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Creative cultural tourism as a tool in regional development

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Abstract

The economy in a globalized world is an arena for competing cities and regions. Striving to achieve and secure a better position on the international scene, responsible managements turn to entrepreneurial activities aimed at finding new forms of competitive capitalism. Creative cultural tourism is seen as an important sphere within a thus defined context. The subjects of this paper are the social space of the city, local products, mental space and material space of the city, with special attention given to creative cultural tourism as a tool in the process of regional economic development of cities in Southeast Europe. Having in mind the international and local developmental trend, this paper presents the identified elements of Serbia's creative cultural tourism offer. This is illustrated in the example of forming the cultural routes of Europe, with special attention placed on the Project of Cultural Route of Roman Emperors, which could be an appropriate model of connecting cities, municipalities and regions on the platform of common characteristics and issues. Creative cultural tourism should be considered as a basic strategic idea within each individual development sector of the society at various levels of hierarchy and space, which can secure a qualitatively higher level of development both individually and overall. Culture should be seen as a fourth aspect of sustainability, which in addition to the economic, social and environmental aspect needs to be the base for any urban and development plans.

Key words: creative cultural tourism, cultural routes, Cultural Route of Roman Emperors and regional economic development

1. Introduction

The globalized and decentralized world in which we live is simultaneously an arena for the competing cities in the global network. Striving to secure a better position on the international scene,

responsible managements turn to entrepreneurial activities aimed at finding new forms of competitive capitalism. Within a thus defined context, tourism is an important sphere. In recent decades, more and more attention has been devoted to cultural tourism and creative cultural tourism, which is becoming an important sphere of global tourism. Reasons for this trend can be found in an economy based on knowledge and experience, taking into account that tourism is a branch of the economy with a huge potential, and in the sustainability of investments in culture and human resources.

The current period is characterized by the development of the global market with consequences reaching deep into culture, identity and lifestyles. Globalization of economic operations is accompanied by waves of cultural transformation, a process called cultural globalization. As a counterbalance for globalization, there is localization. Theoreticians believe that the establishment of a balance requires the creation of unity between these two phenomena. One of the possible ways is the concept of *glocalization*, which "is based on the actions of a number of different local actors (cities, regions) that are interconnected in networks, in clusters or in pairs, often with the objective of creating bridges between north and south, or between countries that find themselves on opposing sides of a conflict" [1]. The aim of this kind of strategy is both to establish "a link between the benefits of the global dimension and local realities, while at the same time establishing a bottom-up system for the governance of globalization, based on greater equality in the distribution of the planet's resources and on an authentic social and cultural rebirth of disadvantaged populations" [1].

Dynamic processes influencing the changes in the familiar way of life and the functioning of institutions are a daily challenge of participating in the competitive global market. In this "race" successful strategies rely on technologically upgraded, inter-

active, integrative and sustainable means. States, regions and cities strive to secure sustainability of their economy by developing branches of the economy within which they can remain competitive for a longer period; and which are compatible with the principles and goals of sustainable development in all important segments, and also with the development of information–communication technologies. These technologies influence a change in the manner of communication and doing business. There is also the dilemma whether the unification of globalization and technologies will change the foundations of the human society to an extent that it will be threatened. However, they are today, quite certainly, the strongest driving-forces of the economy.

Developing countries recognize the great potential in tourism, as a branch of the economy that still has a future. The significance of tourism is also reflected in the fact that most recreational travel is from economically developed countries toward those that are less developed. In addition, the framework of the usual tourist offer catering to vacations is being expanded to offer other products and values, thus additionally increasing the expected income. Development of tourism can achieve higher goals, such as financing measures for the technical protection of cultural resources; integrative protection of natural resources; revitalization and reconstruction of city quarters and settlements; support for the development of other “products” – material and non-material; creation of new jobs; education related to culture and natural values, etc.

This paper will present the current global context reflected in the achievement of competitive advantages for cities, municipalities and regions. It will focus on elucidating the role of creative cultural tourism in the process of regional economic development. It will also analyze those elements of the regional and city offer that contribute to its competitiveness, and belong to the domain of creative cultural tourism. This will be presented on the example of the *Cultural Route of Roman Emperors*.

2. Competitiveness, cultural tourism and regional development

The economy in a globalized world is an arena for competing cities and regions. Today, cities are the driving-forces of social and cultural develop-

ment, and as such, they have the power to boost themselves, regions and states to grow and develop. To achieve a better position in a system determined by a network of global cities, they must be capable to strongly attract the best organizations, professionals, experts and investors. Harvey [2] describes this as “transition from managerial toward entrepreneurial activities of cities”, with the goal to find new forms of competitive capitalism. Under such circumstances, marketing and its instruments are an important element of development strategies serving to advertise and market potentials of a city in the global economy.

The subject of marketing a site, as a field of urban marketing, are processes related to revitalization of cities, regions and states. A city or some other forms of territorial organization are treated as a “product” aimed at constantly attracting new jobs, tourists, etc., all with the goal of developing a certain community. Although this is a simplified approach, one must not neglect the complexity of the city as a phenomenon. On the other hand, if the city is regarded as an integral product, one should also keep in mind its hedonistic characteristics [3]. This means that, by placing the city or region in the group of hedonistic products, it possesses a specific emotional potential, i.e. the ability to offer satisfaction and excitement. Having in mind the characteristics of marketing as a discipline and the city as a product, this unifies the understanding of the concept of urban marketing and site marketing which: determines local goals and modes of their realization, unifies basic developmental factors (attracting investors), and conforms to a specific “packaging of space” as a product, but constantly directed toward the “production” of a local public resource with the goal of creating additional social development.

In view of the complexity of a city or a region as a product and its hedonistic characteristics, its dimensional frame can be viewed by breaking it down to the social, information, mental, and material space [4]. Each of the mentioned components of the city/region as a product represents individual levels of the overall experience and perception of a city. The **social space** of the city is the frame within which experience is acquired by interactions with other people, i.e. through social relationships. **Virtual/informational city space** encompasses online representations. **Mental city space** encompasses

symbolic meanings and psychological characteristics linked by visitors to a specific space. The physical frame determines the **material space**, i.e. its construction elements, both natural, and created, cultural patterns and local products.

People form an interaction with the environment by staying in a certain place. As a result of such a process appears the aspiration to create city or regional attributes/characteristics that are simultaneously the constructive elements of its attraction. In this manner, each of the separate levels of the overall experience and perception of the city contains elements that can result in raising the level of attraction of the place, thus strengthening its competitiveness. The area where the social, information, mental and material space of the city or region overlap becomes a product representing creative cultural tourism, which is one of the leading domains of tourism as a branch of economy.

Cultural tourism is an important field of global tourism and encompasses all travel that includes experiences and events related to culture. According to Richards [5] cultural tourism signifies movement of people attracted by cultural attractions outside their usual place of residence, with the intention of gathering new information and experiences in order to satisfy their own cultural needs.

Creative tourism is a developed form of cultural tourism implying participation, not only observation; demanding certain skills; contributing to the acquisition of new knowledge and enabling closer contacts with the local population. UNESCO defines creative tourism as travel directed toward authentic experience with active participation, discovering, learning about art, heritage, or about special characteristics of a place. This secures a direct link with those who live in a specific space and form its specific culture of life. The last decades have witnessed the adoption of a series of charters and declarations on cultural tourism. ICOMOS adopted the International Cultural Tourism Charter entitled "Managing Tourism at Places of Heritage Significance" in 1999, establishing the principles of dynamic interaction between tourism and cultural heritage. Tourism is recognized as a phenomenon with a growing effect on politics, economy, culture, education, ecology and esthetics [6]. In addition, the Brussels Declaration by artists and cultural professionals and entrepreneurs, was also adopted with

the goal to affirm the role of IFACCA as a dynamic global network exchanging knowledge, experience and enriching the world cultural heritage and pointing out the importance of creative cultural tourism. In 2002, UNESCO founded the Creative City Network, with the goal to promote and exchange positive experiences in the field of social, economic and cultural development of cities in developed and undeveloped countries. One of the goals of this network is the support of developed countries to developing countries and underdeveloped countries [7].

The basic task of cultural/creative tourism is reflected as a contribution to the economic development of the society, while preserving its cultural values. The popularity of this segment of tourism, as a branch of the economy, has considerably grown in the last decade. Basic causes and motives are noted in the growth of interest for culture; increase of cultural capital; growth of the ageing population in developed countries; "postmodern consumption" of tourism (short vacation, cultural diversity), and increased mobility. Simultaneously, factors that stimulate development of this type of offer are also present. Cultural tourism stands out as a market with constant growth, influencing a different offer of jobs and vocations. The offer of cultural attractions is also increased; problems of financing culture and the growingly important role of intangible culture, image and atmosphere are becoming increasingly pronounced [8].

The significance of cultural tourism in the economy of cities and regions in an era of "creative cities" is growing [9]. As mentioned earlier, many theoreticians emphasize the importance of cultural and creative tourism as a driving force of economic development. Whitt [10] and Zukin [11] believe that the development of a certain type of tourism can be used to influence the forming of a city's image. A positive image leads to higher attractiveness and interest of large investors to invest. As a result of this development there are higher investments in the shaping and equipping of public spaces, as well as in the construction of representative buildings.

Culture is included in urban regeneration as a means of stimulating physical regeneration, animating parts of a city and producing benefits for the economy and the society. It forms the basis for regeneration strategies such as: (1) "culture led

regeneration”, where culture is a driving force of development; (2) “cultural regeneration”, where culture is a part of the integral strategy and (3) “culture and regeneration”, where these are non-integrated processes, and culture plays a supporting role [12]. Various strategies are based on different methodologies, but a similarity in the field of realized results is recognized [13]: (1) **iconic structures** – culture becomes a “system for producing symbols” [11], in this role stimulating the construction of buildings – symbols of a city (museum in Bilbao, music house in Porto, etc.); (2) **construction heritage as a “mine”** - in any period of decreased economic development of cities, as a consequence of decreased building potential construction heritage is conserved, later becoming capital that can stimulate development of the economy; (3) **mega events** – many cities base their economic progress and image upgrading on organization of large international events (Olympic Games, World Fair, etc.) and (4) **thematic approach** – certain cities are making an effort to single out a unique theme from their characteristics (Stockholm, Bruges, St. Petersburg, Amsterdam – “Venice of the North”, etc.).

3. Regional development in Serbia

The Serbian Development Report 2009 states that the main characteristic of regional development of Serbia is a distinct territorial disparity. This kind of imbalance is manifested through several levels: undeveloped territory, developed center and insufficiently developed periphery. The same source indicates that uneven development and regional differences are caused by numerous economic, demographic and social factors, with a special emphasis on multi-decadal marginalization of the process of strategic management of regional development [14]. The consequence is the regional discord which is manifested in a high level of unemployment, reducing the scope of the total economic activity and a constant decline in population especially in undeveloped areas [14]. According to the researches of the Republic Institute, the regional polarization of Serbia is multi-layered and is evident in the inter-regional differences manifested in the demographic movements in Serbia, regional educational structure of the population, interregional economic dif-

ferences, infrastructural gap and poverty. Regional disproportions in the level of development in Serbia are the biggest in Europe and in time they grow even bigger.

Having in mind the negative trend of regional development of Serbia and strategic orientation to join the European Union, regionalization and more even development are set as the primary goals for solving this situation. Its purpose lies in setting the equalities, not literally but in the form of various equalities, opportunities and chances. Jakopin [15] determines five reasons for which regionalization is necessary: (1) regionalization as the basic instrument of the state in terms of economic, social and demographic development, (2) development of each part of the state with geo-strategic character, (3) economic and social homogeneity, (4) dialogue and tolerance and (5) political relaxation.

In the period from 2003, after the ratification of the Law on Planning and Construction, series of activities have been initiated and series of legal acts have been adopted, which are aimed at a more even regional development of the Republic of Serbia. Among them stands out the Spatial Development Strategy of Serbia, which is based on the fact that the cities (urban system and urban net) are in every way a pillar and regional catalyst of the economic development¹. Zekovic [16] states that the cause of recession in our cities is rapid decline in industry that has led to the most powerful regional deindustrialization in Europe.

According to the National Strategy for Sustainable Development [17] and Strategy for Tourism Development in Serbia [18], it has been pointed out that relative wealth in natural resources is a powerful potential for the development of continental tourism (mineral spas, mountains, etc.). However, the analysis of tourism development in Serbia [18] indicates: insufficient valorization of tourism potentials in Serbia; limitations regarding the political and social-economics context; deficiency of diverse tourist products; low quality of service, structure of lodging capacities, present complementary local activities integrated with tourism; deficiency of essentially organized and functionally completed, as well as regionally inte-

¹ Over 90%, and somewhere even over 95% of the total economic development happens in cities.

grated offer of tourist destinations; insufficient following and application of international principles, methods and models of tourism development, etc.

While defining the development clusters and economic capacities that have a chance to succeed, tourism appears to be an inevitable complex where is noted the unused potential of growth [19]. However, Serbia today has only comparative advantages² necessary to transform this potential into competitive advantages of tourism. The primary goal of the tourism development process in the Republic of Serbia is creating a considerably larger scope and higher quality of tourism, coordinated with natural and cultural potentials and resources of certain regional units, and together with a greater participation of the local population and strengthening the cooperation between municipalities, regions and even beyond borders, while respecting the natural and cultural heritage as the capacity of the environment.

As previously mentioned, cultural/creative tourism has become an important factor of economic development. This is also confirmed by the Spatial Plan of the Republic of Serbia 2020, which lists the following as the basic goals of successful and sustainable economic development: (1) raising competitiveness of cities in the Republic of Serbia; (2) decreasing regional inequalities and poverty; (3) stopping negative demographic trends and (4) identifying natural and cultural attractions of Serbia (regional identity) [20].

The mentioned goals can be realized by implementing strategies of urban-economic development through culture and tourism. Development of the characteristics of a place can also be prompted and nurtured by developing creative jobs that would support products and ideas. Many cities are in the process of establishing networks of creative clusters/places that depend on creative production. Their creativity has the potential to become a spectacle for tourists, a backdrop or the very focus for tourist activities [21]. In the mentioned processes, special attention is devoted to the realization of “authenticity”. Authenticity is

2 Diversified structure of attractions, long history and common recognition, preserved natural resources and relatively good communications as well as great human potential.

the basis of the cultural tourism product and it is indispensable to make a place competitive on the global market. It is reflected in: (1) Experience of a different way of life, (2) Experience of expression of a national identity or identity of a certain community, (3) Customs and tradition, insight into various cultures, cultural-historic heritage, etc., (4) An offer different from globally set standards and (5) Quality of the offer/experience.

Authenticity is the basic resource of cultural tourism, and simultaneously also something that every community has in its history and culture, and is able to offer. Cities and regions competing on the global market are working to expand their offer, and are fighting to achieve quality and exclusivity. Having in mind this situation, the cultural tourism offer of Serbia could be directed toward [22]: Organizing visits and tours of individual sites; Organizing tours and visits to events with a seasonal character; Tours of natural resources; Organization of narrative evenings dedicated to local tradition; Rural tourism with an offer of traditional and local products; Opening of ethnographic museums and galleries; etc.

Cross-linking of the regions within an area, in close or remote surrounding, can be various. The establishment of cross-linking is aimed at establishing relations, connections or ties between different parts of regional structures. In this regard, «there were identified several forms of developing regional networks: (1) communicational networks, (2) operational business networks and (3) relation networks” [23]. The focus of this research is on relation networks, which establish functional relations between individual entities. In this regard, depending on the mechanisms of their linking, the following forms are possible: complementary³, compatible⁴ and comparative⁵ networks.

The “route” concept is based on the beneficial effects resulting from encounters among different peoples and cultures [24]. In terms of knowledge and expertise, it highlights the exchange of ideas,

3 Formed when surrounding settlements become supplements to the city they gravitate within

4 Formed when feedback relations between the city and its surrounding occur and the region becomes a united organizational entity

5 Formed when all settlements become inter-competitive or encouragingly competitive through the differences of the quality they want to achieve

beliefs, performances, by integrating the fundamental aspects of cultural and natural heritage. It also recognizes the dynamics, which, in periods of prosperity and periods of crisis, have determined such interaction. However, it helps to evaluate more accurately the odds and means of achieving genuine intercultural dialogue in today's multicultural societies, without getting entangled into the debates of the past. The project goal is the mapping and linking of key events and individuals in the field of creative economy.

Bearing the above-mentioned in mind, projects of cultural routes can be seen as a model (layer) of regional development that corresponds to relation/comparative regional networks of tourist destinations. As a form of creative/cultural tourism it can also be seen within the framework of "glocal tourism – by promoting partnerships and common investments between cross-border cities and their joint access to public and private global resources – is a powerful tool in the hands of local administrators to reach important social, economic, and peace-related goals" [1].

4. Cultural route of roman emperors

In view of the fact that Roman archeological sites on the territory of the Republic of Serbia stand out as an exceptional resource for developing cultural tourism on the international level, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development of the Republic of Serbia initiated the project *Cultural Route of Roman Emperors* (Fig. 2a). The project will be realized in cooperation with representatives from Croatia, Bulgaria and Romania. Memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the project "Cultural Tourist Route - Road of the Roman emperors" was signed between the representatives of the above-mentioned countries at the end of February 2012 [25]. By this document, States Parties are obliged to implement measures and activities that will contribute to the development of the route and other tourist and cultural products. In addition, this is one of the first joint projects based on the guidelines established by the EU strategy for the Danube region, with the goal of long-term sustainable development of this area.

The Cultural Route of Roman Emperors encompasses archeological sites and museums in

Pozarevac, Veliko Gradiste, Golubac, Majdanpek, Kladovo, Negotin, Zajecar, Knjazevac, Svrlijig and Nis (Fig. 1a). The goal of the project is to link these cities into an entity as had existed when the Roman Empire spread to the banks of the Danube [26] For the needs of the project, a master plan was prepared with the idea to offer environments and events that will present life as it was when the Roman Empire spread to this region.

After examining the current practices in the world, with respect to development and management of successful routes as heritage tourism products, as well as reviewing the global and the overall tourism trends in Europe especially those who have repercussions on cultural tourism, and bearing in mind the existing structure and character of the area's attractions through which the route passes, the Master plan's authors concluded that the key success factors of the Roman emperors cultural route could be: 1) unity/diversity, 2) connection/packaging, 3) branding 4) positioning, 5) infrastructure, 6) partnerships, 7) institutionalization of management and marketing, 8) strategic planning, 9) interpretation and 10) sustainability [27].

It is the most important tourist route in Serbia, which further draws its importance from the fact that it is part of larger regional routes. As such, it is a generator of business development and population growth in the entire area. Given the richness of the ancient Roman heritage, carefully packaged with other cultural products of Serbian tourism in this area and with particularly diverse natural attractions and picturesque scenery, this route provides a two-fold character. It is, on one side, a kind of portal to various tourist experiences of Vojvodina, Belgrade and Southeastern Serbia; and on the other, it is a powerful lever of the tourist identity of Serbia, as being the area in which the emperors were born, raised and from where they had influenced different civilizations. The present population respects and fosters the legacy of ancient civilizations as much as their own.

The Roman Emperors' Route is defined as a project of national importance and it is conceived as a modern educational tourism tour, and one of the most important tourist offers of Serbia. The Republic of Serbia has invested over 1.5 million in the development of tourism infrastructure in the past two years and additional investments are be-

ing planned to make this route internationally recognized as a Serbian brand (Fig. 1). As the route stretches across several regions (Fig. 1b), the key investment projects are defined in master plans for particular tourist areas: Stara Planina mountain, Lower Danube Region, Belgrade, Karlovci and area of Stig-Kucajske-Beljanica.



a)

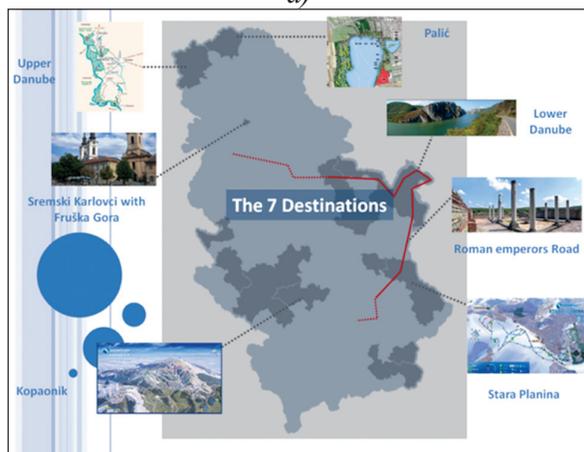
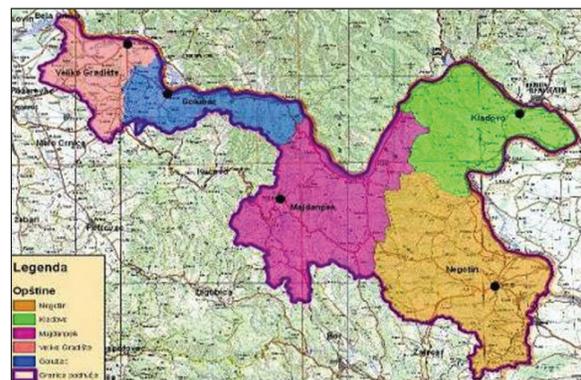


Figure 1: a) Cultural Route of Roman Emperors and b) Cultural Route of Roman Emperors as one of the 7 key destinations. Source: Nacionalna korporacija za turistički razvoj, 2011

The Lower Danube Area (Fig. 3a) with national park “Djerdap”, located in Eastern Serbia near the borders with Romania and Bulgaria, is the part of the broader region. This area has cultural and historical value that was recognized in the strategic spatial and urban plans for Serbia. Tourist area “**Stig-Kucajske-Beljanica**” (Fig. 3b) which represents a “reservoir” of future tourist attractions stretches between the Danube in the

north, the valley of the Morava River to the west, Homolje Mountain to the east and Cestobrodica pass in the south. The main tourism products of this area are naturally related to the characteristics of the region: research and recreation, ethnic, eco and rural tourism, mountain and ski tourism, spiritual tourism, wellness/spa tourism etc.



a)



b)

Figure 2. Territory of a) Master plan Lower Danube Region and b) Master plan Stig-Kucajske-Beljanica. Source: Republic of Serbia, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, 2007.

Key investment projects defined by a Master plan are related to individual sites, which date from Roman times: Viminacium, Traiana, Diana, the Archaeological Museum in Kladovo, Trajan’s Bridge, Spring Šarkamen, Romuliana Timacum Minus and Median [27]. As it is partially shown in Table 1, each site is planned to be equipped with

Table 1. Investment projects for the planned works and technical equipment [27]

Route's individual sites	2008-2011	2012-2014	2015-2017	After 2018
Viminacium	Center for visitors and researchers Hippodrome Amphitheatre Water canal Horticultural arrangement	Urban furnishing	Railings	
Trajan's table	Infrastructure and transport equipment Stone stairs Concrete platform	Info-center Panoramic elevator Horticultural arrangement	Urban furnishing	
Diana	Transport and accessibility routes	Info-center Horticultural arrangement	Railings Urban furnishing	
Archaeological museum in Kladovo		Interpretational center		
Trajan's Bridge	Infrastructure and transport equipment Laser hologram	Info-center Horticultural arrangement	Urban furnishing	
Spring Sarkamen				Accessibility routes
Romuliana	Infrastructure and transport equipment Center for visitors		Roman's labyrinth Urban furnishing Horticultural arrangement	Technological park
Timacum Minus	Infrastructure and transport equipment Lighting			Info-center in Ethno park in Ravna
Median	Infrastructure and transport equipment Info-center	Railings Reconstruction of the villa Guarding construction for the mosaic	Interpretational center	Urban furnishing Horticultural arrangement

parking and appropriate access, adequate road signs, the sculptures of 17 roman emperors, ancient Roman kitchen, souvenirs, hostels in ancient Roman style, etc.

The reason for this kind of investment is seen in the UNWTO, which estimates that in the period up to 2020 there will be a favorable development trend in world and European tourism at a growth rate of 3.5%. Similarly, in Serbia, the number of trips is also expected to increase due to developed habits of the local population to travel and the expected growth in income.

4.1 The impacts of the project implementation

Achieved success of these destinations and tourist areas is observed on the basis of data relating to the entire territory of Serbia and separated tourist clusters. A review of the results for the period from 2002 to 2011 shows an increase in the number of tourist arrivals and overnights in the period after the adoption of the Strategy of Tourism Development. However, after 2008, a decline is noted in tourist arrivals and overnight stays, which can be attributed to the global eco-

conomic crisis. The period from 2010 to 2011 was characterized by a slight increase in the number of visits. If the displayed data are compared with the predictions of the number of visits and overnight stays in 2015, it can be concluded that the actual number of visits and overnight stays were significantly smaller than it had been expected [28].

After analyzing the results from the tourist cluster of Southeastern Serbia, it is evident that the general trend of tourist visits and overnight stays for the period from 2007 to 2011 is close to the trend on the entire territory Serbia (Fig. 5). Most visits to this tourist cluster were recorded in 2008 (412334), and the lowest in 2010 (352553). Citizens of Serbia had the highest visit in 2008 (347376), and lowest in 2010 (274400). However, the majority of visitors to this area in 2010 were foreigners (78153). These findings indicate a positive trend in the visits of foreigners, more precisely about 15%, compared to the number of foreigners who visited this region in 2007 [29].

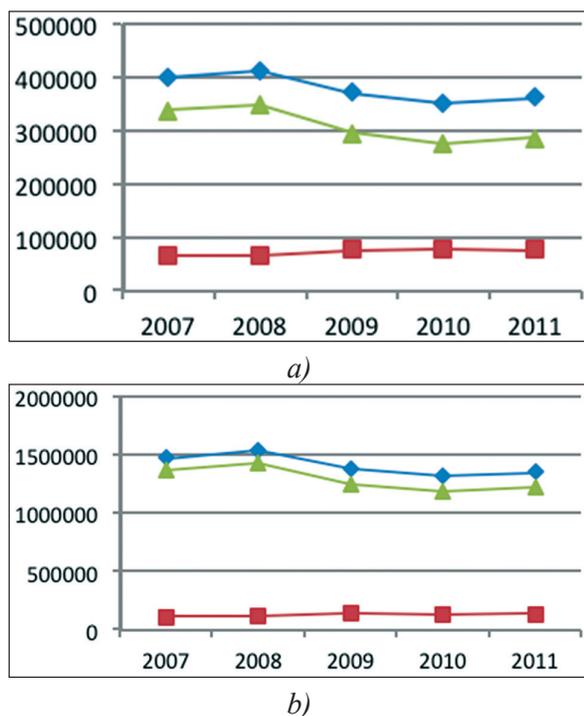


Figure 3. Southeastern Serbia: a) Tourist arrivals and b) Tourists' overnight stays [29]

Percentage-wise, the tourist cluster of Southeastern Serbia in 2011 was visited by 17.5% of total tourist arrivals in Serbia. According to this parameter, the results show that the highest number of

visits to Southeastern Serbia's tourist cluster was in 2009, compared with the number of visits recorded on the entire territory of Serbia. Then, it was 18.4%.

Most of the group visitors are tourists with lower purchasing power (student tours and various associations). Individual visitors are tourists who come to the area because of: business trips, spa treatments, visits to relatives and friends, and sports. Foreign visitors are individual customers whose primary motives are business trips, visiting relatives and friends, or cruise trips along the Danube (of which about 3,000 have visited Viminacium).

Tourists who have visited some of the tourist destinations in Southeast Serbia's tourist cluster generally express satisfaction with the offer and the satisfaction ratio ranges from 6.1 for Knjaževac/Stara Planina to 7.5 for Nis [28]. As major tourist products, they state health and nature (40%), while the cultural content is present in the interval of 5-12%.

Based on the presented results, it can be concluded that the positive results of investing and raising the attractiveness of locations belonging to the group of creative cultural tourism are gradually showing. This is particularly reflected in the increasing number of visitors from abroad, which coincides with the general trend of changes in Europe related to demography, health, the experience of the journey, awareness and education, information technology and sustainability.

With this opinion also agreed the participants of the First Tourism Forum held in Kopaonik in 2010 [30]. It was noted [30] that evident interest in Serbia is seen in city vacations; events/festivals; and that Belgrade, Novi Sad and Nis are seen as incubators/hubs of tourist movement to other tourist destinations and products. In addition, interest has been registered for the promoted cultural route – Roman Emperors, active holidays, and the roads of wine and gastronomy.

5. Conclusion

As driving-forces and pillars of social and cultural development, cities boost themselves, regions and states to grow and develop. Cities, in order to achieve a better position within the system of the network of global cities, are turning toward entrepreneurial activities with the goal to find new forms of com-

petitive capitalism. The concept of urban marketing and place marketing within these processes enables determination of local goals and manners of their realization; unifies local factors of development and corresponds to a specific “packaging of space”, directed toward production of a local public resource in order to create additional social development. As a complex phenomenon and treated as a hedonistic product, the city unifies components of its social, cultural, mental and material space. The area where these components overlap represents creative cultural tourism, one of the leading domains of tourism as a branch of the economy.

Culture and innovation play an important role in assisting regions to attract investments, creative talents and tourists. Paradoxically, in an era of information-communication technologies, which remove obstacles posed by distance and time, the “physical location” and the “socialization” factor remain decisive for economic progress and success. Cities and regions compete to attract foreign direct investments and creative talents. To be successful, they must provide: a varied cultural offer, quality of life and lifestyle. Creative cultural tourism has become an important factor for increasing local and regional attractiveness.

The positioning of cultural tourism as a basic strategic idea within each individual development sector of the society at various levels of hierarchy and space can secure a qualitatively higher level of development, both individually and overall. Culture, as a code of behavior, thinking and space, which is inherited and constantly enriched, today certainly offers a competitive advantage. It influences the quality of life in an environment, and can help in finding answers to modern day challenges. Culture can be regarded as the fourth pillar of sustainability and, in addition to the economic, social and environmental aspect, should form the basis of any urban plan [9].

A case study of the Cultural Route of Roman Emperors appears as a positive example/layer of a possible application of cross-linear regional development. It enables the implementation of a uniform strategy/project with the potential to achieve effects on several territorial levels: trans-regional (more countries involved in the project), national, regional, municipal and local level. In addition, it is possible to implement it in stages, which means that

funds can be invested gradually. This is very important, especially if we take into account the current economic situation, both internationally as well in Serbia. Also, the mentioned project has the goal to map sites and link key events and individuals from the domain of creative economy [31]. Corridors are a specific instrument for preserving and upgrading cultural and natural heritage and raising the quality of life on a specific territory. According to this, routes are seen as a specific instrument for preserving and upgrading cultural and natural heritage and raising the quality of life on a specific territory.

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