

ANALYSIS OF TOURIST TRAFFIC IN THE REGION OF SOUTHERN AND EASTERN SERBIA

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Abstract: Region of Southern and Eastern Serbia has significant natural and anthropogenic tourist values. These values are the basis for the development of tourism in this area. The aim of this work is the analysis of tourist traffic in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2006 to 2016. This analysis should indicate the scope and the dynamics of tourist traffic in this region, but and in certain districts of region Southern and Eastern Serbia. In addition, will be highlighted guidelines for future tourism development and opportunities for an increase tourist traffic in this region.

Keywords: tourist traffic, Southern and Eastern Serbia

INTRODUCTION

The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia has diverse and rich tourist values. These values represent a unique potential for tourism development in this region. Attractive geomorphological values, favorable climatic conditions, significant hydrological potential, diverse flora and fauna, rich cultural and historical heritage, ethnographic and manifestation tourist values provide opportunities for the development of various forms of tourism in this area. The aim of this study is the analysis of tourist traffic in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. Besides that, will be emphasized measures and activities which will attract a greater number of domestic and foreign tourists in the destinations of the region Southern and Eastern Serbia. These measures and activities should enable faster development of tourism in this area, while respecting the principles of sustainable development.

Characteristics of the region Southern and Eastern Serbia

The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia located in the southeastern part of Serbia. The area of this region is 26.248 square kilometer, which is 29.7% territory of the Republic of Serbia. This region is composed of 9 districts, 6 towns, 9 city municipalities, 41 municipalities, 1,973 settlements, 46 urban settlements (Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia, 2016).



Figure 1: Map of the South and East Serbia region (source: Institute for Territorial Economic Development (InTER), available at <http://www.lokalnirazvoj.org/sr/books/details/23>)

According to the 2011 population census, on the basis of data by the Republic Institute for Statistics - Republic of Serbia, 7.186.862 residents live on the territory of the Republic of Serbia, whose average age is 42.2 years (these data do not include the number of inhabitants in the territory of the Autonomous Province of Kosovo and Metohija). Of the total population in the Republic of Serbia, in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia live 1.563.916 residents (21.76%), whose average age is 43.3 years. Table 1 shows the number of residents and the average age of the population in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. Based on the data from the table it can be seen that in this region the biggest number of residents in the Danube District (199.395 residents) and the smallest number of residents in the Toplica District (91.754 residents). The average age of the population ranges from 40.6 years in the Pcinja District to 46.7 years in the Zajecar District.

Table 1: Number of residents and average age of population in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia - census of population in 2011 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

District	Number of residents	Average age of the population
Danube District	199.395	41,9
Branicevo District	183.625	44,3
Bor District	124.992	44,7
Zajecar District	119.967	46,7
Pirot District	92.479	45,4
Nis District	376.319	43,0
Toplica District	91.754	43,1
Jablanica District	216.304	42,4
Pcinja District	159.081	40,6

Table 2: Population density in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia - census of population in 2011 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

District	Number of residents	Population density
Danube District	199.395	159,77
Branicevo District	183.625	47,51
Bor District	124.992	35,64
Zajecar District	119.967	33,11
Pirot District	92.479	33,49
Nis District	376.319	137,89
Toplica District	91.754	41,13
Jablanica District	216.304	78,12
Pcinja District	159.081	45,19

According to the 2011 population census, the average population density in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia is 67.98 residents per square kilometer. Table 2 shows the density of population in certain districts in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. Based on the data from this table, can be noted that the density of population varies from 159.77 residents per square kilometer in the Danube District to 33.11 inhabitants per square kilometer in the Zajecar District.

Regions (districts) in the Republic of Serbia have natural, cultural and historical potentials that can define certain types of tourist offer. These potentials have not been fully exploited because they are partly defined by differences in existing conditions - nature, cultural and historical heritage, and partly created conditions - availability, infrastructure facilities, service sector, diversity of sports and recreational facilities, tourist organizations, etc. (Bjeljac, Ž., Brankov, J. i Popović, I., 2009).

The region of Southern and Eastern Serbia has rich and diverse tourist potential. This potential can enable the development of tourism in this area and contribute to the overall development of the region. The tourism potential of this region has not been sufficiently exploited.

Analysis of tourist traffic in the region and in the districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia

Tourism traffic is an summary indicator of the volume, dynamics and structure of tourist movement. It shows the number of arrivals of domestic, foreign tourists, as well as the total number of tourists arrivals. Also, shows the number of nights of domestic and foreign tourists, as well as the total number of tourists nights in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia and in the individual districts of this region.

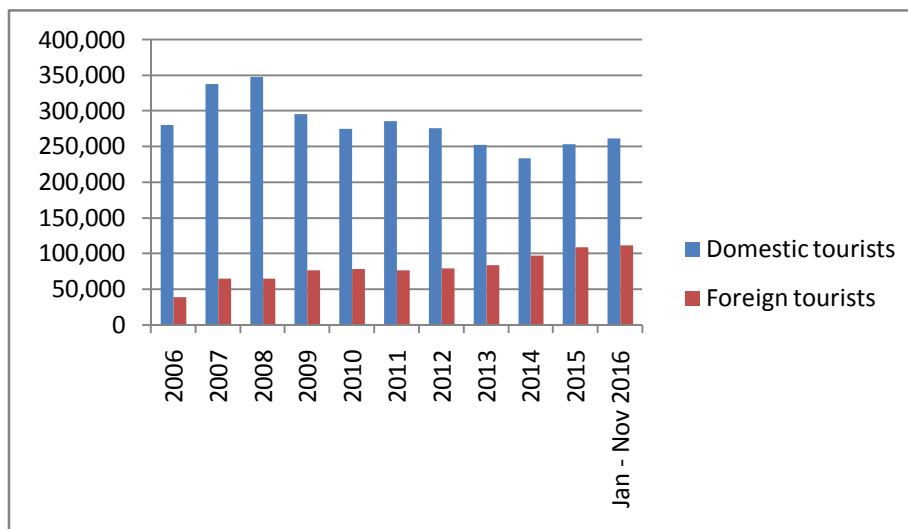
Below are the data about tourist traffic (tourists arrivals and tourists nights) in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2006 to 2016.

Table 3: Tourists’ arrivals in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period 2006-2016 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Year	Tourists’ arrivals		
	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists	Total
2006.	279.986	38.865	318.851
2007.	336.779	64.490	401.269
2008.	347.376	64.958	412.334
2009.	294.629	76.609	371.238
2010.	274.400	78.153	352.553
2011.	285.604	76.594	362.198
2012.	275.073	78.633	353.706
2013.	251.673	83.136	334.809
2014.	233.013	96.516	329.529
2015.	252.910	108.868	361.778
Jan- Nov2016	260.822	111.552	372.374

Table 3 shows data about tourists arrivals in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the observed period. Based on the data from Table 3 we can notice that the total number of tourists arrivals from 2006 to 2008 gradually increased (from 318.851 arrivals in 2006 to 412.334 arrivals in 2008). During this period the number of arrivals of domestic and foreign tourists increased. In 2009 was a decrease in the total number of tourists arrivals (from 412.334 arrivals in 2008 to 371.238 arrivals in 2009). There is a decrease in the number of arrivals of domestic tourists. The decrease in the number of arrivals of domestic tourists (and the total number of tourists arrivals) was characteristic for 2010. In 2011 the number of arrivals of domestic tourists increased (and the total number of tourists arrivals), and in 2012 the number of domestic tourists arrivals (and the total number of tourists) was again reduced. Reduction in the number of arrivals was characteristic for 2013 and 2014, and in 2015 and 2016 there is an increase in the number of arrivals of domestic tourists (and the total number of tourists arrivals). In the observed period the number of foreign tourists arrivals in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia constantly increasing, except in 2011 when the number of foreign tourists arrivals decreased compared to 2010. In the period from 2006 to 2016, the biggest number of domestic tourists arrivals in this region was in 2008 (347.376 arrivals), the biggest number of foreign tourists arrivals was in 2016 (111.552 arrivals in the period from January to November 2016), while the biggest total number of tourists arrivals was in 2008 (412.334 arrivals). Based on the data from Table 3 we see that in the total number of arrivals a much higher share of domestic than foreign tourists.

Graph 1 shows data about tourists' arrivals (domestic and foreign tourists) in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. The data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia relate to the period from 2006 to November 2016.



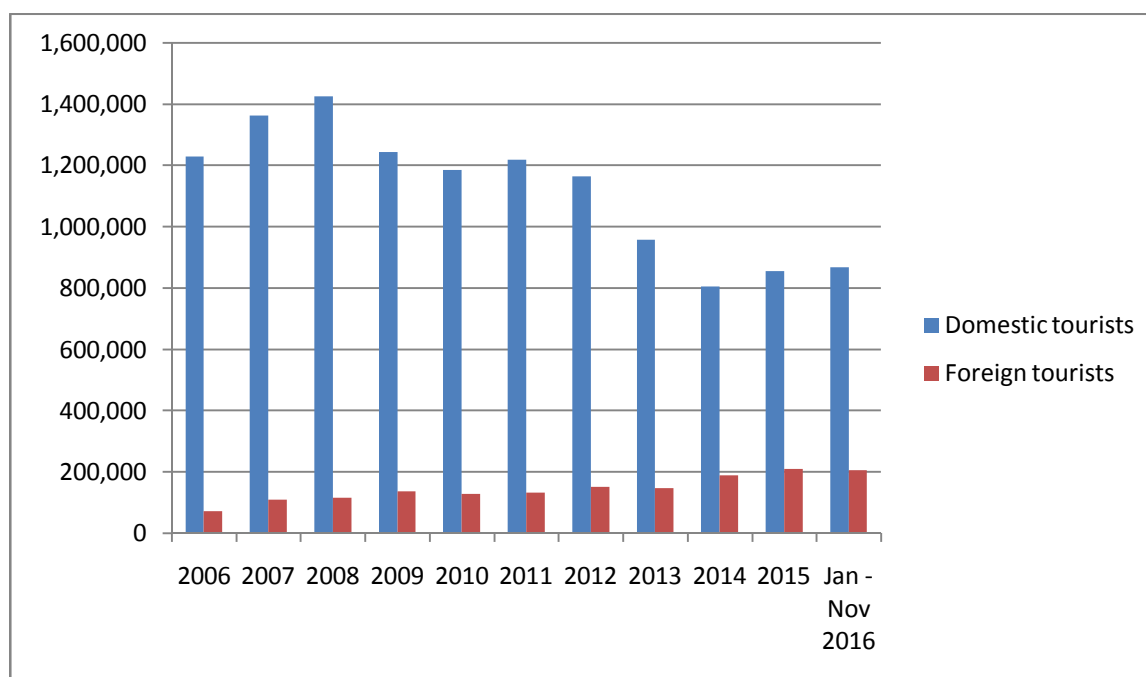
Graph 1: Tourists’ arrivals in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Table 4: Tourists' nights in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period 2006-2016 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Year	Tourists' nights		
	Domestic tourists	Foreign tourists	Total
2006.	1.228.613	73.995	1.302.608
2007.	1.363.171	109.536	1.472.707
2008.	1.424.628	117.107	1.541.735
2009.	1.243.508	137.948	1.381.456
2010.	1.185.410	129.297	1.314.707
2011.	1.217.258	133.501	1.350.759
2012.	1.163.491	151.943	1.315.434
2013.	957.431	148.746	1.106.177
2014.	805.322	190.626	995.948
2015.	855.685	211.313	1.066.998
Jan- Nov2016	867.872	206.810	1.074.682

When it comes about the total number of tourists nights in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia from 2006 to 2008, this number increased (from 1.302.608 tourists nights in 2006 to 1.541.735 tourists nights in 2008). From 2009 to 2014 there is a decrease in the total number of tourists nights, except in 2011 when the total number of tourists nights increased compared to 2010. In 2015 and 2016 there is an increase in the total number of tourists nights in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. In the observed period, the biggest number of domestic tourists nights was in 2008 (1.424.628 nights), and the smallest number of tourists nights in 2014 (805.322 nights). Foreign tourists accomplished the biggest number of tourists nights in 2015 (211.313 tourists nights), and the smallest number of tourists nights in 2006 (73.995 tourists nights). The biggest total number of tourists nights accomplished in 2008 (1.541.735 nights), and the smallest total number of tourists nights accomplished in 2014 (995.948 tourists nights). In this, in the total number of tourists nights, the number of domestic tourists nights was much higher (Table 4).

Graph 2 shows data about tourists' nights (domestic and foreign tourists) in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. The data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia relate to the period from 2006 to November 2016.



Graph 2: Tourists' nights in the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

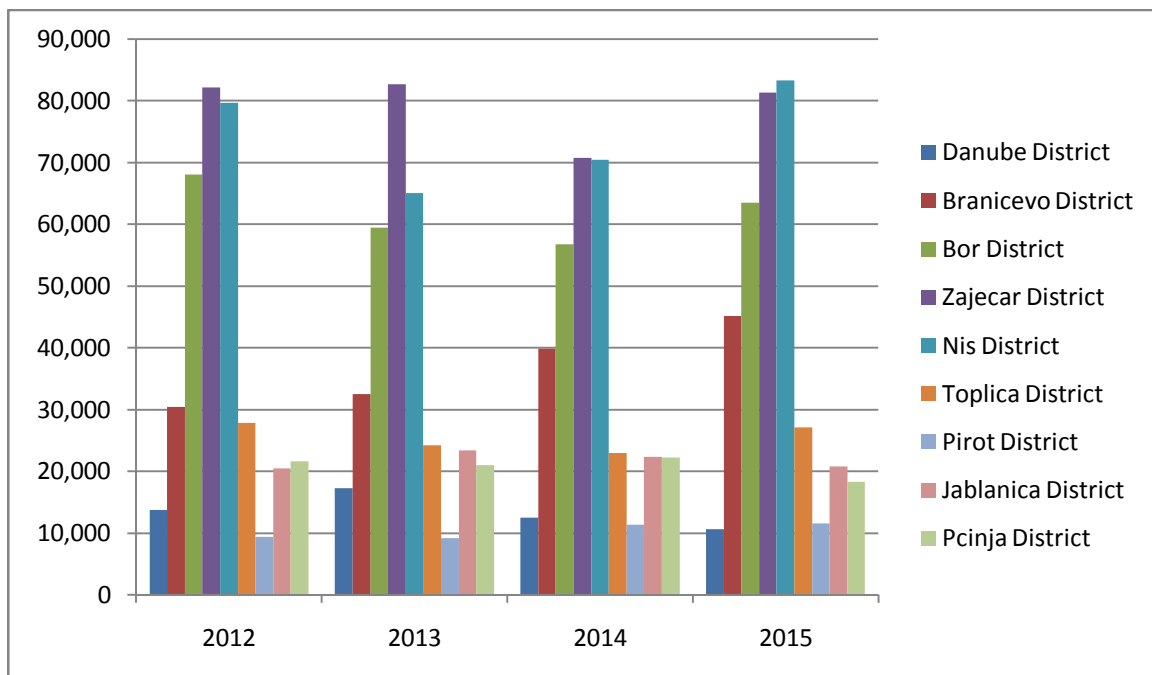
Table 5 shows data about number of tourists arrivals in the districts of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2012 to 2015. Based on the data from Table 5, we can notice that in 2012 the biggest number of tourists arrivals was in Zajecar district (82.177 arrivals). On second place is Nis district (79.631 arrivals), on third place is Bor district (68.023 arrivals), while the smallest number of tourists arrivals registered in Pirot district (9.455 arrivals). During 2013 and 2014 the biggest number of tourists arrivals was in the Zajecar district, on the second place is Nis district and on the

third place is Bor district. In 2015 the biggest number of tourists arrivals was in Nis district (83.292 arrivals), then in Zajecar district (81.309 arrivals) and Bor district (63.524 arrivals), while the smallest number of arrivals in this year was in the Danube district (10.617 arrivals).

Table 5: Tourists' arrivals in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period 2012-2015 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Districts	Tourists (domestic and foreign)			
	2012.	2013.	2014.	2015.
Danube District	13.815	17.282	12.572	10.617
Branicevo District	30.490	32.569	39.885	45.154
Bor District	68.023	59.449	56.789	63.524
Zajecar District	82.177	82.659	70.769	81.309
Nis District	79.631	64.990	70.413	83.292
Toplica District	27.887	24.208	22.990	27.170
Pirot District	9.455	9.181	11.432	11.589
Jablanica District	20.539	23.416	22.397	20.790
Pcinja District	21.689	21.055	22.282	18.333

Graph 3 shows data about tourists' arrivals (domestic and foreign tourists) in individual districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. The data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia relate to the period from 2012 to 2015.



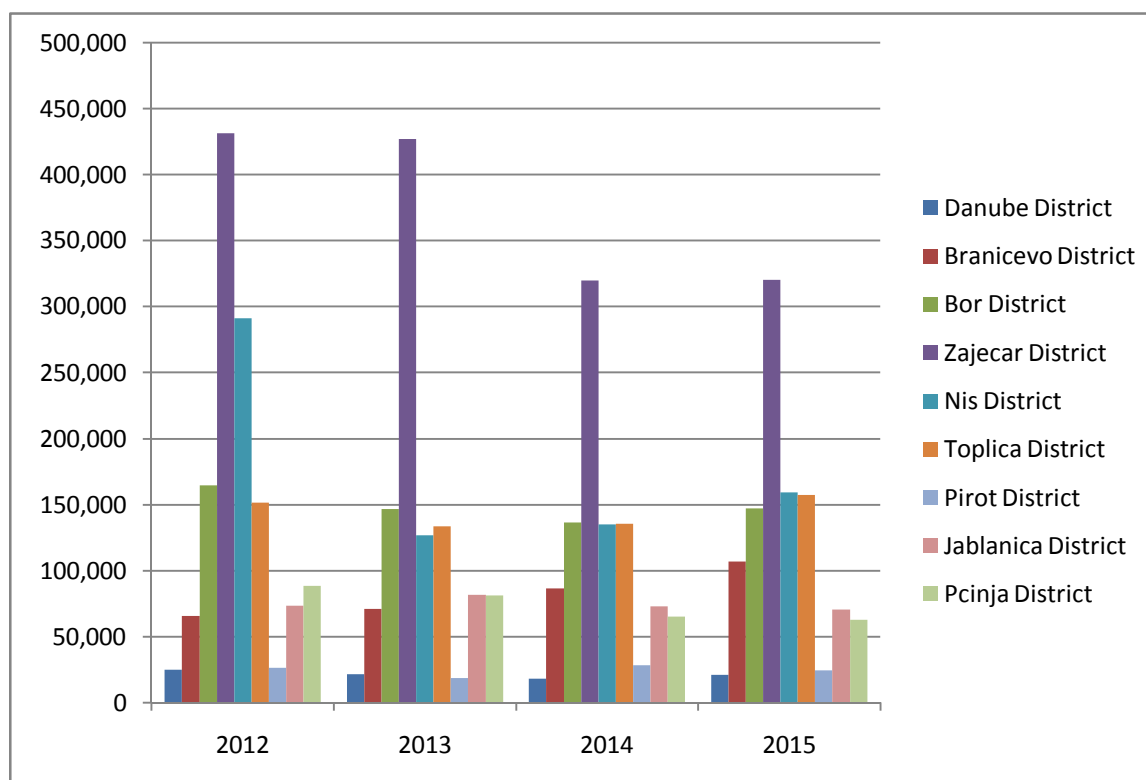
Grafik 3: Tourists' arrivals in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Table 6 shows data about the number of tourists nights in the districts of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period from 2012 to 2015. The biggest number of tourists nights in 2012 accomplished in Zajecar district (431.066 tourists nights), on the second place was Nis district (290.984 tourists nights), while on the third place was Bor district (164.169 tourists nights). The smallest number of tourists nights in this year was accomplished in the Danube district (24.674 tourists nights). In 2013, the biggest number of tourists nights accomplished in Zajecar district (426.906 tourists nights), on the second place was Bor district (146.528 tourists nights); while on the third place was Toplica district (133.303 tourists nights). The smallest number of tourists nights in this year accomplished in Pirot district (18.556 nights). In 2014, on the first, second and third place in the number of tourists nights were, also, the Zajecar district (319.554 tourists nights), Bor district (136.252 tourists nights) and Toplica district (135.179 tourists nights), and the smallest number of tourists nights accomplished in the Danube district (17.782 tourists nights). In 2015, the biggest number of tourists nights was

accomplished in the Zajecar district (319.909 tourists nights), then in the Nis district (158.919 tourists nights) and Toplica district (157.013 tourists nights), while the smallest number of tourists nights, as well as in the previous year, was accomplished in the Danube district (20.666 tourists nights). The data from Table 6 show that in the observed period the biggest number of tourists nights accomplished in the Zajecar district.

Table 6: Tourists' nights in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia in the period 2012-2015 (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Districts	Tourists' nights (domestic and foreign)			
	2012.	2013.	2014.	2015.
Danube District	24.674	21.127	17.782	20.666
Branicevo District	65.673	70.840	86.159	106.524
Bor District	164.169	146.528	136.252	146.759
Zajecar District	431.066	426.906	319.554	319.909
Nis District	290.984	126.393	134.990	158.919
Toplica District	151.360	133.303	135.179	157.013
Pirot District	26.367	18.556	28.319	24.393
Jablanica District	73.036	81.546	72.910	70.279
Pcinja District	88.105	80.978	64.803	62.536



Grafik 4: Tourists' nights in districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia (source: authors based on the data of Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia)

Graph 4 shows data about number of tourists' nights (domestic and foreign tourists) in individual districts of the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia. The data of the Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia relate to the period from 2012 to 2015.

In the region of South and East Serbia, the following natural tourist values attract tourists the most: the mountains (Stara planina, Suva planina, Radan planina, Rtanj, Ozren), gorge (Djerdapska, Sićevačka, Jelašnička), canyons (Temštica, Lazarev canyon, Rosomače canyon, Jerma river canyon), caves (Resavska, Rajkova, Ceremosnja, Ravništarka), Đavolja varoš (geomorphological tourist value that attracts special attention of tourists), spas (Sokobanja, Prolom Banja, Lukovska Banja, Niška Banja, Vranjska Banja) the Danube River, lakes (Lake Djerdap, Vlasinsko Lake, Silver Lake

and numerous waterfalls (primarily on Stara Planina). From anthropogenic tourist values, a great number of cultural monuments (churches, monasteries, museums, fortresses), archaeological sites, famous places and spatial cultural and historical units can be found. Monasteries Manasija, Ravanica, Prohor Pčinjski, fortresses Golubac, Smederevo and Nis Fortress, archaeological sites of Felix Romuliana, Mediana and Caricin Grad attract great attention.

Table 7 shows an overview of the municipalities within the individual districts of the South and East Serbia region with the highest number of tourists' arrivals (domestic and foreign) in the years 2013., 2014. and 2015.

Table 7: Municipalities with the highest number of tourists' arrivals (domestic and foreign) by individual districts in the years 2013., 2014. and 2015. (source: Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia, issues 2014., 2015., 2016.)

Districts	2013.		2014.		2015.	
	Municipality	Arrivals	Municipality	Arrivals	Municipality	Arrivals
Danube District	Velika Plana	15.101	Velika Plana	9.646	Velika Plana	8.237
Branicevo District	Veliko Gradiste	13.322	Veliko Gradiste	13.768	Veliko Gradiste	14.234
Bor District	Majdanpek	25.562	Majdanpek	22.523	Kladovo	22.347
Zajecar District	Sokobanja	50.629	Sokobanja	42.438	Sokobanja	41.676
Nis District	Medijana (Niš)	29.752	Medijana (Niš)	33.163	Medijana (Niš)	40.724
Toplica District	Kuršumlija	24.208	Kuršumlija	22.990	Kuršumlija	27.170
Pirot District	Pirot	8.150	Pirot	9.788	Pirot	10.005
Jablanica District	Leskovac	16.603	Leskovac	15.811	Leskovac	14.000
Pcinja District	Vranje	7.158	Vranje	7.766	Surdulica	4.611

Table 8 shows the representation of municipalities within the individual districts of the South and East Serbia region with the highest number of tourists' overnight stays (domestic and foreign) in years 2013., 2014. and 2015.

Table 8: Municipalities with the highest number of tourists' overnight stays (domestic and foreign) by individual districts (source: Municipalities and Regions in the Republic of Serbia, issues 2014., 2015., 2016.)

Districts	2013.		2014.		2015.	
	Municipality	Overnight stays	Municipality	Overnight stays	Municipality	Overnight stays
Danube District	Velika Plana	17.320	Velika Plana	12.526	Velika Plana	13.970
Branicevo District	Veliko Gradište	25.848	Veliko Gradište	27.597	Veliko Gradište	37.476
Bor District	Kladovo	63.577	Bor	47.124	Kladovo	49.326
Zajecar District	Sokobanja	306.506	Sokobanja	219.755	Sokobanja	194.896
Nis District	Medijana (Niš)	53.101	Medijana (Niš)	53.893	Medijana (Niš)	70.473
Toplica District	Kuršumlija	133.303	Kuršumlija	135.179	Kuršumlija	157.013
Pirot District	Pirot	16.618	Pirot	24.858	Pirot	22.057
Jablanica District	Medveđa	51.426	Medveđa	48.471	Medveđa	46.995
Pcinja District	Vranjska Banja	33.000	Vranjska Banja	26.393	Vranjska Banja	23.666

Table 9: Participation of the South and Eastern Serbia region in the tourists' traffic of the Republic of Serbia in the period of 2011-2015 (source: Statistical Yearbook of the Republic of Serbia, Belgrade, 2016)

Year	Tourists' arrivals (domestic and foreign)			Overnight stays (domestic and foreign)		
	Republic of Serbia	South and East Serbia Region	Region participation in the total number of arrivals	Republic of Serbia	South and East Serbia Region	Region participation in the total number of overnight stays
2011	2.068.610	362.049	17,5%	6.644.738	1.350.521	20,3%
2012	2.079.643	353.706	17,0%	6.484.702	1.315.434	20,3%
2013	2.192.435	334.809	15,3%	6.567.460	1.106.177	16,8%
2014	2.192.268	329.529	15,0%	6.086.275	995.948	16,4%
2015	2.437.165	361.778	14,8%	6.651.852	1.066.998	16,0%

Table 9 shows an overview of the total number of tourists' arrivals and overnight stays in the Republic of Serbia, the total number of tourists' arrivals and tourists' overnight stays in the region of South and East Serbia, as well as the percentage participation of the South and East Serbia region in the tourists' traffic of the Republic of Serbia. Data refer to the period from the 2011. until 2015. Based on the data from the table, it can be noticed that the percentage share of tourism in the region of South and East Serbia in the total tourist turnover of the country is gradually decreasing in the observed period.

CONCLUSION

The fact is that the region of Southern and Eastern Serbia, thanks to its attractive geomorphologic values, favorable climate conditions, significant hydrological potential, diverse flora and fauna, rich cultural and historical heritage, ethnographic and manifestational tourist values, has the potential for develop various forms of tourism. However, this rich and diverse tourist potential is not sufficiently exploited. The region has comparative advantages for the development of tourism and a certain level of competitiveness. Comparative advantages, however, need to be transformed into competitive advantages. It is also necessary to improve the level of competitiveness of the region. It is very important to plan and implement certain activities in order to improve the quality of the tourist offer and increase the tourist traffic. These are the following activities: Implementation of programs for the protection of natural and anthropogenic tourist values; Improvement of traffic and communal infrastructure, tourist infrastructure and suprastructure; Improvement of tourist signaling; Construction of new and renovation of existing accommodation capacities; More intensive realization of promotional activities in the field of tourism; Creating a positive image on the domestic and international tourist market; Strengthening the awareness of the social community about protection of tourist values and the importance of tourism development; Education of employees in the field of tourism. Development of tourism is one of the strategic goals for region development of Southern and Eastern Serbia. The current development of tourism in Southern and Eastern Serbia is not at a satisfactory level, in spite of the comparative advantages. The development of tourism in this region requires the formulation an appropriate development strategy, which will define the basic directions of tourism development, while respecting the principle of sustainability. In addition, the development of tourism requires the definition of concrete measures and activities for the realization of the set goals.

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