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Role of rural tourism in sustainable development of Lower Danube

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ABSTRACT

Sustainable development of the tourist destinations implies the ability of the tourist destinations to achieve competitiveness in the tourism market and at the same time manages to maintain the quality of their social, cultural and natural resources. Sustainable development of tourism means tourism development that meets the needs of tourist destinations, tourists and all stakeholders in the tourism industry, while preserving and increasing the potential of tourism resources. The subject of this paper is sustainable development of a tourist destination in the example of the Lower Danube. Lower Danube is certainly one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Serbia. This area offers a wide range of options for recreational activities, for the education about the beginnings of the past way of life, such as prehistoric cultures or historical architectural buildings in the picturesque, but also harsh environment. Keeping pace with the new trends of development, it is necessary to adjust and improve the strategic way of existing forms of tourist offer in the Lower Danube, and develop new products tailored to the needs of modern tourist demand.

Keywords: rural tourism, sustainable development, tourism, Lower Danube, tourist destination.

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INTRODUCTION

The subject and the importance of research

Tourist destination can be defined as a location that has a collection of attractions and adequate tourism services and facilities that tourist groups or individual tourists choose to visit or that the offer promotes, ie. as an area with a variety of natural features and attractions that attract visitors - tourists and visitors.

The term of sustainability of a tourist destination means the ability of a tourist destination to be capable, at the same time to achieve competitiveness in the tourism market, and manages to maintain the quality of their social, cultural and natural resources. Sustainable development of tourism means tourism development that meets the requirements of tourist destinations, tourists as well as, all stakeholders in the tourism industry, while preserving and increasing the potential of tourism resources, and at the same time not compromising the possibility for future generations to acquire their own needs

Sustainable tourism development should provide high level of tourist satisfaction, it should also provide the tourists with a meaningful experience, expanding their awareness of the issues of sustainability and improving the practice of sustainable tourism among the tourists.

To become sustainable tourism should be given to multiple assessments and integrated planning. With the proper marketing of tourism products, investment programs, management and marketing innovation in tourism products and development programs, each region can become a tourist destination.

The subject of this paper is sustainable development of tourist destinations in the case of the Lower Danube. Tourist destination Lower Danube administratively includes the territory of five municipalities of Eastern Serbia: Negotin, Kladovo, Majdanpek, Golubac and Veliko Gradiste. Lower Danube is certainly one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Serbia. This area offers a wide range of options for recreational

activities, for education about the beginnings of the past way of life, such as prehistoric cultures or historical architectural buildings in the picturesque, but the harsh environment.

Research goals

The aim of this study is twofold, namely:

- The scientific goal of the research is scientific and theoretical description of sustainable tourism as a new concept of tourism, with a focus on sustainable tourism destinations. It also aims to explore, describe, analyze and looks at the existence and the possibility of sustainable tourism in the area of the Lower Danube
- The social aim of the research is that the work is of practical use, ie. To draw attention to the issue of sustainable tourism in the tourist destination of Lower Danube.

The hypothesis of the research

The main hypothesis of this paper is: The Lower Danube region has great potential for sustainable tourism that is not used.

Other hypotheses are:

- The tourist destination of Lower Danube in Serbia has not sufficiently used the real possibilities and potentials.
- The main competitive advantage of this destination is in the exceptional cultural and natural values.
- To make tourism become sustainable the Lower Danube must dedicate more attention to multiple assessments and integrated planning, with proper marking of tourism products, investment programs, management and marketing innovation in tourism products and development programs.

Methods of Research

Taking into account the specificities of the studied subjects of research, different methods have been used so that the basic methodological requirements are satisfied - objectivity, reliability, generality and systematic.

Study consists of scientific and theoretical knowledge, relevant literature as well as contemporary business practices by using methods as: *induction, deduction, analysis, synthesis, abstraction, generalization, complex observation and content analysis*.

The work structure

The paper is composed from several components. The first part of the paper will present the concept and assumptions of rural tourism and its economic effects. The second part will be dedicated to the current situation and development of rural tourism in Serbia. The third part will deal with the strategy and priorities for development of rural tourism, with a focus on positioning this type of tourism in the directions of future development. In the fourth part of the paper will generally explain the concept and characteristics of tourist destinations and sustainable tourism. The fifth part will be dedicated to tourism destination of Lower Danube, its condition and level of development. The final part will discuss the sustainable development of the tourist destination Lower Danube.

1. TERM AND ASSUMPTIONS OF RURAL TOURISM

1.1. Defining rural tourism

We can define Rural tourism as the tourism that provides the visitor a "rural environment", and thus it provides a combination of experiences from the the natural beauty, gastronomy, culture, local folklore to the people, strictly of rural character (UNDP, 2011, p. 12). The essence of rural tourism is the absolute identification of the visitors to the authentic and original experience. Rural tourism in that way, transfers the visitors back to the nature and basic things such as roots, origin and simplicity.

Rural tourism includes a wide range of activities and services that are organized by the local domestic population. It is based upon the principles of sustainability and offering elements characteristic of the rural environment but also represents the traditional values of hospitality and local residents. What makes rural tourism seems so authentic is the contact with nature and personal human touch with the local population. Accommodation in rural tourism is a combination of different variations of tourism that show the rural life, culture art, and heritage in such areas. World trends show that rural tourism is becoming wider concept and that the needs and expectations of domestic and foreign tourists are becoming more sophisticated. (UNWTO, 2010).

In that way, rural tourism represents a combination of wide range aspects of experience, sharing and presenting rural life. Rural experience can be defined in terms of activities in rural areas and rural accommodation experience. The combination of the above experiences is the substruction of rural tourism (UNDP, 2011, p. 12).

Rural tourism includes a number of forms: eco-tourism, sports and recreation, adventure, educational, cultural, culinary, agrotourism, local history, health, religious, hunting, fishing, wine and others. (Pasinović M., 2006, p. 37).

Major features of rural tourism are the following: (Lazić L., 2007, p. 19):

- develops in uninhabited or sparsely populated areas, functionally directed to rural: contact with nature, open space;
- provides insight into the traditional way of life and economy;
- enables the participation in various activities: introduction to the tradition and way of life of the local population through personal contact with the population or through "traditional" societies;
- Is of traditional character, grows organically and slowly, above all is associated with families that live there, and is in most cases controlled locally it also develops in the direction of the long-term well-being of local communities of certain regions;
- Makes a good part in the percentage that is provided by tourism revenue and in such benefits the community.

Rural areas are the main source for the development of rural tourism that is highlighted in the Encyclopedia of Tourism (WTO, 2006). Rural tourism is appealing to the people from towns and cities, because it allows you to meet the need for peace and provides them the space for outdoors sport recreation.

Also, rural tourism includes panoramic rides, visits to nature parks and national parks, stay in rural households adapted to the needs of tourist as well as the tour of the rest of heritage in rural areas.

The publication of the World Tourism Organization Rural Tourism in Europe - Experiences, Perspectives and Development (WTO, 2004) the term,, rural tourism "is utilized in situations where the traditional culture represents the main component of the tourism product that is offered.

The specificity of rural tourism is in the pursuit of the visitor being able to experience a personal contact with local people and participate in various activities related to the tradition and lifestyle of the local population, which contributes to a sense of physical and human environment in rural areas.

In order to define rural tourism in relation to other forms of tourism, it is necessary to observe it in relation to the environment. Population density and size of settlements,

land use and economic activity, and the traditionalism of social structure are the three basic factors that determine the area of rural and affecting that tourism in these areas is considered rural tourism (J. Popescu, 2016).

A small inhabitants density and relatively small size of the village define this type of area, where the specific size of the settlement varies across regions and countries. For direct definition of rural areas (regardless of the size and scale of the village population density) are important characteristics that make rural - the experience of the area by the potential tourists and comparison of that space with the environment in which he lives (usually urban). Thus, a rural area with a relatively small size of the settlement and low population density represents a more pronounced attraction.

A style of doing business that relies on a non-industrial land use, for example agriculture, forestry and the use of raw materials is characteristic of rural areas. The level of economic development also affects the attractiveness of these areas for potential tourists. Underdeveloped, rural areas, which are based on traditional agricultural production, small-scale, are more attractive for tourists, because, among other things, they seek to diversify development.

Potential tourists, who mostly originate from urban areas, determine the dimension of rural character of a specific area primarily by the given level of traditionalism and general social values of the social structures that no longer exist in urban centers. Rural areas are characterized by a stronger sense of community, local, non-cosmopolitan cultures and way of life that is quieter, slower, less materialistic and less complex than in urban areas. The importance of these characteristics of rural areas confirms the growing interest of modern tourists for Cultural Heritage (J. Popescu, 2016).

Mentioned characteristics cannot be considered absolute for all rural areas, since they assume a large number of varieties between predominantly rural and urban areas completely. With this in mind, we determine the direction of development of rural tourism; the primary goal should be the compliance with the overall environment, engaging local people in tourism development and respect for all kinds of restrictions in rural areas (cultural, physical, etc.).

1.2. Assumptions for development of rural tourism

There are several prerequisites for the development of rural tourism.

The attractiveness of the location - the most important elements that indicate the attractiveness of the area as clean air, clean water, healthy air, preserved ambience, natural and cultural heritage.

Also important is the freedom of movement in nature with the aim of recreation, sightseeing attractions and entertainment. Waters and mountains are also an important element of the attractiveness of the area. Rivers and lakes, as well as mountain areas, enable walking, fishing, hiking, biking and other activities. The place is even more attractive if there are castles, churches, museums and so on. By organizing different events can influence positively the attractiveness of rural areas. Getting to know the old crafts could also be interesting for tourists. Tourist's surrounded by the untouched nature and rural architecture, do not have particular requirements in terms of comfort (Todorovic M., Štetić S., 2009, p. 144).

Structure of rural areas and tourist facility - With the arrangement of rural areas, the details must be taken care of, in terms of providing adequate access, plenty of space for parking, space and facilities for children to play and so on. It is certainly preferable for a rural tourist area to include other activities such as seats in the nature in the open, meadows for resting, places for grill, benches with a table under a tree, etc. The maintenance of order is also important, electrical illumination and cleanliness.

The attractiveness of the offer in rural tourism area - In addition to the overnight stay, food and drinks, purchase of agricultural products, souvenirs and their combinations tourists seek other services as well. Tourists are also looking for the possibility of involvement in the affairs in nature, such as the use of properties for sports and other activities. Tourists must be enabled better contact with nature, housekeeping must be represented with local specialties, and every step must be made as to feel the atmosphere of rural areas.

The legal basis of rural tourism business - Providing catering services in the rural tourist household is governed on a legal basis. Regulations governing the tourism and catering industry in Serbia are (SeConS, 2011, p. 54):

- Law on Tourism of the Republic of Serbia,
- Rules on minimum technical and sanitary-hygienic conditions for the provision of catering services in local handicrafts and rural tourism household,
- Ordinance on standards for categorization of hospitality facilities for accommodation,
- Ordinance on the form, content and manner of keeping records of guests in the domestic industry,
- Rules on records of guests in rural tourism household.

Other prerequisites for the development of rural tourism - addition to the above conditions for the development of rural tourism, it is necessary to provide additional assumptions such as: organizational, spatial, development, infrastructure, documentation, educational, financial, tax and so on.

1.3. Characteristics of tourism demand of rural tourism

Even though some estimates point out that approximately 75% of world tourism demand is directed to areas of nature and such values, it is impossible to accurately determine how much of this part is directed towards rural areas. However, if we take into consideration the dominant requirements regarding the demand, its particular motif and selectivity, we can come to a conclusion that a significant portion is directed to this type of areas, especially to the destinations where, such an area is has an enviable status from, from the offer in whole.

The essential features of the modern tourist demand, significant for the consecution of tourism in areas that can be classified as rural are: (Todorović, M., Štetić, S., 2009, pp. 47-48):

- Increasing demands for environmental quality and health-recreational function;
- Increasing the number of tourists who advocate the return of man to nature and its authentic values;
- Popularization of the so called. "Green consumer", characterized by the environmental motivations in the market of goods and services, and therefore on the tourist market;
- Expansion for the demand of the "green" and "white" destinations (protected natural-urbanized and rural areas as well as villages that are both important in cultural sense and have historical value);
- The need for a new tourist offer, which includes pronounced contrast between the city-village, plain-mountains;
- Increasing the request for rural and agro-tourism, that includes quarters in various types of facilities (hotels with small capacity, motels, inns, homes...);
- Requirements for clean and free space suitable for movement, recreation and other leisure activities;
- Increased interest for leisure and entertainment, cultural and religious characteristics, environmental values (healthy environment and food), as well as many other "unique" content based on the specific characteristics of certain destinations;
- increasing the representation of family and individual movement, adequate the mode of reception in households in such places;
- An increase in demand of our population for areas of that type, due to the low living standard of the majority population and the general economic situation.
- The assessment of the number of tourists, based mainly on the „UNWTO”, implies positive impact on the tourism market fully, given the dominant position of the demand in relation to the tourism offer. On that basis, as well as the prevailing tendency of the tourism demand, particularly in the „Old Continent“, can be singled out (UNWTO, 2012);
- Refreshment through the contrast (tourist traveling from village to city, mountain-plain, the mainland-island etc.);
- Pursuit of enriching experiences related to cultural and historical heritage
- Demand for places, experiences and events that have specific integrity, identity and diversity;

- "Green" movement or tourism, also called alternative, responsible, "soft", "good" or "new" tourism, that involves the demand for the tourist destinations that offer the untouched nature (clean water, unpolluted air, healthy food), ie . Tourism, which is not massive but more "friendly" oriented towards the natural environment) - refers also to the tourism in the countryside and in the cities and on the coast;
- "blue" or the nautical movement - a demand which involves cruising the sea with the use of systems such as marinas, harbors and anchorages);
- demand for rural and agrotourism - refers to having residence in different types of accommodation that are not exclusively in rural households, as well as engagement in various leisure activities (sports, arts, adventure, handicrafts, etc.);
- demand for health, mental and spiritual renewal, as well as the renewal of identity which includes new forms of health care, and spa tourism (leisure activities, child)
- Eco-tourism (alternative or responsible tourism) is a significant form of tourism, which originated from the synchronized effect of the "green", health, and tourism related to the natural and cultural environment, whose, also important segment is the rural tourism.

Rural tourism according to the research (UNWTO, 2012) is on the rise as much as three times faster than the conventional, mass tourism, it is predicted, that its share of the market will be higher than 20% in the next 20 years. According to market research from the UK, almost 25% of tourists from the continent tend to reside in rural environment. In addition to general factors (leisure time, relationship to nature as well as the tourist attractions), a substantial effect on this type of tourist demand, is the social position (volume of income, education, etc.), Age, sex, location of residence, ownership of the car and others. (UNWTO, 2012).

Based on survey results, it is evident that the tendency towards participation in tourist movements towards the village is built up mostly among younger, better educated people, who are owners of vehicles and live surrounded by nature. In studies of shorter trips of the Europe's population in the mid-nineties of the twentieth century led to the following results (Plavša J., 2007, p. 52): 19% of tourists used the round trips,

10% went on trips to the mountains outside the ski season, a 9 % of traveled to rural areas for a break and recreation. It shows outstanding directivity of the continents people to these places. Particularly interesting study refers to the residence and recreation of the tourists. According to the research in the UK, domestic tourists who visited rural areas were engaged in mostly in activities such as hiking, walking, cycling, fishing, horseback riding and a special adventure tours.

- Disagreements in identification and definition of the data among multiple nations (one country could count just nature and farms, on the other hand, another one can and involve many other economic activities outside urban areas in rural tourism);
- Rural tourism and recreation enthusiasts often decide just for one day visit (Sightseer) and do not use the possibility of staying the night, making it impossible to determine their extent at least in the approximate extent;
 - Large separatinoand fragmentation (tens of thousands of public initiatives and entrepreneurs participate, but only some of them have been marked by the regional as well as local institutions).
- The complexity of the tourism offer is conditioned by the complexity and heterogeneity of tourism demand which is directed towards rural areas. Seen from a marketing point of view, the process of forming an offer is creating the tourism product. One of the characteristic features of rural tourism is the existence of a large number of participants in the tourist industry, and the formation of the tourism product, with the greatest incidence of small organizations in the private sector or self-employed (J. Popescu, 2016).

1.4. The economic effects of rural tourism

Numerous positive economic and non-economic effects may arise from tourism development in rural areas, in other words rural tourism. The development of rural tourism could achieve a number of economic and non-economic effects, both on the development of farm households, as well as the development of the whole community. These effects include the development of underdeveloped areas, increasing in the number of household members, the exercise of invisible exports, selling domestic products, the preservation of customs and the return of old crafts,

creating opportunities for the return of the population in rural areas, increase revenue from tourism and others. (Todorovic M., Štetić S., 2009).

The expectation that tourism will contribute to the faster development and the revival of rural areas in Serbia is based primarily on the possible economic effects from the development of this business activity. As the most important effects; we can extract the growth in employment and income of the population. Tourism has direct effects on the participants that provide the offer, by selling services directly to the tourists. In the case of rural tourism those are rural tourist households. Tourism development provides an opportunity for rural households, to employ with a minimum of investment, the members of their households and provide extra income. In addition, tourism provides the ability for rural tourist household to also insure income, from sales of products from own production (Bošković T., 2012, p. 29).

The uprising of tourism, in addition to being able to contribute to the economic strengthening of rural population, contributes to strengthening the local and regional economy, as well as the entire economy of the country. The evolution in particular encourages the growth of agricultural activities in such places, but also positively affects nearly all economic and non-economic business activity in the country.

Rural tourism relies primarily on domestic demand from the urban areas, so that its more intense development would contribute to the overflow of income from economically more developed urban regions into underdeveloped rural areas. In this way, tourism would contribute to faster economic development of rural areas, which would lead to reducing the existing gap in the development of rural and urban areas of Serbia (Bošković T., 2012, p. 33).

Three factors are crucial for the growth of this form of tourism: level of income provided by household on the basis of agricultural production, the existence of tourism resources and accessibility by emitting tourist regions. A significant advantage in developing this type of tourism is expressed in the provision of income from tourism in rural areas with minimal investment by farmers themselves, as well as in

promoting economic development in peripheral areas, based on the interdependence between tourism and agriculture (J. Popescu, 2016).

2. SITUATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM IN SERBIA

2.1. Characteristics of rural areas in Serbia

According to the data, from the „Strategy Plan for Rural Development 2009-2013”, the rural areas of our country, include as much as 70-85% of Serbia's territory and are inhabited by 43-55% of the total population, 1,365,000 households. To enable a comparison with the EU statistics, according to OECD criteria, rural areas in Serbia are defined as municipalities with a population density below 150 inhabitants per km². By this criterion, from the 165 municipalities, 129 are characterized as rural, but in rural areas there are 3,904 settlements (Bošković T., 2012, p. 32). Small population density is one of the important characteristics of these areas. The population density in rural areas of Serbia is 63 inhabitants per km², which is less than the national average of 97 inhabitants per km², and substantially less than in urban areas (289 inhabitants per km²) (Milošević Đ. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 38).

The natural features of the rural areas are assessed as very favorable. This area is characterized by a high concentration of Serbia's natural resources, agricultural land, forests, water, etc., with preserved ecosystems and biodiversity. Also, one of the advantages of this area is represented in its cultural resources, and preserved traditions of the peoples who live in this area. Natural and cultural resources, alongside the human resources are the most important elements of the rural areas of Serbia.

Despite the opportunities that are offered by the rich and varied resources, in the development of the rural areas we have identified numerous problems and limitations. Rural areas, compared to urban, show a much lower GDP per capita, which is suggestive of their backwardness in economic development. By analyzing the economic structure of these areas, we have been led to the result that indicates a high dependence on the rural economy from agriculture. The rural population of Serbia has a high percentage of employment in this very sector of agriculture. At the same time, this points to the problem of low diversified activities and income of the population

living in rural areas. The situation is further aggravated by the fact that the productivity and the intensity of Serbian agriculture is significantly below the European average. The big problem in rural areas is the high unemployment rate.

All of these economic circumstances have led to the depopulation and abandonment of such areas by the population, primarily young and educated population. In this case it is the migration from rural to urban areas, or from the relation, village - city, where young people go to urban areas, cities, while we have mostly the elderly people, who remain in rural areas, taking care of the households. As a result of such developments, in rural areas we can record unfavorable age and educational structure of the population. Data of the National Rural Development Program 2011-2013 and the Plan of Strategy for Rural Development 2009-2013 indicate the following information. Rural areas in Serbia recorded a rate of aging of 1.08%, as compared to urban areas (1.02%), but also in relation to the whole of Serbia (1.05%). Also, in rural areas we have recorded the percentage of the population without education of 28.19%, which is as twice as high, as the one in the urban population (14.01%). Furthermore, only 6.96% of the rural population has higher education, while the percentage of the urban population is significantly higher and amounts to 16.05% (Milošević Đ. S., Milovanović J., 2012, p. 42).

Poor age and educational structure of the population is a direct negative impact on the quality of human resources. Unfavorable demographic trends significantly hinder economic development of rural areas, because human resources are a key factor in this process.

As a result of all these negative phenomena in the long term, today, the rural areas of Serbian are characterized by a great poverty, which is contrary to their resource potential. Therefore, recently there have been attempts to implement some of the new models of economic revival of rural areas, such as the diversification of economic activities. To this end, the tourism, due to its numerous advantages, has been singled out as one of the major activities which is encouraged by the national policy for rural development. The experiences of some European countries confirm that the development of such models can be very successful and that tourism can contribute to

economic renewal and strengthening of underdeveloped rural areas (Bošković T., 2012, p. 34).

Financing rural development in Serbia in recent years has been focused on increasing the competitiveness of agriculture, land consolidation, improving the market orientation and development of rural infrastructure. More and more attention is paid to the diversification of the rural economy, towards the non-agricultural activities.. A key catalyst that may accelerate the development of the rural economy by starting new business initiatives and the realization of synergies between the existing agricultural and rural (UNDP, 2011, p. 14).

2.2. Resources as a basis for the development of Serbias rural tourism

Serbia has a large number of natural resources. They are extremely attractive and have great potential for growth. These resources include protected natural heritage sites, national parks, parks and natural areas, distinctive features, rivers and gorges, hot springs, etc. Serbia has at its disposal untouched natural resources, mountainous areas with potential for winter tourism, plains and hill areas for year-round tourist season. It also offers water resources, rivers and lakes. All natural resources are well preserved and have a great potential to attract tourists (Jovičić D., 2000, p. 212).

Serbia has at its disposal a large variety of attractive cultural resources, has a rich cultural heritage, with seven World Heritage sites and several nominated location. All cultural resources are extremely attractive and important for the development of rural tourism.

Serbia is also organizing a number of different cultural manifestation and festivals that are becoming more numerous and more attractive, both on the local and on the national and international level. Wine and spirits are high quality products and represent a significant content of Serbian gastronomy. The great advantage of Serbia is in its intangible resources, such as the hospitality that represents a valuable resource.

2.3. Situation in rural tourism of Serbia

Rural tourism is based on the principles of sustainability and includes a range of services and activities that the population in rural areas is organizing from the contents that are typical to these rural areas. Rural tourism, although solidly developed in some parts of Central Serbia, Western Serbia and Vojvodina, is still under-recognized and under-developed tourist product of Serbia (I. Rosić, 2001, p. 54).

Based on the research of local tourist organizations in Serbia, rural tourism has more than 32,000 registered and unregistered beds in rural areas, of which only 10,000 in rural settlements. In the Serbian economy, this form of tourism directly accounts for 10.4 billion dinars, which represents 16% of total GDP in the tourism sector in Serbia in 2010. The average daily consumption in this year is lower than in other countries, and amounts to 1,900 dinars per person of tourist consumption (not including the cost of transport and accommodation). Rural tourism has achieved 27% of the total number of overnight stays and 2.7 million overnight stays in Serbia in 2010. In rural areas there are large seasonal variations and the low rate of occupancy of accommodation facilities out of season. The average hotel occupancy rate in rural areas is 4%, and in other accommodation facilities 21% (Milošević Đ. S., Milovanović J., 2012, p. 47).

Table 1. Situation and forecasts of rural tourism in Serbia

source / forecasted period			base year	Year 3	2015	2020	CAGR
LTO / UNWTO (2009)	Beds	General	4,439	4,577	4,643	4,746	0.7%
		Rural	1,157	1,239	1,366	1,780	4.4%
		In total	5,596	5,816	6,009	6,526	1.6%
	Availability (percent)	General	16%	21%	23%	30%	
		Rural	5%	10%	13%	20%	
	Overnight stay	General	266,501	342,732	393,567	519,729	6.9%
		Rural	21,118	42,965	62,326	129,932	19.9%
		In total	287,619	385,697	455,892	649,661	8.5%
	The multiplier effect of rural tourism		1	1	1.1	1.6	
	Direct economic impact (in billions of RSD)		0.6	0.9	1.2	2.3	14.1%

Source: UNDP, *Master plan for sustainable development of rural tourism in Serbia*, Madrid - Belgrade, 2011, p. 47

Explanation of the table (translation of the first row:source / forecasted period, the base year, Year 3. Translation of the second row, from the green area to the light green, and from the above to down: bearings, general, rural, total. Translation of the third row:occupancy (percent), general, rural. Translation of the fourth row: general, rural, total. Translataion of the fifth and sixet row: a multiplicative effect of rural tourism, direct economic impact (billions RSD))

In addition to the promotion of rural tourism, we must improve the existing offer of accommodation and increase the number of beds in line with the market demand, as to fill the use of the capacity that exists. A large part of the target population of rural tourism belongs to different groups of the population: hikers, bikers, kids, teams from companies and similar... One of the requirements of these tourists is that when accommodated, they are not separated.To meet this requirement, in particular, the rural place must be able to accommodate 45-50 people (Arsenov S., 2000, p. 99). If this requirement is impossible to fulfill, it is difficult to keep the tourists in this place by any activity, not even with a special offer for fun and food. For this reason, the offers for accommodation needs substantial changes by introducing the label of quality accommodation and offered services (Milošević Đ. S., Milovanović J., 2012, p. 47).

2.4. The disadvantages and limitations of rural tourist areas in Serbia

The analysis of rural tourism in Serbia, one can observe a number of weaknesses and limitations.

Small and underutilized accommodation facilities - Most households usually do not meet the necessary capacity for accommodation, especially for the acceptance of whole groups of tourists. This structure limits significant the commercialization in rural tourism, which directly causes a small volume of total revenues.Capacity utilization in the rural areas is down to the minimal and ranges from 1% to 5%, which is an extremely low value (SeConS, 2011, p. 4).

Mediocre accommodation facilities - Small availability of apartments and other higher categories of accommodation in relation to the offer of rooms, testifies to the relatively low quality of accommodation services, which results in a low cost, and therefore a low total income. This situation represents a structural problem, which prevents a significant increase in the volume of business.

Unused existing capacity - The capacities of the dining rooms that belong to the households providing food, are very little utilized, although there are solid capacities, so there is not a significant revenue on this basis.

Incomplete offer of basic services - Many rural households do not offer food service for guests staying with them and do not earn income on that basis. Therefore, those household will not be chosen for visits from a significant percentage of guests, how have gastronomy as an important motive for the break.

Economics of small-scale and low price - Prices of accommodation and food services in rural areas are low in general at the regional level and in relation to other types of accommodation. Price accommodation tends to be about nine euros, although in some cases the offer is significantly cheaper. The average price of bed and breakfast is about ten euros and there are no significant fluctuations in the fields. The average price of half-board is about fourteen euros, while the average price of full panison is about sixteen euro (SeConS, 2011, p. 5).

Under development of additional services - A very small percentage of households has any additional form of services, whether sports and recreation, culture, craft, trade, etc. Poor diversification of services is highly expressed and talks about a very low development of service of all households.

Small investment capacity - A small percentage of households that have invested in accommodation, even a small amount of investment shows that there is no need for a bigger expanding. In addition to investing in accommodation, a much higher percentage of households have invested in additional events. A small number of households participate in the organization of some events and their financing. Small funds intended for investment, testify to the low level of development of this type of

offer in rural tourism and a lack of awareness of the need for funding in this direction. This structure of investment shows a low investment capacity of rural households, but also a slow trend of development of rural tourism.

Inadequate promotion - As the case is with other activities, the promotion of rural tourism is very limited and underdeveloped, as well as commercial channels. The Internet as a global network is increasingly used because of their advantages. There is significant percentage of guests who arrive via the local tourist organization. This fact points to the small capacity of households for commercial propaganda, but also it overestimates the importance of tourism organizations, because the achieved tourist traffic in rural tourism is negligible.. The importance of local tourist associations for the promotion of rural tourism is still insignificant, but it is expected that in perspective, tourism associations will have a much greater involvement in the promotion of rural tourism.

Inadequate workforce - Structure of households engaged in rural tourism is largely inadequate. Most of the household population is composed of pensioners, then the employed, and after them the unemployed are heads of the households. Individual farmers are in fourth place, which is a very small share, having in mind that, when it comes to rural tourism, it is largely based on agriculture (SeConS, 2011, p. 5).

The share of non-active is about the half of all households, which indicates a very bad economic situation of these households. A small share of agricultural households, presents a large limiting factor for the development, as rural tourism relies heavily on agriculture and rural households themselves represent the primary tourist value of this type of tourism.

The educational structure varies from region to region. The region with the most unfavorable educational structure is the Central Serbia. The most common are rural residents with high school education. In addition to this structure of education, the majority of the members from the households have a few extra skills that can be used for further commercialization. Involvement of human resources in rural tourism is small.

2.5. SWOT analysis of rural areas in Serbia

Based on the SWOT analysis, it can be seen that the disadvantages of rural areas are more dominant and more numerous, and in addition are more intense in the relation to the advantages of these areas. Rural areas in Serbia in the future will have to expect, almost an equally large number of opportunities, but also threats from the environment, which they will have to face (L. Ristić, 2013, p. 231).

Table 2. SWOT analysis of the rural areas of the Republic of Serbia

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Geographical position • Natural Resources and preserved rural landscapes • Biodiversity • Forests, rivers, lakes and thermal springs • Cultural and historical heritage • Tradition, gastronomy and hospitality of the population 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of financial resources • Inadequate infrastructure • The migration of population from rural to urban areas or abroad • Inadequate age and educational structure of the population • The high unemployment rate • Rural poverty and social exclusion • Undiversified and undeveloped rural economy • Lack of business integration • Inadequate volume and / or quality of production • Inadequate waste management
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sustainable use of resources • Economic diversification • Development of small and medium Enterprises • Integration in Agribusiness • The development of rural tourism • The production and use of renewable energies • Organic and traditional and indigenous food products with protected designation of origin • Export • Cross-border cooperation projects • EU funds and other funds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Competition in the domestic and international markets and global brands • Low purchasing power of the local population • Changes in consumer spending and consumption trends • Socio-economic and / or political instability • Climate changes • Irrational use of natural resources • International quality standards • Lack of skilled labor • Insufficient development of infrastructure • Insufficient financial resources available

Source: L. Ristic, *Strategic management of sustainable rural development in the Republic of Serbia*, *Economic Horizons*, Vol XV, Issue 3, 2013, p. 233

In addition, some effects of the environment are at the same time, a chance and a threat to sustainable rural tourism development, such as, for example, European integration, product quality, foreign trade of agricultural products, etc.

3. STRATEGY AND PRIORITIES THAT INFLUENCE SERBIA'S DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL TOURISM

3.1. The strategic plan for the development of rural tourism

The strategic plan for the tourism development for Serbia in 2007, rural tourism was identified as a very important product, which can direct Serbia towards nature and the development of sustainable tourism. Rural tourism is present throughout the territory of Serbia, and has in its offer a variety of experiences in the visual and receptive sense. Revival and adjustment of the existing objects in the Serbian villages in the function of rural tourism can be recognized as a favorable development for the development of rural tourism.

In terms of different economies and experiences, we can define four tourist clusters: Vojvodina, Belgrade, Serbia and Southeast Southwest Serbia. Master plan for the development of rural tourism from 2010 defines 12 clusters of rural tourism (KRT): (UNDP, 2011, p. 23):

1. KRTG 1: Central and Western Serbia Serbia
 - KRT1: Golija;
 - KRT2: Zlatar and Zlatibor;
 - KRT3: Kopaonik;
 - KRT 4: Central Serbia;
2. KRTG 2: South Banat and the Lower Danube
 - KRT5: Lower Danube;
 - KRT6 South Banat;
3. KRTG 3: Eastern Serbia
 - KRT7: Sokobanja;
 - KRT 8: Eastern Serbia;
 - KRT9: Southeast;
4. KRTG 4: Vojvodina
 - KRT10: Fruska gora;
 - KRT11: Upper Danube;

- KRT12: North

Based on the National Master Plan for the development of rural tourism, the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia and the documents of the Joint United Nations program "*Sustainable Tourism in the Function of Rural Development*" there has been developed a Program of sustainable rural tourism in Serbia.. This development program is fully in line with the Law on Tourism of the Republic of Serbia and aims at the development of rural tourism in Serbia. An important segment of this program is to achieve the diversification of the rural economy, with the aim of improving the quality of life of the population, poverty reduction, preservation of heritage and cultural wealth of the country, environmental protection and balanced regional development. Another objective of the program is the contribution of rural tourism in Serbia to the overall tourism development of the country, given its significant potential (Official Gazette of RS, 2011, p. 14).

3.2. Potentials and disadvantages of rural tourism in Serbia

Insufficient capacity and scarce support of rural tourism, as well as the low level of awareness about the values of natural and cultural resources and tourism potential among the population, indicate the necessity of establishing service centers for the development of human resources and associated support structures. Some local travel agencies have throughout the year to offer products of rural tourism, while still only a small number of international tour operators promote rural Serbia.

The number of foreign visitors (who are mostly from neighboring countries) is far smaller than domestic. The main driver of the market of rural tourism is the domestic market. Key factors that limit the development of rural tourism are availability (poor road infrastructure and poor and non-existent signaling), lack of facilities and providers, lack of information, poor hygiene conditions in rural areas, and the lack of organized activities and other attractions (Todorovic, M., Štetić, S., 2009, p. 67).

Tourist destinations in Serbia which have good potentials can be identified in a number of forms: the field of traditional holiday with significant storage capacity and

infrastructure, that are near to the large urban areas, remote areas whose appeal is based on wilderness and wildlife, mountain and forest areas with a real possibility for the development of eco-tourism, rich agricultural areas, protected and rural areas with small towns and villages that have a rich historical, architectural and cultural heritage.

Rural tourism is significantly correlated with other aspects of the already developed tourism in Serbia (based on the nature and cultural heritage), and can support further development of these other tourist products and even help to further and encourage their promotion. Tourist Organization of Serbia has already promoted to the market a product called "*rural life*", which highlights the rural values and symbols of Serbia as a good basis for the development of rural tourism (Todorovic M., Bjeljac Z., 2007, p. 96). However, there is still the current large gap in the tourist value chain, referring to the untapped opportunities of synergy between the agricultural sector and the tourism sector. The entire promotional campaign TOS from 2012 called Soul Food (food for the soul) is based on the traditional cuisine of rural areas of Serbia and contributes to the filling up of these gaps, but this is only an initial effort to promote traditional local products and much more remains to be done in the field of application of standards and quality control in the tourism sector as a whole, especially in the accommodation and food services (L. Ristic, 2013, p. 239).

3.3. Positioning of sustainable rural tourism in Serbia

The most used definition of sustainable development is still the one from the report of the World Commission on Environment and Development, according to which it is a "process of meeting present needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". Sustainable development is based on the principles of healthy and energy efficient economizing of world's resources, as well as on equity when using these resources so that the benefit from them is properly distributed.. Sustainable development means creating a better life for all people in such a way so that it is sustainable in the future as well as now. (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 54).

Sustainable tourism has been defined by the World Tourism Organization of the United Nations in 1988: "Sustainable tourism meets the needs of tourists and host regions while at the same time protecting and improving the possibilities for the future. It is designed to keep the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems "(UNWTO, 2010).

In accordance with these principles of sustainable tourism, the overall objective of the development of tourism in rural areas of Serbia's is the development of socially, economically and environmentally sustainable products in the short and medium term, from which the benefit will be collected by the local community in all rural areas. In the absence of interaction and balance between social, economic and environmental components, there will be no benefit from rural tourism. In addition, rural tourism in Serbia depends on a number of natural and cultural resources that must be preserved and used in a sustainable manner as well as continue to improve (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 52).

Sustainable rural tourism affects in a positive way the local transformation - uniting local communities to improve living conditions and reduce poverty, and contributes greatly to the conservation of natural and cultural resources, such as traditional values, cultural heritage and biodiversity. Rural tourism can enable Serbia to become one of the leading tourist destinations in the Balkans, and in order to achieve this, we should first acquire the benefits of the sale, which includes a combination of tangible and intangible heritage, rural housing and rural activities.

Positioning strategy should be based on a combination of physical and spiritual elements of authentic rural tourism that will reflect the unique spirit of Serbia. The development of rural tourism in Serbia should contribute to ensuring environmental sustainability and develop a global partnership for development and poverty eradication (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 53).

3.4. Future directions for development of Serbias rural tourism

In contrast to the highly developed European countries, Serbia is in the process of agrarian rurality, with steps towards rural industrialization. A large number of rural areas in Serbia are characterized by depopulation and economic underdevelopment, while urban areas recorded a higher concentration of population and greater economic activity. This tendency in many ways has a negative impact on the development, and it is necessary to develop programs, projects and future directions of sustainable development of rural areas, in accordance with their characteristics, economic and non-economic functions which they have in the economy and society, but also by the requirements of domestic and international environment.

An important priority for the development of sustainable rural tourism is the reconstruction and development of rural infrastructure, such as roads, water, sewage, electricity, information and telecommunication services, etc., That has a great socio-economic importance. In addition, cross-border projects can significantly contribute to a better use of local resources, for example, a common road infrastructure, energy networks, tourist facilities, etc. (L. Ristic, 2012, p. 238).

An important challenge for many rural areas in Serbia is represented in the development of rural tourism and agro clusters, especially in view of the natural, cultural and historical heritage, gastronomy, events, hospitality of the population and other tourism potential of these areas. Rural tourism can contribute by providing alternative sources of income for households in rural areas and diversification of the rural economy, reducing unemployment, the revival and development of villages and agriculture in many aspects.

It is necessary to offer tourists a range of activities and services, which fit into the rural landscape. Rural tourism is already developing in some parts of Serbia, through the integration of tourism, agriculture and other sectors of the economy. Due to the very different preferences and motives of modern tourists, who require high-quality service, comfortable accommodation and a variety of sports and recreational, cultural and other entertainment content, it is necessary (L. Ristic, 2012, p. 239):

- Investment in rural infrastructure,
- Renovation and construction of accommodation facilities, in accordance with traditional architecture, and, following the example of authentic rural buildings, attracting investment to rural areas with significant tourism potential,
- Education of personnel in rural tourism, especially in the areas of marketing, management and modern communications,
- Promotion of rural tourism at all levels, national, regional and local,
- Establishing and strengthening public-private partnerships in rural tourism,
- Organization of events, the sale of specific products that are specific to the areas,
- Appropriate scope, quality and range of tourist services,
- Realization and introduction of additional attractions that are appropriate to different demands of tourists,
- Adaptation of tourist products to the specific requirements of health, child, youth, family and tourism, "the third age"
- Establishing a database of entities that are interested in participating in the activities of rural tourism,
- Education and encouragement of women living in rural areas to be more active in rural tourism through the traditional trades and handicrafts.

3.5. The importance of marketing in development of rural tourism

Basic characteristics of supply and demand in rural tourism as well as the importance of cultural and natural environment for the development of this segment of the tourism market, indicating the importance of marketing application in order to create a good basis for rational market operations. On the other hand, special attention to the development of rural tourism is given to its potential contribution to social and economic regeneration of rural areas (the importance of tourism in providing employment and additional income, as well as the repopulation and the removal of social isolation in rural areas). For these reasons, tourism can be seen as an opportunity to address or overcome a series of problems in the development of rural areas throughout the world. Taking into account the dimension of the relationship

between tourism development and the development of rural areas, it can be concluded that the market access terms in rural tourism must be based on respect for general social benefits arising from this relationship (Popescu, J., 2016).

Application of marketing in tourism is constantly adapting to the constant changes in the economy and society. Along with those changes, the very basis for the implementation of marketing is changing. Analyzing the current global trends in the application of marketing (especially tourism marketing), we can see the significant adjustment of social goals which include the expansion of the base for marketing, and partially revising the goals of operation of the entire marketing system in the company. It is evident that the application of marketing in tourism is entering a phase of social orientation, ie, humanization of marketing and the application of a new concept of social marketing. For this reason, marketing should be seen as a link between companies and organizations involved in consolidating tourism enterprises, tourist offer and tourist destinations. Achieving the goals of the overall business should be in line with the need to preserve limited resources, especially natural (Popescu, J., 2016).

At the core of the concept of sustainable tourism development is the directing of tourism towards the man, his needs and the natural and cultural environment. So one of the main objectives of applying marketing in tourism becomes the improvability of the quality of life of all participants in the process. Only by the harmonization of action to improve the quality of the natural and socio-cultural environment, as well as to increase the quality of the experience of tourists, can the goals be achieved that will make rural tourism useful for all participants.

On the importance of marketing application by state and social institutions, organizations and associations at the national, regional and local level is indicated by the number of participants on the side of the tourist offer of rural tourism, their relatively small power for undertaking marketing activities, as well as, already mentioned wider social significance of rural tourism development. Of particular importance are the importance and role of national tourism organizations (NTOs), as well as relevant organizations at the local level (in Serbia - Tourism Organization of

municipalities and cities) in the design, promotion, presentation and education relating to rural tourism (Todorovic, M ., Štetić, S., 2009, p. 79).

Local, regional and national tourism organizations in particular should support the creation, presentation and sale of products of rural tourism through the creation of the image, support product development, market research, training of personnel, consulting and advisory activities, so as the marketing efforts of the organizations that deal with marketing at micro level of rural tourism can be materialized.

Marketing of rural tourism is faced with a number of problems that may affect the positioning of product on the rural tourism market. The main problem is the existence of a discrepancy between the expected benefits of foreign tourists, and the total tourism product, which contains specific, tangible and intangible elements.

In order to successfully overcome these problems, it is crucial to improve the relationship between the public sector, tourism enterprises and organizations (regardless of the form of ownership) and individuals who provide services in rural tourism. The solution should be in the process of adequate planning and management of the development of rural tourism, in particular by establishing a system of long-term and meaningful involvement of the public sector in the development of rural tourism (Popescu, J., 2016).

3.6. Planning and management of rural tourism

The specificity of the planning and management of tourism development lies in the complexity of tourism as an economic and social activity, and requires a special organization at all levels. Planning for tourism development is a process that is based on research and aims at adapting the potential contribution of tourism to human progress and the quality of the natural (living) environment. In accordance with the character of tourism, it is carried out on several levels, with the particularly important issue of harmonization of certain levels of organization, particularly in the context of tourist destinations (L. Ristic, 2013, p. 231).

During the planning and management of rural tourism, we must have respect for certain characteristics typical to this type of tourism. The main objective of the planning and management for the development of rural tourism would be to establish a balance between supply and demand, or total capacity and full utilization of natural resources for tourism development without compromising the environment.

The existence of adequate resources for the development of tourism and traditions in rural tourism development are the basis for the differentiation of three distinct types of approaches in relation to the planning and management of tourism development, and this is for (Popescu, J., 2016):

- Rural areas with tradition in tourism development,
- Rural areas with significant resources, but without enough tradition in tourism development,
- Rural areas of poor resources and without tradition in the development of rural tourism.

If the principles of sustainable tourism development are to be included in the planning process of tourism development, particularly strategic, and if they are expressed in the strategic goals for the development, this concept can become a basis for meaningful development of tourism in tourist destinations at all levels. The primary objectives for the development of tourism in the context of the planning process can be very numerous, varied and contradictory. They can be expressed in social, economic and environmentally terms. By accepting awareness of a need for determining the strategic goals of tourism development that are wider than economic increases, the influence of the public sector or state authorities (L. Ristic, 2013, p. 233).

In order to achieve one of the basic preconditions for successful planning and management of sustainable development of rural tourism, is the active involvement of the local population of the rural areas in this process, because the natural environment is an important factor in the overall quality of life of residents of rural areas. The use of this resource for the purposes of tourism development without the consent of the local community can be regarded as an abuse of the local population and may represent a disincentive factor for development of rural tourism.

Another important factor in the success of planning and managing the development of rural tourism is a harmonization of many participants in the development of rural tourism. Primarily, harmonization of relations between the public and private sectors, on the one hand, and tourism enterprises and all other organizations that are directly and indirectly involved in the development of rural tourism, on the other hand. This partnership should have resulted in the inclusion in the planning and management of the development of rural tourism and the wider social and environmental issues (Plavša J., 2007, p. 81).

To achieve the sustainable development of rural tourism, the visitors must also take part in the overall process. It should align their behavior with the set of development goals, primarily the protection and conservation of the natural environment and cultural and historical heritage. It is about the management mode of use of the total resources in the rural areas by the visitors, and the orientation of behavior of the visitors. One of the most common ways of achieving this impact is the publication of the official code of conduct so that the visitors, themselves will take a part of the responsibility to protect the resources of rural tourism by adapting their behavior (Lazic, L., 2007, p. 94).

Frequent changes in the tourism market require constant adjustment of all participants in the process including those on the supply side and those on the demand side. The process of planning and management should be continuous and have innovative approaches. The main objective is to achieve a proactive approach to the protection and preservation of all the resources that are related to the development of rural tourism. Such an approach can be achieved by accepting the following facts (J. Popescu, 2016):

- Objectives relating to environmental protection and commercial goals must be long-term considered (preserved environment creates the basis for a successful business, as opposed to the degraded environment);
- As long as consumers have the choice, sustainable development can be achieved only by the products that consumers are willing to buy, the manufacturers need to adapt their production and sale to that.

The planning process for the development of rural tourism begins with the creation of the situational analysis, and continues with the research that involves the analysis of all the relevant factors of tourism development, as well as the characteristics of rural areas that have good prospects for the development of tourism. Special attention is paid to the analysis of natural and socio-cultural characteristics of the area, economic development, employment levels, the level of infrastructure development, attitude of the local people towards the development of tourism, the organization (national and economic) that is directly or indirectly involved in the tourism business, the characteristics of the competitive areas for the development of tourism, global, regional and local trends in tourism development and the movement of tourist traffic and consumption.

In the next phase of the planning process, the goals of the development are defined (restoration of traditional houses and buildings, diversification of production, increase employment, etc.), with the creation of the necessary conditions to meet the demands, needs and wishes of visitors (it is common to formulate objectives such as social and economic goals). Defined objectives must take into account the wider context - regional and national development goals, particularly the development of tourism. (Popescu, J., 2016)

In the next phase we have the analysis and synthesis, in other words we can draw a conclusions based on the results of research. Results of the research are specifically related to natural, cultural and historical resources, as well as on market and other conditions for the development of tourism. The process of synthesis enables the collection of data on the relationship between the number of tourists and offers of space, as well as the necessary facilities, recreational facilities and services that the visitors can benefit from.

The design phase of the proposal and the recommendation includes the comparison of offered alternative development with the defined objectives for the development of tourism, impact on the local community and other factors. Based on the results of these comparisons, we can formulate plans, policies and form a recommendation. They should be based on the following aspects for tourism development (Lazic, L., 2007, p. 96):

- The space as a factor of development (compliance between the projected demand and total supply)
- The definition of the program (including recommendations regarding the marketing activities)
- Formulating policy (provides the basis for the integrated development of tourism in the defined area including the role of interested organizations, individuals and ways of achieving the goals of development);
- The priorities (all recommendations should be classified according to the method of application and the expected benefits of development).

The phase of the implementation and management is a continuous process that has for its aims the constant checking of the level of realization of the defined goals. This phase should be based on determining the degree of satisfaction of the expectations of tourists, assessment of achieved economic results, particularly in relation to the local population, the assessment of the overall impact of tourism development on the natural and socio-cultural environment, as well as to align with regional and national plans and programs development of tourism, especially the rural (Popescu, J., 2016).

A special part of the management for the development of rural tourism refers to the need for educating employees, because it is implicated that the development of tourism should contribute to an increase in the employment (providing products and services for tourists), and to provide an additional income for the already employed in seasonal employment. For this to be achieved in a quality manner, it is necessary to educate key stakeholders in meeting the needs of tourists (Popescu, J., 2016):

- Hosts, home owners, small hotels, restaurants, camp grounds (they need to be aware of the needs of tourists, provide for them the necessary knowledge about management, accounting, security, providing conditions for the leisure that the guests would enjoy, ways of maintaining hygiene in tourist facilities, as well as, expanding their knowledge of the natural, cultural and other characteristics of the end);

- The entire local population - so as be usefully involved in achieving a joint project of rural tourism development;
- Local tourist guides and animators, as well as staff in the local tourist information centers - in order to expand knowledge about the characteristics of the area, tourist resources, ways of promoting tourism products, recreational opportunities and others.

Those participants are not the only ones, on the list of those who need to learn about and further their education in a special way in order to understand not only the needs, requirements and desires of potential consumers (tourists), but also the local residents of rural tourist areas as a whole, especially those directly involved in the tourist business.

3.7. The key players for development of rural tourism

Rural tourism and its development cannot be considered separately from the activities of the entire community. In other words, rural tourism should be integrated with the development of the community initiatives. Management, collaboration and cooperation in business are essential preconditions for the establishment of rural tourism, business connections, partnerships and regional bodies. The aim is the interest of the collective, that is, business for the common good.

Rural tourism development and implementation strategies must necessarily be carried out through cooperation not only at the community level, but also through regional cooperation and integration in the wider international programs. Effective marketing contributions and linking with national and international associations, whose activities are related not only to the development of rural tourism, but also to the integral and sustainable development in the continent, in addition it enables the exchange of information, experiences and adoption of different methodologies.

3.7.1. The role of national level management

Rural tourism is recognized as one of the activities of the rural economy, and will be supported through rural development programs in the future, with a goal for the development of rural areas and improve the quality of life in the countryside. For the development of sustainable development and rural tourism, it is very significant to have cooperation and coordination with the strategy and development programs of other ministries, public enterprises and institutions.

Tourist Organization of Serbia was founded in 1994 as a government agency to perform activities in order to promote its tourist value and opportunities. TOS is involved in activities:

- 1) Promotion of tourism in Serbia;
- 2) Coordination of activities of tourist organizations, business and other entities in tourism, which act directly or indirectly on tourism promotion;
- 3) Organization of tourist market research for the promotion of tourism of the Republic of Serbia;
- 4) Market research in the field of trade fair, convention, sports and cultural events;
- 5) Providing information-propaganda materials that promote tourist values;
- 6) Formation and development of a single tourist information system and its connection with other information systems in the country and abroad, as well as other activities

TOS carries out the promotion of rural tourism in all major trade fairs and through the media, then there is cooperation with local tourist organizations on the territory of Serbia, issues brochures and on its promotions organizes various conferences to inform and educate about the rural tourism.

3.7.2. The role of the local population

The generally accepted role of communities in rural tourism, ie, its importance is reflected in the (Djordjevic-Milosevic S., 2007, p. 97):

- Providing the most important social link to a specific area and its inhabitants,
- The realization of the link between local and global, and the area and the population in the process of globalization,
- Potential resistance to homogenization which threatens globalization.

It is necessary that local communities have a significant operation in projects relating to the implementation of sustainable tourism in their communities, mostly through the encouragement of participation and claim of ownership, therefore, the participation of the community is necessary as an important prerequisite for the sustainability of tourism development (Bogdanov, N. Zecevic B., Versace, A. and Roháč, J., 2011, p. 45).

Local self- government units (LSU) in Serbia are still not trained to the necessary level to be more involved in rural development, in the terms of human resources, technically and in the organization, in a most of the LSU, offices have been established to help the village / agriculture and part of the budget is allocated for the development of these areas. Mostly, LSU have no plans for the development of agriculture and villages, nor have programs for the development of tourism, and in that framework, as presented, there are no development programs for rural tourism.

Local self-government units have in the past mostly worked on the construction and rehabilitation of infrastructure facilities, improvement of health and social protection, the development of rural tourism, the organization of different events of rural tourism and the creation of institutions that represent the interests of farmers. In addition, in many cases, self-government units support the work of existing professional services. Farmers are trying to be help through education, improved awareness, facilitating in the administrative tasks, as well as the provision of agricultural insurance, approval of budget and interest-free loans, the purchase of resources, irrigation, etc. Local self-government units encourage the development of certain agricultural production through the provision of subsidies, premiums or recourse. All these activities are, of course, important for the development of rural tourism.

Rural tourism provides more options on which to base local and regional strategies. For this reason, its successful development depends on strategic cooperation, which includes a wide range of interest groups. Effective partnerships between the public and private sectors are the basis for sustainable development. As long as the participation of the public sector is welcome, innovations should come from the private sector by those who live and work in this area.

3.7.3. The role of non-governmental sector

The role of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) in rural development varies significantly across countries. In some countries, NGO networks effectively meet the needs of the rural population and include them in different forms of its activity, while in other countries their influence and visibility in rural communities is minor because of low capacity and poor connections.. In the field of rural development, non-governmental organizations are active in the field of environmental protection and promotion of cultural and historical heritage, education and social issues. Although many NGOs are relevant to the rural development, there is only a few of them with concrete projects that are implemented in this area. The rural population does not recognize NGOs as their relevant partners, because it is not sufficiently informed about their projects and initiatives.

NGOs created by connecting on the national level should minimize the weaknesses of local subjects. They are crucial to the inclusion of promotion of rural tourism in the overall tourist offer of the country, as well as for the presentation at the international level. Today in Serbia, a growing number of organizations is involved in various aspects of tourism development.. Taking into account the previously mentioned weaknesses in the development of rural tourism, and following the example of associations in countries with more developed forms of rural tourism, in Serbia, today we have an increasing number of active associations with the operations in the field of rural tourism.

AEERT - Association of Experts in Eco Rural Tourism-is based in Kragujevac, and has for its aim to promote culture, development and operations in the ecological rural

tourism, and all, in the framework of an integrated and sustainable rural development. AEERT has the following activities (Rosić I. 2001 p. 3-4):

- Improving and promoting the development of ecological rural tourism in the context of an integrated and sustainable rural development;
- Improving the quality of life in rural areas;
- Connect all actors involved in ecological tourism and the exchange of information through collaboration with professional associations and other organizations at home and abroad, whose activities in areas that are important for environmental and rural development;
- Promotion and creation of research, studies and projects in rural development and provision of services for consulting;
- Organization and creation of symposiums, seminars, expert meetings and training courses;
- Publication of scientific and technical results of the members of the Association in international and national journals, the publication of monographs and other publications, as well as participation in scientific meetings;
- authoring classical, electronic and internet presentations is very important for the development of eco - rural tourism;
- supporting the development of small enterprises in the field of sustainable rural development.

CenORT - Centre for responsible and sustainable development of tourism-- Is an independent, non-governmental, non-profit institution that has the role of research, advisory, informative as well as documentation, and communication character in the field of sustainable and responsible tourism development, ie. in conjunction with the contemporary trends in the development of tourism. Centre for responsible and sustainable tourism was founded in 2001 as an association with the aim of scientific and technical research of responsible and sustainable tourism development, educating and raising awareness about the role and influence of tourism on the economic and social development (CenORT, 2001, p. 65).

CenORT has special attention directed towards developing awareness of the importance of sustainable tourism development, organizing lectures, participation in projects, publishing of books and publications, participation in international and national scientific and professional conferences, cooperation with related organizations, particularly European, participation in the celebration of the 2002nd year as the International year of ecotourism, participation in the work of the tourism stock exchange and fairs, etc. (Djordjevic-Milosevic S., 2007, p. 46).

An important part of their work CenORT devoted to activities that improve the development of eco-tourism, rural and cultural tourism, which represents an important basis for sustainable development of tourism in Serbia as a tourist destination. CenORT considers that natural and other resources represent a reasonable basis for achieving better position of Serbia in the international tourism market. For this reason, CenORT as a direct objective set the support activities for the development of rural tourism. All of the mentioned has led to the attitude that the successful development of rural tourism in Serbia must be based on connecting with similar European organizations, the implementation of European criteria and standards and integration into the European promotional activities (CenORT, 2001, p. 67).

CenORT cooperates with several international organizations in the field of sustainable tourism development, especially from the Netherlands and Germany. CenORT has for a long time cooperated with ECEAT-TV - the European Centre for eco and rural tourism, considering the development of rural tourism as a priority for the development of tourism in Serbia. As a result of this cooperation, CenORT, during the General Assembly session ECEAT in Jarni, (Sweden), held in 2003, was presented with a membership to the ECEAT as a member candidate. In addition to Serbia, in the same category of membership Spain and Slovakia had been accepted, while the full membership has been given to Slovenia, Poland, Finland and Lithuania (DjordjevicMilosevic, S., 2007, p. 48).

Cooperation at the international level is of great importance in order to introduce current trends in rural tourism in the world, the adoption of the world and European development model, while taking into account all the specifics and the affirmation of natural, cultural and other resources. This is a particular challenge for the countries

that have a lower level of economic development, because it provides an efficient integration into the international market.. The importance of cooperation at the international level is all the greater because the interest of tourists from economically developed countries are increasingly moving to new destinations and is increasingly tied to special interests.

At the world tourism market, we have a growing number of active international associations whose activities are related to the development of rural tourism, some of which, that in particular have separated are: EUROGITES, ECEAT, IAERT, *Rural Tourism International Training Network* and other (CenORT, 2001, p. 72).

EUROGITES - European Federation for rural tourism - the organization that brings together 23 national and regional associations from 17 countries and has 65,300 members. The objectives of the Federation are as follows (CenORT, 2001, p. 74):

- Contribution to the preservation and quality of life in rural areas of Europe,
- Offer of the alternative to mass tourism,
- Defining the European concept of rural tourism,
- The creation of standards of quality for the evaluation of rural tourism,
- Contribution to environmental protection.

ECEAT - European Centre for eco and rural tourism - is a non-profit and independent organization that brings together national ECEAT organizations in European countries. Formed in 1992, from a pilot program, that included rest on organic farms in Czechoslovakia, and today it is considered as a major partner in the development of tourism in the Czech Republic. ECEAT has been established by the organizations dedicated to the development of eco-rural, ie. the sustainable tourism of Germany, the Netherlands, Czech Republic, Sweden and Portugal. The main objective of ECEAT is the development and promotion of tourism that helps the development of organic agriculture, sustainable land use, nature protection, cultural heritage protection and development of the village. European center for eco and rural tourism is particularly committed to supporting the organization of programs for vacation in the village (various authors, 2007, p. 34).

Most programs of the ECEAT take place in areas that are ideal for hiking, horseback riding, biking, bird watching, water sports. In addition, schools for painting, foreign language learning, courses of music, learning traditional crafts, natural treatment are organized. ECEAT International, as an umbrella organization and national ECEAT organization of European countries, have four basic modes of operation - activities on the whole territory of the country, providing education for farm workers who want to deal with tourism, for the public and tourists, implementation of sustainable quality criteria for the inclusion of facilities to accommodate the travel programs and direct work for the benefit of tourists. On this basis, ECEAT wants to create a unified system of certification in the European context, primarily for services in rural tourism, as well as the appropriate booking system. For all types of accommodation facilities that are being developed (various authors, 2007, p. 39):

- Standards related to the comfort of accommodation facilities;
- Standards relating to the environment,
- Standards for sustainable land use and
- Socio-cultural standards.

Professional training programs are realized through personal visits, seminars, workshops and application instructions for entrepreneurs in rural tourism. The Centre publishes a guide on rural tourism and cultural rural heritage.

IAERT - International Association of experts in rural and agro-tourism - based in Perugia, Italy, aims to investigate various aspects of rural tourism and information in rural tourism in the context of a strategy for integrated and sustainable rural development. Members IAERT derive from 27 countries and from all the regions of the world. Among the activities of the IAERT-what especially stands out is the organization of the International School for rural and agro-tourism and the organization of the World Forum of Rural Tourism (CenORT, 2001, p. 78).

3.7.4. Cooperation between levels of government

Rural tourism development is accomplishing in conditions of increased level of awareness of the need to implement the concept of responsible and sustainable development. Firmly associated with community activities and is integrated in its development initiatives. The cooperation of individual actors in the tourist offer of Serbia usually takes place at the level of tourism organizations of local government, and rarely agencies or other organizations. The disadvantages of this form of organization can be noted in the fact that rural tourism is marginalized in comparison with other forms of tourism.

Associating on the local level (local associations or networks dealing with this type of tourism) is of great importance for the recognition of all actors in rural tourism. Cooperation in marketing and organization of specific content is extremely important for small tourism enterprises (plantations, farms and the like.) in the rural areas. The propaganda success is difficult to achieve individually, but when joined they can accomplished a much more effective marketing approach.

Also, through the local associations a more effectively overcome can be achieved of the financial and other difficulties. Small tourist entrepreneurs, related organizations and local groups have to be organized and motivated to work together on improving the quality of the destination, and maintaining their good relationship. A successful merger means a good choice of area in which all of it will be started, the formation of effective management structures, functional coordination of local activities, the involvement of the wider community, and good information.. Case studies show that non-governmental organizations play a key role in the inclusion of the population of the local community in the tertiary sector, the establishment of partnerships with the private sector, find financial support in order to improve quality, provide training, consulting or other assistance to certain groups. No matter what type of organization it comes to, a key role in achieving success is in the following factors (Comic Lj., 2007, p. 262):

- Provided funding during the optimum period of time;

- Full participation of local authorities, which includes connections to all relevant areas (management of environment, planning and transport);
- Links with national and regional tourism administrations in order to provide support and expertise;
- Strong commitment of the local tourism industry;
- Giving recognition within the wider community;
- Small working team that is dedicated to quality.

Case studies have shown that the driving force of a person is often the key to success. It should become a long-term commitment that we all share. It is expected that in the future, community centers will become local action groups that will propose and implement projects, monitor the funds available for rural development and deal with the pre-accession EU funds intended for local development.

At this moment in Serbia there is no coordination in the (Comic Lj., 2007, p. 265):

- Planning and directing state aid;
- Cooperation between different ministries;
- Cooperation among numerous actors and institutions involved in the various aspects of rural development;
- Making strategic and system documents.

An additional limiting factor is the fact that development programs for rural areas must be in coordination with several ministries, provincial and local institutions and organizations. However, it is difficult to achieve this due to the lack of efficient mechanisms to achieve such coordination and integration.

4. CHARACTERISTICS OF AND IMPORTANCE OF SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST DESTINATION

4.1. The concept and characteristics of tourism destination

The word destination (destinatio) is of Latin origin and means the ultimate goal, commitment, determination and purpose. Newer definitions of the term in English (from where it spread to all other languages) mark it as a destination, a place of travel, place in which a person or thing go. (Popesku, 2008, p. 25)

This term is widely used both in the tourist theory and practice. UNWTO defines tourism destination as well as a visit to an important place during the journey, taking into account the spatial determinant. We can distinguish three types of tourist destinations: main (the place where he spent most of the time), remote (farthest city visit in relation to the place of residence) and motivational destination (a place for visitors is the primary objective of the visit).

In the latest approaches to the tourist destination the approach is, not only as a spatial area which is visited and used by tourists, regardless of its physical and administrative boundaries, but also as a focus of a collection of many components that in a joint action enable themselves to meet the needs, desires and interest of the tourists. Some authors define a tourist destination as a location that has a collection of attractions and adequate tourism services and facilities for tourist groups or individual tourists, who choose to visit them or that the offer promotes, or an area with a variety of natural features and attractions that attract visitors - tourists and visitors.

The term sustainability of a tourist destination is the ability of a tourist destination to achieve competitiveness in the tourism market and at the same time manages to maintain the quality of their social, cultural, and natural, environmental resources. Law on Tourism of the Republic of Serbia, however, gives the most succinct definition, according to which tourist destination represents a destination for the stay of tourist that are equipped to accept the stay of tourists. (Official Gazette of RS, no. 36/2009, 88/2010, 99/2011)

World Tourist Organization notes that a tourist destination is characterized by six basic elements: (Manent, 2007)

1. Availability - represents a tourist destination geographical position, transportation infrastructure and transport links with the source markets (international transport terminals, local transport), but also the conditions for entry, visa, etc.
2. Benefits - is made out of accommodation facilities, a wide range of facilities, services and other facilities that are in the service of accommodation for guests (utilities, roads, basic infrastructure, public transport, shops, housing, manufacturing, catering, guides, sports facilities, information, etc.) .
3. Attractions - are natural and social attractiveness of the tourist destination that can in any way be attractive to tourists. They are the motive and cause for visits and stays of tourists and the center are of interest.
4. Price - is an important aspect of the competitiveness of the destination. Given the complexity of the tourist offer, a multitude of factors that have an impact on pricing in the tourist market.
5. The image - a unique image on the market place (reputation) is of crucial influence in attracting the attention of potential guests. It is not enough that the destination has at its disposal a quality range of attractions and supporting facilities, if a potential visitor is not aware of it. In addition to the attractiveness, uniqueness and attractions of the place, an important role in its image is also the concerns about the quality and preservation of the environment, the level and quality of service, security, hospitality of local people and other. The role of the government in creating a positive image of the place is irreplaceable, but also, a very important role in creating the image can be found in the activities of branding, marketing, e-marketing and, of course, the media.
6. Personnel - in tourism has a very great importance, because tourism is a labor-intensive industry. Despite information and booking systems and modern technologies that provide numerous services for tourists replacing human labor, the personal contact between tourists and tourism personnel (employees at the agency, guides, hotel staff, employees in the store, hospitality) is what the tourism industry is based on.

Overall sustainability of a tourist destination directly depends on achieving a balance between the capacity of natural and manmade resources on the one hand and the type and volume of tourist activities in the area on the other side. Size of carrying capacity is crucial for environmental protection and sustainable development.

4.2. Sustainable tourism as a new concept of tourism

The tourism industry is becoming one of the leading industries in the world thanks to the dynamic growth of tourist traffic and consumption in the period from the end of World War II. This is confirmed also by World Tourism Organization. From 1950 until today, the international tourist traffic has increased by about 32 times (the number of foreign tourists in 1950. Was 25.3 million, and in 2005 god. 806 million). However, a particularly significant effect in this period was realized in the field of tourism consumption which recorded an increase of about 324 times (revenues from foreign tourism in 1950 god. Were US \$ 2.1 billion, and in 2005, 680 billion US \$) . Positive development trends are expected in the coming period as well. (Bošković, 2009) By following the above constant growth trend, we can assume that it can only continue. This claim is supported by statistical data for 2016, according to which, there was a growth of 3.9% or a total of 1,235 million US dollars. That accounts for 46 million more tourists.

The rapid growth and development of mass tourism in the second half of the twentieth century, which can be analyzed with the socio-cultural, economic and environmental aspects, was an important generator of overall economic growth and development in a number of countries, but it also certain negative effects have appeared. For this reason, we now must make a special reference to the socio-economic aspects of tourism development, and the need for implementing the principles of the new concept of sustainable tourism.

The social costs of tourism, ie. social price of tourism development (especially in economically underdeveloped countries) poses a special problem. Therefore, care should be taken in defining the role and influence of tourism in the socio-economic development, its economic and other effects. There should be an overall careful

approach to the development of tourism, responsible and by paying attention to the elements of cost / benefit analysis in each area of its influence.

As a result of adaptation of the tourism industry to the global technological, economic, information, communication, socio-psychological, climatic and other changes, in the tourism place fundamental qualitative have been changing. Rules of the game and the key success factors in the tourism industry are changing, which is confirmed by the emergence of new destinations on the world tourism map.

It is worth noting that, from the 50s until today, there was a significant shift from the, until then dominant model of passive spending the holiday, to various activities. The development is directed towards the "birth of a new tourist culture". Numerous analyzes profile the new tourist as an: experienced, independent, technology-oriented, active, those who seek value for money, and wants to learn from other cultures. The new tourist is taking shorter breaks, and he is socially and environmentally sensitive. It is understood that this is about the changing of a long-term character and that this is still in the initial stage.

The concept of sustainable development, and building a sustainable world also includes tourism growth, summarizes the overall aspiration for changing the approach to the development of tourism, and for defining the base of the development, which includes respect for environmental and social needs of present and future generations.

Sustainable development of tourism means tourism development that meets the needs of tourist destinations, tourists and all stakeholders in the tourism industry, while preserving and increasing the potential of tourism resources, and without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Boskovic, 2010)

The procedures and guidelines of management relating to sustainable tourism development are applicable to all kinds of destinations and in all forms of tourism, including mass tourism and the various niche markets as segments of tourism. Principles relating to the sustainable development of tourism should be applied to companies, business, all kinds of tourist activities and projects. They related to

environmental, economic and socio-cultural aspects of tourism development, and between these three dimensions the right balance must exist in order to guarantee the sustainability in a in a long-term, of the tourism development. Sustainable tourism requires the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, as well as strong political leadership to be provided for wider participation and consensus of different interests.

Sustainable tourism development should provide a high level of tourist satisfaction, and provide the tourists with a meaningful experience, expanding their awareness of the issues of sustainability and improving the practice of sustainable tourism among the tourists. Other policy areas are very often linked with tourism (regional development, transport, urban planning, etc.). These policy areas should be included in the definition of specific measures and actions to ensure a coherent policy of sustainable tourism. Achieving sustainable tourism is a continuous process that requires continuous monitoring of the impact and use of the necessary preventive and / or corrective actions when necessary.

Tourist sites, regions or countries, have been, in the development of tourism, for a long time guided purely on the economic effects of tourism (increased income, investment, employment, etc.), Thereby neglecting other influences, especially those who are negative. During the period of the last two decades, there has been more recognition of the interdependence between the environment and tourism, thus there is often the talk about the need for sustainable development of tourism or the kind of planned development that will create the opportunity for tourism, not only that it they do not endanger their socio-cultural and natural environment, but also be a factor in its improvement. Also, the quality factor of attractive offers (cultural, historical and natural resources), of particular importance for the quality of the tourist product destination. (CenORT, 2001)

Using the resource of the environment in the area has two consequences for tourism. The first is that the amount of available resources reduces and thereby limits the further development of the tourism areas. Resources that cannot economically and / or physically increase (the beach, the city's historic and natural interest) also become limiting factors. Another consequence is that the quality of resources decreases with negative effects on tourism. The offered product of tourism becomes of reduced

quality, and the quantity of high quality products (which was the primary reason for tourism development) is reduced. To avoid this, we must carry out planning for tourism, in which the relationship between tourism and the environment are central in terms of setting limits and guidelines for development of tourist activities.

The current development of global tourism shows that the space is an essential element of tourism development, in both the international and the national levels. Quality equipment and space are the most important motivation for direction of tourist movements. Planners in the tourism, studying the dynamics of development and the geographical dispersion of tourism, can understand the tourists need for a new product. Changes in the field of tourism demand are highly expressed in a short period of time. While the 70's and 80's years of the 20th century, the tourist demand was satisfied with stereotypical products and very was very slow in changing them, at the beginning of this century tourists are constantly on the move, looking for new facilities and incentives and have shorter retention.

A very noticeable aspect of the modern tourism demand is the one that is located in a natural environment. Mass tourism development confronts us with a number of problems, but also benefits, which must be overcome and resolved in order for the further development of tourism. The search for balance in the degree of interaction between nature and tourism, nature and man, and man and Tourism should give us guidance and response in planning of tourism development which is at the same time, in the function of preserving the environment and in the function of satisfying the needs of tourism.

In order for one area to be explored as a "framework" and the possibility to provide guidelines for the implementation of a quality tourism product, we must take into account basic settings and changes in international tourist flows: (Pasinović, 2006, p. 144)

- Increased need to go to the preserved natural environment,
- Changes in tourist attractions and a significant reduction in the price of basic tourist product,

- Establishing a balance between sustainable and mass tourism,
- Changes in the diversification of global tourism trends.

For the tourism to become sustainable, it must be tested under multiple assessments and integrated planning. With the proper marketing of tourism products, investment programs, management and marketing innovation in tourism products and development programs, each region can become a tourist destination.

Modern planning of tourism development includes: (Official Gazette, 2005)

- Organization of space and coordination of the activities of the bodies, commercial, public and other stakeholders with the aim of promoting the development of tourism,
- Integrated planning of tourism development,
- Declaration and sustainable use of space for tourist purposes;
- Development of information systems for the purposes of tourism;
- Research and analysis of the tourism market;
- Encourage the development and promotion of tourism

Integrated planning of tourism development is under jurisdiction of the Spatial Development Strategy of the Republic. Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia is realized through a program of integrated development of tourism, and to encourage the development of new forms of tourism, complementary activities tourist destinations, as well as the implementation of the Strategy for the promotion of tourism of the Republic of Serbia. (Official Gazette, 2005)

Within their jurisdiction, local communities adopt programs of promotional activities in accordance with the Strategy for the promotion of tourism of the Republic of Serbia, and tourism development programs in accordance with the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia. In accordance with these two strategies, land and landscapes with decorated nature, parts of rivers and of lakes, environmental, and cultural and historical sites, picnic areas, places of interest, smaller special sites with strong attractiveness, recreational and landscape characteristics, may be declared areas of important for tourism.

5. DEVELOPMENT AND CONDITION OF THE TOURIST DESTINATION OF THE LOWER DANUBE

Serbia is linked by the Danube belt region to the central Europe. The Danube belt region has outstanding development capabilities, values and opportunities. Hence, in the spatial plan of Serbia, is its place with a special strategic, developmental and comparative role.

River transport has the advantage over other modes of transport, thanks to the comparative advantage in the evaluation of environmental, economic and many other areas. Danube through Serbia, with its 588 km length, accounts for 13.5% of the length of the waterway Rotterdam - Thessaloniki. For this reason, a number of development, planning, strategy and spatial documents have been made in our country and on the international level, in areas through which the Danube flows, including also a part of Serbia, they highlight a range of well-substantiated indicators, a combination of standards to which the economic development of Europe depends. Part of the Danube region in Serbia, in a series of planning and development documents, has the primary role in the development of large urban agglomerations (Novi Sad, Belgrade, Smederevo) and the entire regions (region of Obrenovac and Pancevo to Smederevo, Belgrade urban region, the North Danube, Timočko Danube, Iron Gate and a number of other sub-regions that are effected by the manifestations of the Danube. (Stojic Karanovic, 2005, p. 54)

Municipalities on the Danube, Negotin, Kladovo, Majdanpek, Golubac and Veliko Gradiste make up a unique and united entity of Đerdapa, and as such represent a new tourist destination in the Lower Danube that its development has become the basis for further development of tourism in Serbia.

In the development of tourism and the performance of a number of important functions in the area, the Lower Danube in Serbia has not been sufficiently exploited the real possibilities and potentials.

5.1. Tourist region of the Lower Danube

Tourist destination of the *Lower Danube* administratively includes the territory of five municipalities of Eastern Serbia: Negotin, Kladovo, Majdanpek, Golubac and Veliko Gradiste.

Djerdap National Park covers the territory of these five municipalities and the protected zone of a total area of 336 200 hectares. Region borders with a small part with Bulgaria and Romania and includes about 250 km of the Danube, three gorges: Sipska, Gospodin source and Golubac, three valleys: Oršavska, Donjomilanovačka and Ljupkovska and two canyons Mali and Veliki kasan. (JP NP Djerdap, 2012)

At the confluence of the Pek and Danube, in the foothills of the Carpathian and Homolje mountains, Veliko Gradiste is located. From Belgrade, 110 km away, a railway and a highway Belgrade-Kladovo pass through the southern part of the municipality. Veliko Gradiste is also a dock to all ships that sail the Danube. . The natural values of this area are Ada Čibuklija, Labudovo okno, hill Gorica, Silver Lake, Pek and Danube rivers. Prominent cultural and historical values of this area are Pinkum Roman city, Roman military fortress Lederata fortress Ram, Nimnik monastery; church Archangel Gabriel, the old city center. (Bujdić-Krečković, 2013)

On the bank of the Danube River, at the entrance to the Đerdap gorge, in the Kučaj area, Golubac is located. Its area is 130 km. The natural values of the area are Crni vrh, Brnjica river canyon, Tumanska river, the Danube, a cultural and historical church of St. Nicholas Monastery Tuman, Vicus Cupae, the medieval fortress town of Golubac, Church in Korbovo, Hajdučka ascites, City Gallery, Archaeological Museum of Đerdap, Monastery of the Holy Trinity, St. George Temple, Ethnopark Quick Palanka, Fort. Elizabeth, Trajan's Table Trajan's Bridge, Fetislam, Egeta, Diana, Pontes. (Municipality of Golubac, 2008)

On the border of Serbia, Bulgaria and Romania is Negotinska Krajina. It stretches between the Danube and Timok up to the mountain Stol and Deli Jovan. This is the most continental part of the East Serbia, and is connected via routes across Zajecar to

Paracin, and from the direction of Kladovo and Donji Milanovac - Danube Highway. (Municipality of Negotin, 2012)

In the central part of the Đerdap, between the Danube and the hills of northern Kučaj, Majdanpek is located. This municipality is well connected by rail and road infrastructure with other parts of the Republic. (Municipality of Majdanpek, 2010)

Municipality Kladovo is divided into two natural systems - Lower and Upper key. The Lower key lies directly along the Danube and covers the most populated, lowland part. The Upper key is hilly and mountainous and largely under pastures and forests. This municipality is well connected with Nis and Belgrade, but also with Romania and other parts of Europe over the bridge on Đerdap hydroelectric power plant. (Municipality of Kladovo, 2010)

Cultural and historical values of this area are the Church of the Holy Trinity, Church of the Holy Virgin, Monastery Korglaš, Monastery Vratna, Bukovo Monastery, House of Stevan Mokranjac, Museum of Krajina, Hajduk Veljkova Barutana, Hajduk Veljko Museum, the old town of Negotin, Smedovačke pimmice, Rogljevačke pimmice, Štubačke pimmice and Rajačke pimmice.

Đerdap National Park, which extends over 63,608.45 hectares along the Danube, from Golubac to Kladovo is one of the most important national parks, natural heritage of Europe. On the right side of the Danube, in a distance of about 100 km from the medieval fortress Golubac to the ancient city Dijana, an area is located with a high concentration of bio-geographical, hydrological and geomorphological resources, important monuments civilization in the period of the New Stone Age, marked by the culture of Lepenski Vir (7000 year BC), the remains of Roman civilization to the medieval and Ottoman period. Since the period of the Lepenski Vir culture (which testifies to the existence of the community and the lives of people in prehistoric times in this area) until today, there has been a continuity of material life. Trajan's table as a part of Trajan's times represents a great example of building enterprise of the time. (Institute of Architecture and Urban Planning of Serbia, 2012)

In the I degree of protection within the Djerdap National Park nine nature reserves are located : Bojana, Golubac city, Šomrđi, Bosman-sokolovac, čoka Njalta with Pesačom, Gypsy stream, Boljetin river canyon, Lepenski vir, Big and Small Strbac. These are the most attractive and most valuable parts of the NP with a large number of cultural and historical monuments that have been declared as the good of exceptional importance. (JP NP Djerdap, 2014)

5.2. The attractiveness of a tourist destination of the Lower Danube

Lower Danube is certainly one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Serbia. The Danube is in this area, unique, only like in a few other places in its course, and has been able to merge a range of attractive content. The Danube has in that place broken through the Carpathians, demonstrated its intensity, but also enabled people and live from it. This area offers a wide range of opportunities for recreational activities, for education about where the past way of life began, on the examples of prehistoric cultures or historical architectural buildings in scenic, but also a harsh environment. . This area has a variety of tourist attractions (Lepenski vir, the diversity of flora and fauna, the most beautiful gorge in Europe, wine routes, the Roman limes and medieval fortifications, pubs, a rich hunting and fishing area, bike paths, Danube beach and water activities, events on the Danube).

Despite many benefits to tourism, that are offered by this area (general recognition of the Đerdap, significant monuments, preserved natural resources, in proportion to the good communication, human resources), the existing tourism offer is very narrow and focused only on the development of several types of tourism which are mainly based on offer of accommodation facilities in Golubac, Kladovo and Donji Milanovac, at Silver lake (school excursions, residential tourism in the summer months, the preparation of athletes, bicycle, on a smaller scale congress tourism). Outside the urban centers of tourism, the resources of the region are very poorly used, and are suitable for development of different forms of tourism, caving, rural sports and recreational tourism, hunting, fishing and nautical tourism, Kate surfing, tours on the Danube, etc. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

5.2.1. Natural values

Outstanding attractiveness on the watercourse of the Danube, its cliffs, coast and its reservoir has an exceptional value for the whole area and makes special content in the formation of tourist demand. This area has the characteristics of a specific character of nature linked to the natural environment of the Danube potential (mountain-mountain, continental climate and environmental value).

Values of the region (Silver Lake, River Pek, black top, Tumanska river Boljetinska River Canyon, Porec river, mountains Deli Jovan and Miroč, Valja prerast, Šomrdi, the Veliki zaton Lake, Canyon Vratne, Vratnjanske gate, canyon of the river Zamna, Veliki and Mali kazan) its characteristics can attract the attention of a group of tourists with specific needs. Also, we can add a large number of caves and caverns, as well as forest resources that are of particular importance for the development of tourism.

1. Growing number of fans of hunting and fishing tourism, consider this area to be a challenge and an adventure. Picturesque and the attractiveness of the landscapes canyons, cliffs, coast and bays may also be the reason for the tourist movement. (Master plan cultural and historical route "Road of Roman Emperors", Economic Faculty in Belgrade, Belgrade, 2007, (group of aut.))

5.2.2. Cultural values

The extraordinary importance of this region in relation to the European situation, can be found in its diversity of archaeological sites and monuments dating from late Paleolithic and Mesolithic, through the Iron Age (as testified by the material evidence of the occurrence of early mining and metallurgy), the period of Roman civilization, the Ottoman rule, all the way, to the present period.

Care and grooming of practices and custom, and beliefs represent a way of life in the region, with a wide range of diversity of folk songs, dances and costumes. The use of legends and myths for tourism purposes is known as the as tourism itself. For visitors

and tourists, gastronomy and folklore of the Serbian and Vlach population, have always been attractive because they have a wealth of smell, taste and color.

Event tourism - a very important commercially-affirmative element, creates the conditions and launches international and domestic cooperation, whose influence can extend to the evaluation of the numerous tourist sights of the area. Events that are well organized, depending on the content and its originality, best represent the area, which may result in a greater influx of local and foreign visitors. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

5.3. Accessibility tourist destination Lower Danube

In the Danube region, including part of its hinterland can directly use three types of transport, the rail, land road and river traffic. The road network and its connection with Corridor 10 provides a relatively good basis for evaluation of sites to the tourist importance of the Danube and the neighboring hinterland (Prahovo, Kladovo, Donji Milanovac, Golubac, Veliko Gradiste, Pozarevac, Belgrade-M25, Djerdap highway). In addition to the reconstruction of roads, it is necessary to ensure traffic and tourist signs and to build rest stops positions and viewpoints. The attractiveness of this road is certainly important, but a large number of landslides should be mentioned that threaten safe travel, and dumps, that are not good for environment, or for the tourist aspect in this field. (Stojic Karanovic, 2005, p. 49)

The Danube waterway is not only a connection with significant centers, but it has already become the primary goal, as well as an integrating factor in the tourist destinations and activities. Existing infrastructure facilities (marinas, piers and moorings) in this part of the Danube are not enough, making this attractive tourist potential underutilized and neglected. Border crossings and permanent docks in Prahovo and Veliko Gradiste, as well as border crossing and temporary seasonal dock in Donji Milanovac, represent an unused advantage of the region, resulting in a lag in comparison with other regions of the Danube. The most important prerequisite for the development of tourism on the Danube is, certainly, the establishment and

intensification of international river traffic (international tourist river White Fleet), which includes the restoration of our river fleet by purchasing smaller river vessels.

Railway Belgrade-Smederevo-Pozarevac-Majdanpek-Bor-Zajecar-Prahovo and Belgrade-Nis-Zajecar-Negotin, can provide the answers to some of the needs of tourists and have a peripheral character. Railway traffic in the future may gain in importance by establishing rail links with Romania, over the dam hydroelectric Djerdap II at Kuskaj, and modernization of the rolling stock and infrastructure, as well as the stock of slow lines and bottlenecks. (Vasic, B., S. Vojnovic, Stefanovic M., 2008)

The region is accessible to foreign tourists traveling on the international road Corridor 10, and bearing in mind the airport in Belgrade and Nis airport and those passengers who use air transportation.

Much of the accommodation facilities are mainly located in urban areas, and the entire background represents an under-exploited tourism, despite very attractive landscapes and traditional rural areas. However, in recent years there has been an increase in the number of categorized facilities in the local arts and crafts, including hand rural households, which directs tourists to culture, traditions and way of life in the countryside.

5.4. Institutional managerial aspects of tourism

Competitive activities in the field of tourism assume, in addition to being a key driver that determines the concept of competitiveness and development, and mutual partnership and interaction between the private and public sectors. This partnership should be developed from both sides and to the maximum transparent interests.

By establishing partnership and cooperation between the public and private sectors in the tourist area, it is possible to achieve cohesion in financial, technical and intellectual resources, which are the most effective influence on the success of the development and long-term competitiveness. In a situation where there is still a long-

term financial sources do not exist, in which public and private actors do not have enough power for the development incentive, there is an obvious need for specialized agencies that will directly enter into investment projects, but at the same time act as entrepreneurs themselves, which is in the interest of accelerating the development of tourism. (Vasic et al. 2008)

Without unification and a strong partnership scheme, it will not be possible, or it will be very difficult to move forward, and without those who also recognize the need for deep structural changes and respect the experience of the best exemplary practice, those who are willing to establish and support innovative solutions. Only on such a basis, we can build a minimum of necessary and possible supports for the dedicated and effective overcome of the current practice and taking responsibility for a step forward in establishing a new structure in the tourism industry.

Weaknesses of the management of the tourist destination of the Lower Danube: (Faculty of Economics in Belgrade, 2007)

- Insufficiently developed cooperation between the public and private sectors in the field of tourism;
- Insufficient cooperation between local governments and their tourism organizations in the development of tourism;
- Lack of expertise in management, sales, marketing and tourism planning;
- Insufficient development of knowledge and skills in the management system (hotels, motels, local tourism organizations and other stakeholders in the tourism industry).

The municipal tourism organizations of local governments do not have sufficient capacity for entrusting jurisdiction of management. In order to achieve a coordinated development of tourism we must have personnel, material and technical support to the local tourism organizations. In addition, in accordance with the provisions of the Law on Tourism for tourist destination of the Lower Danube, it is of extreme importance to start the initiative and procedures, of course, provided that they fulfill all prior conditions for the establishment of sub-regional tourism organizations.

Favorable circumstance is the fact that in all of the five municipalities have established municipal tourist organization and that their work is based on aid, mediation and coordination in the field of tourism development. These organizations work closely in several directions, and they are all directed to the creation of the tourism product and the implementation of tourism development. The system links these organizations moving in several directions: (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 118)

- Tourist Organization - the founder of municipalities involved in the management system development in the field of tourism
- Tourist Organization - municipalities - investors (foreign and domestic)
- Tourist Organization - TOS - Tourism Department of the Ministry of Economy and other related ministries
- Tourist Organization - catering and similar companies and institutions
- Tourist Organization - travel agency
- Tourist Organization - an information service that is in the function of information flow in multiple directions (internet, local, etc.).

Tourist organizations should increasingly shape the fundamentals of market-oriented management, with a wide range of services. The work of tourist organization must be enabled and promoted by their own income from the collection of tourist tax, tourist fee and others. This would overcome the current situation of a small number of tourist information centers and poorly organized tourist information activities. Apart from Majdanpek, other tourism organizations in this area do not have an organized service guide.

In the management of tourism this multiple nature of this industry is apparent, as well as the complexity of the relationship of stakeholders, which results in a far more difficult situation to establish a relationships among the many sectors and various subjects in tourism, more than in other areas. Functional and successful implementation of the approach of intelligent tourism destination management involves a high degree of trust among the main participants. From this we can

conclude that it is crucial to have the proper selection of the leaders of intelligent management.

The establishment of intelligent management of tourist space is another key quality factor, in addition to integrity management. Destinations such as the Lower Danube must fully adopt the approach of intelligent management as a model by as the public-private partnerships is, in order to effectively align strategy and destination management process and raising the value of experience with visitors. Intelligent control, in addition to prominent diversification experience of visitors, and directly related to the ability to compete. A key determinant of the competitiveness of tourist destinations is effective intelligent management. The possibility of adopting this approach allows the key requirement of the National Tourism Development Strategy - the establishment of partnerships between the public and private sectors. This is an obvious deficiency and weakness in the development of tourism flows in the whole tourist area of Serbia. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 122)

5.5. Options to improve tourism destination on the Lower Danube and SWOT analysis

For the current period of tourism development of the Danube, accommodation facilities such as hotel type were a typical basic construction, without an adequate number of hospitality ancillary facilities. If we look at forms of tourism that have been represented in previous years in the region, we can conclude that it was the youth and student tourism that was mostly prevalent, and then business tourism (conferences, seminars), tourism in the form of shorter stays (holidays and weekends), residential tourism mostly in the summer season, while nautical tourism had a negligible representation.

On the territory of Belgrade-Prahovo, the highest number of overnight stays has been realized in the territory of Donji Milanovac-Kladovo (60%). Such results were influenced by a huge tourist attraction Lepenski and the hydroelectric power plants Djerdap. In the area of the national park, tourism forms of special interests or active

holidays in nature are mostly implemented, individually or in small groups. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

SWOT analysis would contribute to further highlight the importance of sustainable tourism development strategy on this destination, which would be focused on promoting the benefits and their application, eliminating weaknesses, taking advantage of given opportunities and avoiding risks.

Strengths

1. Current tourist facilities (hotels, accommodation, restaurants) - The largest tourist facility in the Djerdap National Park, is the hotel Lepenski vir. Facilities for outdoor sports and swimming pool are available, mainly for hotel guests. In addition to this hotel, and the municipal tourism organizations have offered a program involvement of private accommodation. The national park has a large number of different restaurants and cafes that have different target groups. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 163)

It is recommended to continue improving the quality of supply of existing capacities and to encourage a greater number of residents to offer their rooms to tourists, which would strengthen the sustainable tourism offer of the area. Cooperation should be made possible at all levels in order to adequately take advantage of existing facilities.

2. The notion of the tourism of Djerdap which comes from the past - The Đerdapska gorge is an area that has had for decades- a long tourist value. Hotel Lepenski Vir has a long tradition in accepting sports teams and school trips. The hotel has attractive offers for groups, sports grounds for training, as well as a host of other benefits. Impressions of a large number of domestic and foreign tourists who visited Djerdap are positive.

It is recommended to use this fact to attract tourists, but also to experience a new spirit of Djerdap with accommodation which is in the homes of local people and packages sustainable tourism.

3. *Tourism Organizations* - In all municipalities in which the Djerdap National Park extends, there are tourist organizations. Cooperation exists with national and international institutions and many activities encourage local people to develop tourism. The development of plans and strategies for the development of tourism in the region included the municipal Tourism Organizations. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 164)

In order to provide effective sustainable development of tourism in the Djerdap National Park and throughout the Lower Danube region, it would be necessary to ensure the continued cooperation of all stakeholders in tourism development.

4. *Cooperation with other municipality's concerning the concept of the Danube Riviera* - For many years there has been an idea of a concept of the Danube Riviera. The Master plan for tourism destination of the Lower Danube has plans for infrastructure investments for the territory that is included in the municipalities of Kladovo, Majdanpek, Golubac, Veliko Gradiste, and it is on that basis that the municipalities should receive a port and supporting infrastructure for tourists. The investment plan is very ambitious and includes both public and private investment. The cooperation between municipalities in the field of tourism does exist, but the competition is very noticeable as well. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 165)

Taking into account that the development of the Danube Riviera leads to mass tourism development, it would be recommendable to develop a detailed assessment of the impact of development on the Riviera, the natural, cultural and socio-economic aspects, and based on the results of these assessments to undertake further steps.

5. *Cultural assets* - Djerdap National Park has a diverse and rich tradition and culture. Festivals and events are already attracting tourists to this area. The National Park has a very great potential for the sustainable use of cultural resources.

It is recommended that the numerous tourist packages are organized in order to promote the history and culture. Events are many, thus, the target group can be diverse. For the preservation of local traditions the idea of establishing workshops for the conservation of traditional crafts can be very reassuring.

6. The hospitality of the local population - is traditional in this area. Human migration, unemployment and isolation from major cities due to recent economic changes, gives the population an incentive for even closer contact with tourists. Of course, although welcoming locals in some cases are too suspicious of the new contacts. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 165)

It is recommended to organize long-term training programs for the local population and facilitate participation in the development of tourist packages.

7. Contacts with universities and scientific institutions – The Administration of National Park Djerdap, cooperates with scientific institutions and universities. Because of the research students from different faculties keep coming, Forestry, Biology, the Faculty of Sciences in Belgrade and the Faculty of Sciences in Novi Sad. Also, the students of the Faculty of Physical Education come to Donji Milanovac to participate in the practical education for many years now. In addition to students, and many university professors collaborate with these institutions. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 165)

In order to encourage sustainable development of tourism in the region the participation of representatives of various universities is recommended.

Weaknesses:

1. The problem of waste - this issue is important from many aspects. Through the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the Serbian government is working with local authorities to solve the problem, and the process of waste collection has been started.

It is recommended to increase education and awareness, which are very important for the local community. The primary goal of education should be the prevention of waste, ie, sustainable consumption, and only then solving the problem of waste.

2. Lack of education and low awareness of local people for tourism - local population lacks awareness about nature conservation, environmental protection and the importance of tourism. The main reason can be found in the level of education of inhabitants. Most of the population has completed primary or secondary school, and are employees mainly in agriculture, industry, or mining, without the possibility of continuing education.

It is recommended to organize study visits, seminars and training. Awareness can contribute to better education and diversity of experiences, as well as easier access to information.

3. The infrastructure problems - Lack of investment in the past has caused damage to buildings, roads, poor water supply, problems in the sewage system.

Despite the fact that local authorities are able to partly affect the increment of investment in the infrastructure, better cooperation between local authorities and relevant ministries is recommended.

4. The lack of tourist products - Although the possibilities for development of tourism are major, what is lacking is a continuous tourism product. Regions are visited by different groups of tourists: sports teams, students, families, cyclists, hunters, and increasingly individual tourists. Everybody can use the same program that includes visits to cultural and historical monuments. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 166)

It is recommended to support stakeholders to define the tourism product and the target group of tourists, because it is really necessary. Ideas exist, but are not aligned.

5. Poor knowledge of foreign languages - Russian language was the predominant foreign language in schools in Serbia for many years. Most of the population in this region has forgotten the knowledge due to the inability to use the language. Lately, the English language is dominant, but the older population does not speak that language. The problem with foreign languages is especially noticeable when international ships dock.

Given that a number of residents speak Romanian, it is recommended that part of the offer is directed toward the tourists from Romania. Young people who speak English would have to be more involved in events that provide opportunities for the use of this language.

6. The lack of visibility of the Public Enterprise of the National Park "Djerdap" - Public Company National Park "Djerdap" is administered by the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning. As a public company, National Park "Djerdap" is obliged to make its activities and work public. Employees are required to limit the operation of the local population, because of countermeasures, which can be a problem.

In order to improve the relationship between the local population and NP "Djerdap", a more frequent organization of meetings is recommended at which to present and explain the activities of the National Park "Djerdap"

7. Poor cooperation between stakeholders in the tourism industry - Lack of cooperation exists at many levels and lack of communication leads to stagnation on many issues. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a, p. 166)

It is recommended that the meetings should be held more frequently and to encourage cooperation and communication. Seminars and training sessions would be useful, to find interest in the participation of all stakeholders. Also important is the role of civil society, because they have no profitable or political interests.

5.6. The current and potential role of rural tourism in the development of the Lower Danube region as a tourist destination

In addition to the many goals of tourism development and the positive effects that it produces, if the development of rural tourism is analyzed on a deeper level, there are certain doubts about its viability. The most significant problem is the economic profitability of rural tourism services, since the demand is seasonal, capacity

utilization rates are low and the necessary investments for the creation and improvement of capacities for tourists and infrastructure are often high.

Households in the Lower Danube region rarely considered income from agriculture as the main one. Only 15% of households had more than 50% of income from agriculture, which is logical considering the available agricultural resources. Their income often comes from foreign grants, from family members working abroad. Households in the Lower Danube region are the least informed about the financial support in agriculture - more than half of the participants were not informed about the state system of support in agriculture, despite the fact that their lack of financial resources is the main limiting factor of development. (SeConS, 2011, p. 4)

In order for small farmers to be involved in the tourist industry, for the first time, they often need support from outside. To accommodate the needs of visitors, they may be in need of affordable credit and external expertise, which could help them to adopt appropriate standards. They need new skills on how to manage what they have to offer and provision of services for their visitors so that they would be pleased with the stay and would wish to return. External aid will probably be necessary, also in advertising so as to attract tourists from distant cities. Whatever intervention is needed, it is worth the effort because the integration of the primary processing sector and services creates a value chain that brings revenue and regenerate rural communities around the world. Planners and policy makers usually see rural tourism in economic terms, as a source of additional income on the farm or as a fully off farm activity. Farmers themselves are likely to see agriculture as their main economic activity, tourism as a secondary option for diversifying the economy of their farms, which can provide a market for their products, additional opportunity for employment of a family member, as well as the way to a better use of surplus space. (Milosevic Đ. S., Milovanović J., 2012, p. 41)

There are many differences between the municipalities of the Lower Danube where the strategic investments in infrastructure and other investments have been realized, like Golubac and Majdanpek. In these two municipalities, in addition to a significant improvement of the material base of tourism development there has been a significant impact in improving the offer. In addition to increasing the competitiveness of the

tourism market of these municipalities, a positive attitude has been noticed on rural tourism, which is the opposite case in relation to Pozarevac and VelikoGradiste.

Majdanpek Municipality is investing in all segments of the public and tourism infrastructure and attaches importance to the development of rural tourism. The proof of that are the investments in roads, public infrastructure, but much more testifying to that fact are the investments in tourism infrastructure which is visible through a better organization of facilities for housing and public buildings. In Pozarevac there is a reserved stance on the development of rural tourism, because of the natural and economic characteristics of the municipality, which are to some extent in conflict with rural tourism. In VelikoGradiste tourism development is based on investment in the Silver Lake, which is demoralizing to the rural hosts that deal with rural tourism, so the households that offer rural tourism practically do not exist. (SeConS, 2011, p. 5)

Lower Danube Region, in terms of local partnerships, is poorly developed, with the exception of Majdanpek. Local partnerships do not exist in its classic form. Good cooperation between rural tourist household exists in the municipality of Majdanpek. Just for this municipality it can be said that it has a developed local partnership. In Majdanpek and Golubac there been partner investments in tourism infrastructure from Serbia's relevant ministries and the EU, but these relationships can be classified as local partnerships, given the capital investment in tourist infrastructure which cannot be realized without a solid partnership between all actors.

In other municipalities, the local partnerships have not been significantly expressed. Not one relationship between private actors has been mentioned, which is an indicator of weak local partnerships.

Local products are of great importance for increasing the attractiveness of rural tourism. But despite that, the connection of the production and service sectors on the local level is very poor. In the Lower Danube region there is an initiative for all of the households offering accommodation in rural tourism, to be equipped with cabinets that hold local products.

One of the projects that have been organized offered training in the field of making pottery and was intended to encourage to renewal of the craft of pottery as a way of providing an authentic local dishes for serving food and drinks, as well as the packaging of local products and souvenirs offer. In addition, this project has created the conditions for the creation of a new tourism product for entertaining tourists, guests in rural tourism, as well as one of the first joint activities and partnerships for the promotion of the new brand "Djerdap" within the framework of rural tourism in the region of the Lower Danube. (Bošković, T., 2010, p. 126)

Fishermen event "Alaska evenings" in Veliko Gradiste is just one of the local traditional events that celebrate fishing and fish as part of the traditional economy of the Danube region. Perhaps the most famous one in Tekija, dedicated to hunting for catfish in the traditional fishing village of the Lower Danube, in the area of the Djerdap gorge.

The process of identifying the geographical origin of a product can strengthen the capacity of the territory to attract consumers and tourists in the area of production and offer a different basket of local products and services based on the use of local resources. As part of the extended territorial strategy the product with a geographical indication has a contributions and attractiveness of the territory. Important tourist sites and attractions like museums, archaeological sites, some areas, ski resorts, etc., can contribute to the marketing of products with designation of origin. Such a strategy requires effective collective coordination and synergies. Determination of brands in the region and products for better marketing of the territory in terms of tourism could be in this case considered as one of the means of implementation of successful rural development based on the field, of the most promising integrated approach to this issue which was recently promoted by the European Commission, which is on track to be implemented in Serbia. The archaeological site Lepenski Vir is one of the main attractions of rural areas of the Lower Danube, as well as the site of world importance.

Wine from the Rajačka region is good and recognizable in the market, regardless of the fact that the production is small on the local, let alone the national level. Clients recognize Rajačke wine as the original domestic product, which connects with the

traditional skills of the Rajac wine makers, the specific mode of production based on natural processes and associated with the famous "pimnice" attractive settlements made of a stone wine cellars - "villages without chimneys, where only wine lives" and favorable surroundings/ land and insolation where their grapes are produced.

The reputation and stable good quality of wine has provided income for generations for the Rajac population, and it include those who have had the honor to export their wines to France and other Western countries and win medals at international exhibitions, such as the one in London. During the attack of phylloxera on the European vineyards, traders have found Rajacke wines to be the most similar to those of France, and Bordeaux, which is on the same latitude as Rajac, has started to be export them from Rajca to the European clientele.

The tradition of natural wine production, which uses the old traditional method of processing, the natural yeast on the surface of grapes, old methods that provide healthy barrels that can last more than a hundred years and maturing of wine without temperature control in a naturally stable climate stone cellars, etc., and history winemaking represent valuable Serb intangible cultural heritage - traditions and living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to offspring. Its material form - unique in Serbia lives life through the complex wine cellars in Rajac vineyards in the village of Rajac and neighboring Rogljevo and Smedovac (where a small number of cellars has been integrated into the village and not separated as in Rajcu and Rogljevo) and protected as a Serbian cultural treasure. Today pimnice and Rajacke wine attract interest of tourists as much as consumers of local wine. The custom of serving food to local wine buyers has been carried out for at least 6 generations with wine tasting today is part of the tourist offer. (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 43)

In relation to the production of wine in Rajcu, national institutions have their own requirements - Institute for Protection of Monuments of Culture of Serbia insists that pimnice should be kept as they have been, with no change in the structure of materials, etc.; agricultural legislation, on the other hand, imposes opposing requirements - changes in architecture and equipment and processing procedures ... to accommodate regulations identical to those required by a modern winery. Traditional

small wine producers from Rajačke field, similar to other wine regions in Serbia (or even more, because at least in other regions of the old wine cellars are not subject to the rules on the protection of cultural heritage), suffered between the two sides. Both are killing one last chance for survival of the Rajac population that is engaged in the production of wine and partly tourism and almost has no other source of income.

Preserving the cellar and wine-making tradition of community of Rajac vineyards is possible if national legislation on the production of wine obtains components that regulate the traditional wine producing in small scale. Such practices exist in the EU, so there is no obstacle to obtaining a permit for the derogation from the imposition of rules for the industrialized production to the small wine producers, or even the special rules for their type. Using this good practice in Serbia as well, can develop appropriate legislation so that small traditional wineries continue to produce, and not only survive but to prosper and employ more local people in rural tourism. This will create an opportunity for the completion of all other activities that are in the protection of Rajac cellars as a world heritage site under UNESCO. Piminice are on the initial list for the implementation of the process of protecting the world's cultural heritage as Negotinpiminice. Otherwise, if the small production is pushed out, the other owners of the cellars are likely to leave their production as their cellars will fail. The damage for the local tourism and rural development will be irreparable.

Traditional wine production in Rajcu provides income to local rural community as much as in some other traditional wine regions in Serbia, and they share the same problems. They are too small for large investments, but have neither the capacity nor the intention to increase their production or to compete with industrially produced wines. They do not want to register the winery and destroy their cellars because of their attractiveness in tourism depends on the living tradition of wine production in a traditional setting and selling their products and services. (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 57)

The inclusion of educational programs, entertainment, attractions, recreation and sport in the local tourist offer is just as important for the enrichment and diversity of rural tourist offer as the offer of accommodation and food. This offer must be designed so as to satisfy the needs of different target groups - individuals, couples and families,

adults and children, young and old, active and adventurous as well as those who demand peace for the holidays or those with other special requirements - which can not be achieved anywhere else than in the pristine nature or peace of a remote village. This means that offer activities in the rural environment must use all available opportunities for their creation, cultural and natural heritage, attractions stemming from the way of life of the rural population, their habits, beliefs, traditions, to use their good ideas, and to copy or adopt those that are effective, but are the product of others.

"EuroVelo" is a project of the European Cyclists' Federation (ECF), through which we can develop the network of cycle paths through Europe. It consists of 12 transcontinental routes that go all over the continent, a distance of over 60,000 kilometers. The route "Euro Velo 6" connects the Atlantic coast to the Black Sea and is moving along the Danube. Through Serbia the Euro Velo route 13 goes through (Barents Sea - Black Sea), known as the "Iron Curtain", because a good part of the route leads along the borders divided Europe during the Cold War. Serbia also joined the project that includes the 11th route. Cycling tourism is on the rise in Europe, and for cyclists accommodation in rural tourism is very favorable, but in the paths Euro Vela holdings that offer accommodation and meals can expect better sales capacity. (Milosevic Dj. S., J. Milovanovic, 2012, p. 63)

Water activities, including nautical tourism, are also in its infancy in Serbia, but it is clear that this type of activity is an attraction for tourists who prefer accommodation in rural tourism much more than any other type of tourist services of this type. For now, the best conditions for the development of nautical tourism is held by Danube, but lakes and smaller rivers in Serbia also have a perspective in this, if the adequate infrastructure is developed.

A necessary condition for the future development of rural tourism in the area of the Lower Danube is, as already mentioned, external aid. IPA Cross-border program (IPA CBC) in parts of Serbia who fulfill the conditions for use of these funds is an important and prompt financial instrument to launch rural development projects. However, the problem with the CBC is that the project applications and the procedure is very complicated and financial management a heavy burden (seeking the

large amount of their own participation and pre-financing), which makes it, in addition to the local administration, other sectors (NGOs, local communities) practically impossible to apply. The development of cross-border cooperation, joint and participatory preparation / production projects, as well as the decision-making process that is shared with neighbors is an important exercise for actors in rural development as the investments that can be made using CBC funds. However, it seems that without cross-border institutions it will not be possible to provide long-term sustainability of cross-border initiatives. In their absence and without the involvement of other sectors in addition to the public, which is currently the most successful in winning grants, cooperation can only be short-term, mainly socio-cultural character, rather than the achievement of socio-economic added value. (Boskovic, T., 2010, p. 127)

6. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT OF TOURIST DESTINATIONS LOWER DANUBE REGION

6.1. Problems of sustainable development in the Lower Danube region and plans for solving them

Tourism development based on the irresponsible use of resources can not last forever, but that does not jeopardize the capacity of the area. In order to achieve sustainable growth, the one that is aligned with the limits of nature and the needs of the people, it must be provided the link between tourism and environmental policies in all sectors of the economy and at all levels of state administration. Developed countries increasingly spread awareness that economic growth is compatible with preservation of natural resources, ie. that a healthy economy and a healthy environment follow each other. Tourism is not only helped by healthy environment, but also by preservation the area with well-planned tourism development. Countries with high average standard of living and strong economies, countries that were industrialized, tend to spend more money and time on solving environmental problems and therefore have a better environmental situation.

The primary goal of sustainable tourism development must be to combine a sophisticated, spacious concentrated and selective tourism which will provide sufficient funds for the improvement and preservation of the environment, and not, as is the case now - spatially dispersed, massive, extensive, tourism at any cost . One of the important issues of sustainable tourism development is limiting the spread and pressures that can be performed on certain environmentally sensitive areas; so, in this sense determining carrying capacity of the area appears as an important instrument.

In order to hit the target, which includes faster and better development of tourism in this area, the Master plan for the development of the Lower Danube is made. That plan covers all the disadvantages and advantages of the region, as well as the plans and proposals for its further development. (Faculty of Economics, 2007)

Table 3. Analysis of the current state of resources at the destination Lower Danube

	Disadvantages	Priority		
		Low	Medium	High
1.	Inadequate accommodation facilities that do not meet international standard			X
2.	Natural and cultural and historical resources have not been sufficiently used in the creation of the tourism product			X
3.	River traffic on the Danube			X
4.	The lack of river infrastructure to create products related to the river			X
5.	The availability of road corridors is limited due to the poor quality of roads			X
6.	The lack of private initiatives for investments			X
7.	The lack of complementary offers			X
8.	Very low level of quality control procedures in the context of accommodation	X		
9.	The low level of professionalism of human resources and lack thereof			X
10.	Insufficient protection of space			X
11.	The lack of an integrated tourist information system			X
12.	The gastronomic offer is not sufficiently diversified and specialized		X	
13.			X	
	The absence of a common marketing approach of the destinations			

Source: Faculty of Economics, Master plan of tourism destination Lower Danube, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, p. 324

On the basis of the identified deficiencies in the region of the Lower Danube, programs for their elimination are formulated. A list of plans and actions for improving the situation in the Lower Danube region includes the following: (Faculty of Economics, 2007)

- Program of creation complementary offer
- Program for advancement and development of accommodation capacities

- Program for improving availability with land corridor
- program for development of the tourist information system
- program for planing and protection fo area
- program for activating the Danube river channel
- program for conversion of old town centres
- program for establishing parking and intern mobility
- program for integrating the tourism labeling system
- using the public services and infrastructure
- touristic quality system
- using the system of exemptions and incentives
- Development of small and medium enterprises.

For the improvement of all the items listed, greatest responsibility should be assumed by the municipality, ie. the development plan should be first launched by a local government. If there would be a better organization, cohesion and cooperation among municipalities, and an incensement in investment, a great progress in the field of regional development and tourism of the entire area could be achieved.

The processes in the system environment, which are important for the development of sustainable tourism in this area, have to be monitored in terms of the local population during the planning, supervision, construction, maintenance, management and modification of basic projects and initial conditions. The result should be to the mutual satisfaction - and receptive and initiatives.

Travel receptive can not only be lead to economic results achieved by the development of tourism, but must take into account the numerous interdependencies of space and tourism. Based on this, conclusions can be drawn about the need for a controlled and planned tourism development, which should not jeopardize the attractive attributes (natural, cultural and historical) but must contribute to their improvement, because only as such cannot form the basis of bids. To avoid negative consequences, the tourism planning is essential, which means that the ratio of environment and tourism takes the central place in terms of constraints on growth and

development of tourism activities and the definition of guidelines cannot be lead only by economic results achieved by the development of tourism, (Maxine et al. 2011)

6.2. Possibilities of development different types of supply and new tourism products

If we take into account the fact that tourism is now transforming the industry of vacations into the industry of experience, as reflected in a constant increase in the number of tourists who aim to dynamic vacation, it is important to make tourism development strategy in this area. Keeping pace with the new trends of development, it is necessary to adjust and improve the strategic way of existing forms of tourist offer at the Lower Danube, and to develop new products that are adapted to the needs of modern tourist demand.

By analyzing all forms of tourism that have took place in the tourist area of the Lower Danube in previous years, the conclusion could be made that he was most prevalent youth and student tourism, business tourism (conferences, seminars), tourism shorter stays (holidays and weekends), the highest in residential tourism summer season, while the nautical tourism is negligible presented. As the predominant forms of tourism, based on the available capacities and their supporting facilities, the following are identified.

Table 4. The major forms of tourism in the Lower Danube

Recreational classes and school trips	during fly season, with various forms of water sports (swimming, fishing, sailing) and sport activities in the summer season, and in winter mainly during the winter school holidays
recreational classes and school trips	during the off-season (April-May, October-November)
preparation of athletes	visits related to sports events
congress tourism	congresses, conferences, seminars, business meetings

Source: Faculty of Economics, Master plan of tourism destination Lower Danube, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, p. 328

The Lower Danube area, with all its natural, geographical and cultural and historical values opens the possibility to develop new types of tourism that could valorize those values.

Eco-tourism has expanded to "travel with the natural element" from one insignificant base "environmentally and socially responsible travel." In the broadest sense, eco-tourism offers possibilities to finance the protected zones, as well as development opportunities, but requires differentiation into small groups with special interests and the large groups of those who does not associate vacation on the beach with a one-day visit nature reserves, as s mandatory content of their experiences on vacation.

Cultural tourism – The role of the WTO is that there is a choice between small market niches that have a special interest and big groups in its program holiday, which otherwise has a different focus, including a visit to cultural monuments.

Thematic tourism - It is focused on a very specific interests and includes a relatively small market. Specific interests have their advantages, but they also have other aspects, such as climate or location. Thematic tourism, which is focused on three large "E" - Excitement, Entertainment and Education - could act as a catalyst for the development of the Lower Danube.

Adventure tourism - represents a small market, which recorded growth in the last period. Bearing in mind that almost every corner of the country is examined, this tourist group prefers to explore new tourist destinations (rivers, lakes, sea depths, mountain tops, etc.).

Cruise - The main advantage of this type of tourism is that it is possible to see a lot in a short period ("time poor - money rich"). Such characteristics other ways of traveling can not offer.

In the future, touristic destinations Lower Danube should be a comprehensive tourist area that brings together different experiences, initiatives and actors of the wider area. In terms of geographic area in the space between markets and products, market segments and sets of products, it may constitute a competitive unit that is oriented to

the future development processes in tourism. Globally speaking, it would be created a conglomerate of products and factors on this recreation area, such as infrastructure and upgrading its services, air conditioning, cultural and natural resources. Lower Danube as a tourist destination, would conceptually included tangible elements: monuments, restaurants, hotels, beaches, and intangible elements: management and image. From the results of the management of all these aspects and expectations of tourists is directly dependent on the quality of the destination. (Amidžić, 2011)

Lack of the Danube transport links and the lack of marina, pier and mooring for small river vessels, is the main limiting factor in intensifying the development of tourism. For sightseeing tourism special importance are cultural monuments, but they lack adequate tourism infrastructure with the necessary facilities, news programs and suitable signalisation. Ethnographic and anthropogenic values are authentic and typical for the tourist offer and they are a significant tourist value. As for the type of settlement in the hinterland of urban areas, the farming village inhabited by the rural population are presented, and with a little change, more comfortable conditions it could become a special tourist offer of rural tourism.

The basis of valorization of the existing value of the Danube and this region are stationary stay, sport and recreation, transit, nautics, hunting and fishing tourism, events, school trips and excursions, primarily on Silver Lake, but also to visit other natural and cultural values.

Those could be very significant sources of foreign tourist demand in the tourist offer in this area, if an attractive tourist product is properly formed and market positioned.

Particular attention should be paid to the need for strategic guidance to new market segments, both domestic and foreign tourists. There are special opportunities to attract tourists who have special interests. On the world market, even in the context of our country, the demand for specific types of tourism has a constant tendency to increase. In the area of the Lower Danube the interests are in ethnology, archeology, fishing, hunting, staying in the countryside, sports activities, hiking and others. In this area, the important advantages by forming specific products could be realized. Those products are: (JP NP Đerdap, 2012)

- Activities in the unique natural ambient NP Đerdap – watching the flora and fauna, walking, collecting mushrooms and medical and aromatic plants,
- tours to the archaeological contents (the remains of Roman settlements)
- tours for caves enthusiasts (Gradašnica, Rajkova pećina, Valja Prerast)
- panning for gold in the traditional way on the river Pek
- eco-tours - tours related to the preservation of natural values.

Nautical tourists, whether they are individuals or belong to different forms of organized tourist traffic, represent a new market segment, which can be a very good source of demand in the coming period (especially from the perspective of potential consumption). In recent years a growing trend in interest in cruising the rivers in the European market is presented, and the Danube and the Iron Gate area are one of the most attractive destinations in Europe. Now the big foreign ships, with hundreds of tourists, cruising along the Danube, but they are not visiting other tourist destinations in our country, with the exception of Belgrade. (JP NP Đerdap, 2012)

Provided that certain infrastructure limitations that relate to the landing of ships and acceptance of a larger number of tourists, can be overcome, this segment of tourism which has huge financial abilities, could have very significant economic effects in the future. Restrictions are valid regulations concerning the procedure accepts these categories of tourists at border crossings. According to existing regulations, it is necessary to re customs and passport control at each landing ship. This significantly hinders the ability to provide any tourist services, and the majority of ships are oriented only on landing in Belgrade. One of the conditions for activating the potential of this market segment would certainly be modified legislation. It is understood that the basic assumption offer attractive and authentic programs that would attract visits of organized groups (one-day or half-day excursions). Such attractiveness may be formed at the archaeological site Viminacium, which belongs to this area, but it would have to provide a substantially new quality in the presentation of cultural and historical heritage.

Similar problems are present when it comes to individual nautical tourists. As part of promotional activities, as well as in the formation of leads, must be taken into account the specific characteristics of demand in this segment. The initial step was the construction of appropriate receiving facility for marine vessels, and the activities should include other elements that are designed to this group of tourists (workshop for repairing boats, petrol stations on the coast, commercial buildings, restaurants, etc.).

The basis of environmental and tourism excellence of Danube are wetlands abundance and diversity of flora and fauna. In these marshes there is primordial habitat of migratory birds, which participate in the great migrations from south to north and from north to south every year. Danube marshes are a natural reservoir of food for waterfowl and they are natural hatchery fish of many species of the Danube. At the same time, they are the richest hunting ground wild boar, deer (deer and marsh), foxes, wolves, wild cats, rabbits and other small and large game. A special particularity of wetlands is diversity of vegetation, which is in a function of balance the need of wildlife, fish and birds that is perfect harmony that prevails in the unique marsh ecosystem. (JP NP Djerdap, 2012)

On the islets in wetland areas can be organized many tourism activities: EKO safari (ecological research sites that contain cells of each individual wetland), hunting safari (which exists in specially organized hunting grounds), fishing safari (in certain areas), small nautics (which includes navigation in rowboats to paddle around the marsh), excursions with ecological and educational type with vessels that have electric drive (for silent movement of wetland management) and the channels of the shelters in the zone of the target location for tourists hikers, bird watching (the observation of attractive species of high marsh vegetation , swamp flora, birds, their nests and clusters, rare specimens of wild animals.

It is necessary to set up a supervisor and a tour guide service, rescue service, set up a system of marking boards and information boards in order to successfully organize those functions tourist attractions. It is also necessary, as is the case with all protected natural goods, to establish policies, guidelines and sanctions for those who violate the established regime of usage wetland areas. The main prerequisite for introducing tourists to sensitive wetland areas is mandatory organization group, guided by

professional guides through the wetland, time precisely determined stay in the marsh and very strictly controlled number of visitors. Staying on the river islands in the wetlands should be limited to a one-day visit without accommodation (except safari tours that are visiting with a guided tour and camping at the designated places). Also, it is significant that on the territory of wetlands must not plan and build accommodation and other facilities that may endanger the ecological balance of the wetland with noise, waste water and substances necessary transport and others. All objects with the functions that are essential for tourism should be located near and downstream of the swamp zone, or on the coast, which is located in the zone protected from floods, where there is a possibility of building an entertainment and sports courts, horseback riding, marina with winter quarters , nautical services. Also, it is necessary to achieve a connection with the surrounding villages and rural households, as they will be future carriers providing accommodation and food. (JP NP Đerdap, 2012)

As the wetlands and river islands are one of very important segments of the tourist offer of the Danube at the European and world markets, the business of financing and supervision of development and measures to protect wetland zones are part of the obligation of all Danube countries, including European countries and the countries of the European Union. This is one of the essential preconditions for the spatial integration of the Danube countries.

Table 5. The establishment of the basic aspects of supply and new tourism products

Improve the basic aspects of the tourist offer in existing and essential aspects of the tourist offer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ pupillary and youth tourism ➤ Residence tourism throughout the year ➤ leisure and sports ➤ shorter stays tourism ➤ excursion tourism ➤ business tourism, with new contents and programs
Ecotourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ The advantage of the area of the National park and the region on the Danube; hiking and construction ➤ footpath ➤ residential facility in nature ➤ eco-lodging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> -adaptation ➤ log cabins ➤ water mills ➤ hunting lodges
Rural tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ In the preserved and authentic rural households with respect to to the elements and standards of quality accommodation and facilities categorized as homemade ➤ the creation of a special and significant clientele public offering in the region. as one of the best in the country
Hunting tourism	
Fishing tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ tourist offer dedicated to fishermen for active holidays in nature with infrastructure, services, equipment and services in a unique and attractive fishing territory

Source: Faculty of Economics, Master plan of tourism destination Lower Danube, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, p. 205

6.3. Djerdap National Park as the backbone of the Lower Danube destination

It is necessary to accurately determine the strengths, weaknesses and potential of the Lower Danube, so the tourism product of the region could be improved. The practice so far has been such that these data are counted for each municipality, but in order to better comprehend all the factors, the best thing to do would be basing on the improvement plans based on the example of the Strategy Development NP Djerdap (Economical Faculty, 2010)

Preparing of this plan has started from the basic needs. First, the assessment of development opportunities has been done, and then has been established the economic and social conditions of the National Park Đerdap. Then the current situation has been viewed in the marketing and the SWOT analysis has been made. Certain strategic goals and vision for future development are determined. In the end, the main priorities of action have been defined. This could be the basis on which to justify some of the plans for the development of the Lower Danube.

Djerdap gorge's area possesses tourist value which is known for decades. Based on the SWOT analysis of the Djerdap National Park, two main disadvantages of this turistic area could be singled out:

1. absence of a plan of carrier capacity in the case of a sudden increase of the number of tourists - Tourist Organization of Serbia and the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Department of Tourism are responsible for planning and investing in tourism in Djerdap region, and at the same time the problem of carrying capacity of this extremely valuable region devoted to insignificant attention.

The co-operation with other stakeholders is preferable, in order to define carrying capacity of the Djerdap National Park, and in order to continue with the planning. Given that investments in tourism development will be increasing, the private sector will be able to invest in tourist infrastructure (restaurants, hotels ...).

2. the concept of sustainable tourism - The term "sustainable tourism" sounds confusing for those unfamiliar with the concept of sustainable development. This concept is poorly adopted at the national level. For example, in the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia, the term "sustainable tourism" is not even mentioned, while the terms of ecotourism, rural tourism and ethno tourism are used. The problem exists not only in terminology, but also in the concept of eco and rural.

A good example of materials that could be used in the interpretation of the concept of sustainable tourism are brochures, which are dealing with this problem and issued by the civil society organizations. Promotion is very important for the development of sustainable tourism, and should be strengthened at the national level. It would be desirable to organize seminars and training on sustainable tourism and sustainable development.

In accordance with the provisions of the Spatial Plan of Djerdap National Park, located in the natural reserve of the national park will be implemented measures to protect natural resources and quality as the natural values.

Spatial plan of national park this natural reserve is divided into zones of different protection regimes in relation to the value of cultural and natural heritage.. (The RS Official Gazette 16/09)

First - degree zone protection regime is spread at about 2,664.26 hectares, which is 4.20% of the total area of the National Park. This zone is under strict protection of special cultural and natural values of particular significance, which includes the areas around the monuments of culture: the specific nature and landscape of the continent, nature reserves, viewpoints, natural monuments, all rare and endangered animal and plant species along with their habitats. In the zones with the first level of protection implemented under special circumstances measures of protection, education and public presentations, scientific research

Second-degree zone protection regime extends to approximately 15,262 hectares, ie. 24% of the total area of the National Park and include areas that ensure the protection of the values in the regime of first instance, the protection of particularly significant parts of nature (specific ecosystems, landscape and other values) and the protection of natural areas around immovable cultural property. Within the zone under a second degree of protection, under the terms, the education, research, sports and recreation, water management and transport, forestry and agriculture with animal husbandry, the presentation of the National Park could be occurred.

Third-degree zone protection regime is spread over an area of 45 682.02 hectares, ie. 71.8% of the total area of Djerdap NP and include parts of the NP protection zone outside the protection of the first and second degree to the activities of sport, recreation and tourism. The third level of protection covered by the forests of the first and second level of protection and agricultural areas (pastures, meadows and fields, etc.); mixed neighborhoods, villages and hamlets, construction areas of towns, tourist centers and zones; transport, telecommunications, energy and water infrastructures; individual objects agriculture, forestry, fishing, hunting, etc; Facilities temporary mining of raw materials (for a limited period at the site, according to the Regional Plan for the National Park) and zone specific purposes if they are located outside the first and second level of protection.

6.3.1. Priority actions for the development of Djerdap National Park

The activities on the development and protection of the National Park Đerdap, in accordance with the established goals, must respect the following general conditions: (JP NP Đerdap, 2012)

- Other activities within the NP Djerdap (management of hunting and fishing fauna, forests, conducting activities in the NP Djerdap, use of space and other resources) must be harmonized with the priority program activities in the promotion, preservation and protection of natural and cultural-historical values and characteristics representative of the NP Djerdap;
- protective zone of the National Park and its development must comply with the limit capacities of utilization of created and natural values of the National Park, by supporting the development of sport, recreation and tourism, agriculture, forestry and other activities that are consistent with the functions of the National Park;
- educational and scientific-research activities Djerdap NP should contribute to the affirmation of cultural and natural heritage of Serbia;
- ensuring the proper implementation of the prescribed protection regime (conditions and measures of protection and use of the NP), and depending on the function and purpose of certain parts of the field in certain zones of protection;
- Seek to improve the quality of life of residents by raising levels of quality and types of services, municipal standards;
- Providing planned construction of a building that should be harmonized with the obligations to maintain the quality of the environment and natural resources that respects the tradition of architecture and works to preserve ethnic heritage.

The activities to promote and protect these values in the area of the National Park, and in accordance with the appropriate degree of protection of the NP Djerdap and general conditions of protection of natural values, nature and immovable cultural property, the measures to ensure are implemented:

- protection, conservation and improvement of biodiversity, specific cultural and natural values of the National Park Đerdap, individual phenomenon of cultural-historical and natural values of large and exceptional importance to the localities and the regime of protection zones in the first degree;
- Integral protection of cultural property, ecosystems, certain species of flora and fauna and their habitats;
- requirements for rehabilitation and reconstruction of degraded and altered parts of nature with the aim of improving the quality of the environment of the National Park;
- directing irrationally used natural resources to the extent and in a manner that ensures their preservation, sustainability, preservation of the landscape character of landscapes, ecosystem stability, and strict compliance with the conditions under 1)

6.3.2. Decorating and presentation of certain zones and localities

By projects and programs on the regulation, protection and presentation of certain natural resources in the area of NP Djerdap, protection measures will be established, as well as methods and conditions for planning and presentation, with a certain pace of their implementation.

In the first place the programs for the protection and regulation of nature reserves Lepenski vir, Čoka Njaltá with pedestrians, Golubački city, Canyon River Boljetinska with Ridge, landscapes with special natural characteristics Mali and Veliki Strbac should be prepared, and the corresponding protection zone in the first degree of cultural property of extreme importance - Trajan tabla I and II, Lepenski vir, Golubački city and Diana. (Službeni glasnik RS 16/09)

6.4. Marketing concept i Strategic of developmen of the Lower Danube

National Tourism Organization has an important role in the coordination and harmonization of all the participants in the creation of adequate tourism product, as

well as in tourism development at the local, regional and national levels. Conceptual, global framework of marketing management at the level of a tourist destination should include the following elements: (JP NP Đerdap, 2012)

- formulating objectives, mission and guidelines;
- analysis of internal resources and situation analysis;
- defining appropriate strategies;
- formulating strategic and tactical moves, which are related to each individual marketing instruments;
- coordination with the management systems of support and control activities.

Formulating objectives, mission and policies is the next step in the management of tourism destination marketing. If there is no mission or purpose that seeks to reach a destination tourism development in this particular field goal as the main factor that has a tourism destination ahead at the long-term purpose of the VOA of its own, and guidelines in this development, there can be no real decisions on the strategic selection and design of the organization destination.

As a unique spatial geographical area, a tourist destination Lower Danube should be a comprehensive tourist area that brings together a variety of factors, experiences and initiatives of immediate, as well as from the wider environment. This is a destination in which are integrated market segments and meetings products and may represent a very promising actor competition, comprehensively oriented development processes in the future of tourism. Destination Lower Danube would create target product integrity and coherence of the factors of tourism development (air, services, infrastructure and upgrade its natural and cultural resources). This tourist area conceptually would conceive and would include not only the material elements (monuments, restaurants, hotels, beaches), but also the intangible elements (integrated management and image). From the results of the management of all these aspects and expectations of tourists, the quality of the destination is directly dependent.

Destination Lower Danube, attractive, prosperous and distinctive tourist destination of Serbia, should create, starting from the vision of the future development of tourism, a

wide range of objectives which leads to an increase tourism and sustainable planning in this area, as well as the effective inclusion of the local and foreign market. Accordingly, and satisfying the basic criteria (motivating factor reality, distinctiveness from competitors) the definition of Mission is formulated: „ *Lower Danube, a tourist destination on the competitive tourism market, a destination of sustainable development with stable growth, based on knowledge and of innovation, with quality products and services required in the market, profitable for those who create them..* “ (Faculty of Economics,2007a)

Strategic objectives for the development of tourism destination Lower Danube were determined on the basis of established goals of sustainable tourism development, adopted by the World Tourism Organization (WTO), as follows: (Economical Faculty, 2007a)

1. Economic viability - means ensuring the survival and competitiveness of individual businesses and entrepreneurs, as well as destinations in the continent, in order to proceed with further prosperity.
2. Regional and local prosperity - means increasing the income of local community development of individual tourist facilities and increasing the level of consumption that is generated by tourists.
3. New and better jobs - means better working conditions, higher wages, better conditions for the expertise, personnel selection.
4. Social equality - means providing social and economic benefits for the poor, (employment, income generation and service delivery).
5. Meeting the needs of visitors.
6. Local and regional control - implies the involvement of local communities in decision-making on everything you need to undertake further sustainable development, as well as their involvement in the local and regional planning in tourism.
7. The well-being of the region - means the possibility of access for all citizens while avoiding resource degradation and exploitation on any ground which results provides a better quality of life.
8. Cultural richness - means the transfer of heritage and respect for tradition while preserving the authenticity and respect for diversity.

9. Physical Integrity - means the prevention of visual and physical degradation of the environment.
10. Biological diversity of the region - provides for the protection and preservation of the environment from a variety of harmful effects, even from those that tourism brings by its own development.
11. Efficient use of resources in the region - involves reducing exploitation of non renewable energy resources in developing.
12. Healthy environment - means that air, water and land must be uncontaminated by generating waste materials from tourist facilities and from tourists.

And the guidelines also derive entirely from concrete goals and mission, and in fact represent their operationalization. We can say that the guidelines are a quantified target, that it must be consistent with the mission to tourist enterprise, and with the goal. The next stage in the management of tourism destination marketing or business is the construction of strategic alternatives and their selection. Through strategic actions and strategic planning we can reduce or completely eliminate the gap between the demands of the environment and the potential of companies, especially if we consider the turbulent changes in the tourism market.

When conducting studies and development plans of the destination, based on the methodological framework, they were able to identify the following areas of regional development strategy: (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

1. Planning, Spatial Planning and booking of tourist areas of the region - For this area there are already significant planning acts: Detailed Regulation for Lepenski vir (in implementation), the construction and renovation of the tourist complex Beli bagrem (in realization), organizations for cultural and historical sites, as well as the act that is proposing and declaring the region for tourist area of importance for the development of tourism. There is also a preliminary design project for the revitalization of the Golubac Fortress.
2. Development of tourism quality systems in the region - the establishment of basic quality standards and procedures for their implementation in key segments of planning tourist products and services, as well as the tourism infrastructure in the region.

3. Improving and upgrading of the accommodation facilities in the region.
4. Establishing and the development of the tourism information system in the region.
5. Determining of the institutional framework of destination management - the formation of destination management organizations, or regional tourism organizations.
6. The enhancement of public services and tourist services in the region.
7. Accessibility and availability of the region
8. Tourism infrastructure - design and construction of adequate infrastructure in the National Park, on the Danube, within the region, planning and preparation of the sites planned for the stay of tourists in nature, fishing and hunting, regulation of galleries, museums, cultural centers, lighting important sites and improve public lighting.
9. Development of new tourist products and additional tourist offer of the region
10. Transport and Tourism signaling of the region
11. Education and upgrading skills of the staff
12. Development of entrepreneurship in tourism
13. Promotion and marketing of the region - is necessary, first, to establish a system of marketing in the region, then for the region to establish a tourism brand, positioned as the most attractive destination in Serbia, and eventually create a comprehensive range of tourist values.

6.5. The positioning of the Lower Danube to the tourist market

The main segment and the essence of the tourism product represents a spatial component. It is particularly evident in the disadvantaged countries, which are characterized by significant natural and cultural resources on the one hand, and the absence of the tourism system on the other. Without spatial component, taking into account its engagement, design, stabilization and, of course, valorization, the tourism product would have no basis.

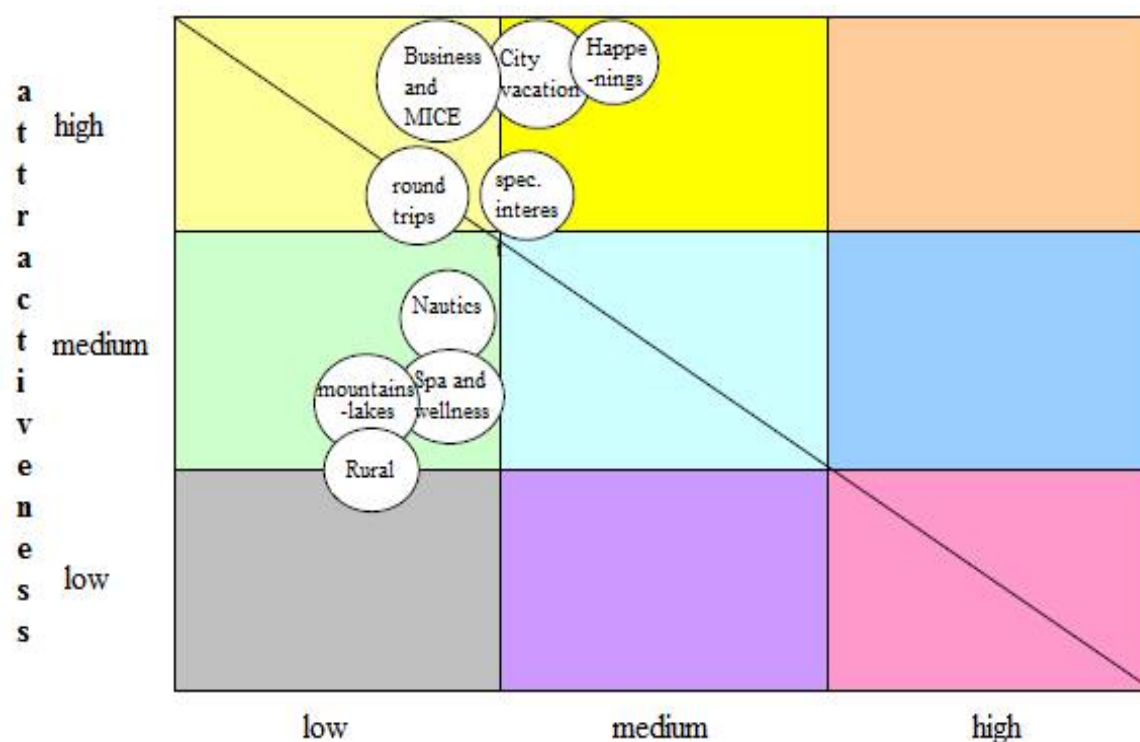
Time component of the tourism product is made out of the dynamic tourist system, which is expressed in time. Time is the component that determines the duration of the

tourist product, manifesting itself through the duration of the scheduled vacation, stay, and season.

The central instrument of the marketing mix represents the tourism product. If not positioned properly, other instruments of marketing mix are not able to come to the fore, and become counterproductive because of the counterproductive product itself. Expected results, planning and development of product realization must contain all of the elements of the competitive differentiation, positioning and quality, ie, must be adequately market usable, to be part of the market offer. It is therefore necessary to precisely define product features and to optimize the process of its development and management.

The characteristics of the tourism product has to be defined as precisely as possible, because it is the only way to determine what can be a part of the tourist offer. The basis of tourism development, which allows the assessment of optimum tourism strategy, is very precisely determined and defined the structure of the tourist offer and tourist products. The tourist development of Serbia on empirical, theoretical and normative level does not take sufficiently into account the development opportunities of the tourism product. To understand the current level of tourism development in Serbia and opportunities for future development its extremely important analysis of the tourism product, as one of the basic elements of tourism marketing. (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

Figure 1. Matrix attractiveness and competitiveness of Serbian interesting tourism products



Source: Faculty of Economics, Master Plan for Tourist Destination Donje Podunavlje, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, str. 237

Ranking of the attractiveness of certain tourist products, present in the tourism area, was carried out with consideration of the competitiveness and attractiveness variables, and thus the criteria for defining priorities in the development and commercialization of tourism products. Tourism Development Strategy of Serbia determined nine priority ranks of the tourism products. This tourist area has no conditions for the development of the following tourism products: business and MICE, city breaks, spa and wellness.

Table 6. The projected ranking of priorities and development of key tourism products in the tourist destination Lower Danube (1 very poor to very good 5)

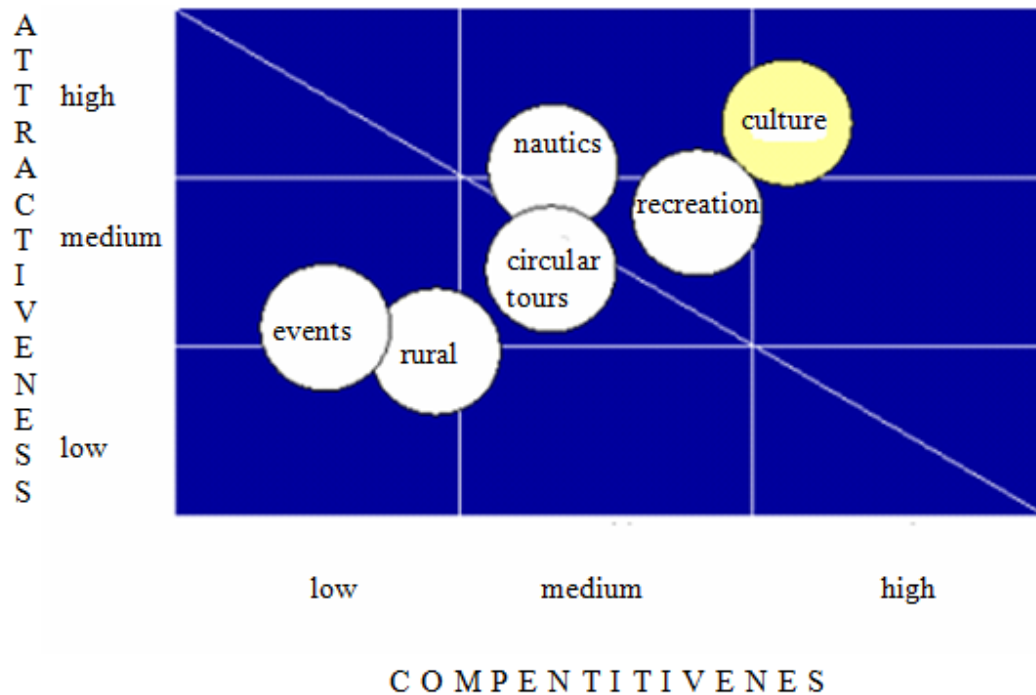
	1	2	3	4	5
Acculturation					
Nautics					
Recreational tourism-lakes					
Round trips-Touring					
Special interests					
Rural					
Events					

Source: Faculty of Economics, Master Plan for Tourist Destination Donje Podunavlje, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, p. 241

Positioning of this area on the tourist map is based on: (Faculty of Economics, 2007a)

- objective presentation of the attraction, potential and offer of the resources of this area;
- addressing key deficiencies of the current situation in the field of tourism;
- analyzing the success possibilities and the position of destinations compared with competitive tourist areas;
- analyzing and evaluating the possibilities of success on the market for the placement of specialized tourism product.

Figure 2. Matrix of attractiveness and competitiveness of the Lower Danube interesting tourism products



Source: Faculty of Economics, Master Plan for Tourist Destination Donje Podunavlje, the Government of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2007, p. 243

Potentials of Tourism owns lies in its power to directly encourage and support the economic development of regional and local character by including direct interaction between the supplier (the host) and consumers (tourists). Tourism depends entirely on the hospitality of the host, authentic heritage and high quality natural space. Exactly what contemporary forms of tourism makes it special and unique is this combination of dependence, multiple interactions and conscience in tourism. Destination Lower Danube for these reasons should and can be future leader on the tourist market of Serbia and beyond.

A modern tourist seeks sites with such characteristics that distinguish it from any other site. Instead of local authenticity develop as a cultural capital of the local population, cultural programs are imported. The main competitive advantage of this place is extraordinary cultural and natural value. Unifying these values can represent great potential for visitor experiences, which are based on a combination of natural rarities, traditional culture, modern and ancient history, religious heritage and archeology. Tourist region of the Lower Danube allows tourists to conceive experiences as a series of events that are remembered: a walk through the streets of

the medieval fortress, the Serbian and Turkish (Golubac, Ram, Fetislam); connecting two worlds (new and old) by underground world of viminacijum, Trajans bridge: swimming in Silver lake and rowing on danube.

The abundance and diversity of experience of the visitors are becoming crucial for the importance and identity of the destination. There is a growing demand for more individualized experiences with an emphasis on learning and activity. Relaxation and recreation are increasingly combined with the values, and activities on vacation are combined with the local contribution and active participation. Conceptual advances must be noticed in the providing services - from one-sided, as offers authentic and autonomous experience to consumers depending on their motivation (emotions and thoughts) caused by consumption of new products and services.

In the tourism industry, in the context of modern trends, there are two main dimensions that characterize the experience of visitors: the first is the increasing number of experiences that the visitor wants to come across on the trip, and other diversification and the increasing involvement of tourists in a realistic attitude towards the destination in terms of the need for all greater diversity of experiences on offer as a tourist product. (Bujdić-Krečković, 2013)

These tendencies lead to the identification and establishment of new tourism category. It is necessary to properly handle the key issues related to the creation of the image strategy in promoting cities on Danube, starting from the previous development of tourism in the Lower Danube region, numerous and extremely unfavorable economic and political factors that have significantly affected the economic conditions in Serbia.

Creating an image requires large investments and precise strategic and programmatic approach. This is a time consuming process, especially when it comes to the international market. Marketing activities, especially promotion can be very effective for the creation of a positive image. Also, effort should be directed to the changes of some negative connotations in the current image. With regard to the latest trends in the international tourism market, tourism businesses of the Lower Danube, with locations in the area where there are all conditions for the development of modern

forms of tourism should, be directed towards creating a destination brand as their motto in promotional appearances.

CONCLUSION

Rural tourism can be defined as tourism that provides the visitor with a "rural environment" and thus it offers a combination of nature experience, culture and people strictly of rural character. The essence of rural tourism provides a complete empathy of the visitors in the authentic and original experience. Rural tourism, in that way brings back the visitors to nature and basic things such as roots, return to the origin and authenticity.

The expectation that the tourism will contribute to faster development and revitalization of rural areas in Serbia is based primarily on the possible economic effects from the development of this activity. As the most significant effects we can separate, the increase in employment and income of the population. Tourism has direct effects on the participants that offer that sell services directly to tourists. In the case of rural tourism those are rural tourism households. Tourism development provides an opportunity for rural households that with the minimum investment employ members of their households and provide extra income.

In the latest approaches to the tourist destination is accessed, not only as a spatial area which is visited and used by tourists, regardless of its physical and administrative boundaries, but the focus should be directed on the group of many components that joint action enables them to meet the needs, desires and interest tourists.

Overall sustainability of tourist destinations directly depends on achieving a balance between the capacity of natural and manmade resources on the one side and the type and volume of tourist activities in the destination on the other. Size of carrying capacity is crucial for environmental protection and sustainable development. The concept of sustainable development, and building a sustainable world including tourism growth, summarizes the overall tendency to change the approach to tourism development, and to define the basis for the development, which includes compliance with environmental and social needs of present and future generations.

To achieve the sustainable development of rural tourism the visitors themselves must take part in the overall process. They should align their behavior with the set of

development goals, primarily the protection and conservation of the natural environment, cultural and historical heritage. This represents the management mode in which the use of the resources in the rural areas is totally in the hands of the visitors, in other words, we guide the behavior of visitors. One of the most common ways of achieving this impact is the publication of the official code of conduct so that the visitors can take their part of the responsibility to protect the resources of rural tourism by adapting their behavior.

The development of tourism and the performance of a number of important functions in the area, Danube in Serbia is not sufficiently exploited the real possibilities and potentials. Danube region links Serbia with central Europe. Danube region has exceptional development capacities, values and opportunities. Hence, the spatial plan Serbia's place has a special strategic, developmental and comparative role.

Municipalities on the Danube, Negotin, Kladovo, Majdanpek, Golubac and Veliko Gradiste as a single unit of Đerdap, makes a new tourist destination in Lower Danube that with its development will become the basis for further development of tourism in Serbia. Lower Danube is certainly one of the most attractive tourist destinations in Serbia. This area offers a wide range of opportunities for recreational activities, for learning on where are the beginnings of the past way of life, the examples of prehistoric cultures or historical architectural buildings in scenic, but also a harsh environment.

Despite the many advantages of tourism offered by this area, the existing offer is very narrow and focused only on the development of several types of tourism which are mainly based on the offer of accommodation capacities in Golubac, Kladovo and Donji Milanovac, on Silver Lake. Outside of the urban centers tourism resources of the region are very poorly used, and are suitable for development of different forms of tourism, caving, rural sports and recreational tourism, hunting, fishing and nautical tourism, katesurfing, tours on the Danube, etc. In order to reach the goal of faster and better development of tourism in this area, Master plan was made for the development of the Lower Danube, which covers all the disadvantages and advantages of the region, as well as the plans and proposals for its further development.

Keeping pace with the new trends of development, it is necessary to strategically adjust and improve the existing forms of tourist offer at the Lower Danube, and to develop new products that are tailored to the needs of modern tourist demand. Area of the Lower Danube with all its natural, geographical and cultural and historical values opens the possibility to develop new types of tourism that could valorize this value.

The basis of valorization of the existing value of the Danube are stationary stay, sport and recreation, transit, nautics, hunting and fishing tourism, events, school trips and excursions, primarily on Silver Lake, but also to visit other natural and cultural values. This could be a very significant source of foreign tourist demand within the tourist offer in this area, if it is properly formed and market positioned an attractive tourism product.

As a unique spatial geographical area, a tourist destination Lower Danube should be a comprehensive tourist area that brings together a variety of factors, experiences and initiatives of immediate, as well as from the wider environment. This is a destination in which are integrated market segments and groups of products and may represent a very promising competition player, comprehensively oriented on development processes in the future of tourism. Destination Lower Danube would create a target product integrity and coherence of the factors of tourism development. This tourist area conceptually would cover and would include not only the material elements, but also the intangible elements. Results of the management of all these aspects and expectations of tourists are directly dependent on the sustainable development of the destination.

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