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Possibilities for Improvement of Rural Tourism in Fruška Gora

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ABSTRACT

Despite the fact that its height barely exceeds the lower limit of low mountains, Fruška Gora is the most dominant mountain in Vojvodina. It is an area of significant natural and social specificity, thus in 1960 a part of it was proclaimed National Park. The convenient location, the good quality of agricultural land, substantial wildlife resources, abundance in water and geological elements, as well as the richness of the cultural-historical monuments exemplify an important potential of the area. Hitherto it has been shown that excursions represent the most common tourist activity in Fruška Gora. The tourists organized in groups or on an individual basis usually visit monasteries and picnic areas (Iriski venac, Strazilovo and Zmajevac). In addition to these activities, they practice other miscellaneous activities such as: walking in nature, hiking, biking, bird watching, and water-related activities in the summer season. Along with rural tourism, cultural tourism and event tourism, wine tourism brings an immense potential to this area, as well. Fruška Gora is one of the eight wine regions of Serbia and has a capacity of about 60 private wineries. So far, it was confirmed that rural tourism could have a great significance in the overall development of certain areas, in the economic, social and cultural terms. In order to achieve that, one of the most important components is the involvement of local communities in tourism activities and in the process of planning and decision making. Out of the 57 settlements in Fruška Gora 46 have up to 3,000 inhabitants and agriculture is the most important economic sector for the majority of them. We can state that most of this area has a predominantly rural character and most of the actual activities already take place in a rural area. It is necessary to link these activities and make a complete and unique tourism product. The aim of this research is to demonstrate the current situation and the possibilities of improving the overall tourism offer for rural tourism in the area. Furthermore, it should show the existing capacities of the tourism offer, the existing and potential activities of public and private sectors, their mutual cooperation and collaboration with local communities carrying the objective of sustainable tourism development of area. In addition, the aim is to point out the importance of legislation, which sets directions of development in this particular/specific area and eventually to indicate the measures that will enhance the current tourism promotional activities of Fruška Gora.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fruška Gora is most dominant orographic unit in the Northern Serbia (Vojvodina). The largest part of Fruška Gora is located in Vojvodina, while a small part spreads into eastern Croatia. It is located in the northern part of Srem, between two important rivers Danube and Sava. This mountain chain is 80 kilometres long, and it generally spreads in the West-East direction. Its highest peak is Crveni Čot (539 m). The

mountain area covers 500 square kilometres. Because of the natural beauties, historical monuments, plants, wildlife and qualities of soil in December 1960 it was proclaimed as National Park. The National Park area covers 25,520 ha in the central part of Fruška Gora Mountain [1].

Besides National Park there are several important protected areas in wider area: Special Nature Reserve Kovilj-Petrovaradin Marsh, Begečka Jama Nature Park, Monument of Nature - Loess profile in

Stari Slankamen gorge, Monument of Nature - Beocin beach, Island of Love and Natural Geomorphologic Monument Dunavac, and a number of protected monuments of nature in the settlements.

The aim of this research is to demonstrate the current situation and the opportunities of improving the overall tourism offer in the area with the emphasis on the resources of rural tourism, natural and social.

Furthermore it should show the existing capacities of the tourism offer, the current and potential activities of public and private sector, their mutual cooperation and collaboration with local communities with the objective of sustainable tourism development of the area.

2. THEORY AND METHODOLOGY

Significant support to sustainable development of rural areas is provided through diversifying rural economy, where most importance is attributed to development of rural tourism.

Rural tourism is among the most polymorphous of all forms of Special Interest Tourism. The diversity of attractions included within rural tourism embrace [2]:

- indigenous heritage sites;
- aspects of culture (agriculture);
- industrial tourism (farm practices);
- educational tourism;
- special events;
- ecological attractions;
- adventure tourism;
- wine tourism.

Such diversity represents major opportunities for rural areas that have turned to tourism as a means of supplementing diminished incomes.

Unpolluted natural environment with diverse ecosystems, clean water, healthy food and preserved original style of life fostering traditional values, all of these make the villages attractive for the visitors.

There are numerous opportunities for enriching the tourist offer through various sports and recreational activities: hunting, fishing, riding, mountain climbing, as well as other related activities.

Production and demand for certified organic products as well as specific local produce have seen a steady rise, which contributes to strengthening the offer in rural tourism.

Traditional rural architecture as well as products of old crafts and hand made products have great cultural value.

Exhibitions and permanent displays of local artists, cultural events, national dances and folk crafts are only some of the numerous activities promoting rural tradition, culture, folk art, traditional music, customs and other characteristic features of rural way of life.

2.1. Natural tourism resources

In geological structure of the central massif of Fruška Gora it can be found Paleozoic-Mesozoic mountain formations such as: crystal shale, phyllite, serpentinite, granite, basalt, limestone and others. These geological formations are partially covered by younger layers – primarily lake-marine sediments and loess [3].

From the transversal point of view, the mountain is split into three parts. It is only the central part, from Djipsa in the West, to Banstol on the East that has characteristics of the real mountain ridge. Its length is 40 km, and average altitude ranges from 440-460 m. This part is asymmetrical and dissected, (broken down by numerous stream valleys, with developed water sources). From Banstol to the West, to Slankamen on the East, stretches the eastern wing of Fruška Gora in a shape of a narrow and low hillside named Kosevac with the highest peak of 268 m altitude. The western wing, which stretches from Djipsa on the East to the loess section of Telek on the West, has the characteristics of a wide plateau from which rise lonely and narrow hills. This part of the mountain reaches the maximum altitude of 300 m [3].

Observed as a whole, Fruška Gora is dissected by numerous stream valleys. This may be seen particularly in the higher regions where there are series of narrow valleys which slip all the way under the mountain ridge.

Fruška Gora plays a role of a climatic modifier. By its location, the area of Fruška Gora Mountain should have continental climate, but because of its structure and characteristic, this type of climate changes into a sub-continental climate. Exception is the climate of the mountain's ridges, with cold winters and chilly summers. Considering average temperatures, winds, precipitation and snow layer Fruška Gora has certain micro climatic conditions which have a calming effect on human psyche and body.

The hydro-geological features of the Fruška Gora Mountain are directly conditioned by the complexity of its geological structure, the spatial distribution of the rock masses, their porosity and the precipitation. Most of the precipitation that Fruška Gora receives penetrates into the inside of mountain mass, only a small portion flows on the surface, merging into streams. It is due to this reason that there are more than 180 springs [3].

There are several thermo mineral springs: Vrdnik, Stari Slankamen, Ljuba and Staro Hopovo monastery. Springs, which are currently in use, are: Vrdnik, Stari Slankamen and Ljuba. They are a result of human intervention (natural springs have been abandoned). Thermal water of Staro Hopovo gushes up naturally.

Surface hydrography of Fruška Gora Mountain is represented mostly by numerous streams which flow down the northern and southern mountain slopes. There are more than 50 streams. They flow mostly periodically, but some are permanent in nature. Among the longest flowing are: Patka bara, Esikovac stream, Cerevic stream, Novoselski stream, Citluk, Tekenis, Almas, Cedomir-stream, Potoranj, Lisvar, Nestin stream and others [3].

Apart from streams, the surface of Fruška Gora Mountain comprises artificial dams, created primarily on the southern slope. Protection dams were built as a protection from torrential flooding. Today these dams are mostly stocked with fish and semi-functional. The largest dams were built at: Sot, Eredevik, Rivica, Dobrodola, etc. [4].

Flora at Fruška Gora Mountain is very diverse and specific. There are about 1500 plant species, 211 bird species, 60 species of mammals, 24 amphibian and reptilian species [3].

At higher altitudes, forest complexes are dominant. The most important types of trees are: Sessile Oak, European hornbeam, Lime Tree, European Beech.

It has been recorded a great number of medical plants in Fruška Gora. Part of these plants fall into category of endemic plants or relicts.

The main steppe association of the Fruška Gora is more widespread in its eastern region and generally on the lower slopes of the eastern and northern parts of this mountain. They have a rich floristic composition, which contributes to the beauty of the landscape.

Fauna of the Fruška Gora is rich in species, but the populations of certain mammals and birds are considerably reduced. Fruška Gora is a selected IBA area. Special bird species are: Imperial eagle, Saker falcon, Black stork and Collared Flycatcher. The Imperial eagle is the most endangered and the rarest bird in the Fruška Gora and one of the rarest in Europe. As far as hunting goes, the following game is available: red deer, rabbit, fox, roebuck, wild boar and other.

2.2. Cultural tourism resources

The area of Fruška Gora Mountain was exposed to numerous conquerors so there are only a few of the earliest monuments dating back to Old Ages. Locations at Cortanovci and Stari Slankamen (Acuminucum) are of the most important archaeological value. Fortification structures from medieval times such as Tower of Vrđnik, Gradina - Dombo at Rakovac, remnants of the structure near Slankamen - were partially preserved [3].

The most valuable cultural resources in terms of tourism are monasteries scattered all over Fruška Gora Mountain. They are built in the period from 15th

to 18th century. From 35 monasteries, 16 have been preserved till today. They were destroyed on numerous occasions, rebuilt, destroyed again and restored in the late sixties. Some of them suffered heavy damages with only ruins remain; some of them have been completely or partially restored. The most important monasteries are: Hopovo, Krusedol, Jazak, Mala and Velika Remeta, Grgeteg, Beocin, Vrđnik. Historically important, but less preserved are monasteries: Sisatovac, Rakovac, Privina glava, Kuvezdin, Staro Hopovo, Sv. Petka and Besenovo.

The monasteries represent objects of immense architectural value, with unique and precious instances of iconography protected by the state, as they represent precious cultural monuments that have been revitalized and adapted. The monasteries are concentrated in an area 50 kilometres long and 10 kilometres wide. Recent history also left numerous traces here. In the memory of German occupation at Iriski venac a big monument was erected to the Partizans of Srem, the work of the sculptor Sreten Stojanović.

2.3. Tourism resources

The exact number of accommodation facilities in Fruška Gora mountain is difficult to determine because a number of facilities closed or changed the original purpose. Also there are no precise statistics which will determine exact number of beds in the area. Besides accommodation facilities in the surrounding cities, area Fruška Gora mountain has hotels, motel, hostels, youth settlement and resort for smaller children, mountain lodges and accommodation in family households. Number of buildings and structure are sufficient for providing services which respond to the needs of tourists, but their equipment, organization and functionality are not at the appropriate level. There are also a numerous catering facilities, which offer a various types of food.

The Information centre is located at Iriski venac. The centre is a base of all cultural, scientific and tourism events in the Park. This centre has a museum with permanent exhibition of Fruška Gora natural values, and a congress room as well. It is an ideal place for meetings, courses or educational theme exhibitions on development and protection of nature.

Tourism infrastructure is also consisting of hiking and biking trails, picnic areas, signalisation for wineries and wine routes etc.

2.4. Tourism – current state

The most represented activities on Fruška Gora are:

- excursions of pupils or individuals (cultural, educational, natural) – visits to monasteries and other cultural monuments, visits to natural reserve;

- recreation in forms of hiking, biking, swimming and fishing in the lakes;
- sports longer stay: professional trainings, sports seminars;
- seminars, educational courses, events.

Recreation is one of the basic activities that take place in Fruška Gora Mountain. There are several picnic areas such as: Popovica, Zmajevac, Iriski venac, Artiljevo, Glavica, Kamenicki park, Strazilovo.

Hiking trails on Fruška Gora offer from easy part-day trips over gentle terrain; to others which require skill and endurance because of their elevation, length and ruggedness. Most are marked with directional signs helping hikers not to be lost. Cycling is a very often activity, as well.

Fruška Gora represents a treasury of cultural goods from various periods in time, which shows that this region had a turbulent history. The monasteries, the city of Sremski Karlovci with Strazilovo, and Petrovaradin Fortress with Novi Sad are the base of cultural tourism.

At the moment there are two centres which have thermal/mineral water with the programmes for health (SPA) tourism. Those are Vrdnik spa with the thermal water springs (32.5°) which have a wide range of effects on the human body and Special Hospital Dr. Borivoje Gnjatic which is mainly a prevention unit, for treatment and rehabilitation.

Fruška Gora is well known for its wines, which are produced in over 60 private wine cellars scattered throughout monasteries and villages in the region. The largest number is located in Sremski Karlovci, but they can also be found in Irig, Nestin, Banostor and Erdevik.

Numerous natural and cultural values influenced setting up of various events, both on the

mountain and in the surrounding settlements. A great number of them are inspired by local tradition in making food and wines: Wine Harvesting in Sremski Karlovci, Watermelon celebration in Rivica, Lime Tree and Honey event in Beocin, Wine harvesting event in Irig etc. One of the most famous events is Fruška gora Marathon. It has a 20 year long tradition. Every year in May, this event gathers a large number of friends and fans of nature, which spend a lovely day hiking, running or biking. Marathons are of different lengths and they offer real challenges to participants.

In Fruška Gora Mountain there are public hunting grounds and hunting reserve Vorovo, closed for public. Preserve Vorovo certainly stands out since game is of a good quality. It mostly consists of fallow deer, moufflon and wild boar. There are also jackals, martens, badgers, hawks and other. It is important that the hunting area has an easy road access [3].

In Fruška Gora there are 14 artificial lakes which are relatively used for fishing and recreational activities. Some of them are adjusted to the needs of visitors. Three artificial reservoirs are the most important: Sot (22 ha), partly surrounded by the forest that serves as Vorovo hunting reserve, Bruja (15 ha) near Erdevik settlement, with water from a thermal spring located 200 m from the reservoir, and Moharac (60 ha) also near Erdevik. They are rich in Sweetwater fish such as: carp, pike perch, white fish and other.

2.5. Organization of tourism

Management and organization of tourism activities in Fruška Gora Mountain can be viewed from two aspects: through organization at national, regional and local level and through organization by public and private sector.

Table 1. Responsibilities of partners in rural tourism

Role of the central authorities (state, government)	Role of the public sector	Role of the private sector
<p><u>Umbrella support</u> – securing general political support for the local/regional initiative</p> <p><u>Securing transparent</u> and legal proprietary forms of cooperation, documentation, permits etc.</p> <p><u>Providing financial</u> support where possible</p> <p><u>Grants for different</u> fiscal concessions for projects</p> <p><u>Monitoring</u></p>	<p><u>Securing public infrastructure</u>, complying with the local urban land-use plan and similar obligations</p> <p><u>Securing support</u> and services to private entrepreneurs in the form of infrastructure, equipment and objects – basic core infrastructure that is necessary in the initial stages of development in order to show the potential of the rural area</p> <p><u>Introducing regulatory</u> measures to secure social, cultural and ecological sustainability</p> <p><u>Ensuring that the local community</u> is completely included and that as many people as possible benefit from tourism development</p> <p><u>Securing all preconditions</u> to ensure that tourism services are compatible - in terms of volume, type and quality with the environmental protection and the area's social and cultural milieu</p> <p><u>Conducting necessary research</u>, preparing a master plan, formulating a marketing strategy and organizing an overall promotion in conjunction with representatives of the private/business sector</p>	<p><u>Constructing and managing</u> an area's tourism capacities</p> <p><u>Assuming responsibility</u> for the training and further education of the workforce, in order to achieve the highest possible quality of services provided</p> <p><u>Participating in the preparation</u> of investment guidelines, marketing strategies and assistance in the creation of databases for different kinds of market and strategic research</p> <p><u>Preserving, taking care of and protecting</u> tourism attractions</p> <p><u>Caring about environmental</u> protection</p>

Source: Public-private Partnership in Rural tourism, The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), under the auspices of the joint United Nations programme "Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development", 2011 - p.37.

Relying on the previous table, we can say that Ministry of Economy and regional development (Sector for Tourism) has been involved in providing support - financial and political.

Also this Sector performs numerous duties of state administration which are related to: implementation of the Law on Tourism and Tourism Strategy; monitoring and analysis of system solutions, legal regulations and measures of economic policy on business and development of tourism industry and proposing of appropriate measures; proposing and implementing measures to encourage the development of tourism; proposing measures to improve the quality of tourist services; the realization of the adopted master plans; monitoring the Plan for Serbia to join the EU etc.

The activities of the public sector are organized also through regional and local secretaries and departments (Provincial Secretary for Agriculture, Water Management and Provincial Secretary for Economy) who are dealing with strategies, plans, researches, analysis and databases, statistical related activities etc.

Public Institution National Park of Fruška Gora manages the National Park. Its main activities are: protection, preservation and improving diversity of biogeographical characteristics of the area; activities related to culture and education of the people; presentation and popularization of National Park values; planning and disposing of the National Park area, augmentation and revitalization of endangered areas.

The activities of promotion in the public sector are mainly organized through National Tourism organization of Serbia, 1 regional and 9 local tourism organizations (municipal organizations: Sid, Ruma, Sremska Mitrovica, Irig, Beocin, Indjija, Sremski Karlovci, Novi Sad, Backa Palanka).

National Tourism organization of Serbia focuses its activities on positioning Serbian tourism on the domestic and international markets and evaluating the comparative advantages of Serbia with respect to tourism.

In the private sector, besides entrepreneurs which are directly involved in providing services in tourism, the significant role belongs to the travel agencies. They have a role of mediator between service providers and tourists.

The tourism offer must contain all the necessary elements, from the object of the offer, to the price. Travel agencies have an important role in everything that consolidates and completes such offer. They are often creators of the tourism offer, as well.

Unfortunately, only few agencies in Vojvodina are dealing with receptive tourism. Reasons are various but the most important is the financial benefit which agencies mostly achieve through sales of summer (sea) and winter (mountain) arrangements.

There are a few clusters in this area which are involved in tourism activities: Tourism cluster of Srem, Danube Tourist Cluster – Istar 21, Cluster of wine producers of Fruška Gora.

Joining at the local level through the foundation of local associations or networks that deal with this type of tourism is of great importance for the promotion of all those involved in rural tourism. Cooperation in marketing and organization of specific programmes is extremely important for small tourism businesses in rural regions (farms, plantations, etc.). Each of them individually has difficulties to achieve a great commercial success, but together they can have an effective marketing approach. Through local associations it can be achieved more effectively overcome the financial and other difficulties.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

As we can see Fruška Gora Mountain without a doubt has a great potential for rural development, according to above mentioned resources. However, the current level of tourism development is lower than before; neither corresponds to the resources that exist in Fruška Gora, nor meets the requirements of tourist demand.

The advantages of the rural development in this area are:

- revitalization of villages,
- preservation of the rural area population,
- slowdown of migration to urban areas,
- employing,
- recovery of wine growing and production,
- recovery of old craft trades,
- recovery of authentic customs,
- preservation of natural specificities,
- preservation of social and culture specificities,
- procession of agricultural products.

To achieve the expected effects from rural tourism it is necessary to stimulate rural tourism planning and organizational activities in the creation of the tourism and cultural offer of the villages. Rural tourism product should be small-scale, locally controlled and based on the authenticity [5].

There are 57 settlements on the territory of Fruška Gora Mountain. Most of them are located in the vicinity of valuable cultural and historical monuments which can be visited by the tourists in organized tours. All of those who decide to spend holidays in these villages have numerous possibilities for an active holiday. We can state some of them.

Walking is an activity anybody can do, regardless of age. Cyclists can ride bikes, lovers of fishing can fish where it is convenient and can spend days by the water. Hunters can go hunting together with their hosts, either from time to time along with other activities or on the daily basis. Ornithologists have

possibilities for bird watching; biologists can collect the herbs and fungi. For nature-lovers Fruška Gora Mountain provides a wide variety of enjoyment through watching and taking photographs (photo safari) of protected animals and plants.

Many foreigners are interested in the way of life of other nations. Ethnological heritage may be of great interest for potential tourists. Spending time in a village on Fruška Gora allows time to get acquainted with the spirit of the area and customs of the local residents.

Ethnic characteristics of local people will create a unique experience. Visitors can be interested in visiting old craftsmen, local artists, local events etc. Lovers of history have many possibilities to visit monasteries or archaeological sites nearby. People with minor health problems can start getting cured.

Apart from this, tourists can play various sports. Seminars, courses or educational programmes can be organized, as well. In addition to the above mentioned, there is a number of attractive village jobs such as fruit picking, brandy distilling, wine making, grass mowing, haystack making and watering vegetables, working with domestic animals, knitting, embroidery, preparing pickles etc.

Stay on the mountain could be enriched by visiting some of the events that take place in the cities nearby. All settlements share high expertise in preparation of local culinary specialties: sremski kulen (Kulen of Srem), paprikas (Goulash stew), fish dishes and similar.

Ecotourism should become one of the leading tourism forms in these areas, respecting the integrity of plant and animal wildlife, or all natural resources.

Ecological elements should be included in the rural tourism development to its maximum; development of eco-village with various forms of healthy activities.

As we mentioned earlier, children's excursions and sport trainings are very often. Conditions for establishment of sports schools and camps on Fruška Gora need to be provided since they could become an interesting tourist offer throughout the year.

Even with all these above mentioned possibilities, until this moment there is no well-organized and completed tourism offer of the area.

One of the weaknesses is certainly lack of necessary infrastructure. With regard to village infrastructure, the biggest problem appears to be the fact that there are no footpaths for pedestrians or, if there are, they are poorly regulated, as are village roads and the general appearance of the actual houses.

The villages of some municipalities have a problem with the disposal of farmyard manure and waste, while some houses lack constructed access.

Infrastructure problems are among the main obstacles to the development of tourism.

Currently, all settlements do not have good standard tourist facilities, which mean that there are very few shops and tourist resources (water fountains, benches, information boards etc). It has been started with signposting for wine routes and individual wine cellars.

In the rural tourism offer there is no clearly differentiated information on quality of the tourist stay. So far there is no serious research on information, expectations, needs and satisfaction of visitors. This kind of analysis would help in determining strategies and goals in the further tourism development.

The data on accommodation in rural household tourism has not yet been entered into official statistics. Categorization of these facilities has not been completed. Also, there are no data about number of visitors. This is something that must be changed in the future.

The possible solution is to charge a fee at the entrances to the National Park in order to allow full control over the number and structure of visitors.

In the terms of tourism organization, Ministry of Economy has produced Tourism strategy of the Republic of Serbia and Strategy for the rural tourism development which treats rural tourism as a priority, emphasizing specially the development of eco-tourist villages in the mountainous area that offer healthy environment, ecological food, agreeable surroundings, active holiday in the countryside, ethnographic and other cultural and historical values. It is foreseen by the master plan that the tourist development should be focused on the 12 priority clusters [6].

When it comes to Vojvodina, Fruška Gora has been marked as a cluster of the highest priority, followed by clusters of the Upper Danube, North Serbia and South Banat.

Therefore, these are areas in Vojvodina that have been marked as a priority when it comes to distribution of financial resources to accelerate development of rural tourism in this area.

In order to support rural development, UN agencies (UNDP¹, UNEP², FAO³, UNWTO⁴ and UNICEF⁵) and Serbian national partners (Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Water Management and the Tourism Organisation of Serbia) will implement the Joint Programme Sustainable Tourism for Rural Development at two levels:

¹ UNDP - United Nations Development Programme

² UNEP - United Nations Environment Programme

³ FAO - Food and Agriculture Organization of United Nations

⁴ UNWTO - World Tourism Organization

⁵ UNICEF - United Nations Children's Fund

- *National Level* (National Rural Tourism Master Plan; National Rural Development Programme and provide guidance for public investments);

- *Local and Regional Level* (Tourist Destination Development, diversification of Rural Economy through Tourism and Active Learning Tourism Investments).

Programme interventions will target the regions of Central Serbia, Eastern Serbia, South Banat on the Danube and the Lower Danube.

Public sector is organized through regional and local secretaries and departments which are dealing separately with rural development. It is necessary to establish intersectoral cooperation as cooperation between different levels of public sector.

As good example, we can point out a common programme Development of rural tourism in Irig, Beočin and Sremski Karlovci, which connects three municipalities in area of Fruška Gora and regional Provincial Secretariat for Local Self-Government and inter-municipal cooperation. The project aims to promote the development and presentation of tourist offers of these three municipalities, as well as to discover and create new tourism potential.

In the private sector, formally binding through rural tourism associations undoubtedly brings benefits, primarily due to clear relationships and a division of responsibilities, but particularly because it increases the visibility of this type of tourism offer and not only contributes to strengthening the offer, but also the development of other activities related to rural tourism [8].

It is necessary to encourage travel agencies to deal with receptive tourism. That is possible with government help with tax and credit policies (for example tax relief or good credit terms). Also, the creation of numerous diverse programs is very important, because travel agencies organize excursions which include mostly visits to monasteries.

Finally, one of the important preconditions for successful planning and management of rural tourism sustainable development is active involvement of the local community into that process. Every usage of resources for the needs of tourism development, without the approval of local community, can be marked as abuse by local population and represents the dissimulating factor of rural tourism development [7].

It is necessary to educate the entire population

- employees in local tourist information centres, tourism organisations, travel agencies, local travel guides and animators, with an aim to gain wider knowledge about the characteristics of the region, especially tourism resources, ways advertising tourist products, recreational techniques, etc. It is also necessary to educate visitors how to use resources in rural areas. One of the most common ways of this kind of influence is the proclamation of official rules, codes of conduct, so that visitors, by adapting their behaviour

could bear a part of responsibility in resources' protection.

Rural tourism is a good opportunity for agricultural based communities, but the setting of objectives and the final tourism development plan needs caution. For better results the whole range of the stakeholders has to participate in the planning stage. Slow and stable steps needs for this kind of planning in order to avoid conflicts and mistakes.

4. CONCLUSION

Basic problems and trends almost all rural regions share are migrations, poor diversification of economic activities, extensive agriculture, high level of unemployment, lack of employment possibilities, poor and underdeveloped infrastructure, low GDP per capita in comparison to the urban regions and unpolluted environment faced with potential threats [6].

The contribution of rural tourism to developed economies and to the economic restructuring of the weak economies is unquestionable. The activities associated with travel, tourism and recreation affect people in many different ways and have a profound impact on social, cultural and economic perspectives of life in any society. The rural tourism industry encapsulates multiple sectors, for example hospitality, food and crafts, and can have significant benefits for local rural areas. Yet rural tourism instigates a change in employment or customer protection, health, new technology, transport and culture.

As the main weaknesses of Fruška Gora mountain we can state:

- inadequate road infrastructure;
- uncontrolled construction;
- low quality of signalization;
- passivity in the development;
- uncontrolled development of a destination;
- undeveloped economy, unemployment;
- lack of finance;
- insufficient trade offer;
- grey economy in tourism sector;
- uncategorized and unstandardised accommodation facilities in family households;
- lack of reliable data on total accommodation facilities;
- lack of central reservation system;
- lack of data on visitors;
- lack of entertainment facilities;
- lack of tourist facilities;
- inadequate age structure of population;
- low level of education;
- insufficient protection of natural and cultural goods;
- incoherence of complementary offer in the destination;
- lack of institutional cooperation;

- inconsistent and insufficient promotion of destination.

The main problem of the past development of tourism in Fruška Gora is that leaders of the tourism development are not clearly defined, the visitors do not bear the consequences of inadequate behaviour, and finally development programs have not been implemented [9].

In establishing the tourism offer on Fruška Gora mountain it should be chosen types of tourism which could be developed quickly and without major investment, which are competitive in the tourism market, as well as types that can be carried out continuously in space and time. Those are [1]:

1. Short-stay

Cultural and educational excursions (visits to monasteries and other cultural monuments, one-day visits of cultural events, visits to protected areas and nature, but after the security of space (marked objects, paths, codes of conducts etc.).

Recreational excursions (mountaineering, hiking, biking, games and relaxation in nature, swimming and fishing on the lakes, the Danube, sports games).

2. Long-stay

Cultural and educational visits (culture, art, nature, technical seminars, courses and workshops, no matter of age or interests of visitors).

Sports and recreational visits (sports training, sports school, holidays, seminars and courses for sports groups, alternative sports).

Rural tourism (short and long visits to rural areas; rural, cultural and entertainment events; staying in rural households and participation in the village activities).

Spa, health and recreation.

In accordance with natural conditions, these types of tourism can be organized throughout the year at various locations, with various activities, and therefore with different effects.

For the day trips it is necessary to provide conditions for transport to Fruška Gora Mountain, organize hikes on the trails that already exist (Strazilovo, Cortanovci, Popovica, Andrevlje, Iriski venac, Lipovaca).

For the weekend trips it is necessary to adapt, reconstruct, modernize and decorate existing buildings and surroundings. Majority of the recreational activities should be directed to locations where facilities and trails already exist.

Conditions for establishment of sports schools and camps on Fruška Gora need to be provided since they could become an interesting tourist offer throughout the year.

The basic forms of presentation of cultural tourism values could include: round tours and weekend

visits, events (exhibitions), schools or camps of culture, arts, education.

All of these activities also require adequate space conditions and facilities with suitable equipment and information.

It is possible to organize specialized tours, such as: Paths of the poets, (Branko Radicevic, Milica Stojadinovic Srpkinja and Jovan Jovanovic Zmaj), roads of history, wine tours, visits to villages with ethnological motifs - ethnic house (Nestin, Jazak Prnjavor), craft workshops etc [1].

Fruška Gora Mountain has great tourism potential, both by presence of natural and cultural resources. Unfortunately, those resources have not been exploited sufficient and adequate. The reasons are unstandardised accommodation facilities, degraded road infrastructure and insufficient promotion by travel agencies and tourism organisations.

Still, we cannot talk about the completed and unified rural tourism offer; therefore it is still in development stage. However, there are individual activities in this direction, which might contribute involvement of more stakeholders in rural tourism development.

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