

## REGIONAL HISTORICAL – GEOGRAPHICAL OVERVIEW OF TOURISM IN THE REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA

**Abstract:** The paper presents a regional historical and geographical cross - section of the tourism in the Republic of Macedonia. It has been covered for a long time since the beginning and the development of tourism to date. There are several regional divisions of tourism present at different times. The analysis is dominated by the regional review of the number of accommodation facilities and a tourist visit. The purpose of the research is the argumentation of ranking and valuation of the tourist regions from the first their division to date.

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### Introduction

**T**ourism takes place in a geographical area that is complex and surrounded by a multitude of objects of anorganic, organic and anthropogenic origin. Considering the fact that space determines tourism in research and valorization, an important aspect is the regional aspect. In regional analyzes there are certain problems in the provision of the typology and hierarchy of the tourist region. Different criteria are applied in the typology of the tourist regions and are commonly referred to as homogeneous, heterogeneous or polarized and complex tourist regions.

It is similar when determining criteria for defining the hierarchy of tourist regions. The most common terms in the hierarchy are the terms area, area, zone, region, and the like. The hierarchy of

regions can start from a lower and higher rank on a hierarchical basis. Thus, we find the divisions of the mesoregion, submesoregion and microregion. or macro, meso and micro region. Tourist and geographical literature also includes the terms tourist agglomerations, tourist complexes, tourist areas, tourist area, tourist area, tourist zones, tourist sites, tourist centers and the like. [1] [2]

Depending on the size of the geographical area, the Republic of Macedonia is a meso tourist region offering an interesting, rich and varied tourist offer. On the territory of the country there are several regional entities with greater or less homogeneity of the elements that possess various tourist values.

With the issue of tourism regionalization in the Republic of Macedonia, several experts from the field of tourism have taken part and use more scientific criteria and approaches. First was Panov (1968), followed by the views of Jeremic, Stojmilov, Marinovski and others.

In our paper will be presented general observations on the touristic regionalization, then presented several divisions of tourist regions in the Republic of Macedonia in the last five decades and at the end presentation of more important tourist data in the eight statistical regions.

### **Methodology**

The research uses a qualitative analysis based on review and examination of relevant primary (published papers and books) and secondary sources (statistics and scientific publications).

From the research, we pull the following, prof. Dr. Mitko Panov, determines two criteria: primary and secondary. As the primary criteria it takes: the suitability of the geographical position, the quality and type of tourist motives, quantity, places, objects and areas. Secondary criteria were taken: accommodation capacities and indicators of tourism turnover. [3]

The tourist valorization of prof. PhD. Dusan Jeremic made it based on: natural and anthropogenic factors. In determining the regional entities on the territory of our country, he used the following criteria: criterion natural and socio - economic whole; criterion of possibilities for harmonious growth of the region; Integration criterion; market criterion; and criterion of optimal tourist valorization. [4]

For prof. Dr. Alexander Stojmilov applies the following criteria: the natural whole; harmonized growth of tourist spatial unit with other spatial units; optimal tourist valorization; integrity, if the smaller spatial units functionally connect, form a larger spatial unit and create better conditions for the development of tourism; contact with tourist flows, etc. From the group of criteria elements are included: tourist-geographical position; traffic links and gravitational possibilities; natural tourist attractions (climate, relief, hydrography and biography) and their opportunities for tourism development; cultural historical heritage and its importance to tourism; and the material base for the development of tourism (facilities, infrastructure, services, etc.). [5] [6]

In general, the most significant criteria that express the complexity of tourism regionalization are: preserving the natural and economic integrity; compliance with other activities; the degree of integration; proximity to the market; disposition of facilities; capacity of the space for certain types of tourism, etc.

In each tourism regionalization it starts from determining the value of the smallest spatial unit (site), while the grouping of smaller spatial units creates spatial units of higher rank, zone - makes up several sites, more zones constitute an area and more areas constitute a region).

### **Results and discussion**

The first regionalization made by Panov is divided into seven regions and 14 regions, including the Skopje - Kumanovo region (with the Skopje and Kumanovo regions), the Polog - Radika Region (with the Polog and Mavrovo - Radika area), the Ohrid - Prespa region (with Ohrid – Struga and Prespa region), Pelagonija (With the Veles - Demir Kapija and Gevgelija - Dojran area), the Middle Bregalnica - Strumica region (with the regions of Stip - Kocani and Strumica - Radovis), the Pelagonia region (with Bitola - Mariovo and Prilep - Krushevo region), Middle Vardar region (with Shtip – Kocani and

Strumica – Radovish region) and the Osogovo - Maleshevo region (with Krivo - Palanka and Kratovo upper bregalnica regions). From his research we get the following data. In 1966, the then Socialist Republic of Macedonia was visited by 378572 tourists who realized 1141467 overnights. Most tourists visited the Ohrid-Prespa region with 50.5% participation, followed by the Skopje-Kumanovo, Polog-Radik, Pelagonia, Vardar, Middle-Bregalnica-Strumica and with the least touristic visit the Osogovo-Malesevo region. [3]

In 1966, SR Macedonia had a total of 106 accommodation facilities, of which 43 hotels, 12 motels, 35 hospices and resorts, 11 mountain huts and 5 bathrooms. Distributed by regions, the situation was as follows: the most accommodation facilities were in the Ohrid-Prespa region 27 buildings, the Skopje-Kumanovo 23, the Poloshko-Radica 14, the Middle Vardar 13, the Middle Bregalnica-Strumica 11, the Pelagonia 10 and the least in the Osogovo-Malesevo only 8 accommodation facilities. [3]

A few years later, in 1971, Dusan Jeremic presented touristic regionalization from 6 regions, including: the region of Skopje with the narrow gravity region, the Western touristic region (part of Vratnica to Debar), the region of Ohridsko - Prespa (lakes), the region of Dojran - Gevgelija - Border Crossing, the region of Kriva Palanka - Kratovo, and region the Modern Road "Brotherhood - Unity" with a narrower gravitational area. [4]

The next tourist division for the Republic of Macedonia is Stojmilov and Marinovski: 3 tourist regions, 14 tourist areas, 57 zones and 172 tourist sites. [1] [7]

Tourism is an important branch that significantly influences the policy of balanced regional development. The policy of balanced regional development is a system of goals, instruments and measures aimed at reducing the regional disparities and achieving a balanced and sustainable development of the Republic of Macedonia. Through the process of identification, encouragement, management and exploitation of the development potentials of the planning regions and areas with specific development needs, the goal is to ensure the integral development of the state and raise the quality of life by creating conditions for equal access to public services.

Recognizing the benefits from the regional policy of the European Union, a system of measures and instruments has been established, which corresponds to European standards and creates preconditions for more efficient use of the funds from the Union funds. In 2007, the Law on Balanced Regional Development was adopted, and in 2009 the Strategy for Regional Development of the Republic of Macedonia. For the purpose of planning the regional development and realization of the measures and instruments for its stimulation, the Law has established 8 planning regions in the Republic of Macedonia: Vardar, East, Southwest, Southeast, Pelagonia, Polog, Northeast and Skopje, as well as 8 Centers regional development (Veles, Stip, Ohrid, Strumica, Bitola, Tetovo, Kumanovo and Skopje). Taking into account the need for a statistical basis in the planning of their development, the planning regions coincide with the statistical, determined by the nomenclature of territorial units for statistics NUTS-3. [8]

These premises are an integral part of the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Macedonia, and in accordance with the basic long-term objectives, the concept and criteria for development and organization of the tourist offer, and the regionalization of the tourist areas by 2020, a total of 10 tourist regions have been defined: 53 tourist zones and 195 tourist localities. [9]

In these regions, areas and zones are distinguished tourist sites, 34 of which are for activities on snow, for activities on water 47, for activities in natural and historic ambiances 80, 9 baths, city tourist centers 29 and main interstate connections 4. The number of tourist sites is slightly larger (203), because we find several sites with two / three activities on one site. [9]

In 2015, according to tourism data extracted from the websites of the eight statistical regions, in the Republic of Macedonia there are 32 tourist areas, 54 tourist zones and 212 tourist sites. In 2017, these sides have been updated and another division in the Republic of Macedonia is seen with a total of 10 tourist regions, 100 tourist zones and 223 tourist sites. [10]

## Short historical - geographical overview of tourism in statistical regions

This section of the paper will briefly outline the most important data on tourism in each region. In the short description we use data from multiple books, statistical reviews and publications.

Since 2003, statistics on tourism turnover by regions have been kept, the text that follows provides a statistical overview of the tourist visit by 2017, ie for a period of 15 years.

Table 1. Numerous movements of tourism and overnight stays by regions 2003-2017

Year	Tourists/ nights	Total RM	Of that Region							
			Vardar	East	Southwest	Southeast	Pelagonia	Polog	Northeast	Skopje
2003	<b>Tourist</b>	<b>483151</b>	<b>12698</b>	<b>8602</b>	<b>241380</b>	<b>35313</b>	<b>63689</b>	<b>16255</b>	<b>4540</b>	<b>100674</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	325459	9411	6571	189829	27521	54464	11357	3555	22751
	<i>Foreign</i>	157692	3287	2031	51551	7792	9225	4898	985	77923
	<b>Nights</b>	<b>2006867</b>	<b>30859</b>	<b>22171</b>	<b>1339022</b>	<b>169100</b>	<b>202424</b>	<b>39536</b>	<b>6365</b>	<b>197390</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	1660667	23308	17070	1203809	156957	187716	31178	4704	35925
	<i>Foreign</i>	346200	7551	5101	135213	12143	14708	8358	1661	161465
2009	<b>Tourist</b>	<b>587770</b>	<b>9448</b>	<b>12680</b>	<b>257480</b>	<b>90998</b>	<b>50740</b>	<b>31596</b>	<b>3560</b>	<b>131268</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	328566	4063	8135	170127	68416	38902	17500	1436	19987
	<i>Foreign</i>	259204	5385	4545	87353	22582	11838	14096	2124	111281
	<b>Nights</b>	<b>2101606</b>	<b>17228</b>	<b>27509</b>	<b>1326191</b>	<b>277030</b>	<b>139699</b>	<b>61146</b>	<b>6247</b>	<b>246555</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	157810	6741	15742	1077229	233220	114439	36155	2781	31503
	<i>Foreign</i>	583796	10487	11767	248963	43810	25260	24991	3466	215052
2013	<b>Tourist</b>	<b>701794</b>	<b>17196</b>	<b>20747</b>	<b>264826</b>	<b>109982</b>	<b>70312</b>	<b>30823</b>	<b>5584</b>	<b>182324</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	302114	4120	13582	130020	59977	49635	15491	1856	27433
	<i>Foreign</i>	399680	13076	7165	134806	50005	20677	15332	3728	154891
	<b>Nights</b>	<b>2157175</b>	<b>30840</b>	<b>42222</b>	<b>1152651</b>	<b>327279</b>	<b>162752</b>	<b>61652</b>	<b>8244</b>	<b>371535</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	1275800	6194	24987	763788	231870	112637	30806	2553	102965
	<i>Foreign</i>	881375	24646	17235	388863	95409	50115	30846	5691	268570
2017	<b>Tourist</b>	<b>998841</b>	<b>26145</b>	<b>31775</b>	<b>368924</b>	<b>142888</b>	<b>63549</b>	<b>30124</b>	<b>11290</b>	<b>324146</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	368247	8033	19947	164459	84260	38074	14150	2387	36937
	<i>Foreign</i>	630594	18112	11828	204465	58628	25475	15974	8903	287209
	<b>Nights</b>	<b>2775152</b>	<b>47189</b>	<b>62957</b>	<b>1365684</b>	<b>457162</b>	<b>161751</b>	<b>60249</b>	<b>17207</b>	<b>602953</b>
	<i>Domestic</i>	1480460	17473	38320	826774	351244	93314	27457	3283	122595
	<i>Foreign</i>	1294692	29716	24637	538910	105818	68437	32792	13924	480358

Source: State Statistical Office (SSO). Tourism in Republic of Macedonia, Statistical review, 2003-2005, 2006-2010, 2007-2011, 2008-2012, 2009-2013, 2010-2014, 2011-2015, 2012-2016, 2013-2017.

Figure 1. Numerous movements of tourists and overnights stays by regions for 2003,2009,2013,2017



Interesting is the data about the number of hotels for a period of one century, so from 24 hotels and hostels in 1912, [11] [12] their number after the First World War has steadily increased, from 160 hotels and lodging in 1936, [13] 300 hotels, motels and resorts in 1989 [14], then 486 hotels, hostels, motels and resorts in 2008 [14] [15]

According to the census of catering services, the situation with the accommodation facilities was as follows: Skopje 69, Ohrid 72, Resen 61, Dojran 49, Mavrovo and Rostusha 27, Struga 24, Tetovo 19, Bitola 16, Krusevo 12, Kumanovo 10, Strumica 9, Gostivar 9, Gevgelija 8, Kochani 8, Prilep 7, Veles 6, Caska 6, Shtip 5, Berovo 5, Debar 5, Kicevo 5 and so on. In total, 16306 rooms and 45139 beds were registered in 2008.

Number of business facilities in the catering industry was 2035 objects. Number of employees in accommodation facilities was 5444 persons, while employees in catering facilities 16216 persons. [16] while in 2017 there were 502 hotels, hostels, motels, lodging and resorts [17].

In 2017, the total number of 502 hotels, according to the regions, was 167 hotels in the southwest region, 150 in Skopje, 60 in Pelagonia, 30 in southeast, 30 in Polog, 25 in east, 20 in Vardar and 20 in the northeast region.

The total number of capacities for accommodation in 2015 in the Republic of Macedonia was 2084 business units (27812 rooms and 72021 beds were located), of which there were 204 business units in the Vardar region (675 rooms and 1696 beds), in the eastern 185 (641 rooms and 1894 beds), in the southwest 294 (16370 rooms and 41917 beds), in the southeast 167 (2404 rooms and 6316 beds), in the Pelagonia 130 (3386 rooms and 9993 beds), in the Polog 401 (1128 rooms and 3443 beds) northeast 186 (315 rooms and 673 beds), and most in the Skopje region 517 business units (2893 rooms and 6089 beds). [18]



Observed by cities and later in municipalities, the situation was followed. Until 1912, there were mostly hotels and nightclubs in Bitola (7), Skopje (6), Dojran (3), Ohrid (2), and so on, [11] after the First World War most wanted and lodging in Skopje (56), so Bitola (25), [13] and after the Second World War, the number of hotels is constantly increasing, so in 2017 the situation with the number of hotels, hostels and motels is as follows: Skopje has a maximum of 172, Ohrid 58, Bitola 29, Struga 28,



Tetovo with Popova Sapka 21, Gostivar with Mavrovo 21, Strumica 17, Star with Nov Dojran 12, Gevgelija 12, Prilep 10, Veles 10, Shtip 8, Kumanovo 7, Resen 7, Kavadarci 5, Debar 5 and so on. Namely, in 2017 the total number of accommodation facilities amounted to 1047 facilities, of which 502 hotels, motels 81, hostels 36, night huts 24 and apartments and private rooms for renting 545 objects. [19]

**Map 1.** Regional division of the Republic of Macedonia

### Vardar Planning Region

It covers an area of 4042 km<sup>2</sup>, with 152742 inhabitants (RM, 2072490 inhabitants, estimation for 2016, density of 80.6 æ / km<sup>2</sup>), with a population density of 37.8 æ / km<sup>2</sup>, there are 215 settlements located in nine municipalities (Veles , Gradsko, Demir Kapija, Kavadarci, Lozovo, Negotino, Rosoman, Sveti Nikole, Caska), of which 5 are urban (Veles, Demir Kapija, Kavadarci, Negotino and Sveti Nikole). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments that are only partially tourist valorized. The Vardar region is figuratively called the "wine region". The administrative center of the region is Veles with 45000 inhabitants. [20]

In Veles in 1866, there were 25 taverns, 13 inns, 24 cafes, 1 meana and 7 pastramalties. The first lodging called Hotel was registered in 1888. The first European-style hotel was built in 1909 with the name Hotel "Belgrade" (later "Moscow"). In Negotino there were 5 ana and 1 meana, in Kavadarci 2 ana, in Gradsko 2 ana and in Demir Kapija 2 ana and one café, and another 20 pass and village ana. [11]

In the period 1919-1941 in Veles there were 5 hotels, in Kavadarci 3 and Gradsko 2 (there were a total of 160 hotels in the territory of today's Republic of Macedonia). [13] The beginnings of tourism in the region date back to 1956. The number of hotels in the eighties was 15, [14] and in 2017 more than 20 hotels, hostels and motels.

In 2017, the region visited 26145 tourists (2.61% participation in the total number of tourists who visited the Republic of Macedonia in 2017) and realized 47189 nights (1.7% participation in the total number of nights spent in 2017), with an average stay of 1 , 8 days. More than half of tourists (69.2%) and nights (63%) in the region were made by foreign guests. In 2017 the region was most visited by tourists from Serbia, then from Romania, Germany, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is the wine (about 30 wineries), mountain (Jakupica Mountain, Kozuf), fishing (Vardar, Tikvesh Lake, Lake Mladost), cultural - historical (archeological site Stobi, churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments) , manifestation ("Racin's meetings", "Tikvesh vintage") and rural tourism (Gradsko, Bogomila, Nezilovo, Papradiste and other villages).

### **East planning region**

It covers an area of 3537 km<sup>2</sup>, with 176568 inhabitants, with a population density of 49.9 w / km<sup>2</sup>, and has 217 settlements in 11 municipalities (Berovo, Vinica, Delcevo, Zrnovci, Karbinci, Kocani, Makedonska Kamenica, Pehchevo, Probistip, Cheshinovo - Obleshevo and Stip), of which 8 are urban (Berovo, Vinica, Delcevo, Kochani, Makedonska Kamenica, Pehchevo, Probishtip and Stip). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments that are only partially tourist valorized. The administrative center of the region is Stip with 47000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period in Stip there were 1 caravansaray, 47 inns, more cafes, and in 1912 there was also a hotel. In Sveti Nikole there were 3 inns, 1 meana, 1 café, in Kochani there were 1 inns, one in Delcevo, Berovo and Pehchevo, and 10 other road and village inns. [11] In the period 1919-1941, there were 12 hotels in Stip. [13] The beginnings of tourism in the region date back to 1958. The number of hotels in the eighties was 12, [14] and in 2017 about 25 hotels, hostels and motels (12 of them in Stip).

In 2017, the region was visited by 31775 tourists (with a share of 3.2% in the total of RM) and realized 38320 nights (with only 2.3% in the total of RM), with an average stay of 1.2 days. More than half of tourists (62.8%) and overnight stays (60.9%) in the region were made by domestic tourists. In 2017 the region was mostly visited by tourists from Bulgaria, then from Serbia, Germany, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is the mountain (Osogovo Mountains, Ski Center Ponikva, Maleshevski Mountains, Plackovica, Golak), cultural - historical (archeological site Bargala, Vinica Kale, Isar, churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments) wine, fishing, hunting and rural tourism.

### **Southwest planning region**

It covers an area of 3340 km<sup>2</sup>, with 219732 inhabitants, with a population density of 65.8 km / km<sup>2</sup>, there are 286 settlements in 9 municipalities (Vevcani, Debar, Debarca, Kicevo, Makedonski Brod, Ohrid, Plasnica, Struga and Centar Zupa) of which 5 are urban (Debar, Kicevo, Makedonski Brod, Ohrid and Struga). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments, which in a significant part of the tourist are valorized, and especially the coast of Ohrid Lake. The administrative center of the region is Struga with 16559 inhabitants, and the largest city is Ohrid with 42000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period, Ohrid is mentioned that he had 3 caravanserai, 31 inns, meani and cafes, and in 1911 two hotels were mentioned. In Kicevo there were 2 inns, Struga 1 inn, Makedonski Brod 1, Debar 1, and 14 other road and village inns. [11] In the period 1919 - 1941, and especially since the early thirties, tourism in Ohrid appears in an organized form. Thus, in that period there are 8 hotels in Ohrid, while in the whole region 21 hotels (Ohrid 8, Debar 4, Banja Banjishte 4, Banja Kosovrasi 3, Struga 1, Kicevo 1). [13]

After World War II, and especially since 1949, closed-type tourism has been transformed into an open type and built hotels, resorts ("Orce Nikolov" in 1949) in an organized form after 1952 on the Ohrid coast, and in Struga since 1954 year. At the end of the eighties in Ohrid, Struga, along the coast of Ohrid Lake, there are over 80 hotels, resorts and auto camps, [14] and in 2017 we register over 170 hotels, hostels, motels, apartments, auto camps, etc.

In 2017 the region was visited by 368924 tourists (36.9% of the total RM) and realized 1365684 overnights (49.2% of the total RM), with an average stay of 3.7 days. More than half of the tourists (55.4%) were from abroad, and overnight stays (60.5%) in the region were made by domestic tourists. In 2017, the region was mostly visited by Turkey, the Netherlands, Bulgaria, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism in this region is the lake (Lake Ohrid), the mountain (Galichica, Jablanica, Stogovo, Bistra), cultural and historical (Ohrid, St. Naum, Struga, churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments), manifestation, fishing and rural tourism.

### **South-East planning region**

It covers an area of 2739 km<sup>2</sup>, with 173550 inhabitants, with a population density of 63.4 km / km<sup>2</sup>, with 183 settlements in 10 municipalities (Bogdanci, Bosilovo, Valandovo, Vasilevo, Gevgelija, Dojran, Konce, Novo Selo, Radovis, Strumica ) of which 5 are urban (Bogdanci, Valandovo, Gevgelija, Radovis, Strumica). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments that have been valorized in significant part, especially the coast of Dojran Lake. The administrative center of the region is Strumica with 35000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period for Strumica it is mentioned that she had 1 caravansaray and 7 inns, in Dojran 30 inns, 24 cafes and 2 restaurants (first cafe 1884 "Fuck Tak"), there were 12 inns in Radovish, 7 inns and 2 inns in Valandovo 4 inns, in Gevgelija 3 inns and 2 cafes. The first hotels are mentioned in Dojran 3 and Gevgelija 1, and in 1903 there is 1 night stay in Negorski Banji. In the Turkish period, there are also 7 road and village inns. [11]

In the period 1919 - 1941 in Gevgelija there were 6 hotels, Strumica 4 and 1 hotel in Banja BANSKO and Negorska Banya. [13] The first forms of organized tourism appear in Star Dojran in 1952/53, and in 1975 around Dojran Lake there are 10 hotels and 22 resorts, two auto camps, while the region has 16 hotels and motels, [14] and in 2017 in this region has over 30 hotels, hostels and motels.

In 2017, the region was visited by 142888 tourists (14.3%) and realized 457162 nights, with an average stay of 3.2 days. More than half of tourists (59.0%) and overnight stays (76.8%) in the region were made by domestic tourists. In 2017 the region was mostly visited by tourists from Greece, Serbia, Bulgaria, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is the lake (Dojran Lake), the spa (Negor Bath, BANSKO), the mountain (Kozuf, Belasica), the cultural - historical (archeological site Isar Marvinci, Vardarski Rid, Tsarevi Kuli, churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments), manifestation, wine, fishing, hunting and rural tourism.

### **Pelagonia planning region**

It covers an area of 4717 km<sup>2</sup> with 230387 inhabitants, with a population density of 48.8 w / km<sup>2</sup>, has 343 settlements in 9 municipalities (Bitola, Demir Hisar, Dolneni, Krivogastani, Krusevo, Mogila, Novaci, Prilep, Resen) 5 are urban (Bitola, Demir Hisar, Krusevo, Prilep, Resen). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments, which in a significant part of the tourist are valorized. The administrative center of the region is Bitola with 74000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period for Bitola it is mentioned that there were 1 caravanserai, 50 inns, 44 means, inns, cafes and restaurants, in Prilep there were 26 inns, 2 means, in Krusevo 32 inns and commercial warehouses, Demir Hisar 2 and in Resen 1 and 60 road and village inns. In Bitola the first hotel was mentioned in 1843, and in 1912 there were 7 hotels in the city, and in Prilep 1 hotel. [11]

In the period 1919 - 1941, 25 hotels were registered in Bitola, in Prilep 6, in Resen 2 and in Krusevo 1 hotel, or in total 34 hotels in the region. [13] The first forms of organized tourism appear in 1926 with the construction of a children's resort on Pelister and Krushevo. However, tourism started to develop in the mid-1950s (Carina resort 1953, Oteshevo 1955 and Pretor 1959, later a Kranj auto camp was built - all of Prespa Lake, Krusevo hotel "Ilinden" built in 1947/49 and expanded in 1952). At the end of the eighties in this region there are over 40 hotels and resorts, [14] and in 2017 there are about 60 hotels, hostels, motels, apartments, etc., and over 300 cafes and restaurants.

In 2017, the region was visited by 63549 tourists (6.3%) and realized 161751 nights (5.8%), with an average stay of 2.5 days. More than half of tourists (59.9%) and nights (57.7%) in the region were made by domestic tourists. In 2017, the region was mostly visited by tourists from Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is the lake (Prespa Lake), the mountain (Baba with Pelister, Busheva, Nidze, ski resorts Kopanki, Pelister, Krusevo), cultural - historical (archeological site Heraclea, Stibera, churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments ), manifestation, fishing, hunting, alternative and rural tourism (Brajcino, Ljubojno, Malovista, Smilevo, etc.).



### **Polog planning region**

It covers an area of 2416 km<sup>2</sup> with 320560 inhabitants, with a population density of 132.7 km / km<sup>2</sup>, has 184 settlements in 9 municipalities (Bogovinje, Brvenica, Vrapciste, Gostivar, Zelino, Jegunovce, Mavrovo - Rostusha, Tearce and Tetovo) which are 2 urban (Gostivar and Tetovo). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments, which in a significant part of the tourist are valorized. The administrative center of the region is Dzepeviste with over 4,000 inhabitants and the largest city is Tetovo with 53000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period for Tetovo it is mentioned that there were 3 inns and one teke with the function of inn, for Gostivar that he had 1 caravansaray, and 11 road and village inns were mentioned (of which 6 were only in the village of Mavrovo). [11] In the period 1919 - 1941 there were 4 hotels in Tetovo, and there was still no hotel in Gostivar. In the thirties, several mountaineering homes were built on Shar Planina and ski competitions were held. [13] Initial forms of tourism in this region appear in the mid-1950s, and especially intensively since the mid-1970s, when the tourist settlement Mavrovo is being built rapidly. At the end of the eighties in this region (Tetovo, Gostivar, Mavrovo, Leunovo) there are over 15 hotels and resorts, [14] and in 2017 there are about 30 hotels, hostels, motels, apartments, etc.

In 2017, the region visited 30124 tourists (3.0%) and realized 60249 nights (2.2%), with an average stay of 2 days. More than half of the tourists (53.0%) and overnight stays (54.4%) in the region were made by foreign tourists. In 2017, the region was mostly visited by tourists from Kosovo, Albania, Turkey, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is mountain (Shar Planina Bistra, ski resorts Popova Shapka, Mavrovo), lake (Mavrovo Lake), cultural - historical (churches, monasteries, mosques, museums and other objects and monuments), manifestation, fishing, hunting, and rural tourism (Galichnik, Lazaropole, Mavrovo, Leunovo).

### **Northeast planning region**

It covers an area of 2310 km<sup>2</sup> with 176201 inhabitants, with a population density of 76.3 km / km<sup>2</sup>, has 192 settlements in 6 municipalities (Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, Kumanovo, Lipkovo, Rankovce and Staro Nagoricane), of which 3 are urban (Kratovo, Kriva Palanka, Kumanovo). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments that are partially touristically valorized. The administrative center of the region is Kumanovo with 76000 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period for Kumanovo it is mentioned that there were 33 inns, Kriva Palanka 1 large an karavansaray, and Kratovo had 3 inns, 16 means and 2 cafes. [11] In the period 1919 - 1941 there were 7 hotels in Kumanovo, for other cities we do not have data. [13] Initial forms of tourism in this region appear in the mid sixties, and especially intensively since the mid-1970s when a hotel on the locality Kumanovska Banya was built, as well as a hotel in Kumanovo and Kratovo. By the end of the eighties in this region there are about 10 hotels and resorts, [14] and in 2017 there are about 20 hotels, hostels, motels, apartments, etc.

In 2017, the region was visited by 11290 tourists (1.1%) and realized 17207 nights (0.6%), with an average stay of 1.5 days. More than half of tourists (78.8%) and nights (80.9%) in the region were made by foreign tourists. In 2017 the region was mostly visited by tourists from Bulgaria, Serbia and Romania. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is cultural - historical (churches, monasteries, museums and other objects and monuments), mountain (Osogovo mountains), manifestation, fishing, hunting, alternative and rural tourism.

### **Skopje planning region**

It covers an area of 1812 km<sup>2</sup> with 622750 inhabitants, with a population density of 343.5 km / km<sup>2</sup>, that is, it covers the Basin of Skopje Valley. The urban area of the City of Skopje consists of 10 municipalities (Aerodrom, Butel, Gazi Baba, Gjorce Petrov, Karposh, Kisela Voda, Centar, Chair, Shuto Orizari). Other 7 municipalities occupy the remaining area of Skopje Valley, which are the

municipalities: Aracinovo, Zelenikovo, Ilinden, Petrovec, Sopiste, Studenichani, Cucer Sandevo). The region is abundant with natural beauties and cultural and historical monuments, which in a significant part of the tourist are valorized. The administrative center of the region is Skopje with 506926 inhabitants. [20]

In the Turkish period for Skopje it is mentioned that he had 6 caravansarai, 16 inns and 44 means. The first hotel is mentioned in 1865 and it is Kurshumli an which is mentioned as "Lead hotel", and in 1877 hotel "Turati" ("Sloboda"). In 1912 there were 6 hotels in Skopje. [11] In the period 1919 - 1941 in Skopje 56 hotels and inns. The initial forms of tourism in this Skopje region appear from the middle of the twenties. In addition to the City of Skopje, Katlanovska Banja with 4 hotels has a significant place in the tourism. [13]

After the Second World War, especially after the 1950s, hotels were built, and in the late eighties in this region there are about 30 hotels [14], and in 2017 there are about 150 hotels, hostels, motels, apartments, boarding houses, etc.

In 2017, the region was visited by 324146 tourists (32.5%) and realized 602953 nights (21.71%), with an average stay of 2.45 days. More than two thirds of tourists (88.6%) and overnight stays (79.7%) in the region were made by foreign tourists. In 2017, the region was mostly visited by tourists from Turkey, Serbia, Greece, etc. [21] [22] [23] [24]

The focus of the tourism is cultural - historical (churches, monasteries, mosques, museums and other objects and monuments), mountainous (Vodno, Skopska Crna Gora, Kitka), manifestation, fishing (Lake Matka), alternative and rural tourism.

## Conclusion

From the previously stated on the historical and geographical overview of tourism in the regions of the Republic of Macedonia, we present the following arguments. The initial form of tourism is marked in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when in several cities we register hotels for accommodation of guests. A few years after the First World War, tourism again appears, but with an insignificant pace of growth. A real "tourist revolution" is noticeable in the mid sixties of the last century, when tourism is rapidly developing on the shores of the three valley lakes, in the larger cities, and the development of spa and mountain tourism.

Along with that, in the mid sixties, the first regionalization of tourism from 7 regions and 14 regions was registered. Since then, for half a century, with few exceptions, tourism has grown in all eight planning regions, and today in the Republic of Macedonia, 10 tourist regions, 100 tourist zones and 223 tourist sites have been identified.

All analyzes for tourists, overnight stays, accommodation facilities, rooms, beds and the like speak for a continuous increase, so today the number of tourists who visited the Republic of Macedonia is over one million tourists with over three million overnight stays left. We rightly conclude that tourism in the Republic of Macedonia has a continuity of approximately one century of growth with preconditions for continuous improvement and development.

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