Administration of the City of Belgrade - Statistics Sector. "Tourism - Turnover of foreign tourists in ports", <https://zis.beograd.gov.rs/index.php/2013-12-03-10-50-11/2013-11-04-10-15-34/viewcategory/21-rhiv.html>, (accessed 15th August 2020.)

Table 1 shows statistical data on the total number of tourists and the number of berths in the port of Belgrade for a five-year period. In the observed period, there was an increase in the number of berths in the city of Belgrade as well as the number of tourists on those ships. The most favourable results were achieved during 2019, when 742 berths were realized, ie about 25% more than in the previous year. In the mentioned year, the largest number of tourists was recorded (100,632 tourists) or 25.4% more tourists compared to 2018. In the period from 2015 to 2019, the number of tourists increased by 59.48%, while the number of ships docking in the port of the city of Belgrade increased by 50.20% (Author's calculation according to the data of the City Administration of the City of Belgrade, 2018; 2019).

Graph 1. Turnover of foreign tourists in the port of Belgrade from selected countries, 2018-2019.

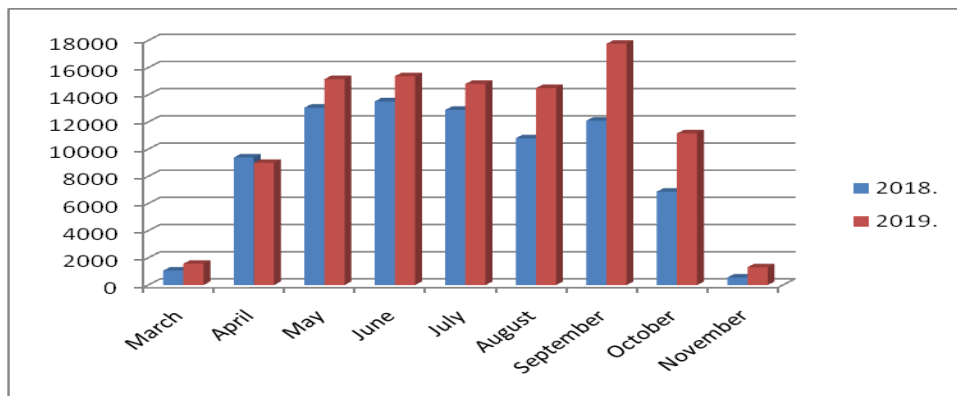


Source: City Administration of the City of Belgrade - Statistics Sector. "Tourism - Turnover of foreign tourists in ports", <https://zis.beograd.gov.rs/index.php/2013-12-03-10-50-11/2013-11-04-10-15-34/viewcategory/21-rhiv.html>, (accessed 15th August 2020.)

Graph 1 shows the number of foreign tourists in the port of Belgrade according to the country they come from in 2018 and 2019. In the observed period, the largest increase in the number of tourists in the port of Belgrade was achieved for the following countries: France (+ 213.6%), Germany (+ 23%), United States (+ 38.9%), United Kingdom (+ 32.7%) and Switzerland (+ 38.7%) (Author's calculation according to the data of the City Administration of the City of Belgrade, 2018, 2019). A large number of foreign tourists, who cruise the rivers on the territory of the city of Belgrade, indicate that this form of tourism can contribute to the increase of income from tourism, but also to the greater recognition of the city of Belgrade on the international tourist market.

Graph 2 shows the distribution of tourists in the ports of the city of Belgrade on a monthly basis for the period from 2018 to 2019. By analyzing the presented data, it can be concluded that the largest number of tourists cruise the rivers of the city of Belgrade in the period from May to September. The largest number of tourists was realized in September 2019 and it amounted to 17,760 tourists, which is about 47% more than in the mentioned month of the previous year (Author's calculation according to the data of the City Administration of the City of Belgrade, 2018, 2019).

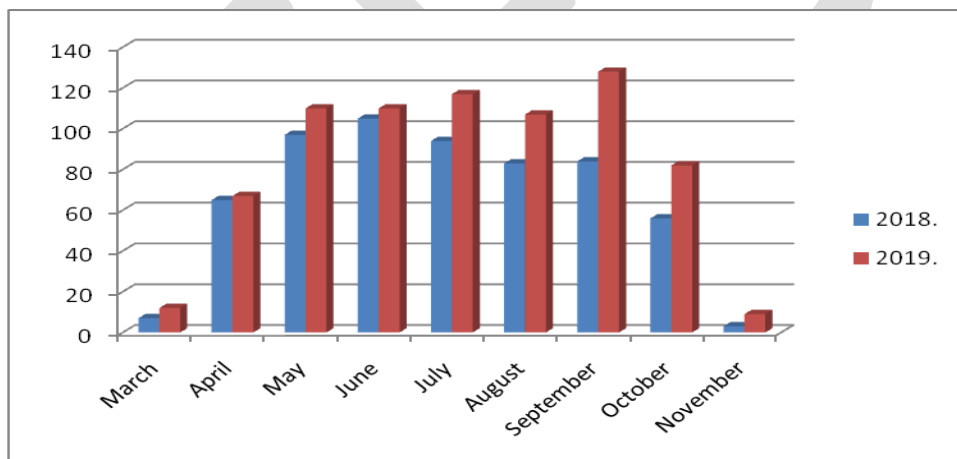
Graph 2. Turnover of foreign tourists in the port of Belgrade on a monthly basis, 2018-2019.



Source: City Administration of the City of Belgrade - Statistics Sector. "Tourism - Turnover of foreign tourists in ports", <https://zis.beograd.gov.rs/index.php/2013-12-03-10-50-11/2013-11-04-10-15-34/viewcategory/21-rhiv.html>, (accessed 15th August 2020.)

The largest number of ships docked in the port of Belgrade in the period from May to September, and it is noticeable that the largest number of ships docked during September, when that number was 128 ships, or about 52% more than in the mentioned month of 2018 (Author's calculation according to the data of the City Administration of the City of Belgrade, 2018, 2019).

Graph 3. Number of berths of ships in the port of Belgrade on a monthly basis, 2018-2019.



Source: City Administration of the City of Belgrade - Statistics Sector. "Tourism - Turnover of foreign tourists in ports", <https://zis.beograd.gov.rs/index.php/2013-12-03-10-50-11/2013-11-04-10-15-34/viewcategory/21-rhiv.html>, (accessed 15th August 2020.)

The comparative advantage of the capital of the Republic of Serbia is access to the Danube River, which is one of the most important European waterways. In addition, the existence of a large number of tourist attractions allows connecting the offer of nautical tourism with other forms of tourism in the

city of Belgrade, such as cultural, event, excursion tourism and other. However, the hydrographic potential is not enough for the nautical tourism development in the form of river cruises. The modernization of the nautical tourism infrastructure, the arrangement of the space around the waterways, as well as a larger number of catering and other facilities can greatly improve the development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade. In that way, the possibility of tourists staying in the city of Belgrade for a longer time and creating a desire to visit again would be created. Connecting with companies that organize cruises in Europe can contribute to the affirmation of the city of Belgrade as a destination for nautical tourism. Long-term successful and profitable development of nautical tourism requires continuous investment in infrastructure and adaptation to the requirements of tourists, as well as coordinated cooperation between the public and private sectors.

SWOT ANALYSIS AND GUIDELINES FOR IMPROVING THE OF NAUTICAL TOURISM OFFER OF CITY OF BELGRADE

SWOT analysis of the nautical tourism offer in the city of Belgrade, which is shown in Table 2, indicates the existence of significant resources for the development of this form of tourism, but also the weaknesses of its development so far. One of the key advantages in the development of nautical tourism is the long tradition in the development of tourism, which is one of the leading economic activities in this city. Such a tendency is related to the fact that the city of Belgrade has a developed tourist offer, which consists of a large number of tourist attractions and other facilities for tourists, as well as a variety of accommodation structures. The long tradition of tourism development and continuous improvement of the tourist offer have contributed to building the image of the city of Belgrade on the international tourist market. The most significant potential for the development of nautical tourism are the rivers Danube and Sava, on which a large number of ships cruise annually as part of organized international cruises, as well as organized sightseeing tours of the city. The rich cultural and historical heritage can also be included in the nautical tourism development through the organization of sightseeing of the city from the rivers. An aggravating circumstance for the nautical tourism development in the city of Belgrade is insufficient equipment, i.e. outdated nautical tourism infrastructure that does not have sufficient capacity. On the other hand, this form of tourism requires continuous investment and modernization of infrastructure in order to provide quality services to the nautical tourists. The future development of nautical tourism depends on the elimination of these weaknesses, as well as on the definition and implementation of appropriate marketing activities in order to promote and position Belgrade on the nautical tourism market.

Table 2. SWOT analysis of nautical tourism development in the city of Belgrade

Advantages	Weaknesses
<p>Significant hydrographic potential in the form of the Danube and Sava rivers</p> <p>A large number of river islands</p> <p>Natural attractions</p> <p>Quality and diverse accommodation offer</p> <p>Nearness of airport and important roads</p> <p>Fulfilment of climatic predispositions for the nautical tourism development</p> <p>Rich cultural and historical heritage</p> <p>Attractiveness of natural landscapes</p> <p>A large number of catering facilities</p> <p>A long tradition in the tourism development</p>	<p>Outdated nautical tourism infrastructure</p> <p>Lack of adequate capacity to accommodate large vessels</p> <p>Low level of stakeholder awareness of the importance of nautical tourism for the overall development of tourism in the city of Belgrade</p> <p>Lack of promotional activities to nautical tourism offer</p> <p>Lack of a clearly defined strategy for the nautical tourism development</p> <p>Lack of tourist facilities and facilities for providing services to nautical tourists in the immediate vicinity of waterways</p> <p>Insufficient information of tourists about the nautical tourism offer</p>
Opportunities	Threats
<p>The status of the city of Belgrade as a stable political, economic and cultural centre of the country.</p> <p>The built image of the city of Belgrade on the international tourist market</p> <p>Dominant participation of foreign tourists in the total tourist turnover of the city of Belgrade</p> <p>Development of complementary forms of tourism</p> <p>Activation of river islands in the nautical tourism development</p> <p>Organizing thematic tours with additional activities for tourists</p>	<p>Close proximity to developed nautical tourism destinations (Republic of Croatia and Montenegro)</p> <p>Lack of skilled labour</p> <p>Insufficiently developed awareness of the importance of nautical tourism for the overall development of tourism in the city of Belgrade</p> <p>Lack of a clearly defined strategy for the development of nautical tourism</p> <p>The impact of potential crises on the nautical tourism development (health crises, political instability, etc.)</p> <p>Insufficient number and capacity of</p>

Entry of the Republic of Serbia into the European Union, which would enable the entry of the city of Belgrade into new markets and the building of the image of a nautical tourism destination	marinas
Establishment of a destination management organization	Insufficient awareness of key stakeholders about the need for coordinated cooperation in the nautical tourism development
Involvement of tourist agencies in the organization of river cruises in the city of Belgrade	
Growing interest of tourists in river cruises	
Organization of events on river cruises in the city of Belgrade	

Source: Authors

The analysis of the potential for the development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade has enabled the identification of key opportunities for the future development of this form of tourism. Certainly, a significant chance for the nautical tourism development is contained in the existence of opportunities to connect the offer of this form of tourism with other forms of tourist activities. The chances for further development of nautical tourism are related to the existence of space for improved offers, through the organization of thematic tours accompanied by a tourist guide, as well as the organization of events on ships in order to animate tourists. From the economic and political aspect, the development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade is contributed by the fact that Belgrade is a stable destination and that it is the capital of a country that is in the process of joining the European Union.

The threats identified in the SWOT analysis can greatly hinder the nautical tourism development in the city of Belgrade. Aggravating circumstances are related to the lack of adequate infrastructure and to the inadequate workforce in terms of competencies and experience. On the other hand, the potential for the development of nautical tourism can be used in the first way if there is a clearly defined strategic approach to the development of this form of tourism. However, strategic documents have not yet been drafted to support projects in the development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade. In the immediate vicinity of our country and the city of Belgrade, there are countries that are recognizable on the tourist market as nautical tourism destinations (Republic of Croatia and Montenegro), which conditions the possibility that tourists will opt for destinations with already developed nautical tourism offer. Based on the analysis of the potential of the city of Belgrade for the nautical tourism development, guidelines have been defined, which could improve the offer of this form of tourism:

- Modernization of nautical tourism infrastructure in the form of construction of new docks and marinas as well as improvement of existing facilities for receiving passengers and ships.
- Raising the awareness of the local community about the importance of the nautical tourism development for the entire economy of the city of Belgrade.

- Provision of funds from EU funds for capital investments in nautical tourism infrastructure.
- Organization of a number of thematic river cruises in the city of Belgrade.
- Research of the nautical tourism market in order to adapt the existing offer to the development trends of this form of tourism as well as the needs and preferences of tourists.
- Aligning the offer of nautical tourism with the needs and preferences of tourists in order to provide greater value in relation to the price of travel.
- Monitoring the model of nautical tourism development of the main competitors and implementation of examples of good practice in order to increase the visibility of the city of Belgrade in the nautical tourism market.
- Coordinated cooperation between the public and private sectors in order to improve the offer of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade.
- Involvement of the city in European and international associations of nautical tourism.

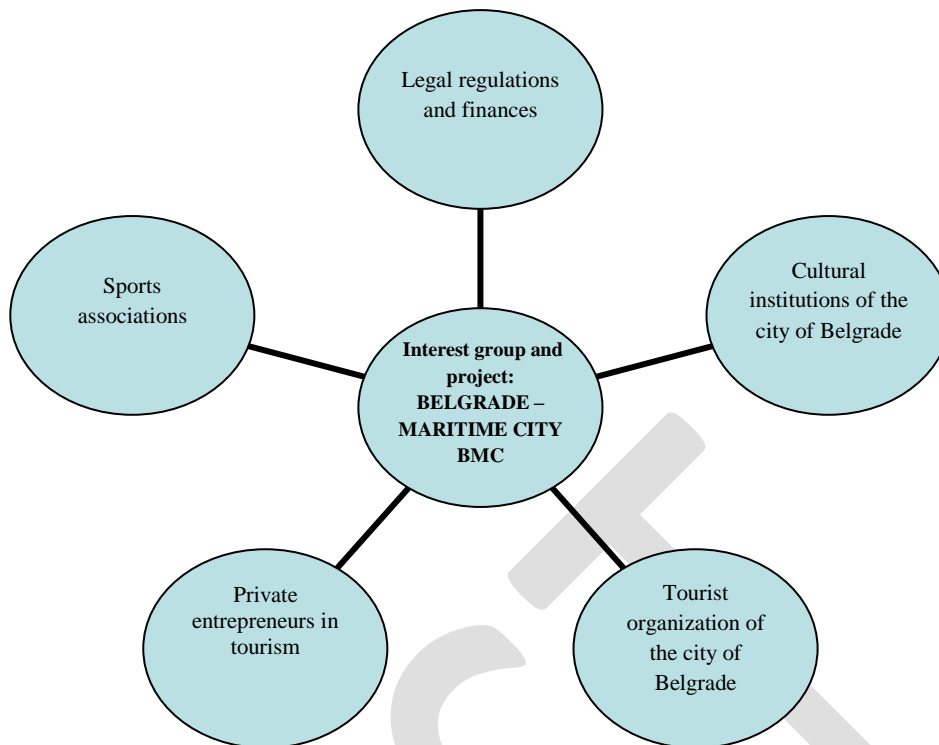
Based on the prepared SWOT analysis, the authors suggest the BELGRADE MARITIME CITY MODEL. Based on the previously stated advantages and opportunities which the city of Belgrade, being a global metropolis, offers, the authors have prepared a development model for tourist positioning of the city of Belgrade as an important centre for nautical tourism of this part of Europe. Rich history of the city, a favourable geographical location, gastronomic peculiarities and the history provide the possibility to create a multi-layered tourist product of the city, especially if the project Belgrade Waterfront is realized, by which the city would finalize the new attractive offer and, therefore, improve its position on the competitive tourist market. The model is based on realizing a synergy of all shares related to the tourism development of the city of Belgrade, with the aim of maximizing all previously determined advantages.

Model:

BELGRADE

MARITIME

CITY-



BMC

The project presents a basic platform for the creation of a tourist offer of the city based on its continuous connection to water, as well as its recognizable brand. That is the basic brand to which other brands would connect to in the future, making an umbrella of a unique set of tourists offer. In order to be possible, clear standards of a quality service need to be created and designed, for which the Maritime city shareholder would be in charge. For the stated to be possible, the Government of the Republic of Serbia should additionally encourage the development of nautical tourism, through laws and by-laws, in the city of Belgrade, through tax relief, grants for entrepreneurs investing in the development of the tourist offer of nautical tourism, with an emphasis on those who base their offer on preserving the identity of the nation and the traditional way of living, with the aim of giving more significance to the preservation of the landscape features of the Danube river. The Government may form a team for the development of nautical tourism at the central tourist community, whereby the establishment of an office for funding the project BELGRADE MARITIME CITY is suggested, in order to allow the inflow of knowledge into „one spot“ and, therefore, enable high quality creation of comprehensive projects to be funded from the budget, but also from the pre-accession EU funds.

Tourism and sports experts would have an important role in the project, as well as scientific institutions and culture institution, which would form mutual interest headquarters, which would enable the creation of a unique tourist product of Belgrade, through exchange of ideas and application of international experiences, which includes, except by the classic tourist offer characteristic for this type of tourism, a specific tourist offer which guarantees sustainable development, the preservation of traditions and the peculiarity of Belgrade on the tourist market. The aim of the association is to create a recognizable brand of maritime tourist offer of the city, to encourage involvement in the project of

all shareholders in way to encourage the strengthening of advantages of the city and to minimize the deficiencies in its current tourist offer and, therefore, to enable the creation of new jobs and new tourism products. In addition to the aforementioned, it is necessary to establish constant monitoring of project success, and to keep improving it through back connections.

CONCLUSION

The city of Belgrade has significant potential for the development of nautical tourism. Although this form of tourism is one of the strategic priorities in the development of tourism in the city of Belgrade, nautical tourism is still not developed sufficiently to contribute to the competitive position of this destination on the tourism market. The Danube River is the most important waterway that flows through the territory of the city of Belgrade. In addition to the Danube River, the Sava River as well as the river islands with an extremely preserved and ecologically clean environment can be included in the development of nautical tourism. The development of nautical tourism in the form of cruising the Danube and Sava rivers is a tourist attraction for tourists staying in the city of Belgrade, but also for tourists on international tourist cruises. Despite the existence of significant potential for the development of nautical tourism and connecting this form of tourism with other tourist facilities in the city of Belgrade, a strategic approach is needed in defining the future development of this form of tourism. Primarily, significant investments are needed in the modernization of nautical tourism infrastructure (marinas, ports, etc.), as well as the construction and equipping of catering and other facilities in the immediate vicinity of waterways. Further development of nautical tourism in the city of Belgrade should be directed towards adapting the offer to the needs and preferences of nautical tourists in order to provide them with an authentic experience as well as a certain value for the money they set aside for cruises. By applying the proposed project, Belgrade Maritime City (BMC), the authors are convinced that the same can be achieved in a relatively short time with the realization of significant competitive advantages of the city of Belgrade and the Republic of Serbia as a whole.

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