

## TOURISM DEVELOPMENT LIMITATIONS AND TOURIST TRAFFIC ANALYSIS IN SOUTH AND EASTERN SERBIA

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### Abstract

*The aim of this paper is to assess the current problems and limitations in the development of tourism in the region of South and Eastern Serbia, as well as analysis of tourist traffic in this region. There are numerous natural and anthropogenic tourist values on the territory of the South and East Serbia region, which represent the comparative advantages of tourism development. This creates a certain level of competitiveness of the region, but this level is not satisfactory. In this paper, the measures and activities to be undertaken will be emphasized in order to improve the quality of the tourist offer, enable and promote the development of tourism in this region. These measures and activities should lead to creation of diversified tourist offer, to faster development of tourism and increase of tourist traffic in the destinations of this region. It is therefore important to identify both affirmative as well as limiting factors of tourism development in this area and to critically approach their analysis in order to improve the tourism development and raise the level of destinations competitiveness in the South and Eastern Serbia region.*

Key Words: *tourism, development, tourist traffic, South and Eastern Serbia*

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### Introduction

In the South and Eastern Serbia region each district has certain specificities in terms of demographic characteristics, natural and anthropogenic tourist values and opportunities for tourism development.

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The richness and diversity of natural and anthropogenic tourist values, points to the possibility for the development of different types of tourism. In the region, therefore, there is a basis for the development of different types of tourism that can encourage regional development of tourism and to highlight the comparative and competitive advantages of the region.

In order to create a quality tourist offer and an appropriate performance in the domestic and international tourist market, all incentive factors need to be identified and used. Apart from the consideration of affirmative factors in the development of tourism, it is especially important to identify the limiting factors in this development and to critically approach their analysis. In doing so, it is necessary to eliminate or mitigate the effects of limiting factors in the tourism development. Despite the significant potentials of South and East Serbia, the development of tourism has not been at a satisfactory level which is contributed by numerous problems and factors that limit the tourism development in this area. Some of the most significant limiting factors are: unfavorable demographic trends, underdeveloped general infrastructure, insufficiently developed tourism infrastructure and suprastructure, inadequate marketing concept in promotion of tourist offer, insufficient financial support, etc.

These problems and constraints make the development of tourism more difficult and must be overcome in the coming period. Appropriate measures and activities need to be taken to prevent such restrictions from complicating or, in the long run, preventing the development of tourism in the region of South and East Serbia. All these activities should increase the level of competitiveness of destinations in the region of South and East Serbia in the tourism market. In many cities and municipalities of the region, measures are being implemented aimed at improving the tourist offer and increasing the tourist traffic. However, more intensive implementation of these measures and activities, as well as the planning of new measures and activities is needed. Continuous improvement of the tourist offer is aimed at better positioning of destinations on the market, growth of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists and growth of tourism revenues.

### **Consideration of the current tourism development problems in South and Eastern Serbia**

Despite the significant potentials of the region of South and East Serbia, tourism development has not been at a satisfactory level in the past. Many

problems and factors that limit the development of selective forms of tourism in this area have contributed to this. It is difficult to improve competitiveness, if the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in tourism market cannot be identified, understood and measured (Stamenković & Ilić, 2017, 642).

According to the Gašić (2016) basic demographic problems in the region of South and Eastern Serbia are negative birth rate, emigration, depopulation, senilization, changes in the ethnic structure of the population and disorders in the territorial distribution (p. 157). According to census data from 1971 to 2011, the birth rate is constantly decreasing from 4.8 promilles in 1971 to -8.0 promilles in 2011 (Mitrović, 2015). The lowest birth rates were recorded in the municipalities of Crna Trava, Babušnica, Gadžin Han, Ražanj, Svrlijig and Blace (Gašić, 2016, p. 158). One of the serious demographic problems in the region of South and Eastern Serbia is the emigration of the population. The emigration of inhabitants leads to consequences related to the number of inhabitants and affects population aging (Rašević, 2016). Gašić (2016) points out that the largest demographic discharge is recorded in Pčinja, Bor and Zaječar districts, while the dramatic situation in the municipality of Crna Trava (p. 159). Senilization (aging population) is a particular problem in the region of South and Eastern Serbia. In addition, there are also changes in the ethnic structure of the population that cause sociological, cultural and political consequences in this region. The spatial distribution of the population in the region of South and Eastern Serbia is uneven. While the concentration of population is emphasized in certain districts and municipalities, in other districts and municipalities there is a tendency of decreasing the number of inhabitants. Consequently, special attention should be paid to the difficult demographic situation in the region of South and Eastern Serbia and solving demographic problems that limit the tourism development and hamper the overall development of the region. One of the main limiting factors in the development of selective forms of tourism is the underdeveloped general infrastructure. These problems are reflected in inadequate transport infrastructure (unsatisfactory quality of the road network), communal infrastructure (inadequate irrigation systems, inadequate sewerage system and inadequate municipal waste management), shortcomings in the field of telecommunications (a small number of telephone subscribers in rural areas, needs to work on modernization of telephone networks and better coverage in the territory of this region). The limitations in the creation of tourist products and quality tourist offer are also in the insufficiently

developed tourist infrastructure and suprastructure. Problems in these areas represent a limiting factor in the tourism development, so it is necessary to improve and modernize the general infrastructure. In the current tourism development in the region of South and Eastern Serbia, obsolete and inadequate marketing concept has been used when it comes to tourist attractions, tourist products and tourist destinations. A successful development of tourism in modern conditions requires well-designed, planned, organized and realized marketing activities. These activities should inform tourists with tourist offer programs of certain parts of the South and Eastern Serbia region that will meet their needs, requirements and wishes. In order to achieve the desired results in this area, it is necessary to have a good marketing concept and performance by the subjects of the tourism industry whose main task is to promote the tourist offer. Regardless of the financial support for the development of tourism from domestic and foreign sources, the lack of financial resources remains one of the constraints in the development of tourism. Despite the loans, subsidies and grants coming from the respective ministries for financing various tourism development projects, as well as in support of the development of tourism coming from the budgets of local governments, and the investments of domestic and foreign private companies, insufficient financial resources continue to represent one form of restrictions in tourism development in the region of South and Eastern Serbia. In order to enable the progressive development of tourism that would contribute to the diversification and promotion of the regional economy, an increase of employment rate and the reduction of depopulation, it is necessary to determine the factors that influence the competitiveness of tourism in this region (Djeri et al., 2018).

In addition to the mentioned problems and limitations, the Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016-2025 lists the following weaknesses that hinder and limit the development of tourism (page 30):

- Failure to recognize the importance of tourism as an important factor in increasing employment, economic growth and regional development;
- Undeveloped incentive measures, non-financial and financial support of business entities in tourism;
- Insufficient investment;
- Lack of general infrastructure within the underdeveloped tourist areas;
- Outdated inadequate model of tourism and marketing management in tourism;

Lack of cooperation between the public and the private sector in product development and the establishment of an integrated value chain;

- Insufficient participation of local self-governments in tourism planning and development.

According to Blagojević (2009), the concept and goals of tourism development are defined by the basic goals of social and economic development, based on which the economic and tourist policy of the country is defined (page 197). The Tourism Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia for the period 2016-2025 (2016) states that it is necessary to define the priority products that can be realistically commercialized in the next five years. Then it is necessary to identify destinations that these products have or can develop in the specified period. After defining priority products and identifying destinations, areas of intervention in support of tourism development can be identified. In the development of tourism, the interests of tourists, tourist service providers and the local population must be taken into account (Stojanović & Ilić, 2016).

### **Tourist traffic analysis in the districts of South and Eastern Serbia**

Tourist traffic is a summary indicator of scale, dynamics and structure of tourist movement. Below is an analysis of the tourist traffic in the districts of South and Eastern Serbia. The number of arrivals and overnight stays by districts of the region, the number of arrivals and overnight stays of domestic and foreign tourists, as well as the total number of arrivals and overnight stays in each district of the region, in the period from 2005 to 2015, is given.

Table 1 shows the total number of tourist arrivals in the districts of South and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2005 to 2015. The smallest number of tourist arrivals from 2005 to 2015, observed in the districts of the South and Eastern Serbia region, was recorded in the Pirot district. The exception is the year 2015, when a smaller number of tourist arrivals in relation to the Pirot district was recorded in the Danube District. In the observed period, the leading districts in terms of the number of tourist arrivals were Zaječar and Nišava districts. In the year of 2006, Bor District was the leading district by the number of tourist arrivals, when 74,771 arrivals were registered. In the years of 2005, 2007, 2008, 2012, 2013 and 2014, the highest number of tourist arrivals was in the Zaječar

district. Nišava district stands out as the leading county in the region of South and Eastern Serbia by the number of tourist arrivals in 2009, 2010, 2011 and 2015. The highest number of tourist arrivals in the period from 2005 to 2015 was realized in 2007 in the Zaječar district (96,539 arrivals).

Table 1: *Tourist arrivals by districts of the region of South and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Brančevo District | Danube District | Bor District | Zaječar District | Nišava District | Pirot District | Toplica District | Jablanica District | Pčinja District |
|------|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 2005 | 27.125            | 23.670          | 69.224       | 77.640           | 71.155          | 11.977         | 24.588           | 19.824             | 26.921          |
| 2006 | 22.485            | 27.530          | 74.771       | 73.437           | 66.337          | 12.784         | 21.350           | 17.271             | 26.319          |
| 2007 | 31.367            | 31.073          | 71.205       | 96.539           | 90.238          | 10.151         | 20.091           | 21.262             | 29.343          |
| 2008 | 44.781            | 31.665          | 64.843       | 94.398           | 91.383          | 10.536         | 24.026           | 21.679             | 29.023          |
| 2009 | 28.586            | 34.425          | 62.985       | 80.507           | 89.196          | 9.601          | 22.151           | 19.655             | 24.132          |
| 2010 | 22.131            | 25.396          | 66.477       | 70.790           | 90.783          | 8.266          | 23.377           | 20.891             | 24.442          |
| 2011 | 24.690            | 17.952          | 69.307       | 75.282           | 91.618          | 9.361          | 28.547           | 20.781             | 24.511          |
| 2012 | 30.490            | 13.815          | 68.023       | 82.177           | 79.631          | 9.455          | 27.887           | 20.539             | 21.689          |
| 2013 | 32.569            | 17.282          | 59.449       | 82.659           | 64.990          | 9.181          | 24.208           | 23.416             | 21.055          |
| 2014 | 39.885            | 12.572          | 56.789       | 70.769           | 70.413          | 11.432         | 22.990           | 22.397             | 22.282          |
| 2015 | 45.154            | 10.617          | 63.524       | 81.309           | 83.292          | 11.589         | 27.170           | 20.790             | 18.333          |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 2 provides an overview of the number of overnight stays in the districts of South and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2005 to 2015. Data in the table shows that the Zaječar District achieved by far the largest number of tourist nights. Since 2005 (469.199 overnight stays), the number of tourist nights in the Zaječar District increased until 2007, when the highest number of overnight stays in the observed ten-year period (526.410 nights) was realized. Since the year of 2007, the number of tourist nights in this district was decreasing until the year of 2011 when it achieved a greater number of nights compared to 2010, after which the number of overnight stays was again reduced. In the year of 2015, 149,290 overnight stays were recorded in this district compared to 2005. The second district according to the number of realized overnight stays from 2005 to 2013 was Nišava District. In the years of 2013 and 2014, the second place according to the number of overnight stays was occupied by Bor District, in 2015 Nišava District was again in second place according

to the number of overnight stays. The smallest number of overnights in this ten-year period was recorded in the Danube District (2005, 2011, 2012, 2014 and 2015) and the Pirot district (2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010 and 2013).

Table 2: *Overnight stays by districts of the region of South and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Braničevo District | Danube District | Bor District | Zaječar District | Nišava District | Pirot District | Toplica District | Jablanica District | Pčinja District |
|------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------|------------------|-----------------|----------------|------------------|--------------------|-----------------|
| 2005 | 78.553             | 30.996          | 167.083      | 469.199          | 221.973         | 37.761         | 158.620          | 89.341             | 126.084         |
| 2006 | 79.698             | 40.899          | 172.876      | 451.836          | 231.753         | 31.402         | 223.505          | 76.454             | 118.918         |
| 2007 | 63.175             | 36.650          | 157.229      | 526.410          | 326.522         | 23.292         | 105.801          | 94.113             | 139.515         |
| 2008 | 105.549            | 39.833          | 153.222      | 518.070          | 337.371         | 28.579         | 130.496          | 97.469             | 131.146         |
| 2009 | 65.523             | 50.733          | 153.302      | 443.521          | 320.006         | 24.470         | 119.770          | 87.964             | 116.167         |
| 2010 | 46.559             | 31.776          | 173.606      | 403.158          | 317.370         | 18.610         | 118.841          | 88.650             | 116.137         |
| 2011 | 49.466             | 21.894          | 172.440      | 439.313          | 302.658         | 31.674         | 141.891          | 82.075             | 109.110         |
| 2012 | 65.673             | 24.674          | 164.169      | 431.066          | 290.984         | 26.367         | 151.360          | 73.036             | 88.105          |
| 2013 | 70.840             | 21.127          | 146.528      | 426.906          | 126.393         | 18.556         | 133.303          | 81.546             | 80.978          |
| 2014 | 86.159             | 17.782          | 136.252      | 319.554          | 134.990         | 28.319         | 135.179          | 72.910             | 64.803          |
| 2015 | 106.524            | 20.666          | 146.759      | 319.909          | 158.919         | 24.393         | 157.013          | 70.279             | 62.536          |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 3 shows the number of arrivals and overnight stays of domestic and foreign tourists in Braničevo District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that the share of domestic tourists in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of arrivals and overnight stays is higher. From 2005 to 2010, the number of tourist arrivals varied, so that from 2010 this number was gradually increasing and in 2015 it amounted to 37,857 arrivals. Time has not reached the largest number of tourist arrivals that was recorded in 2008 (41,718 arrivals). Number of overnight stays is reduced in 2007 compared to 2006 and 2005. In 2008 there was a significant increase in the number of tourist arrivals (105,549 arrivals) and in 2009 a significant decrease in the number of tourist arrivals compared to 2008. A decrease in the number of tourist nights was recorded in the year of 2010, after which the number of overnight stays of tourists was gradually increasing, so that in 2015, 106,524 nights were realized, which is the largest number of overnight stays in the Braničevo District in the observed ten-year period.

Table 3: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Braničevo District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 27.125           | 24.964   | 2.161   | 78.553             | 72.722   | 5.831   |
| 2006 | 22.485           | 20.931   | 1.554   | 79.698             | 68.543   | 11.155  |
| 2007 | 31.367           | 29.477   | 1.890   | 63.175             | 57.549   | 5.626   |
| 2008 | 44.781           | 41.718   | 3.063   | 105.549            | 100.705  | 4.844   |
| 2009 | 28.586           | 25.389   | 3.197   | 65.523             | 56.146   | 9.377   |
| 2010 | 22.131           | 19.606   | 2.525   | 46.559             | 41.478   | 5.081   |
| 2011 | 24.690           | 21.533   | 3.157   | 49.466             | 38.775   | 10.691  |
| 2012 | 30.490           | 25.861   | 4.629   | 65.673             | 53.057   | 12.616  |
| 2013 | 32.569           | 28.231   | 4.338   | 70.840             | 62.624   | 8.216   |
| 2014 | 39.885           | 33.186   | 6.699   | 86.159             | 69.769   | 16.390  |
| 2015 | 45.154           | 37.857   | 7.297   | 106.524            | 89.766   | 16.758  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 4 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Danube District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that in the total number of arrivals, the share of domestic tourists in relation to foreign tourists in the period from 2005 to 2014 is higher. A higher number of foreign tourist arrivals in relation to domestic ones was recorded in the years of 2014 and 2015. From the 2005 to 2010, the number of tourist arrivals gradually increased. From 2010 to 2015, the number of tourist arrivals was gradually decreasing (the exception is 2013 when the number of tourist arrivals was higher than in 2012) in order to have 10,617 tourist arrivals in 2015, which is 2.23 times less than in 2005. This is the smallest number of tourist arrivals recorded in Danube District in the period from 2005 to 2015.

In the total number of overnight stays in Danube District, the share of overnight stays of domestic tourists was higher in relation to foreign tourist nights. Foreign tourists realized more overnight stays than domestic tourists only in the years of 2009, 2014 and 2015. The total number of tourist nights varies in the observed ten-year period. In addition, the largest number of tourist overnights in Danube District was realized in the year of 2009 (50,733 overnight stays), and the smallest total number of tourist nights was realized in the year of 2014 (17,782 overnight stays).

Table 4: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Danube District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 23.670           | 20.126   | 3.544   | 30.996             | 25.660   | 5.336   |
| 2006 | 27.530           | 24.309   | 3.221   | 40.899             | 36.062   | 4.837   |
| 2007 | 31.073           | 23.234   | 7.839   | 36.650             | 26.067   | 10.583  |
| 2008 | 31.665           | 23.674   | 7.991   | 39.833             | 26.710   | 13.123  |
| 2009 | 34.425           | 21.814   | 12.611  | 50.733             | 24.538   | 26.195  |
| 2010 | 25.396           | 14.954   | 10.442  | 31.776             | 18.251   | 13.525  |
| 2011 | 17.952           | 11.850   | 6.102   | 21.894             | 13.899   | 7.995   |
| 2012 | 13.815           | 7.332    | 4.629   | 24.674             | 16.174   | 8.500   |
| 2013 | 17.282           | 9.163    | 4.338   | 21.127             | 11.214   | 9.913   |
| 2014 | 12.572           | 5.246    | 6.699   | 17.782             | 7.845    | 9.937   |
| 2015 | 10.617           | 5.471    | 7.297   | 20.666             | 8.245    | 12.421  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 5: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Bor District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 69.224           | 64.913   | 4.311   | 167.083            | 157.219  | 9.864   |
| 2006 | 74.771           | 72.222   | 2.549   | 172.876            | 166.759  | 6.117   |
| 2007 | 71.205           | 65.735   | 5.470   | 157.229            | 143.995  | 13.234  |
| 2008 | 64.843           | 59.457   | 5.386   | 153.222            | 143.170  | 10.052  |
| 2009 | 62.985           | 56.720   | 6.265   | 153.302            | 139.651  | 13.651  |
| 2010 | 66.477           | 58.818   | 7.659   | 173.606            | 155.774  | 17.832  |
| 2011 | 69.307           | 59.593   | 9.714   | 172.440            | 149.710  | 22.730  |
| 2012 | 68.023           | 59.523   | 8.500   | 164.169            | 145.365  | 18.804  |
| 2013 | 59.449           | 49.608   | 9.841   | 146.528            | 124.323  | 22.205  |
| 2014 | 56.789           | 45.631   | 11.158  | 136.252            | 105.997  | 30.255  |
| 2015 | 63.524           | 50.479   | 13.045  | 146.759            | 113.803  | 32.956  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 5 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Bor District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that domestic participation in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of arrivals and tourist overnights was much higher. In the year of 2006, the total number of tourist arrivals was higher than in 2005. Since 2006, the total number of

tourist arrivals has been decreasing until 2010, when there were more arrivals compared to 2009. The increase in the total number of tourist arrivals was achieved in the year of 2011, after which there was a decrease in the number of tourist arrivals up to the year of 2015, when a greater number of tourist arrivals was registered in relation to 2014. In the observed ten-year period, the largest number of overnight stays of tourists in the Bor District was recorded in 2006 (172,876 overnight stays). Over the next two years, the total number of overnight stays decreases. A slight increase in the number of overnight stays was registered in 2009, while in 2010 there was a significantly higher number of tourist nights. From 2010 to 2015, the total number of overnight stays of tourists was evident.

Table 6: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Zaječar District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 77.640           | 75.516   | 2.124   | 469.199            | 464.234  | 4.965   |
| 2006 | 73.437           | 71.710   | 1.727   | 451.836            | 446.503  | 5.333   |
| 2007 | 96.539           | 92.254   | 4.285   | 526.410            | 514.556  | 11.854  |
| 2008 | 94.398           | 90.216   | 4.182   | 518.070            | 505.167  | 12.903  |
| 2009 | 80.507           | 75.667   | 4.840   | 443.521            | 431.461  | 12.060  |
| 2010 | 70.790           | 66.473   | 4.317   | 403.158            | 392.928  | 10.230  |
| 2011 | 75.282           | 71.477   | 3.805   | 439.313            | 429.534  | 9.779   |
| 2012 | 82.177           | 77.171   | 5.006   | 431.066            | 420.237  | 10.829  |
| 2013 | 82.659           | 74.839   | 7.820   | 426.906            | 410.546  | 16.360  |
| 2014 | 70.769           | 61.094   | 9.675   | 319.554            | 294.485  | 25.069  |
| 2015 | 81.309           | 66.663   | 14.646  | 319.909            | 287.724  | 32.185  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 6 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Zaječar District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that domestic participation in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of arrivals and overnights was much higher. The total number of arrivals, as well as the total number of tourist nights in the observed period varies. The highest total number of arrivals and tourist nights in Zaječar District was recorded in 2007 (96,539 arrivals and 526,410 nights), while the smallest total number of tourist arrivals and nights was realized in 2014 (70,769 arrivals and 319,554 overnight stays).

Table 7 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Nišava District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that in the period from 2005 to 2014, the share of domestic tourists in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of tourist arrivals increased. However, in Nišava District the gap between the number of arrivals of domestic and foreign tourists, such as in the other districts of the South and Eastern Serbia region, was not so expressed. The total number of tourist arrivals varied in the observed period. The largest total number of arrivals was recorded in the year of 2011 (91,618 arrivals), with the lowest total number of arrivals realized in the year of 2013 (64,990 arrivals). The total number of tourist nights increased from 2005 to 2009. Since 2009, the total number of tourist overnights was decreasing by the year of 2014. During 2014, the number of overnight stays was higher than in 2013, and in 2015 the number of overnight stays compared to year 2014 was higher. However, this number of overnight stays was 2.12 times lower than in 2008, when the highest number of overnight stays of tourists in the observed ten-year period was recorded (337,371 nights).

Table 7: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Nišava District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 71.155           | 48.912   | 22.243  | 221.973            | 188.507  | 33.466  |
| 2006 | 66.337           | 53.211   | 13.126  | 231.753            | 210.812  | 20.941  |
| 2007 | 90.238           | 58.111   | 32.127  | 326.522            | 282.999  | 43.523  |
| 2008 | 91.383           | 60.131   | 31.252  | 337.371            | 286.256  | 51.115  |
| 2009 | 89.196           | 53.866   | 35.330  | 320.006            | 268.879  | 51.127  |
| 2010 | 90.783           | 53.561   | 37.222  | 317.370            | 261.795  | 55.575  |
| 2011 | 91.618           | 55.207   | 36.411  | 302.658            | 251.788  | 50.870  |
| 2012 | 79.631           | 47.551   | 32.080  | 290.984            | 239.298  | 51.686  |
| 2013 | 64.990           | 34.498   | 30.492  | 126.393            | 76.118   | 50.275  |
| 2014 | 70.413           | 32.642   | 37.771  | 134.990            | 76.007   | 58.983  |
| 2015 | 83.292           | 36.868   | 46.424  | 158.919            | 88.200   | 70.719  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 8 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Pirot District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noted that in the total number of arrivals, the share of arrivals generated by domestic tourists was

higher. In the total number of overnight stays of tourists from 2005 to 2012, the share of nights spent by domestic tourists was also higher. From 2012 to 2015, foreign tourists realized more overnight stays than domestic tourists, and in 2015 domestic tourists realized a slightly higher number of overnight stays than foreign tourists.

In Pirot District, the highest total number of tourist arrivals was recorded in 2006 (12,784 arrivals) and the highest number of overnight stays in 2005 (37,761 overnight stays). The smallest total number of arrivals was realized in 2010 (8,266 arrivals), while the smallest total number of overnight stays was recorded in 2013 (18,556 overnight stays).

Table 8: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Pirot District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 11.977           | 8.889    | 3.088   | 37.761             | 31.816   | 5.945   |
| 2006 | 12.784           | 9.653    | 3.131   | 31.402             | 27.108   | 4.294   |
| 2007 | 10.151           | 7.410    | 2.741   | 23.292             | 18.098   | 5.194   |
| 2008 | 10.536           | 7.374    | 3.162   | 28.579             | 23.476   | 5.103   |
| 2009 | 9.601            | 6.426    | 3.175   | 24.470             | 18.370   | 6.100   |
| 2010 | 8.266            | 5.676    | 2.590   | 18.610             | 14.170   | 4.440   |
| 2011 | 9.361            | 7.176    | 2.185   | 31.674             | 26.891   | 4.783   |
| 2012 | 9.455            | 4.889    | 4.566   | 26.367             | 10.043   | 16.324  |
| 2013 | 9.181            | 4.958    | 4.223   | 18.556             | 9.175    | 9.381   |
| 2014 | 11.432           | 6.022    | 5.410   | 28.319             | 11.704   | 16.615  |
| 2015 | 11.589           | 6.177    | 5.412   | 24.393             | 12.363   | 12.030  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 9 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in Toplica District in the period from 2005 to 2015. In the observed period, the total number of arrivals and tourist overnights varied. The largest total number of tourist arrivals was recorded in 2011 (28,547 arrivals), while the highest total number of overnight stays was in 2006 (223,505 nights). The smallest total number of arrivals and overnights was realized in 2007 (20,091 arrivals and 105,801 overnight stays).

Table 9: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Toplica District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 24.588           | 24.251   | 337     | 158.620            | 157.708  | 912     |
| 2006 | 21.350           | 21.019   | 331     | 223.505            | 222.760  | 745     |
| 2007 | 20.091           | 19.189   | 902     | 105.801            | 103.100  | 2.701   |
| 2008 | 24.026           | 23.526   | 500     | 130.496            | 128.814  | 1.682   |
| 2009 | 22.151           | 21.214   | 937     | 119.770            | 116.700  | 3.070   |
| 2010 | 23.377           | 21.742   | 1.635   | 118.841            | 114.698  | 4.143   |
| 2011 | 28.547           | 25.206   | 3.341   | 141.891            | 134.461  | 7.430   |
| 2012 | 27.887           | 24.458   | 3.429   | 151.360            | 142.221  | 9.139   |
| 2013 | 24.208           | 21.722   | 2.486   | 133.303            | 124.998  | 8.305   |
| 2014 | 22.990           | 20.023   | 2.967   | 135.179            | 124.855  | 10.324  |
| 2015 | 27.170           | 22.535   | 4.635   | 157.013            | 142.733  | 14.280  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Table 10 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Jablanica District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that there is a higher share of domestic in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of arrivals and overnights.

Table 10: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Jablanica District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 19.824           | 15.801   | 4.023   | 89.341             | 83.903   | 5.438   |
| 2006 | 17.271           | 14.674   | 2.597   | 76.454             | 72.474   | 3.980   |
| 2007 | 21.262           | 16.135   | 5.127   | 94.113             | 86.878   | 7.235   |
| 2008 | 21.679           | 16.275   | 5.404   | 97.469             | 88.390   | 9.079   |
| 2009 | 19.655           | 13.405   | 6.250   | 87.964             | 79.527   | 8.437   |
| 2010 | 20.891           | 13.596   | 7.295   | 88.650             | 79.308   | 9.342   |
| 2011 | 20.781           | 13.754   | 7.027   | 82.075             | 72.734   | 9.341   |
| 2012 | 20.539           | 11.692   | 8.847   | 73.036             | 57.966   | 15.070  |
| 2013 | 23.416           | 12.706   | 10.710  | 81.546             | 66.595   | 14.951  |
| 2014 | 22.397           | 12.850   | 9.547   | 72.910             | 58.822   | 14.088  |
| 2015 | 20.790           | 13.114   | 7.676   | 70.279             | 58.238   | 12.041  |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

The highest number of tourist arrivals was achieved in 2013 (23,416 visits), and the lowest total number of tourist arrivals was in 2006 (17.271 arrivals). The highest number of overnight stays was realized in 2008 (97,469 overnight stays), and the lowest total number of overnight stays was in 2015 (70,279 overnight stays).

Table 11 shows the number of arrivals and overnights of domestic and foreign tourists in the Pčinja District in the period from 2005 to 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that domestic participation share in relation to foreign tourists in the total number of arrivals and overnights was much higher. The highest score on arrivals and overnights in Pčinja District was recorded in 2007 (29,343 arrivals and 139,515 nights), and the lowest total number of tourist arrivals and overnights was realized in 2015 (18,333 arrivals and 62,536 nights). The total number of tourist arrivals varied in the observed ten-year period, while the total number of tourist overnight stays steadily declined since 2007.

Table 11: *Tourist arrivals and overnight stays in Pčinja District in the period from 2005 to 2015*

| YEAR | Tourist arrivals |          |         | Tourist overnights |          |         |
|------|------------------|----------|---------|--------------------|----------|---------|
|      | Total            | Domestic | Foreign | Total              | Domestic | Foreign |
| 2005 | 26.921           | 23.200   | 3.721   | 126.084            | 115.218  | 10.866  |
| 2006 | 26.319           | 22.755   | 3.564   | 118.918            | 109.313  | 9.605   |
| 2007 | 29.343           | 25.234   | 4.109   | 139.515            | 129.929  | 9.586   |
| 2008 | 29.023           | 25.005   | 4.018   | 131.146            | 121.940  | 9.206   |
| 2009 | 24.132           | 20.128   | 4.004   | 116.167            | 108.236  | 7.931   |
| 2010 | 24.442           | 19.974   | 4.468   | 116.137            | 107.008  | 9.129   |
| 2011 | 24.511           | 19.704   | 4.807   | 109.110            | 99.311   | 9.799   |
| 2012 | 21.689           | 16.596   | 5.093   | 88.105             | 79.130   | 8.975   |
| 2013 | 21.055           | 15.948   | 5.107   | 80.978             | 71.838   | 9.140   |
| 2014 | 22.282           | 16.319   | 5.963   | 64.803             | 55.838   | 8.965   |
| 2015 | 18.333           | 13.746   | 4.587   | 62.536             | 54.613   | 7.923   |

Source: *Data from publications: Municipalities in Serbia 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016.*

Analysis of tourist traffic is important in order to comprehend the scope and dynamics of tourism flows in the previous period, but also to plan the future tourism development in the region.

## Conclusion

The above-mentioned problems and constraints that hindered the development of tourism in the current period have to be overcome in the forthcoming period.

A series of measures needs to be taken to identify the indicated problems and to prevent such restrictions from hindering or preventing the development of tourism in the South and Eastern Serbia region in the long run.

In order to benefit from the comparative advantages, improve the quality of the existing offer and improve the competitive position of the South and Eastern Serbia region on the domestic and international tourism market, it is necessary to:

- to identify the unique advantages of tourist destinations in the region of South and Eastern Serbia;
- to create a positive image of tourist destinations in the region of South and Eastern Serbia;
- to differentiate the offer of tourist destinations in the region of South and Eastern Serbia;
- renew existing and build new accommodation capacities;
- improve road and communal infrastructure;
- to improve the tourist infra and suprastructure;
- improve tourist signaling;
- educate cadres in the field of tourism;
- to intensify market and above all promotional activities;
- to establish an adequate system for managing tourist destinations in the region of South and Eastern Serbia.

Tourism is an economic branch that requires continuous quality improvement, due to competition, but also because of the increasingly complex and diverse tourists demand.

Achieving, maintaining and improving the quality of tourism is one of the main conditions in meeting the needs of tourism and increasing tourist traffic.

In modern conditions, quality is one of the key factors of survival of tourist business subjects and tourist destinations on the market.

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