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# STUDY FOR THE CONDITION OF POTENTIALS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE EAST PLANNING REGION



The Study for the condition of potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region is prepared within the Nature Conservation Programme in Macedonia (NCP) - a project of the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), coordinated by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and Farmahem. The Centre for development of the East Planning Region is a strategic partner of the Programme.



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# 1. INTRODUCTORY NOTES

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## 1.1. Introduction

According to its geographic position and the large number of natural and created values, the East Planning Region of the Republic of Macedonia has a solid base for tourist development and for growing into an interesting tourist destination. The region offers strong possibilities for building an authentic recreational, alternative, rural, shopping, religious-monastic and transit tourism. Unfortunately, there is no organized effort to present these potentials and no mobilized infrastructure for provision of services in these areas. Pursuant to the data from the Program for development of EPR (2009 -2013), tourism is part of the economic sector services which participates with around 30% in creating the GDP of the region. However, if we take into consideration that the sector services is much greater, the conclusion would be that tourism has modest contribution towards the growth of economy. However, it is worth mentioning that tourism has been growing as an economic activity in the region in the last years. This is also confirmed by the number of projects and initiatives for tourism, which are being implemented with a different rate and scope in the East Planning Region.

On the other hand, tourism, agriculture and rural development have been identified by the Government as one of the priority sectors for development in the Republic of Macedonia. The National Strategy for Development of Tourism in the Republic of Macedonia (2009 - 2013) and the Global Study for Tourism in the Republic of Macedonia define tourism as priority. Simultaneously, tourism has also been identified as a strategic medium-term goal of the Program for Development of this region and as a Strategic medium-term goal 4: East region - well-known tourist destination. Taking into consideration the present state of this economic region and the modern European and world trends in tourism, the focus should be directed towards creation of conditions for articulated, organized and integrated representation of local natural attractions and cultural-historical heritage, for the purpose of gaining the interest of foreign and domestic tourists from the middle class – tourists who reveal greater and clearly defined interest for such type of tourism. In this sense, EPR is lacking studies and strategic documents which would provide knowledge and database for the potentials for development of tourism, in order to make tourism a significant economic sector in the region. This is the purpose of this project, which should create conditions for establishing the basis for development of tourism industry in EPR, to promote the significance of development of this industry for economic growth of the region and to identify models for tourism development.

The preparation of the Study for the condition of potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region is a project assignment from the program activity “Preparation of Strategy for development of tourism in EPR with action plan 2015 -2024”. This program activity is implemented within the Nature Conservation Programme in Macedonia, financed by the Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) and coordinated by Helvetas Swiss Intercooperation and Farmahem. The Centre for development of the East Planning Region is a strategic partner of the Programme.

## 1.2. Goals of the Study

The Study for tourism development in EPR, as a basic and significant document which indicates the potentials and possibilities for tourist development of this area, has several goals. The main goal is to analyze, take inventory and valorize tourist resources in EPR from the aspect of tourism. This implies which of the numerous resources in the region could be in the function of tourism as they are not all suitable for tourist purposes. Thus, only resources which have a suitable attractive potential, which are connected to traffic and which enable performance of certain activities have been distinguished. The following important goal is sustainable development of tourism through sustainable use of distinguished tourist resources, in order to prevent their destruction, degradation, deterioration or loss of importance. Also, some of the attractive sights, parts and facilities are under legal protection and

their utilization for tourism should be in coordination with their status and with the legal frames. Thus, it can be concluded that the main goal of the Study is tourist valorization of natural and cultural (created) attractions in the area, in coordination with the principle of sustainable use and in the function of local and regional development of EPR. The distinguished resources and attractions are almost equally present around the area. Their optimal valorization would enable greater equal regional development of EPR, especially taking into consideration that some rural areas are very poor and with strong depopulation. Aside from the general goals, the Study has more specific and particular goals, such as:

- To review all relevant documents and legal frame related to tourism and EPR for preparation of Study for the condition of potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region;
- To review and analyze the existing institutional situation/structure for tourism, management, marketing and promotion with special focus on the roles and responsibilities at national, regional and local level, as well as the existing tourist organization, including the relevant associations, networking, personnel;
- To take into consideration all existing laws, regulations and changes from the areas of interest for preparation of the Study for the condition of the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region;
- To describe the methodology which is being used for preparation of the Study for the condition of the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region;
- To describe the tourist-geographical position and connection in EPR through analyses of: geographical position, traffic connections and position regarding the remaining tourist areas;
- To identify and analyze key factors for potential development of tourism, through analyses of created values - human – demographic characteristics of the region,
- To identify and analyze the natural characteristics and factors (natural heritage: geomorphological characteristics, climate characteristics, hydrographic characteristics), factors related to environment (characteristics and rarities of flora and fauna) and anthropogenic factors (cultural – historical, ethno-social and manifestation values).
- To identify and describe the types of tourism in EPR (mountain, lake, speleological, hunting and fishing, residential, rural, eco, sport and recreational, touring, congressional, health, bath, wine, manifestation and transit and other types of tourism);
- To identify and describe the existing tourist localities in the EPR;
- To provide review of tourist accommodation capacities in EPR;
- To prepare analysis of the existing condition of the present tourism development in EPR;
- To provide assessment of present tourist development in EPR;
- To prepare final version of the Study in Macedonian and English language, with editing and printing;
- To prepare final report with conclusions and recommendations from the Study in electronic format, suitable for printing and publishing on the website.

### 1.3. Methodology

The methodology for preparation of the “Study for valorization of natural and cultural potentials in EPR” arises from the set goals and assignments which were mentioned before. In that sense, pursuant to the present multi-annual site researches on the area of EPR and the total available literature, the natural and cultural-historical values of the ravine have been determined. This was followed by identification of localities, facilities and sights specifically attractive for their characteristics. During the procedure, constant care has been provided for the allowed capacity of burdening a certain locality-resource and the wider area, without harming the natural environment or causing degradation. A short, concise overview is given for all such identified resources. Pursuant to the previous and acquired knowledge, along with the professional experiences, an overview is given for the most potential tourist attractions (types of tourism), along with the necessary steps for greater tourist activation of EPR. This

has been conducted in accordance with the real financial possibilities of the region, the local self-governments and the wider community.

Several methods for this type of researches have been used in the process of preparation of the Study. Some of the most important are: the method of site researches, office analyses of bibliography, map, satellite snapshots and other information sources. With the given methods we established the geological-relief, climate, hydrographic characteristics of the area, selected and processed the significant, endangered and endemic plants and understood the diversity of wildlife. Also, the most important facilities and amenities from the cultural heritage in the area have been distinguished. All stated activities were especially based on the information from the field methods of immediate observation, analyses, etc. The cartographic method was used to determine the position, altitude, area, availability, geological composition and other components of appropriate natural areas and localities. For that purpose we used topographic maps with scale 1:100000 and 1:25000, as well as corresponding sheets of geological maps. The comparative method is used to compare certain resources and localities in EPR even wider in the Republic of Macedonia. Also, a large importance has been given to the method of prospect in the sense of how to transform the area with its natural elements for the necessities of tourism and in general for the social community in the future. Throughout the complete Study, the most important place has been given to the method of tourist valorization, which was used to estimate the attractive amenities from the aspect of tourism. And finally, we will mention that in different phases of the progress of the Study we used software and GIS methods, especially when preparing the maps and similar documentation.

## 2. TOURIST-GEOGRAPHICAL POSITION AND CONNECTION OF EPR

### 2.1. Geographic position

The East Planning Region (EPR) covers an area of 3537 km<sup>2</sup> or 13,7% from the area of the Republic of Macedonia. It includes 11 municipalities in the middle and upper basin of Bregalnica, such as: Shtip, Probishtip, Karbinci, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo, Zrnovci, Kochani, Vinica, Makedonska Kamenica, Delchevo, Pehchevo and Berovo. The largest longitude of the region in the direction east-west is 90 km, while the largest latitude in the meridian direction (north-south) is 70 km. The final points of EPR are:

- West: hillsides of the hill Ilanja (654 m) with coordinates: 21°56'50" egl, 41°42'37" ngl;
- East: Chengino Kale (1745 m) on Maleshevo Mountains, with coordinates: 23°02'04" egl, 41°42'34" ngl (the most Eastern point in the Republic of Macedonia);
- North: top Mal Ruen (2205 m) on the Osogovo Mountains, with coordinates: 22°30'37" egl, 42°09'18" ngl;
- South: point east from the village Sushica (650 m), with coordinates: 21°49'13" egl, 41°57'15" ngl.

For such a relatively small area, the natural geographic characteristics are quite diverse, interesting and attractive from the aspect of tourism. This refers especially to the geological-geomorphological (relief) characteristics, climate, hydrography, flora and fauna.



Figure 1. Geographical position of the East Planning Region within the Republic of Macedonia.

Regarding the communication connections, EPR has relatively dense traffic network. However, the quality of traffic network is relatively poor. The existing road infrastructure in the East Planning



Region is made of 1187 km local roads, 177 km A state roads and 302 km regional roads. The main roads which connect this region with other regions are the state road A3 (Veles - Shtip - Kochani - Delchevo–border with Bulgaria) and state road A4 (Sveti Nikole - Shtip - Strumica).

The road network in this region is relatively well developed, and the construction of the highway of part of the state road A3 Sveti Nikole –Shtip is currently underway, which will connect this region with the modern road connection with Skopje. Reconstruction and superstructure of the section Veles–Kadrifakovo of the state road A4 is also underway.

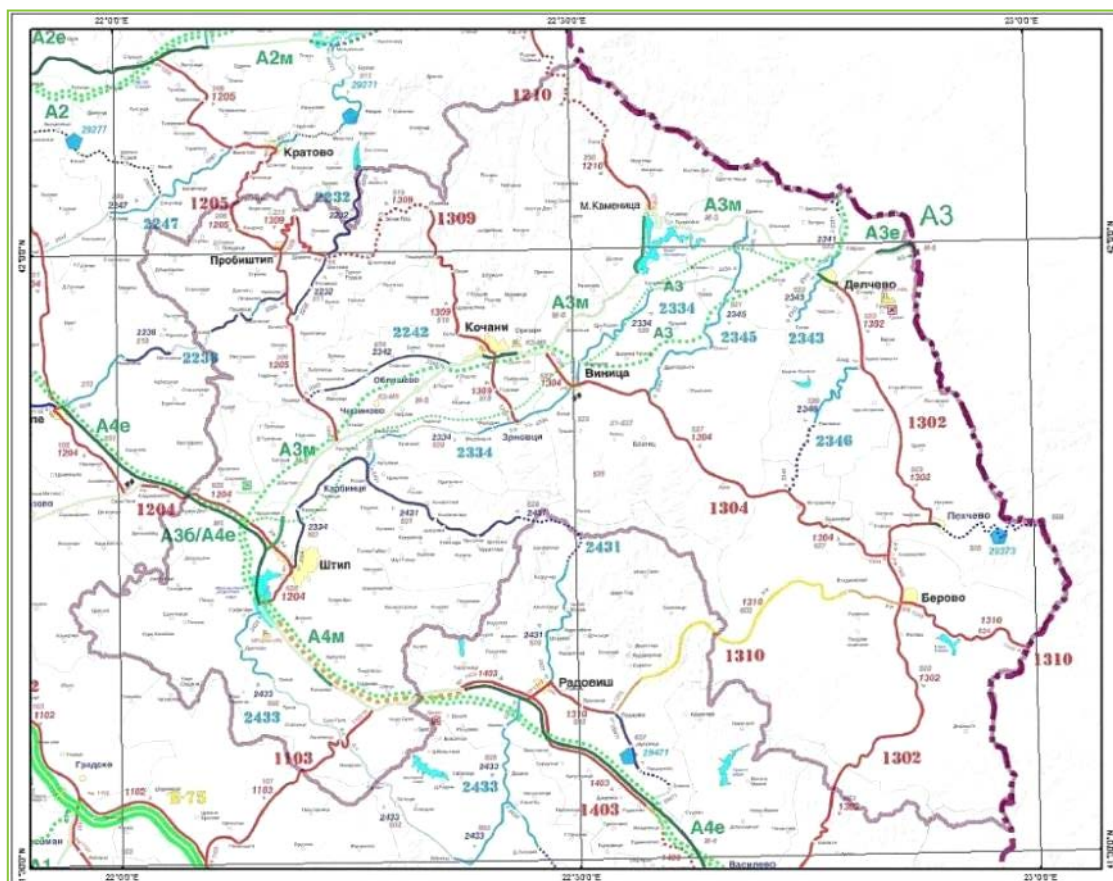


Figure 2. Communication connection of EPR (explanation in the text).

The existing condition of part of the state network of A roads A4 (Shtip – Radovish) and A3 (Shtip – Kochani – Makedonska Kamenica - Delchevo–Border with Bulgaria) is in a relatively poor condition due to damaged road surfaces and improper technical elements existing in these section. Certain sections from the regional road network P1302 (Delchevo- Pehchevo - Beroovo - Bosilevo), P 1304 (connection with A3- Vinica- connection with 1302), P1205 (Kratovo - Probishtip–connection with A3), as well as some from the regional roads from second category P 2345 (connection with P1304 Dragobrashta - Bigla–Connection with A3) and P2431 (Shtip–Karbinci - Zrnovci - Vinica - Kalimanci) are also in a relatively poor state.

The following regional roads are not constructed in the region:

- P 1309 Ponikva - Zletovo (Probishtip)
- P 1310 Beroovo - Radovish
- P 1210 Makedonska Kamenica (Sasa) - Toranica (Kriva Palanka)
- P 2341 Gabrovo–Border with Bulgaria
- P 2342 Pishica - Zhiganci
- P 2431 Prnalija - Shipkovic (Karbinci–Radovish via Plachkovica)
- P 2346 Connection with P1304 - Razlozci–Trabotivishte

Part of the regional road network is with dirt road, such as:

- P 2334 Argulica - Burchilevo; Kuchichino - Vidovishte; Kalimanci connection with 2345
- P 2336 Kukovo –Mechkuevci; Petrshino - Zarapinci

The condition of part of the state A roads and regional roads is not in accordance with the requirements for economic development, or with the standards for safe traffic operation.

The local road network in the East Planning Region is insufficiently developed and larger parts of the local roads have improper quality, which is due to insufficient care and lack of investments. The quality of certain sections of the local road network is so low that it poses a potential threat for normal traffic operation.

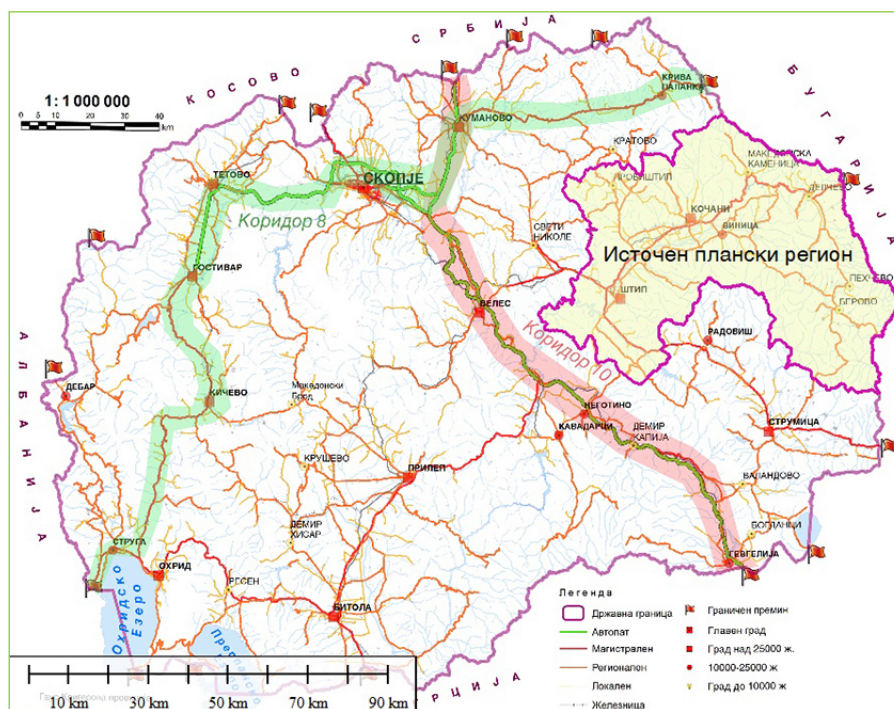


Figure 3. Traffic-tourist position of EPR.

Part of the railway Veles – Kochani is located in the East Planning Region. The total length of this railway which is located in the region is 70 km. The railway network in the east region has small density and it does not enable adequate service for the municipalities from the region. The only railway ends as a dead track, which disables its profitable use. The quality of railway services being offered is at a very low level, which is actually a characteristic of the railway transportation in the Republic of Macedonia. There are two more significant railway stations located in the region in Shtip and Kochani, and they are in a very poor condition and they do not provide even the basic conditions for quality railway services.

There is only one sports airport in the east region near Shtip and one airfield for economy aviation “Lakavica” which are underused. The sports airport is located 4km northwest from the town Shtip and it is used for aviation and sports activities. The runway is 1000m long and 100m wide. The runway is covered with grass and not equipped with lighting signalization for night use. This airport can be used for aircrafts with maximum weight of 5700 kg. It is interesting to note that there are military asphalt runways built during the former YNA near Ponikva and on Turtel on the mountain Plachkovica and they could also be used for small sports planes.

With the existing international passenger airport in Skopje, part of the east region is well covered even though the access towards the main national airport “Alexander the Great” in Petrovec is not quick and simple.

## 2.2. Tourist position

Regarding the location and communication connections, EPR has medium tourist position with certain advantages and disadvantages, such as:

### **Advantages:**

- Up to 4 municipalities from EPR (Berovo, Pehchevo, Delchevo, Makedonska Kamenica) border with the Republic of Bulgaria, i.e. the European Union in the length of 100 km;
- EPR is approximately 100 km away from the capital city Skopje, which is the largest emitting area for potential tourists in this region.
- EPR is approximately 90 km further from the airport “Alexander the Great”, the largest in the country;
- The most significant international road corridor towards the Republic of Bulgaria and the transverse corridor from Kumanovo via Shtip to Strumica passes through EPR;
- EPR has a good network of asphalt roads to almost every village and more significant locality;
- Part of the quite attractive railway Veles-Kochani passes through EPR;

### **Disadvantages:**

- EPR still lacks modern and fast traffic artery which would interconnect the municipalities and the region with neighboring Bulgaria. Even though the construction of the highway Skopje-Shtip is of large importance, the further east (Berovo, Pehchevo, Delchevo, Makedonska Kamenica), where there are rich tourist resources, will remain “distant” for tourists until the construction or modernization of the existing road.
- Even though EPR borders with the Republic of Bulgaria at a significant length of 100 km and with this it also borders with the European Union, there is only one border crossing for now at Delchevo, with poor flow of passengers (due to weak traffic connections). This significantly limits the potential for transit and other types of tourism in the region;
- The process of depopulation in EPR is strongly manifested, especially in the distant eastern parts and in rural areas. This will have negative influence on tourism in various ways, especially concerning the lack of young working, educated and skilled population;
- The most visited tourist areas in Macedonia (Ohrid, Skopje, Dojran, Sharplanina, Mavrovo) are significantly further from EPR, especially from its eastern parts (200-300 km). This along with the condition of traffic connection, has negative influence on the offer for round two-day tours or optional tourist routes from the main centers towards EPR;
- EPR is relatively distant from the main corridor in Macedonia K-10 (50-100 km);
- EPR is basically economically weak (with the exception of municipalities of Shtip and Kochani), due to which the traffic frequency – transit is also weak and has no influence on tourism;
- EPR lacks such an attractive tourist resource which would independently and “unconditionally” attract a large number of tourists (large lake, high mountain, large waterfall, etc.);
- There are no accommodation capacities in some attractive parts of EPR or they do not meet the requested criteria.



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### 3. PRESENT SURVEYS, STUDIES AND STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN THE AREA OF EPR

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A large number of studies and strategies for tourist development have been prepared in the present period for the EPR area and for some of its municipalities. Certain realizations for the attractiveness in the area of EPR have been given in the beginning of the last century in the capital monograph of Cvijikh (1906) "Basis for geography and geology of Macedonia and Old Serbia". There are also some studies between the two World Wars. However, the first more serious researches began in 1960, mainly within the sector studies for tourism of the municipalities from that time. Thus, Kondev published several publications for the wider region of Osogovo (1960, 1966), and Nedkov (1967) wrote mainly for the Kezhovica bath and its tourist utilization. Stojmilov (1976) analyzes the attractive recreational characteristics and tourist localities of the mountain Osogovo, and later in (1979) it defines and assigns use of tourist space units in this region. The same author prepares detailed study and space plan for development of tourism in municipality Kochani (1982) and many other municipalities in EPR. In the 1990s, due to understandable reasons in our country and its surrounding, the interest for tourism and researches for these issues decreased. From the beginning of this century, a significantly greater attention has been given to the opportunities for development of tourism in EPR, and thus more studies and strategies have been prepared for: eco-tourism in the municipality of Berovo (2005), rural tourism in the municipalities Cheshinovo-Obleshevo (2007) and Zrnovci (2007), tourist action plan for Malesh and Pijanec (2008), sports tourism in Shtip (Tashkov and Metodijevski, 2009), ski centers Ponikva and Carev Vrv (Trpeski and others, 2010) and other. Meanwhile, the preparation of a Spatial plan of EPR with special expertise is currently in the process (Lukareska, 2014). In general, it could be concluded that in the recent period a large number of studies and strategies have been prepared from the area of tourism for certain municipalities and parts in the region. However, there is still no detailed and integral study for the entire region (such as EPR or the Bregalnica region), except the expertise for Spatial plan of EPR. This is exactly the challenge of this Study.

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## 4. FACTORS FOR DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN EPR

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### 4.1. Natural tourist attractiveness in EPR

#### 4.1.1. Geological attractiveness

As a result of the long and wild geological history, the EPR area is characterized with various geological structures, which had significant influence on the relief. Thus, on certain mountain parts there are rocks which are almost one billion years old (gneiss and mica schist of Osogovo), while in the river valley of Bregalnica and its tributaries, the rocks are young and they are still being formed even nowadays. Between Probishtip and Kochani, around Makedonska Kamenica and Pehchevo there are volcanic rocks and structures which are the remains of volcanic activity of these areas. Around Probishtip, Zletovo and west from Kochani, there are ten well-shaped volcanic peaks and some of them still have well-preserved craters. In that sense we have Lesnovo peak and crater, then Plavica, the volcanic relief around the village Kundino and the remains of volcanic craters at the village Rajchani – Kochansko, which are especially attractive. These geo-landscapes which are very attractive and which have the remaining advantages, especially regarding the communication connection, are barely used for tourism. Lesnovo crater is an exception, where the famous Lesnovo monastery is located and which is already slightly organized for visiting.

In the low, flattened parts of the area there is a lot of clay and sand material which has deposited in the period when the valleys were under lakes, several million years ago. These clays have been dug out at few places and the relief has deep minings filled with water. Parts of these minings-pools have been turned into fishponds (Lake Sandanski at Delchevo) and they are used for tourist purposes or they could have such use.

As the result of the geological processes, significant ore-mineral deposits have been created in many parts of the region. Somewhere they are deeper into the lithosphere and at other places they come out completely on the surface. Such ore and mineral resources have created interest and exploitation since the old times. Thus, even in Roman Age, and probably even earlier, the extraction and melting of iron, silver, gold and similar was present around Makedonska Kamenica, Zletovo, Probishtip and around Pehchevo. Actually, according to certain archeological and field traces, records, traditions and legends, mining has been present in these areas over 2000 years, and some mines operate even nowadays. In the Probishtip-Zletovo area, the mine deposits are accompanied by the presence of rare minerals, radioactive elements (uranium in the valley of the river Zletovska Reka), oil-bearing slates at the village Pleshinci, zeolitic tuffs at the village Strmosh and other. The mine areas and mines could be very interesting for visiting by interested tourists if they are properly promoted, equipped and prepared. Additional motive is that many archeological fields (Makedonska Kamenica), different old legends and stories, mineralogical finding and collections (Probishtip), modern methods of exploitation (Makedonska Kamenica) and etc., are connected with the given areas.

Parts of the region are quite active seismically. This is especially valid for the area of Pehchevo, and in smaller degree for Vinica and Kochani area. Actually, one of the strongest earthquakes on the Balkan Peninsula and wider, with a magnitude of around 7,5 Richter scale occurred in Pehchevo in 1904. Due to the good weather in the morning hours and the weak construction, there were no victims, but the earthquake influenced the creation of landslides, badlands, rock dolls and other interesting forms. Aside from being an interesting fact, the seismic sights should be taken into consideration in the construction of facilities in this area.

**(1) Lesnovo crater** is located in the western part of Osogovo Mountains, between Probishtip and the village Zletovo. It is among the best preserved fossil volcanic craters in the Republic of Macedonia and the Balkan Peninsula. The diameter of the crater is around 1.5 km, and its depth is 150-

200 m. Around the center of the crater there are 7-8 peak hills in annular position, i.e. volcanic peaks. The north hill Ilin Krst (1127 m) is the most impressive, which was probably the main volcanic center which produced the largest quantity of lava and volcanic material. Through the middle part of the crater runs the small river Lesnovska Reka in the direction of northeast-southwest, which intersects the western frame of the crater. The place of intersection, the valley of this small river is very interesting, steep and with a large number of holes (caves) along the sides. The recesses and the holes in the rocks are not natural but manmade, who extracted the hard volcanic stone (andesite) with good quality and produced water-wheels. As a matter of fact, the neighboring villages, especially Lesnovo, were known for production of water-wheels with good quality and high demand. The volcanic activity in this area began around 30-35 million years ago. The volcano had strong, explosive eruptions, followed by eruption of large quantity of dust, gases and dense lava. This explains traces of lava flows in the vicinity and also volcanic bombs. Due to the fact that it is the most preserved and the most characteristic crater in Macedonia, Lesnovo crater is declared as a natural monument. Aside from the unique relief, this area has a very pleasant climate ranging from mild-continental to mountain. It is distinguished by cool summers and pleasant winters, in combination with clean mountain air and many solar hours (2400) during the year. In the central part of the picturesque crater there is the village Lesnovo which is the only settlement in the Republic of Macedonia which lies in the vividly impressive and preserved fossil volcanic crater. Due to the wonderful, unique nature and cultural-historic and religious values, the interest for visiting Lesnovo is increasing, both by domestic and foreign tourists. Also, the crater and the village have relatively good traffic connections with narrow asphalt road from the town Probishtip (13 km) west and to the village Zletovo (8 km) south.



Figure 4. West edge of Lesnovo crater, intersected with Lesnovo brook (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** well-preserved volcanic crater, volcanic rocks, picturesque nature, rich flora and fauna, many caves, excellent view points.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, mountain biking, country tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** Due to the uniqueness of nature here, the surroundings in the crater or its appearance should not be changed in any way. Everything that would be built in the future should fit in the nature, it should be in the local style (rural: rural- monastic) and “unnoticeable”. The offer for eco-rural tourism should prevail and tourist activities should not disrupt the monastic peace and way of life.

**(2) Paleontological locality Stamer – Delchevo became important in 2007** when a massive tomb of prehistoric animals was found in the area of the village Stamer near Delchevo, which according to the scientists, dates from 10 million years ago. Rhinoceros’ tooth, giraffe’s skull and a fossil deer’s horn have all been found on the locality.

**Tourist attractiveness:** paleontological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** geotourism.

**Note:** The paleontological researches of this locality are underway and during the month of November, 2014, fossil remains of a rhinoceros have been found, which were from 3 to 5 million years old. Considering the fact that there is no information about the duration of researches and the fact that the locality is not presented, it cannot be put into operation for tourist purposes in near future. Placement of signage is recommended with the help of which the locality would be marked and its importance would be noted.

#### 4.1.2. Relief attractiveness

The East Planning Region has many different and interesting relief characteristics with reference to its area: from the high Osogovo Mountains (Ruen, 2252 m), through the deep valleys to the low, flattened fields. The highest point in the region is the top Mal Ruen (2205 m), while the lowest (162 m) is in the bed of the river Bregalnica under the hill Ilanja, west of Shtip. This implies that the altitude difference for the entire region is up to 2043 m, while the average height is 805 m, almost as the average height of the Republic of Macedonia (830 m). EPR covers the upper and middle part of the valleys of Bregalnica (with its tributaries), Turija (tributary of Strumica), river Dvorishka Reka and Lebnica (tributary of Struma in Bulgaria). The valley, i.e. the basin of Bregalnica is absolutely dominant in the area in terms of the area it covers. Due to certain relief-landscape characteristics, the entire area with Istibanjska ravine is divided in Upper Bregalnica (upstream from the ravine) and Lower Bregalnica (downstream from it). Unlike Lower Bregalnica, Upper Bregalnica is higher, with more impressive mountain relief, cooler climate, hill-mountain vegetation and clear socio-demographic specifications. The given differences have their own influence on the tourist factors, offer and activities.

Downstream along the valley of Bregalnica on the area of EPR there are 5 medium valleys such as: Berovska (Maleshevska), Delchevska (Pijanekha), Kochanska, Ovchepolska and Lakavichka. The Zletovo basin can be distinguished as a special relief entity. The valleys are closed from several sides by mountains, and their bottoms have plains (Berovska, Delchevska, Lakavichka) and other fields (Kochanska, Ovchepolska valley). Since the relief of the valleys is closed, especially the Berovsko-Delchevska from the Kochanska, this conditioned significant natural and socio-anthropogenic differences, which are a natural wealth for the region. The most typical and most contrasting valley of this area is Kochanska valley. With Osogovo mountains on the north side, Golak with Obozna on the east side and Plachkovica on the south side, it is well closed and protected from cold continental influences from east and north. On the west side it is widely open towards the valley of the river Vardar, which brings warm influence during the entire year. Due to the neighbouring mountains, there is poor wind and the climate is typical mildly continental. This enabled rice cultivation, for which the valley is well known, and cultivation of cotton, poppy, etc. in the past.

The main relief characteristics of EPR is the presence of mountain relief. It covers an area of 1991 km<sup>2</sup> or 56,3% from the total. It is interesting to note that there are up to 10 mountains or parts of them on the area of EPR. Two mountains – Golak with Obozna and Bejaz Tepe lie completely in the region and eight mountains only partially belong to it and they are: Osogovo Mountains, Vlaina, Maleshevski Mountain, Plachkovica, Ograzden, Goten, Mangovica and Serta. The mountains differ in structure, method of creation, type, climate and other natural elements in them, the presence and influence of humans and other elements. Pursuant to this, they all have some specific uniqueness and attraction. Thus, Osogovo is the highest (with over 2000 m) and most widespread mountain with quite impressive biodiversity. Plachkovica has complexes of marble rocks in which caves and abysses formed and it is rich in dense beech forests. Maleshevo Mountains have an interesting arch stretching, characteristic climate and abundant springs. Ograzden is interesting for the dense forests and many brooks and also for the denudation relief and gorges with strange forms. Mangovica and Serta stretch



almost in the same direction, they are low but easy for walking and mountaineering and they have diverse fauna.

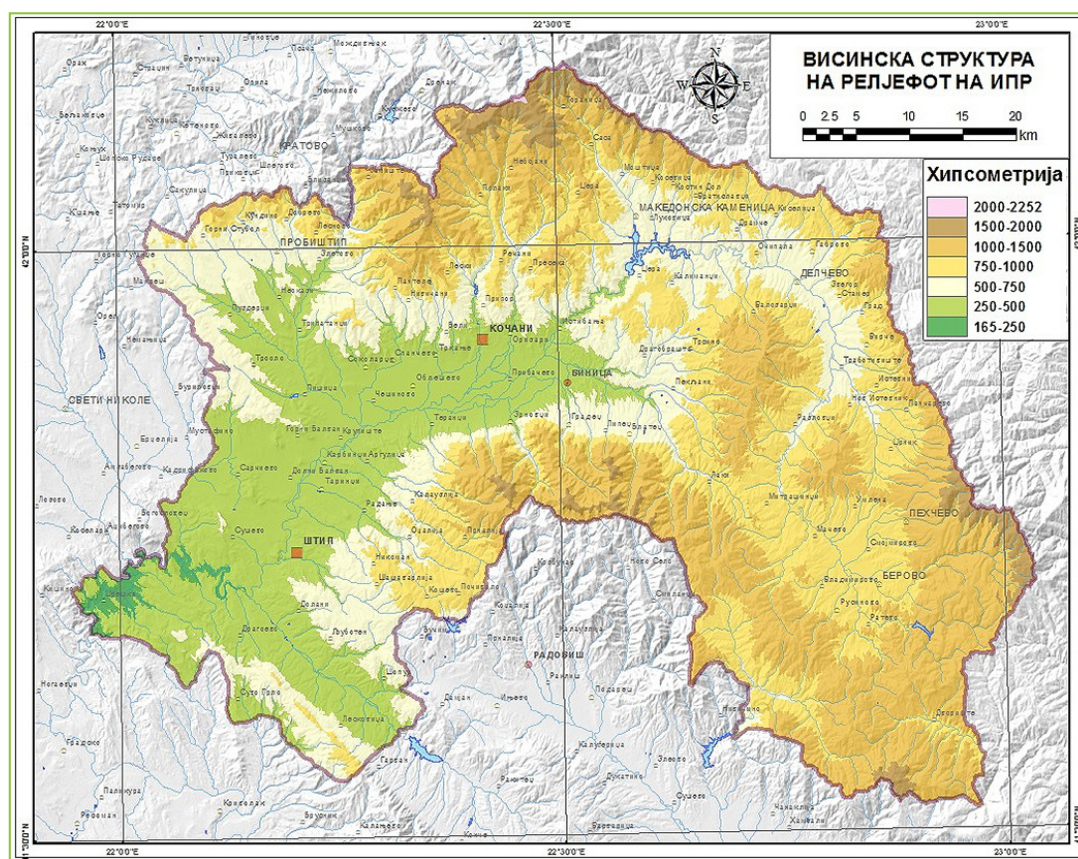


Figure 5. Relief hypsometry in EPR.

Table 1. Area of height zones in EPR.

Height zone	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Area in %
2000-2200m	1,13	0,0
1500-2000 m	106,33	3,0
1000-1500 m	939,89	26,6
500-1000 m	1654,97	46,8
165-500 m	834,99	23,6
Total	3537,30	100,0

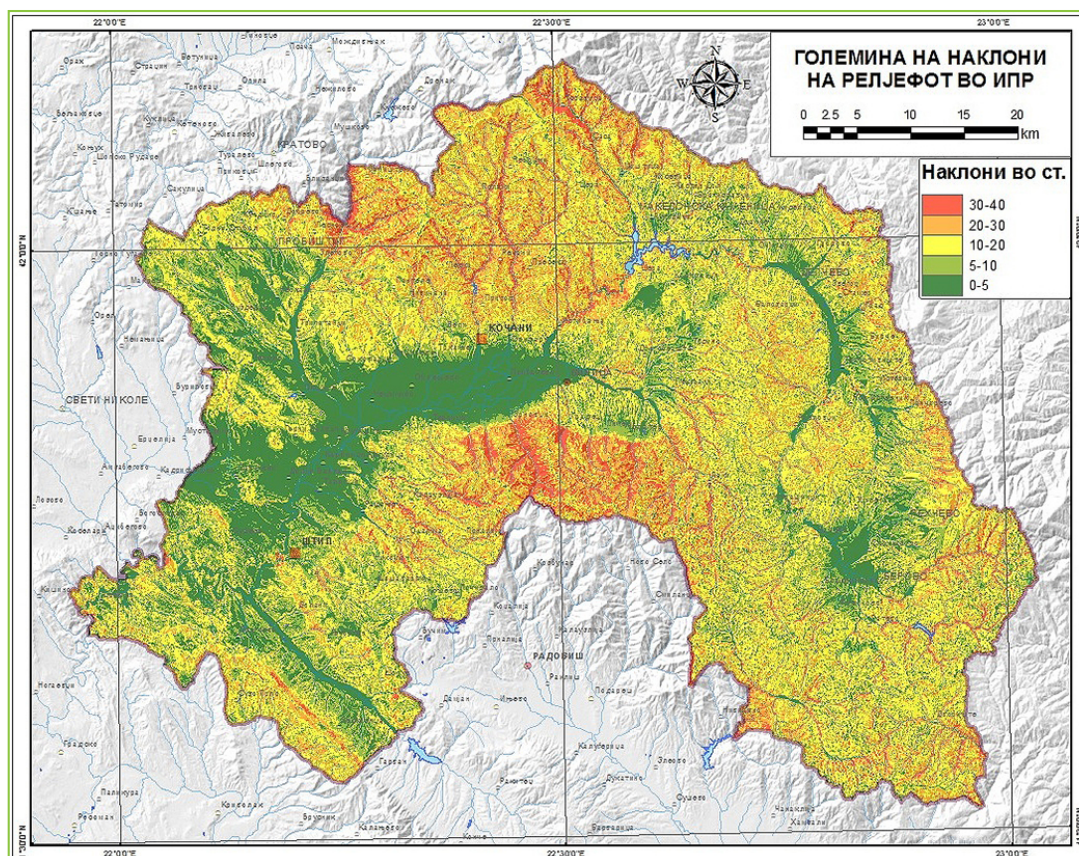


Figure 6. Relief inclinations in EPR.

Table 2. Areas according to inclination (in degrees) in EPR.

Inclination in degrees	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Area in %
>50	1.9	0.0
40-50	12.6	0.4
30-40	181.9	5.1
20-30	701.1	19.8
10-20	1334.6	37.7
5-10	689.5	19.5
0-5	615.6	17.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>3537.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Table 3. Expositions of areas in EPR.

Exposition	Area in km <sup>2</sup>	Area in %
<b>Northern</b>	757.8	21.4
<b>Eastern</b>	867.2	24.5
<b>Southern</b>	886.6	25.1
<b>Western</b>	1025.7	29.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>3537.3</b>	<b>100.0</b>

The structure of expositions in EPR reveals that the terrains with south or sunny (south, west, southeast) position predominate, which has positive effect for various tourist activities.



## Mountains, tops and mountain localities

**(3) Osogovo Mountains** are the largest and highest mountain massive in the East Planning Region and the entire east part of the Republic of Macedonia. The south part of the mountain belongs to the region with area of 594 km<sup>2</sup>, which is 54% of its total area in the Republic of Macedonia (1102,2 km<sup>2</sup>). It is characterized with long, oval crests and tops between the deeply cut river valleys. Five tops are higher than 2000 m, such as Ruen (2252 m), Mal Ruen (2205 m), Carev Vrv (2085 m) and others. There are interesting relief sights on the highest parts of the mountain (over 1800 m) as a result of the low temperatures and snow cover in the winter part of the year. In the western Probishtip-Zletovo part of the mountain, the tops are lower, but sharper as they were created with the former volcanic activities in these areas. The narrow valleys of the rivers Zletovska, Kochanska, Orizarska, Kamenichka Reka and their tributaries are deeply carved among the crests. The valleys are characterized with steep, somewhere almost vertical sides and narrow valley bed, making them typical ravine. The ravine of the river Zletovska Reka downstream from the catchment of the river Emirichka Reka to the village Zletovo is especially interesting. The narrow valleys of Kochanska and Orizarska Reka are very interesting with several waterfalls. The valley of Kamenichka Reka is mainly carved in slates and poorly connected lake sediments which produce very strong erosion.

The climate at Osogovo Mountains differs greatly in the area: from warm mild-continental in the southwest foot, to continental on the east slopes to mountain climate in the higher parts. The average annual temperatures range from 12°C southwest to 10°C on the eastern higher slopes, then around 8-9°C in the medium mountain zone (1000-1500 m) to 5-6°C in the highest parts. Rainfalls grow at height, from 500 mm in the foot to 750-800 mm over 1800 m, appearing as snow in the winter half. This is the only place in the area of EPR (above 1800 m) where we find solid natural conditions for development of winter-sports (ski) tourism.

Osogovo Mountains are known for the large number of springs—there are several hundreds. Some are mineral and towards the foot there are several thermal springs. Under Carev Vrv and Ruen there is the spring of four large tributaries at Bregalnica: Zletovska, Kochanska, Orizarska and Kamenichka Reka. The biodiversity is impressively large, both for the flora and fauna. Notwithstanding of the intensive destruction of the forests in the past, today part of them have recovered naturally and the forest complexes at some places are dense and composed of oak and beech forests. Due to the division of the mountain with numerous and deep river valleys, there are several villages from dispersed type, with districts located several kilometers away in the Osogovo region. Therefore, the road connection of some districts occurred just recently, when the largest part of the population has already left the village property.

**Tourist attractiveness:** excellent panoramic views, picturesque mountain ravines of Zletovska, Orizarska and Kamenichka Reka with numerous waterfalls, volcanic peaks and craters around Zletovo (especially Lesново crater), numerous springs, dense forest complexes, mountain climate, clean and fresh air, traditional rural settlements, etc.

**Potential types of tourism:** rural tourism, tracking tourism, winter-sports tourism in the highest mountain parts at Ponikva too, hunting tourism especially in the hunting ground at Ponikva, geotourism at the volcanic terrain and also at Ratkova Skala, paragliding, mountain biking, picnic tourism, conference tourism, etc.

**Note:** For the purpose of nature conservation, the construction of asphalt roads should be within normal limits. Special attention must be paid when planning and constructing the planned road Toranica-Sasa, which will pass through the central and the most beautiful part of the mountain.

**(4) Carev Vrv (2085 m) and Ruen (2252 m)** are the highest peaks at Osogovo Mountains and in EPR. They are rounded, vast and dominant. There are numerous interesting relief sights as the result

of the low temperatures and the snow cover in the winter half of the year. Those are snow cyrques, seas of decomposed rocks, stone sliding blocks, ice tongues and other (Milevski, 2008). Since they are located in the most attractive, central and high part of Osogovo Mountains, they are among the most significant tourist potentials of the mountain. There is high interest for visiting them during the entire year, and in view of the space, they have large accommodation capacity. They also have good tourist position, as they are among two important highways and near the asphalt roads (village Sasa, village Cera).

**Tourist attractiveness:** excellent panoramic horizon, highland relief, mountain climate, clean and fresh air, cool springs.

**Potential types of tourism:** winter-sports tourism, mountaineering, nature observation, staying at high altitudes.

**Note:** At Carev Vrv and around there are excellent potential terrains for skiing and for other winter sports. Here the snow stays around 4 months, especially on the north, northeast (towards Kriva Palanka) and the east slopes. This area of EPR is the only one that has excellent natural conditions for winter-sports tourist center of interregional importance. This is why a common activity with NEPR, i.e. Kriva Palanka is necessary.

**(5) Ponikva** is a top in the southwest part of Osogovo Mountains, which is 1614 m high. The top and this part of the mountain crest are quite rounded and with a beautiful panoramic horizon. The highest top in the area Panagjur with 1669 m is located 2 km northwest, and the picturesque locality Ratkova Skala is located in the southwest. Northeast of Ponikva there is the crest Lopensko Bilo where there is a mountain road which leads to Carev Vrv (2085 m). Ponikva and its surrounding area have south (sunny) position and excellent exposure to sun during the year. In the winter period there is inversion, i.e. exposure to sun and higher temperatures when it is cold and foggy in the valley Kochanska Kotlina. The average temperatures in July at Ponikva are around 20-25°C or almost 10°C lower than those in Kochani. There are many springs here, brooks and dense forest complexes. Due to all these attractions and the constructed asphalt road from Kochani from before, Ponikva grew into a winter-tourist center from the middle of the last century. A special tourist attraction for the hunting lovers is the game reserve near the sports-recreational center Ponikva. The commercial hunting-reserve offers the visitors the possibility to hunt deer, roe deer, fallow deer, mouflons, wild boars and also accommodation.

**Tourist attractiveness:** excellent panoramic horizon, clean air, sun, mild climate, numerous springs and brooks, dense forests in the vicinity, pristine nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** winter-sports, tracking, paragliding, mountain biking, mountaineering, conference, hunting, health, wellness-spa.

**Note:** Ponikva lacks possibilities to develop into a large winter-sports/ski tourist center since the natural characteristics prevent that. Namely, the highest top in this area, Panagjur is located at 1669 m, which is a relatively low altitude. Above 1500 m there is an insignificant area of 6 km<sup>2</sup>, which means that there is not enough denivelation for longer ski paths. This tourist center is primarily planned and situated in the middle of the last century, when the climate was a bit cooler and the snow falls were heavier than today. The artificial maintenance of snow outside of its natural season which lasts around 3 months here is expensive, irrational and ineffective. Therefore, attention must also be paid to other tourist activities at Ponikva for it to become all year resort. The area around Carev Vrv has much better advantages for winter-sports center where there are 15,5 km<sup>2</sup> above altitude of 1800 m and 5,2 km<sup>2</sup> above 1900 m (300-400 m higher than Ponikva). At Carev Vrv the snow remains around 1-1,5 months longer than Ponikva, especially at the northeastern side.



**(6) Ratkova Skala** is a locality which is situated in the southwest part of Osogovo Mountains, at around ten kilometers northeast from the village Zletovo. It can be reached through the asphalt road from the village Zletovo to the village Tursko Rudare (3 km), and then through a good macadam road to the village Shtalkovica and towards the village Ratkovica. Ratkova Skala is recognizable from afar for the steep rocks with dark to light grey color. Here, due to the slow almost vertical carving of the river Shtalkovicka Reka through the quartzite, its valley in the length of around 1.5 km appears as a canyon, with steep almost vertical rocks up to 400 meters deep. Their formation and shaping lasted almost million years and the rocks are hundreds millions years old. The entire nature is actually quite interesting, with numerous waterfalls at Shtalkovicka Reka and its tributaries. There is also a very dense and various vegetation along the valley sides, with many endemic types. At some places the dense forests are almost impenetrable and during the summer period different animals could be seen: lizards, tortoises, snakes, to different species of birds (falcons, eagles, Egyptian vultures), red foxes and grey wolves. Aside from the nature, the villages in this area are quite interesting for a visit. They have preserved the authentic centuries old archaic appearance. Therefore, the area of Ratkova Skala (along with the localities Ponikva and Sinkovica around it), offers great possibilities for a stay of a small group of mountaineers, alpinists and enthusiasts for pristine nature. The recreational-mountain paths, the advantages for setting alpinist directions along the rocks, the possibilities for mountain cycling and even for paragliding, can make this area very attractive. However, care must be taken to preserve the unique nature.



Figure 7. Locality Ratkova Skala (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** large rock abyss, picturesque nature, rich flora and fauna, good panoramic points.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, mountaineering, country tourism, nature observation.

**Note:** the construction of the planned road from Probishtip to Ponikva via Ratkova Skala may significantly disrupt the natural landscape in this locality which is known for its biodiversity.

**(7) Plachkovica Mountain** is second in area (420 km<sup>2</sup>) and fourth in height (1754 m) in EPR. It stretches between the valley Strumuchka-Radovishka Kotlina and the valley of the river Plavaja (tributary of Strumica) on the south side, Kochanska Kotlina on the north side and the valley of Osojnica on the east side. On the west side it is quite divided and eroded, gradually coming down towards Ovche Pole, the valley of Bregalnica and its left tributaries. The north side towards the field Kochansko Pole

is especially steep and clearly impressed. The main crest is directed towards northwest-southeast with length of around 40 km. With deeply intersected valley of the river Zrnovska Reka, Plachkovica is almost symmetrically divided in two parts: eastern and western. The western part is lower with the highest top Turtel (1689 m). Since there are marbles in geological structure, many caves formed around Turtel and only five of them have been explored. Nearly the entire Turtel crest offers great panoramic view at a great distance towards west, while its eastern side towards the valley of Zrnovska Reka is very densely forested. The eastern part of Plachkovica is higher with the following tops: Lisec (1754 m), Chupino (1725 m), Bel Kamen (1707 m), Kara Tepe (1625 m) and others. The top Lisec is the highest on the mountain. It offers a wonderful panoramic view towards the neighboring area and when the weather is quite clear and the atmosphere is clean we can see Rila on the west side, part of the Thessaloniki bay on the south side, and even the mountain Olympus which is over 200 km away. Even though Lisec is not too high, it is among the tops in Macedonia with largest furthest view or the furthest horizontal view line. The top itself can be reached by walking for few hours along the crest, starting from the village Zrnovci or from the village Gradec where the distance is 10 km. There is a dirt road leading to the top which is in bad condition, so the top can also be reached with terrain vehicle even though this is not recommendable due to nature pollution. At few places it is intersected with deep ravines which look like canyons at few places and they are as follows: the ravine of Zrnovska, the ravine of Gradechka Reka, the ravine of the river Osojnica, the ravine of Argulichka, and other watercourses. The part of Radanjska Reka with the small canyon Kamnik is especially interesting. Aside from the valley of Zrnovska Reka, the following valleys are quite interesting for discovering, walking, climbing and enjoying: the valley of Gradechka and Blatechka Reka on the east side, as well as many valleys along the western foot as that of Argulichka or Radanjska Reka. In some of these valleys there are smaller but fascinating canyon parts. The valley of Radanjska Reka is filled with tens of alluvial fans and alluvial fan zones, which leave a special impression. Aside from the pristine and almost untouched nature in the middle part of the mountain Plachkovica, big attractions are the traditional villages with quite conserved style and way of life. The villages Zrnovci with nicely organized river bed at Zrnovska Reka and few taverns and shops along the coast, then the villages Gradec, Blatec, Argulica and Radanje are especially characteristic. In some villages we can still see people wearing their traditional costumes. Aside from the truly impressive natural beauties, there are still no appropriate accommodation capacities on the mountain and around it, and the fact that there is large degradation by tracing and constructing macadam roads towards the top Turtel and Lisec is quite alarming, along with the uncontrolled construction of holiday homes.

**Tourist attractiveness:** dense, beech, forest complexes, deeply intersected ravines with canyon parts (Zrnovka, Kozjachka Reka, Kamnik, and Gradechka Reka), numerous waterfalls at the rivers, and caves around the top Turtel, pointed tops with excellent panoramic view.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking tourism, more mountain paths, rural tourism in the villages along the foot, paragliding from the top Turtel and more plains above the village Zrnovci, Lipec and Blatec, mountain stay, etc.

**Note:** The top Turtel and its existing accommodation capacities (which only need to be renovated and modernized), offer excellent opportunities for development of more types of tourism.

**(8) Mountain Vlaina** belongs to the group of mountains of average height (1500-2000 m). It stretches along the border with Bulgaria. The highest top is Kadiica on the south part of the mountain, with height of 1932 m. According to the height, Vlaina is the second mountain in EPR, right after Osogovo Mountains (2252 m). However, the relative height from the lower terrains (which are at 800-1000 m) to the highest mountain parts is small and it is around 1000 m. Aside from Kadiica, the remaining more distinguished tops are Kadin Bunar (1793 m) on the south side, Bukovik (1723 m) on the west side, Zanoga (1577 m) on the north side and others. The tops and the mountain crest (15 km long) are rounded, poorly pointed outandbare. However, there is wide horizon from them towards the valley Delchevska and Berovska Kotlina on the west side, towards Osogovo Mountains on the north

side, and the view towards the mountains Rila and Pirin are especially spectacular, as well as towards Blagoevgradska Kotlina on the east side in the Republic of Bulgaria. The area of the mountain Vlaina in our state is 150,4 km<sup>2</sup> of which 74% or 111,2 km<sup>2</sup> belong to the municipality of Pehchevo, and the rest to municipality of Delchevo. The mountain slopes are steep, especially the west side, above 1200 m of height, and the average inclination is 16,4 degrees. The geological composition of Vlaina is represented with Precambrian gneiss in the final south part, slates cut with quartzlatite in the middle part and metadiabases, gabbros and granites in the north part. In the foot of the mountain there are nonresistant Pliocenemarsh-lake sediments and diluvial rubble eroded from the slopes. The settlements Pehchevo, Negrevo, Crnik and Pancharevo are situated on these rubbles. Due to the weak resistance and influence by humans, the given clastic sediments are under strong erosion processes. The mountain Vlaina is intersected with many river valleys of Pehchevska Reka, Zhelevica and its right tributaries Crnichka (Vinichka) Reka, Pancharevska Reka, etc. Due to the large downstream fall (which makes them suitable for small power plants), these rivers in the mountain part formed rapids, small waterfalls and other interesting sights. Vlaina is averagely forested mountain, and significant part is covered with grass vegetation, i.e. pastures. There are more impressive forest beech complexes at over 1000 m height, especially on the north, northwest and west slopes. A large forest complex is present in the spring valley parts of Pehchevska Reka, Zhelevica, Vinichka Reka, Pancharevska Reka, etc.

**Tourist attractiveness:** the valley of Bregalnica with numerous waterfalls, locality Ravna Reka, badlands around the village Crnik, fossil remains at the village Grad, locality Vrtena Skala, the top Kadiica, locality Judovi Livadi with insect-eating plant.

**Potential types of tourism:** rural tourism, tracking tourism, mountaineering, geo tourism, picnic, etc.

**Note:** The lack of asphalt road to Bukovik is a huge disadvantage for tourism on the mountain Vlaina, as the existing dirt roads are in very bad condition and they are dangerous. Also, another problem is the lack of tourist infrastructure, accommodation capacity in Pehchevo and the formed tourist offer.



Figure8. Top Kadiica (1932 m) at Vlaina and the spring part of Pehchevska Reka (original).

**(9) Vrtena Skala** is a rocky goad with characteristic appearance, around 5m high. It is located 4km east of Pehchevo, on the right valley part of Pehchevska Reka and on the south slopes of Bukovik. Through the middle part of the rock there is an opening around 0,6 m wide and around 2,5m long. The

local population believes that passing through the rock helps mothers to conceive and helps young children with insomnia or anxiety. The passing through is carried out with a special ritual. Usually one person is chosen and he leads the woman towards the twisted step in the presence of her husband or other close relatives. This man helps the woman to pass through the opening of the stair from one end to the other. Afterwards, they leave gifts and money next to the step (rock). Here the woman offers gifts to the man who is helping her. After that this man becomes brother by friendship of the woman and every year on that day, the woman and her family visits the brother by friendship and brings gifts and food. Because of the interest for a visit, the access to the rock is arranged and secured.

**Tourist attractiveness:** rock with a specific appearance, cults and legends.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geo tourism, picnic tourism, etc.

**Note:** This locality has a local potential, unless it is combined with the visit of Judovi Livadi, Bukovik and the top Kadiica (1932 m).

**(10) Ilin Kamen** is a locality at the village Zvegor, on the left (north) side of the road towards Bulgaria, at around 200 m distance from the road. It is a rocky block which is around 2 m high, with small opening in the middle part which was made with selective erosion. According to the legends, during the Ottoman period lived a beautiful girl named Ilina and she wished to turn into stone to avoid being abducted by the Turks. This is how Ilin Kamen was made. Because this stone is believed to have powers, a lot of women who wish to conceive come here to pass through the opening of the rock.

**Tourist attractiveness:** a rock with specific appearance, cults and legends.

**Potential types of tourism:** short visit, picnic, transit, etc.

**Note:** In view of the excellent position at the international road towards Bulgaria, Ilin Kamen may become an excellent locality but only if there is better parking and food and beverage facility next to the road.

**(11) Maleshevo Mountains** (Maleshevo Mountain) are located in the final eastern part of EPR and of the Republic of Macedonia, and one part continues on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria. The mountain has parallel stretching with arch rise towards south, and the crest is around 30 km long. Its area (to the border with Bulgaria) is 362,8 km<sup>2</sup>. On the northeast side the mountain gradually connects with Vlaina and there is no clearly defined curve between them, except the crossing Ajdutchki Premn (1612 m). From a geological point of view, the Macedonian part of the mountain is mainly made of many old rocks: mica schist and gneiss, and in the lower parts from chlorite slates and Pliocene sediments. Maleshevo Mountains are of average height with around 1300-1600 m height, except the bordering part which is up to 1803 m high at the highest top Jami Tepe. Another more eminent top is Chengino Kale (1748 m) which is the most significant as being the most eastern point in the Republic of Macedonia. The crests and tops of the mountain are rounded, mildly protruded and covered with grass vegetation or thinned forests. Around the top Chengino Kale there are several small puddles and peat bogs, and from the highest point there is an excellent panoramic view, especially towards the mountain Pirin in Bulgaria. Maleshevo Mountains are quite divided with the tributaries of Bregalnica from the north side and the tributaries of Turija and Dvorishka Reka from the south side. In the higher part of the mountain there is the spring of the largest river in the area, Bregalnica, which is among the longest rivers in Macedonia. Since they are further away from the large city centers and sources of pollution, Maleshevo Mountains are characterized by forests, clean and fresh air and they are an actual air bath. The climate here is continental-mountain with cool summers (maximum temperatures up to 35°C) and cold winters (minimum temperatures up to -31°C), which also contributes for cleaner air. The mountain is known for mixed conifer-beech forests in the east part, rich mountain pastures, waterfalls of Bregalnica and its tributaries in this part, wonderful climate, interesting type of rural settlements, etc. However, the accessibility is relatively weak, as there is the regional road Berovo-



Strumica which leads up to the mountain, i.e. through it, and the local asphalt road Berovo-Lake Berovo-Klepalo leads to the east part.

**Tourist attractiveness:** dense mixed forests around Lake Berovo, the spring part and waterfalls around the river Bregalnica, mountain pastures, numerous springs, small mountain lakes (puddles) around Chengino Kale, the clean air and mild climate, the valley of Ratevska Reka, and diverse biodiversity.

**Potential types of tourism:** rural tourism, health-recreational tourism, tracking, hunting tourism, mountain biking, hotel-spa tourism, etc.

**Note:** Except the part of Maleshevo Mountain along the Lake Berovo, the remaining part is not sufficiently used and presented, even though it has excellent conditions for development of rural tourism.

**(12) Ograzhden** is a mountain which stretches in the final southeastern part of EPR between the river Turija on the west side, Bezgashtevska and Dvorishka Reka on the north side and the border with the Republic of Serbia on the east side. Bezgashtevska and Dvorishka Reka clearly separate Ograzhden on the south side from Maleshevo Mountains on the north side. Both mountains have almost the same direction of stretching, west-east, and the length of Ograzhden to the state border is smaller and it is 24 km (it continues on the territory of Bulgaria). The north side of the mountain up to the main crest belongs to EPR, i.e. to the municipality of Berovo, with area of 105,7 km<sup>2</sup>. The west mountain branch of Ograzhden between the rivers Turija and Suvi Laki is known as Obesenik with highest top Dva Kamena (1285 m). The local population considers Obesenik as a separate mountain even though it is clearly connected as a whole with the remaining part of Ograzhden. Ograzhden is averagely high mountain with highest top Ograzhden (Ograzhdeneć), 1746 m, which is forested and this is why there is no good panoramic view. The remaining tops are significantly lower, rounded and poorly protruded. Ograzhden is made of granite rocks and gneiss, which at certain, open and sunny places, are degraded with formed goads in various shapes. Unlike the south side towards Strumichko, on the north side the climate is continental, colder and more humid, and the air is cooler and cleaner. Ograzhden is rich in numerous mountain springs which are weak but constant. This side lies under dense beech and mixed forests with diverse biodiversity. The part of Ograzhden in EPR has no settlement, except the tourist settlement Suvi Laki and few neighbourhoods from the village Dvorishte. There is a transit-regional road Berovo-Strumica leading through the mountain, which often has rockslides and landslides, especially in the winter period. Aside from this road there is also asphalt road which leads to the village Dvorishte, next to the north foot of Ograzhden. Aside from the asphalt roads, there are many dirt roads, forest roads and mountain roads and path through the mountain. This all reveals that Ograzhden has natural attractions but has no suitable location or traffic connection to have total large tourist potential. In that sense the tourist settlement Suvi Laki is an exception as it has certain possibilities for prosperous tourist development.

**Tourist attractiveness:** the valley of Dvorishka Reka, the spring of Turija (Suvi Laki), numerous springs, brooks and small rivers, clean and fresh air, dense forest complexes, various fauna, etc.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, rural tourism, picnic tourism, weekend tourism, hunting tourism, health tourism.

**(13) Suvi Laki** is a tourist locality on the mountain Ograzhden, on the road from Berovo to Strumica. The locality is situated along the road in the length of 4 km and altitude of around 1000 m. The spring of two rivers is situated in this part of the mountain, that of Bezgashtevska Reka from which the river Turija is formed on the west side and Prevedenska from which Dvorishka Reka is formed on northeast. The nature here is clean and beautiful, situated far from the city centers. Aside from the interesting prolonged leveling, the climate here is especially mild, with mix of warm elements from south and along the valley of Dvorishka Reka, and cold influences from the north side. There are around 2200 sunny hours on the average per year and the air is rich in oxygen. There are many weaker and

few stronger springs and there are several small waterfalls on the numerous brooks in the vicinity. The forest is dense, mainly pines and beech, with wonderful terrains for walking and recreation. The surrounding forest areas have many medical plants and forest fruits. In view of these advantages, the locality Suvi Laki grew into a large tourist settlement which has been urbanized since 1978. The settlement has around 450 holiday homes, 2 children's resorts and the urban plan proposes the opportunity for construction of another hundreds of weekend and commercial facilities.

**Tourist attractiveness:** dense forests, numerous springs and brooks, mild climate, quiet, clean and fresh place.

**Potential types of tourism:** picnic, sport-recreational, tracking, mountain biking, adrenalin parks and other extreme sports.

**Note:** The locality Suvi Laki should have more sports-recreational facilities, arranged tracking paths, adrenalin park, possibility for riding horses, pool-spa, etc. Since the closest towns are Berovo and Strumica with a distance of 30 km, a health station is necessary or at least for the period during the weekends and the vacation times.

**(14) Golak with Obozna** is a small mountain massive between the valleys Delchevska Kotlina on the east side, Kochanska Kotlina and the valley of Osojnica on the west side, and on the south side it is separated from Plachkovica with the curve Obozna (933 m). On the north side Golak is coming down to the valley of the river Bregalnica which makes one large arch around this mountain. The area of the mountain is 236 km<sup>2</sup> and the length of the crest north-south is 21 km. The highest top on Golak is the top Chavka (1538 m), and the top Jastrebac on Obozna (1273 m). The top Chavka is quite dominant and there is a wonderful view towards the entire area and towards the territory of Bulgaria. The mountain is made of gneiss, granites, crystal slates, and there are Pliocene sediments in the lower parts which are susceptible to intensive erosion. A large number of watercourses come down from the mountain crest. On the north side there is Biglanska Reka, on the west side there is Pekljanska Reka and Olshora on the east side. The west and southeast slopes are quite bare with developed erosion, and at some locations there are specific forms –earth pyramids. In the past Golak was quite bare and it is assumed that it was named after this characteristic. To protect it from erosion, large areas were forested with coniferous types in the past century and that is why the forest complexes are dense and vast. The tourist position of the massive is excellent since it has few towns in the radius of 20 km: Delchevo, Makedonska Kamenica, Vinica and Berovo. This was the reason for Golak to be more intensively used from the beginning of the middle of the last century for tourist purposes - with constructed asphalt road from Delchevo to the top, children's resort, few other facilities on the top itself, etc. There are good transit asphalt roads from all sides of the mountain and the traffic connection is quite well in that sense.

**Tourist attractiveness:** the top Chavka with excellent panoramic view, the river valleys which come down from the mountain, dense forest complexes, ravines around the mountain, etc.

**Potential types of tourism:** picnic, sports-recreational, tracking, mountain biking, geotourism, zip-line, adrenalin parks and other extreme sports, paragliding, gliding, etc.

**Note:** Even though there are considerations for construction of winter-sports center with ski paths around the top Chavka, because of the small height (1500 m), the unfavorable expositions (mainly southern and western) and the inappropriate denivelation of the terrain, it would be more appropriate to invest money in other sports-recreational activities (tracking, open sports terrains, adrenalin parks, mountain biking, paragliding).

**(15) Bejaz Tepe** is a small mountain (68,6 km<sup>2</sup>) in the eastern part of EPR, between the valleys of Bregalnica and its right tributary Zhelevica. According to the height of the highest top with the same name (1348 m), it belongs to the group of low mountains (below 1500 m). It is a typical horst which is

divided by rift valleys from the surrounding valleys (Berovska and Delchevska). Its geological composition is made of metadiabase and metagabbros, granite rocks and quite eroded Pliocene and quarter sediments. It is covered with forest and grass vegetation and at some places there are zones with forested areas. All of this created conditions for development of strong erosion processes in the southern and eastern parts of the mountain.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Kukulje – earth pillars towards the village Nov Istervnik, Kukulje – towards the village Razlovci, ravine Razlovecka Klisura locality Sveti Vodi, the top Bejaz Tepe, etc.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geo-tourism, mountain biking tourism.

**Note:** This small mountain will acquire more favorable tourist position if the construction of the road Trabatovishte-Razlovci-Mitrashinci is effectuated.

**(16) Kukulje** is a unique relief sight which is located in the foot of the mountain Bejaz Tepe, between Delchevo and Pehchevo. The locality can be reached via the regional road Delchevo-Berovo, which turns towards west at the village Nov Istevnik and via a narrow asphalt road which leads to the village. A walking path leads up towards south at around 1,5 km and arriving at a spectacular segment (badland) 60 meters deep, with characteristic forms of stone dolls therein.



Figure 9. Locality Kukulje at the village Nov Istevnik (original).

At the length of around 200 m and width of 30-50 m, in the foot of a larger natural badland, there are around fifty earth pyramids up to 15 m high. The most protruded and the oldest pyramids, which are located closer to the valley bed of the brook Istevnicki Potok, are almost completely formed. There are younger pyramids above them, which are still connected with sediment reefs and together they form complex forms which resemble castles and domes. The process is moving upwards towards the slopes, which means that the creation of pyramids is still active nowadays. The construction of earth pyramids in Kukulje is closely connected with the destruction of natural vegetation, and with the

deep carving of Istevnichki Potok in the powerful sediment layers. Kukulje is a very interesting relief sight, second in the range of importance of this type in the Republic of Macedonia. The local population takes pride in it and they admire the dolls. Lately, this place is being admired by numerous visitors from our state and beyond. In 2008 the locality was arranged and fenced for security reasons. There are several viewpoints and paths to explore Kukulje, to take photographs and to observe the dolls which are several hundred years old and to rest on the wooden benches.

**Tourist attractiveness:** unique sight of stone dolls (earth pyramids), large natural segment – badland with excellent view, dense forest, rich flora and fauna.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, country tourism, nature observation.

**Note:** There are no proper signposts or a good path to Kukulje, even though the place itself is relatively well arranged. The entire area is lacking proper food and beverage facility.

**(17) Mangovica** is low and divided mountain which stretches between the valley Kumanovska Kotlina, Ovche Pole on the west side, the valley of Bregalnica on the south side and the valley of Zletovska Reka with the river Beloshnica on the east side. As part of the EPR, this mountain covers an area of 38,8 km<sup>2</sup> (without Crni Vrv). The main crest stretches in the direction north-northwest-south-southeast with length of around 15 km. It is 600-700 m high, and in the further northwestern part it rises to 800 m. The highest top is Asanica (875 m), then Arnautski rid (864 m), Dobra Glava (820 m) and other. This mountain is composed of mainly volcanic rocks (deposits of zeolites, breccias and at some places andesite), which apparently are related to the former volcanoes in the vicinity. The mountain has relatively simple and monotonous relief, except at few places where there are interesting erosion forms. This mountain is completely divided with occasional water flows and dry ravines, some of them almost vertically carved in the shape of small canyons. The springs are weak, rare and mostly periodical. The low, thinned and degraded forests are present only in the valleys, and the rest is under pastures and grass vegetation. However, the biodiversity is various: from rare, endemic and healing plants, to small and large game and especially the various species of birds. The villages are condensed, archaic, and the scenery is interesting. There is a relatively good network of local asphalt roads through the mountain and one local-transit road which connects Probishtip and Sv. Nikole.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting scenery, diverse wildlife, archaic rural settlements, peace and quiet.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, mountain biking, hunting, rural tourism, jeep-safari, motocross.

**(18) Konechka Mountain (Serta)** is a low mountain which stretches between the valley Tikveshka Kotlina from the west side and the valley of Kriva Lakavica from the east side. Up north the mountain begins through low branches from the valley of Bregalnica and on the south side it ends at the ravine Demirkapiska Klisura. The north parts of Serta stretch in EPR with area of 73,5 km<sup>2</sup>. The main mountain crest, which is 19 km long in this part, stretches in the direction of northwest-southeast. The height of the mountain increases gradually from north to south from 600 to 900 m. The crest is rounded and it is an old erosive plain. At some places there are hills which represent the highest mountain tops: Volchjak (1159 m), Bel Kamen (1151 m) and others. From a geologic point of view, the higher part of the mountain is made of Paleozoic slates and marbles and there are Neogene sediments in the foot. The higher part of the mountain is under oak and beech forest, while the lower part is bare or covered with poor grass vegetation.

**Tourist attractiveness:** hunting grounds on the mountain.

**Potential types of tourism:** hunting tourism, gliding, tracking, etc.

**(19) Kochansko Pole** is the middle flat part of the valley Kochanska Kotlina with area of 112 km<sup>2</sup>. It is characterized with thick layers of sand, clay and other sediments, specific, so called warm



continental climate and fertile land. Because of the natural advantages, the field is densely populated and agriculture is the most developed economy. Kochansko Pole is far known for the rice which is the most significant agricultural crop. It is grown here since the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC during the period of Alexander the Macedonian. According to one legend, long time ago the town Kochani was named after a migrant named Kocho, who was returning from China and brought the rice in his home town. The growth of rice was successful and the place was named in his honor. The rice is also called “Kochani’s white gold” because of its high value for the Macedonian economy. Since 1992, Kochani also organizes economic-cultural manifestation “Days of Kochani’s rice” in order to promote the rice as the symbol of the town. Kochani’s rice fields provide special characteristic and culture to this town and the magical special scenery creates a feeling of admiration and a large challenge for a visit. Aside from the rice, Kochansko Pole is also known for the thermal waters which are the largest thermal pool of waters with high temperatures on the Balkans, which reach up to 80°C.

**Tourist attractiveness:** unique scenery of flat field surrounded with mountains, rice fields.

**Potential types of tourism:** transit, nature observation, gastronomic.

**(20) Ovche Pole** is a wavy plain, with the small southeastern part belonging to EPR. It is characterized with a specific geologic composition, warm, dry and windy climate, several types of soil, such as salty and halomorphic soil. A lot of important roads intersect here and this is why Ovche Pole is quite important from traffic aspect. With reference to tourism, there are possibilities for paragliding (from the hill of Bogoslovec), aero-tourism, gliding, hunting, etc.

**Tourist attractiveness:** wavy relief, rare salty soil.

**Potential types of tourism:** transit, hunting, nature observation, jeep-safari.

## Ravines

Because of the various geologic compositions, the frequent change of mountains and valleys and the large erosive energy of Bregalnica and its tributaries, the rivers formed a large number of deep picturesque ravines with very interesting appearances and canyon parts in the area of EPR. Among the most interesting ravines in the area are Istibanjska Klisura (Istibanjsko-Ochipalska), Razlovechka Klisura, the ravine of Zletovska Reka, Zrnovska Klisura, the ravine of Kochanska Reka, the ravine of Orizarska Reka, the ravine of Osojnica, the ravine of the spring section of Bregalnica and much smaller ravines on Plachkovica and Osogovo Mountains.

**(21) The ravine Ochipalsko-Istibanjska Klisura** on the river Bregalnica is intersected among the Osogovo Mountains from the north side and the branches of the mountain Golak from the south side. The entire ravine is 28 km long and it is the longest in EPR and among the biggest in the Republic of Macedonia. This is the characteristic part where the river Bregalnica makes special arch turn from northwest towards southwest, which is probably tectonically conditioned. With a small erosive extension at Makedonska Kamenica, the entire ravine is divided in two parts: Ochipalska Klisura between the village Ochipale and the mouth of Lukovichka Reka (18 km) and Istibanjska Klisura between the dam Kalimanci and the village Istibanja (10 km). Ochipalska Klisura is around 100-120 m deep and intersected in granite rocks and slates. Larger part of the ravine is filled with the waters of the Lake Kalimansko, making it especially beautiful. The Istibanjska Klisura is shorter but deeper (200-400 m) and almost vertical at some places. The ravine is interesting for the numerous erosive forms mostly made in gneiss and mica schist. Because of the south exposition, the rocks are exposed to strong decomposition, and only stronger parts remain in the relief. This is how goads are created in the shape of mushrooms, pillars, needle or forms which remind of animal or human figures. This part of the ravine also partially meets the waters with a small dam and accumulation of Bregalnica above the village Istibanja. This implies that from the total length of 28 km, almost half or 12 km are under water, which additionally increase the attraction of the area. The climate here is specific, going from warmer in the

Kochansko and cooler in Kamenichko. This has affected vegetation and forests, which are significantly degraded in the past. There is a good asphalt road passing through the ravine which connects Kochani with Makedonska Kamenica and with Delchevo, and thus the ravine has excellent tourist position. There are many rural settlements in the ravine, among which the most attractive are Istibanja, Kalimanci, Dulica and Todorovci.



Figure 10. Istibanjska Klisura on the river Bregalnica with unique relief forms (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** impressive and large ravine, denudation relief, Lake Kalimansko, biodiversity, interesting settlements.

**Potential types of tourism:** transit, geotourism, rural tourism, nature observation, fishing, fish ponds.

**Note:** Notwithstanding of the great attraction, the ravine Ochipalsko-Istibanjska Klisura is not utilized for tourist purposes. There are no standard and organized parking places with food and beverage or other commercial elements, no tourist boards or signalization, or a motel or restaurant (except two fish restaurants next to Bregalnica).

**(22) Ravine Razlovecka Klisura** on the river Bregalnica is carved between the mountains Obozna on the west side and Bejaz Tepe on the east side, and it also connects the valleys Berovska and Delchevska Kotlina. The ravine is 15 km long, and the average depth is 200-300 m. The ravine sides are not very steep, except at around 2 km downstream from the village Mitrashinci, as well as before the exit itself at the locality Sveta Voda, where Bregalnica built few ravine meanders. The ravine was named after the village Razlovci which is in its middle part, on the left valley side of Bregalnica. From a geologic point of view, it is carved in solid granite rocks which are decomposed and eroded on the surface. Due to forest destruction in the past for various reasons and aims, the sunny parts of the ravine are quite bare, degraded and eroded. In the past century, the most critical places were reforested and at some places the forests recovered naturally, but there are still many bare surfaces. Since this ravine connects two valleys with relatively different climate (Berovska with cold continental and Delchevska with warm continental), the climate of Razlovechka Klisura has elements of both influences. Springs are scarce, except in the higher mountain parts. The spring of Sveta Voda is quite interesting and quite visited, located between the village Razlovci and the village Trabatovishte. Kukulje is also located nearby. The ravine is accessible via traffic from the side of the village Trabatovishte only to the village Razlovci, with an asphalt road of medium quality. There is no road connection to the Berovo part, which is a great obstacle for its greater tourist activation.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting relief, clean nature, pristine nature, the valley and bed of Bregalnica, the spring Sveta Voda.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, rural tourism, mountain biking, fishing.

**Note:** The lack of transit road through the ravine is a great obstacle in the development of tourism in Razlovechka Klisura, as the present road from the village Trabatovishte ends in a dead end in the village Razlovci. If the asphalt road is continued to the village Mitrashinci, then the tourist attractiveness and the visitation frequency of this area will increase drastically. The lack of such road is actually one of the reasons for accelerated depopulation of the village Razlovci.

**(23) The ravine of Zletovska Reka** is located in the western part of Osogovo Mountains massive. It covers the part of the valley of Zletovska Reka, between the catchment of its left tributaries: Emirichka Reka on the north side and Eshterec on the south side, in the length of 10 km. The ravine is important for many interesting relief sights: deep river valley at places with canyon appearance which sides have screes with large dimensions, rocky goads and small denudation forms, then many waterfalls, rapids and cascades in the bed of Zletovska Reka and its tributaries, etc. Due to its carving through resistant magma (dacite-andesite) rocks, the ravine is quite deep (400-500 m), with steep and almost vertical rocky sides at some places. This is especially characteristic upstream from the catchment of Jamishka Reka with the length of around 6 km. There are numerous screes formed on the valley sides, created with mechanical decomposition of the volcanic rocks. Because of the large inclination, the scree material which is presented with pieces and blocks of 1 m<sup>3</sup>, is gradually sliding towards the valley bed. Some screes are up to 250 m long, and the total volume of the decomposed scree material is around 5 million m<sup>3</sup>. In the process of decomposition, goads from harder rocks and other denudation forms with various shapes remain in the relief. In this area, the bed of Zletovska Reka is very interesting. It is rocky with large longitudinal fall and with frequent occurrence of rapids and waterfalls, the largest of which is 8 m high (at the catchment of Jamishka River). It is the largest waterfall of Zletovska Reka, with an enormous giant pot on the bed of the river around 3 m deep. The small waterfalls are up to 6 m high and they have tributaries of Zletovska Reka before their flowing into the main river. Some waterfalls are ordered in the form of cascades.

**Tourist attractiveness:** fascinating relief, pristine nature, deep valley of Zletovska Reka, many waterfalls, enormous scree zones, steep rocks.

**Potential types of tourism:** nature observation, safari tourism, tracking, geotourism, mountain biking, fishing, wellness.

**Note:** The road through the ravine is good, but it is not secured. There are frequent rockslides and landslides. There are no parking places, traffic signs or information. The only food and beverage facility is the fishpond which is not properly marked with a signpost, a board, etc.





Figure 11. The most interesting, canyon part of the ravine of Zletovska Reka (original).

**(24) The ravine of the river Zrnovska Reka** is deeply carved in the north part of Plachkovica and it separates Lisec on the east side and Turtel on the west side. The ravine is quite steep, it appears as a canyon valley at some places and it is densely forested. The rocky bed of Zrnovska Reka is located along the narrow valley bed, with numerous rapids and small waterfalls. Even though the waterfalls are small and they are rarely higher than 4 m, they formed deep, so-called giant pots, pools or puddles. The most impressive puddle is Devichin Vir with diameter of 8-10 m, up to 4 m deep and formed under Devichin waterfall which is around 5 m high. From Devichin Vir to the village Zrnovci 5 km downstream, there are several such “puddles” (Kolev Vir, Zmijarniko, Suljov Vir), carved in solid rocks. Passing next to them at some places presents a true adrenalin challenge. The upper part of the valley of Zrnovska Reka with the valley of Lomija leaves an impression of pristine nature because of the forests and its distance from the larger settlements. The numerous springs and brooks, the clean air and the diverse flora and fauna, make this part a true amazing green “oasis”.

**Tourist attractiveness:** deep valley with steep sides, rocky river bed, small waterfalls and deep puddles, dense forest complexes.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, mountaineering, geotourism, wild tourism, sports fishing.

**Note:** The Ravine of Zrnovska Reka should be carefully used for tourist purposes because of the undiscovered, yet rich and sensitive biodiversity. The part from the village Zrnovci to Devichin Vir should be organized for tourist purposes (paths, signposts, information boards).

**(25) The Ravine of Osojnica** is carved between Plachkovica and Obozna in the length of around 10 km. Because of the steep sides and depth (height), the Sun does not reach the lowest parts of the ravine during the longest part of the day, and this is why the Ravine was named Osojnica (North side). The scenery is wonderful with peaceful river flow and the regional road from Vinica to Berovo passes along the ravine. Since it is located halfway between the two places, and because of the wonderful nature, there are several tourist facilities in the ravine of Osojnica. The ravine of Zletovska Reka is one of the most interesting and wildest in the area. Only a small part of the ravine Zletovska Klisura belongs to EPR in the length of around 8,5 km. There is a volcanic relief and solid rocks from both sides of the

ravine, and so-called seas of rocks, screes and other different decomposed blocks on the sides. Zletovska Reka and the remaining waterfalls in this area have a fast course, many waterfalls and few cascades. The river itself is very clean and allows fishing. Through the ravine there is a good asphalt road which leads to the newly constructed dam Knezhevo. Because of the fantastic nature and the good traffic connection and the vicinity to Probishtip and Zletovo, tourist facilities have already been built in the ravine of Zletovska Reka, but there is even greater potential in that field.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting relief, pristine nature, the valley and the bed of the river Bregalnica, the spring Sveta Voda.

**Potential types of tourism:** transit, nature observation.

**Note:** Few food and beverage-accommodation facilities have already been built because of the transit position between Vinica and Berovo and the pristine nature. However, in order to utilize them more appropriately, it is necessary to offer and present additional tourist activities (tracking, mountaineering, fishing, adrenalin parks, etc.).

**(26) Canyon Kamnik** is actually a small and no typical canyon valley of Kochevska Reka – tributary of Radanjska Reka. The small canyon is around 1,5 km long and only few tens of meters deep.



Figure 12. Part of the small canyon Kamnik near the village Radanje (Shtip area)(original).

Carved along a typical rift valleyline between quite decomposed, eroded gneiss and solid amphibolites. Notwithstanding of the fact that it is short and carved flat, passing through the canyon is a true attraction, especially through the narrow and vertical rocks. The canyon can usually be reached from the village Radanje through the valley of Radanjska Reka, which is quite attractive because of the vast sand erosive deposits. Along the canyon part at the village Koshevo one can reach the interesting Topolnichko Lake or from the village Shashavarlija to Shtip. This entire area has rich biodiversity and still preserved traditional Macedonian and Juruk villages. Aside from the small canyon

Kamnik, there are also similar carved segments on the neighboring small rivers in this part, especially on Kozjachka Reka.

**Tourist attractiveness:** canyon relief, brooks, pristine nature, traditional rural settlements.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, alpinism.

**Note:** This area is somewhat marked with signposts, boards and (insufficient) protection ropes in the riskiest parts. However, the spread of information is weak and there are no organized offers for visiting.

### Specific relief sights

**(27) Badlands at Pehchevo** are very interesting erosive forms with a characteristic amphitheatric appearance which is narrowed towards the foot and it appears as a cut funnel. In the professional terminology, badlands are marked as badland terrains, i.e. terrains which are significantly destroyed with surface and depth erosion. The most impressive badlands appear around Pehchevo, where there are around 40 sights at the village Crnik, then at the village Smojmirovo (Parkach) and at other places. They have different dimensions and the height of the amphitheatrical vertical segment may reach even up to 80 m, while the diameter is up to 300 m. This gives an impressive appearance to some badlands, while the movement and observation along the edge of the segment is both exciting and dangerous. Moreover, the position of some badlands is such that it is difficult to suppose that there is a 50 m deep segment or more in the flattened hill-mountain part. Badlands are usually horizontal, layered, made of nonresistant sediment rocks (sands, sandstones, clays). This is why the colors of the sides of badlands vary from grayish, yellowish, reddish to brownish. The sides are interesting for the deep furrows, little valleys, ditches, and even earth pyramids as with the badlands in the village Nov Istevnik (Kukuljeto). Regarding their origin, the largest part of badlands were formed with gradual increase, extension and composition of furrows, ditches and erosive valleys in the poorly resistant, thick sediment layers. With some badlands, the initial reason for their composition was the occurrence of landslides in the foot, followed by the development of little valleys and ditches. Humans affected the creation and the morphological evolution of badlands, often times even critically, by excessive destruction of the forests. Even the afforestation in the second part of the last century didn't succeed much in stopping the development of badlands in this area. Disregarding the fact that they are the consequence of the strong erosion activity, the larger badlands in Pehchevo are quite attractive and they catch the attention of the visitors. In that sense, they can be utilized for tourist purposes, in combination with other interesting local contents (archaic villages, delicious food, pristine nature, cold springs, etc.). The largest parts of the mentioned badlands are easily accessible, with asphalt roads to the closest villages and maximum of 10-20 minutes of walking to the forms.





Figure 13. Badlands at the village Crnik – interesting relief sight (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** unique sights of vast earth segments, often with minor earth pyramids on them, weak springs, amazing view.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, rural tourism, jeep-safari.

**Note:** No marked paths, no signalization, insufficiently known and promoted locality i.e. sight.

**(28) Turtel caves** are located under the top Turtel on the Plachkovica Mountain. They were formed with rocky erosion in the marble rocks presented as narrow zone in this area. Five caves have been researched until now among which the longest one is the cave Golema Peshtera, which is around 600 m long. It is a true gem with its cave decorations and a challenge for the speleologists. The following caves Kjup, Ajdutchka, Turtel and Ponor are smaller but they are rich in cave decorations. Almost all given caves are easily accessible for the visitors and there are marked paths which lead to them. The best access to the western part with the top Turtel, as well as the given caves, is the asphalt road leading from the village Karbinci to the resort Plachkovica at around 1350 m. A nice place to spend the night is the mountain home Vrteshka in the Vrteshka village at the altitude of 1050 m, located on a characteristic height with a spectacular view.

**Tourist attractiveness:** numerous caves at interesting location, plentitude of cave decor, pristine nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** speleotourism, geotourism, tracking, adventure.

**Note:** The caves are poorly known and promoted. They are not properly arranged for tourists and there is no tourist guide. The caves are small (narrow) and easily susceptible to destruction.

**(29) Konjska Dupka** is a cave located at the village Grad, 6 km southeast of Delchevo. The cave is made in Triassic limestones, around 50 m deep. The entrance is located in the steep rocks on the left valley side of Gradska Reka with average accessibility. The path to the cave is partially secured. The cave does not have a lot of cave decor, but archeological traces have been found of human presence in the past. Also, there are a lot of bats inside the cave. From the entrance of the cave there is a wonderful panoramic view towards the valley of Gradska Reka, towards the village Grad and the

remains from the fortress above the village. The locals from this area and from Pijanec are the most frequent visitors.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting short cave, characteristic location, archeological remains.

**Potential types of tourism:** speleotourism, geotourism, tracking, adventure.

**Note:** The cave is lacking information boards.

**(30) Cave Kiselichka Peshtera** is located at the village Kiselica, northeast from Delchevo. It is formed in Triassic limestones. According to the available data, the cave is around 80 m long and there is a small lake at its end. It is characterized with numerous narrow canals and with many entrances. It is poor in cave decor, and there is large colony of bats living inside the cave. It is the largest and the most interesting cave in this further eastern part of Macedonia. The cave is poorly known and poorly visited.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting short cave, characteristic location, archeological remains.

**Potential types of tourism:** speleotourism, geotourism, tracking, adventure.

**Note:** There is no marked road to the cave, no signposts or any other information.

#### 4.2.2. Climate attractiveness

The climate has always been a very significant element for tourism and depending upon its characteristics to a greater or smaller degree, it affected the attractiveness of some area. In that sense, the climate in EPR is very suitable in the winter and the summer period of the year. This can be seen through the air temperature, the sun exposure and the rainfall.

The climate in EPR is also quite diverse due to the relief variety. Along the valley of the river Bregalnica walking from the Shtip area towards the valley Berovska Kotlina, the climate changes from modified Mediterranean through mild-continental to continental and mountain in the highest parts of Osogovo. The air temperature is an important element when determining the climate-tourist characteristics of EPR. Generally speaking, the average annual temperatures going from west to east gradually decrease from 13°C in Shtip area to 8,5°C in the Berovo area and only 5-6°C in the highest parts of Osogovo. This also implies that the temperatures decrease with the height, around 0,6°C on every 100 meters on the average.

The exposure to sun is a positive occurrence for tourism, since it enables various activities in nature and in the area in general, it has positive effect on our mood and our health. The area of EPR is characterized with long term exposure to sun with 2400 hours per year on the average in the western part (Shtip, Kochani) to 2200 hours in Berovo. The maximum appears in the summer months especially in July, and the minimum in the winter months – December and January. It is interesting to note that there is no significant change in the length of the sun exposure, but more in relation to the exposition (the position of the terrain regarding the north and the south side) on the mountains in the area.

Rainfalls are very important for tourism from several aspects. The long-term, intensive rainfalls have negative effect on the opportunity for tourists to use their planned time. Strong rainfalls may cause problems with communication and they may cause damage and darkening of the water facilities. However, snowfall on the mountain terrains has positive influence regarding the opportunity for winter sports. Contrary to the temperatures, the average annual rainfall in EPR increases from west to east: from 400-500mm average per year in the Shtip area to 700mm in Berovsko and 800mm in the higher mountain parts. In view of the rainfalls, in the western part of the region they come mainly as rain and in the eastern higher part in the winter months they come as snow. However, snow lasts longer only in the extremely high parts above 1500m, up to 5 months in the winter part of the year. Therefore, the only suitable areas for construction of winter-sports terrains and centers are the ones at the height of 1500-2200m (top Mal Ruen) where the topography of the terrain must also be



considered as a factor. The areas with the height between 1000-1500m are characterized with continental temperatures, partially mountain character, cool summers and cold winters. What is most important for the eastern mountain areas of EPR is that the atmosphere is quite clean; the quantity of oxygen is high, which creates great conditions for health-recreational facilities in this area. The most common winds blowing in the river basin area of the river are the south wind, and the wind Vardarec in the low river flow of Bregalnica. Based upon the experiences from the recent climate classifications and the adequate access for the river basin area of the river Bregalnica, the following homogenous climate areas can be distinguished: (Filipovski, 1996):

- Mild-continental-submediterranean area (up to 600 m)
- Continental area (600 - 1100 m)
- Continental-mountain area (1100 - 1650 m)
- Mountain area (> 1650 m).

Mild-continental, submediterranean area is characterized with combined continental and submediterranean climate covering the following parts: western areas of the basin of the river Bregalnica and the valleys beside the catchment of the rivers: Bregalnica in Vardar, Svetinikolska and Zletovska Reka in Bregalnica (Shtipsko, Svetinikolsko and Kochansko). This climate area covers the area with altitude up to 500 m. The average air temperature in this climate area ranges between 12,6 and 13,5°C and reaches maximum values of the temperature in July (21,5°C and 23,9°C). The lowest values of temperature occur in January (1.1°C- 2.1°C). The average annual rainfall in the continental submediterranean climate area varies: 452 mm in Sveti Nikole, 468 mm in Shtip up to 514 mm in Kochani.

The continental area covers the hill areas with altitude from 500 to around 1000 m. This area has transient characteristics of the climate, between submediterranean and mountain area, where the warm continental climate dominates with a certain combination of Mediterranean influence in the pluviometric regime at some valleys in the central part of the basin area of the river Bregalnica. The climate conditions in this area are significantly different compared with the thermal conditions and compared to the pluviometric regime. The average annual air temperature is between 9.0°C and 11°C, the average January air temperature is from 0.2 to 0,5°C, while the average July temperature is around 20°C. The climate is more humid than the previous one, with annual rainfall from 575 to 623 mm (information from the pluviograph stations Probishtip). The annual maximum of rainfall on the territory of this climate area occurs in the months of May and November, which is a characteristic of the continental pluviometric regime.

The continental-mountain area appears at the altitude between 1000 and 1500 m. Here the influence of the continental and maritime climate is combined. The average annual air temperature is somewhat lower from the previous area and it amounts to around 8.5°C. The average total annual rainfall is around 700 mm. The rainiest period in this part (in the central parts) of the basin area of the river Bregalnica is the month of November, while in the north part of the basin area the rainiest period of the year is the month of May, which is a characteristic of the continental pluviometric regime. In this area there is mountain beech forest as a characteristic of the climate and pedological conditions, which is part of the wider beech zone. The total annual rainfall ranges from 670 mm (Lesnovo), 698 mm (Blatec) to 725 mm (Kozbunar) and it represents the most humid climate zone in the river basin. The areas with the largest quantities of rain are located in this zone, especially prevalent on the mountain massive.

The mountain area is located on the altitude between 1500 and 2200 m. The average annual air temperature ranges from 5.0°C to 8,0°C, while the quantity of rainfall increases with the rise of the altitude and it amounts to around 900 mm. The average annual temperature is less than 5.0°C, while the average temperature of the warmest month is below 13.0°C. The largest quantity of rainfall appears in the month of May with average quantity of 65 mm. The lowest average monthly temperature noted

in this climate area is  $-2.7^{\circ}\text{C}$ . The average annual temperature amplitude is significantly lower and amounts to around  $16.0^{\circ}\text{C}$  (unlike the low parts of the river basin area where it is more than  $22.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) and it is characteristic of the mountain climate (Jovanovski, 2007).

**Note:** Even though different types of tourism agree with different (appropriate) climate characteristics, however, the most attractive climate for this region is the continental-mountain climate related to the mountain zone with altitude of 1000-2000 m. This specifically refers to the areas with dense forests, where we additionally have the microclimatic modification effect. With reference to the low parts of EPR up to 500 m, the summers here are cooler for few degrees, the air is cleaner and richer in oxygen, and the winds are usually much weaker. In the future period, with the expected increase of temperatures due to global warming, these areas will be even more significant and more requested for tourist purposes. In that sense, the following are especially attractive parts of EPR with reference to the climate:

- **Forest mountain areas** at Lake Berovo, Ablanica, Ravna Reka, as well as in the western part of Maleshevo Mountains, where the summer maximum temperatures rarely rise beyond  $30^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and the winter minimal temperatures are slightly higher than those in Berovo (an absolute minimum for Macedonia was registered in Berovo with up to  $-31^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Lake Berovo has a small modification effect on temperatures and during extremely high values it lowers the temperature for around  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and during extremely low temperatures it raises them for  $1^{\circ}\text{C}$ .
- **Locality Suvi Laki** with the surrounding area, where the summer maximum daily temperatures are around  $6^{\circ}\text{C}$  lower than Shtip and Kochani (and also Strumica), and around  $2^{\circ}\text{C}$  lower than Berovo. The situation is similar with other localities of Ograzhden with potential for rural tourism.
- **Forest parts of Osogovo Mountains** with altitude of 1000-1700 m or forest-pastures areas from 1300-1800 m.
- **The north side of Plachkovica** with altitude of above 1000 m (around Turtel, Chatal, Lisec and others).
- **The highest part of Golak**, over 1000 m

#### 4.2.3. Hydrographic attractiveness

The area of EPR is quite abundant in springs. They are usually with poor opulence (up to 1 liter/sec), but most of them are clean, cold, with fresh drinking water. All mountains in the region, especially in the forest parts, are rich in numerous, constant springs, some of which are arranged and some are believed to have healing and “holly” powers. This area is rich in mineral and thermomineral waters. Famous springs which are captivated are Toplikj at Vinica (mineral water Evina), then the village Gorna Cera (mineral water Inakva) and the catchment of thermal waters at Dolni Podlog (mineral water Akva Vita).

**(31) Smrdлива voda** (Rghava cheshma) is a natural spring which is located near Vrtena skala, at 4 km east from Pehchevo. It is a constant spring with significant opulence. The color of the water is yellow-red and the taste is sour and bitter, probably as a result of the fact that it runs through different iron ores abundantly present in Bukovik. This water has been used to treat stomach diseases in the past and nowadays.

**Tourist attractiveness:** pristine nature, beautiful sceneries, specific sight.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking.

**(32) Sveta voda** represents the three springs south of the village Trabotivishte, at the exit of Razlovechka Klisura, at the altitude of around 700 m. The springs are in the relatively steep part of the valley of Bregalnica, and they are poorly accessible (one must pass the river or start from the village

Trabotivishte through the north part of Bejaz Tepe). The springs which are believed to have healing powers, have small opulence.

**Tourist attractiveness:** pristine nature, beautiful scenery, specific sight.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking.

**(33) The springs of Bregalnica** are located on the Maleshevski Mountains, at the altitude of around 1500-1700 m. It is a very interesting and vast spring with tens springs under the top Chengino Kale. The springs function during the entire year, even though they are located under the top itself, with significant change of opulence. This terrain is quite clean, abundant in oxygen, with excellent sceneries and wonderful view.

**Tourist attractiveness:** pristine nature, beautiful sceneries, specific sight, panoramic view.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, mountaineering, relaxation.

### Thermomineral springs and baths

**(34) Kezhovica or the bath Shtipska banja** is located on the right coast of the river Bregalnica, at around 2 km southwest (downstream) from the center of Shtip at the settlement Novo Selo. The two main thermal streams Kezhovica and L'ji which are used for the bath are beside the coast of Bregalnica, with a distance of 300 m. The thermomineral waters spring out from a fault which cuts the granite rocks under the hill Isarot. The spring L'ji has an opulence which varies from 1-1,5 liter/sec., and the water temperature varies from 50-62°C. The water in the spring is not constant; when the level of Bregalnica increases, the capacity of thermomineral water of the spring L'ji increases, along with the temperature of this water. The temperature of the main spring of the Kezhovica bath is 57°C, and the opulence is 7 liters/sec. Kezhovica spa, according to its radioactivity, belongs to the most radioactive thermomineral waters, not only in Macedonia, but wider on the Balkans. Kezhovica was a known bath even from the Ottoman period when it was used for healing purposes and personal hygiene of the dweller. There is no written information about the origin of the spa, but it is assumed that it was built by the Turks towards the end of the XVII century and this was a primate building with a pool. Nowadays, there is a new bath here, with designed bathrooms and pools and a rehabilitation center.

**Tourist attractiveness:** thermomineral water with excellent characteristics, vicinity of the town Shtip, archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** bath-spa, health-recreational, rural, nature observation.

**Note:** The bath is far below the necessary level of quality and standards for such type of facilities. This is why it only has local visitors.

**(35) The bath of the village Banje** (Kochanska Banja) is located 7 km west of Kochani, from the north side of the highway Kochani - Shtip. It is located in the foot of Osogovo Mountains at the very contact with Kochansko Pole, at the altitude of 340 m. The village Banje was named after the bath and the springs of warm water in the village. The springs are characterized with specific chemical, mineralogical and thermal characteristics. The water quantity in the bath has been insufficient for a longer period, and this is why in the 1960s they performed drillings and the opulence increased to 65 liters of water per second. The water temperature is 64°C, which is a very suitable temperature. According to its chemical composition, it belongs to the group of poor mineral hyperthermal waters. Hydrocarbonates dominate in the water, it is poorly alkaline and with a low level of radioactivity. It contains cations, mostly sodium, potassium, calcium and magnesium, and anions such as chlorine, sulphates, hydrocarbonates, silicon oxide, aluminum oxide, iron oxide and other. It also contains rare

minerals, such as lithium, cesium, rubidium and similar. Such physical-chemical conditions of the water in Kochani Bath are the basis for its utilization for healing many diseases. It is mainly used to heal rheumatic diseases, gall canals and gallbladder, urinary canal diseases, gynecological diseases, nerve inflammation, stomach diseases, etc. Moreover, the low radioactivity of the water has curing effect on catarrhal inflammations and respiratory diseases. The bath was initially built and used by the Romans, and during the period of Ottoman Rule it was also used by the Turks. Near Kochanska Banja, at the village Dolni Polog, a warm mineral water with opulence of 95 liter/second and a temperature of over 80 degrees was discovered from a hole 318 m deep, which could be the base for building bath health-recreational facilities. Until 1990, this bath was in a very good condition, with a hotel facility, around ten houses offering accommodation and constantly large number of visitors. Unfortunately, one of the most visited baths in Macedonia and beyond has been neglected in the last two decades and left to the mercy of time, and this is the reason why it is no longer being visited.

**Tourist attractiveness:** thermomineral water with excellent characteristics, excellent horizon towards Kochansko Pole and Plachkovica, rice fields, archeological remains.

**Potential types of tourism:** bath-spa, health-recreational, rural, nature observation.

**Note:** This bath has a large potential which is completely unutilized nowadays for tourist purposes. The relatively good facilities from the past are completely ruined and mostly unusable. If taken under concession it should be renovated and new facilities should be built like a modern spa-center.

**(36) Istibanja** is abundantly rich in geothermal waters. It is considered that there used to be two baths in the past and both of them had been used, and this is how the village was named (Istibanja – same baths). Only a small part of the large richness of thermomineral waters is being utilized today. There is a capture of 56 liter/sec., with water temperature of 67°C, and the water is being utilized for heating glasshouses. The municipality of Vinica is in the process of preparing a project for construction of a spa-center, i.e. modern bath center in this area.

**Tourist attractiveness:** thermomineral water with excellent characteristics.

**Potential types of tourism:** bath-spa, health-recreational, rural, nature observation.

**Note:** This area near the village Istibanja has a great location and a very good potential for bath (wellness-spa) tourism, especially if we take into consideration the vicinity of Vinica, Kochani, Delchevo, Berovo and the transit towards Bulgaria.

## Rivers

EPR has a very well-developed hydrographic network. There are around 700 watercourses, 6 of which are longer than 20 km in this area and they are as follows: Bregalnica, Zletovska Reka, Kochanska Reka, Orizarska Reka, Zrnovska Reka and Osojnica.

**(37) Bregalnica** is the largest tributary of Vardar in length. It springs out under the top Chengino Kale on the Maleshevo Mountains at the altitude of over 1700 m, and it flows into Vardar between the villages Nogaevci and Ulanci, at the altitude of 137 m. The middle flow at the mouth of the river is 28 m<sup>3</sup>/s (maximum flow 640 m<sup>3</sup>/s, and during minimal the bed is dry). Its total length is 225 km, basin area of 4.307 km<sup>2</sup> and relative average fall of 7%. After coming down from the Maleshevo Mountains where Bregalnica has a very developed spring front, first it flows through the valley Berovska Kotlina where it has a wide course, it is quite peaceful but it also accumulates significant riverine material. At the village Budinarci the width of the valley reaches 500-600 m, and from the village Razlovci it already enters into the ravine part of the ravine Razlovska Klisura which is 19,1 km long. There are certain erosion extensions in the ravine as the one at the village Mitrashinci. After Razlovska Klisura the river Bregalnica flows through Delchevsko Pole where it deposits a significant



quantity of pebble and sand and at some points the course divides in several arms. The upper course of the river Bregalnica is located in Pijanec and Malesh. Here the river flows from south towards north and it has a meridian direction. From the mouth of Ochipalska Reka to the village Istibanja, i.e. to its entry in Kochanska Kotlina and further to its flow into the river Vardar, Bregalnica flows from east to west with a parallel direction. Bregalnica flows in the length of 39 km through the ravine Istibanjska Klisura and the lake Kalimanci is located there. In Kochanska Kotlina Bregalnica enters at the village Istibanja and flows through it almost in the middle and then it leaves at the village Krupishte where it built a short gorge from it on the west side. Through the valley bed Bregalnica has a plain character with average fall of only 1,8%. The bed is shallow and unstable because it is covered with rubble from the tributaries and torrents, and this causes frequent overflowing. From the gorge Shtipska Sateska to its flow into Vardar mouth, Bregalnica flows through young Paleogene and Neogene sediments and the bed has meander shape. This is the area of Slan Dol. In its course Bregalnica receives 23 tributaries which are longer than 10 km, there are 10 tributaries interflowing from the right side with total length of 241 km, and 13 tributaries from the left side with total length of 260 km.

**Tourist attractiveness:** river relief, river ecosystem, ravines.

**Potential types of tourism:** fishing tourism, tracking, picnic tourism, kayak.

**(38) Waterfalls in the spring area of Bregalnica**, also called waterfalls Pehchevski Vodopadi are located at around ten kilometers southeast from Pehchevo, within the same municipality. The river Bregalnica is deeply carved here between the mountain Vlaina on the north side and Maleshevo Mountain on the south side. At some places the valley sides are so steep that they resemble a small canyon. This is exactly where there are 7 waterfalls in the wonderful, dense pine and beech forests. Only two of these waterfalls belong to Bregalnica, while the remaining waterfalls are located on its tributaries Crn Dol, Z'tachka Reka and Spikovski Andak. The waterfalls are located in the Valavichka Reka which is being called Bregalnica in that part by the inhabitants of Pehchevo. The attractiveness of these waterfalls has not been known for a very long time, but today they are accessible for all nature lovers and tourists. There are walking paths up to the waterfalls which cut the small rivers with small bridges, signposts, wooden huts and benches for the visitors. All waterfalls radiate mountain beauty. One of the two waterfalls of Bregalnica is the largest and the richest in water, while the waterfall of the Bregalnica tributary Zh'tachka Reka is the highest with 14 meters.

**Tourist attractiveness:** unique sight of large earth abysses, often with smaller earth pyramids on them, weak springs, wonderful view.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, geotourism, country tourism.

**Note:** The waterfalls are accessible, marked with good signalization and information boards. The entire area is well arranged. Care must be taken not to pollute the environment. Ravna Reka offers opportunities for additional themes such as adrenalin parks, zip-line and similar.

## Lakes

There are 26 lakes in the area of EPR of which 3-4 small natural lakes (Kundinsko, the lakes at Chengino Kale), 4 larger accumulations (Kalimanci, Lake Berovo, Gratche, part of Lake Buchim), 4 small accumulations (Pishica, Loshana, Blatec, Istibanjska) and 15 micro-accumulations (Sandanski, Trsinsko, Strmoshko and other). However, not all of them are of tourist importance. Only the lakes Kalimanci, Lake Berovo (Berovsko) and the little town Gratche have a greater tourist potential, while the remaining smaller lakes have complementary-attractive function. Unfortunately, the lakes as tourist attraction and motives in this region are poorly utilized. Lake Berovo has the best utilization, then lake Gratche, while Lake Kalimansko is not utilized at all.

**(39) Lake Kalimanci** is an artificial accumulation of the river Bregalnica in the ravine Ochipalsko-Istibanjska Klisura and it is the largest lake in EPR. The lake is 14 km long, 0.3 km wide, and the maximum depth reaches up to 80 m. It covers an area of 4.23 km<sup>2</sup> and accumulates 127 million m<sup>3</sup> of water. Lake Kalimanci is specific for its jagged shore. The total length of its shore line is 40,5 km (during average water level), or longer from the coastal line of Lake Dojran. There are several bays and peninsulas, one island - Kalata (1,5 ha) and one micro island at the village Todorovci (0,2 ha). The largest bay is Kamenichki zaliv, located up to 3 km towards the town Makedonska Kamenica, then Lukovichki and Ribnichki zaliv (0,8 km). Lake Kaliman was formed by blocking the valley of Bregalnica through the construction of the dam in 1969. The dam is made of stone with clay core, 92 m high (among the tallest in our state), and 240 m long. The basic purpose of the lake is watering approximately 28.000 ha, mainly rice areas in the valley Kochanska Kotlina and also part of the arable surfaces in Ovche Pole. The excess of water is used for production of electricity through the construction of small hydroelectric power plant with installed power of 13,8 MW. Lake Kaliman is very attractive with its position, jagged appearance and surrounding nature. It has a very favorable climate as it is located at the collision of warmer climate from west and cooler climate from east. During the summer the lake temperature rises above 20°C and it is suitable for swimming, especially at places which are fit for beaches. The lake is also rich in fish: carp, chub, sheath fish, common nase, roach and other species, which offers excellent conditions for sports fishing. Along the coast of the lake and in the lake itself there are many archeological localities. A large basilica from the V century has been discovered at the village Dulica (locality Begov Dab) with lots of materials (ceramics, columns, capitols). Remains and objects of ancient times have also been found in the village Ilijovo at the locality Crkvishte, and later a church with graves was built here and it existed from the end of the XIV or the beginning of the XV century.

Lake Kalimanci has an excellent tourist position. It is located next to the town Makedonska Kamenica, 10 km from Delchevo, 20 km from Kochani and Vinica. A picturesque highway passes next to the lake leading to Bulgaria via Delchevo. Notwithstanding of the excellent advantages, lake Kalimanci is not utilized at all for tourist purposes. There are no accommodation and food and beverage facilities, not to mention other facilities. According to the conducted analyses, the lake and its surrounding can attract a significant number of tourists and provide solid funds from tourism.

**Tourist attractiveness:** jagged lake with numerous bays, peninsulas and an island, picturesque nature, diverse biodiversity, fish abundance, archeological locations, pristine nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** bathing, kayaking and other water sports, cruising on the lake, lake routes, fishing, picnic.

**Note:** There are at least 3 locations suitable for beaches, especially at the village Todorovci. The lake offers the possibility for a floating route up to 25 km long (Todorovci-Lukovica-Kalata-Brana-Kamenica). The large oscillation of the lake level is a problem, as well as the high pollution in high waters and the overflowing of the river Bregalnica.

**(40) Kalata** is an island in Lake Kaliman which is located in the western part of the lake, at the beginning of the bay drawn in towards Makedonska Kamenica. It is the only island in the eastern part of Macedonia, even though sometimes a very small island of 0,2 ha appears on the same lake at the village Todorovci. The island Kalata is 300 m long in the direction of northeast-southwest, with largest width of 75 m, and largest height of 15-25 m (depending upon the level of water). The area of the island is 1,5 ha on the average, while the length of the coastal line is around 550 m. The island Kalata is 100-150 m far from the land coast 100-150 m and the best way to reach it is by boat. Due to the large fluctuations of the water in the lake during the summer (dry) period, Kalata usually becomes a peninsula connected with the land part on the northeast side. Regarding vegetation, it is covered with oak forest and dense grass, and the wildlife is quite diverse (amphibians, reptiles and birds). The name Kalata is abbreviation of "the city of tin", as gold and tin were extracted from this place. The rocks

which have gold bearing strings have been heated and with the help of a chisel these strings were extracted and then melted. The highest point of the former tin town used to be at 200 m above the mouth of Kamenichka Reka in Bregalnica. The town was naturally protected from three sides with steep valley sides from both rivers. There used to be only one access to the former flattened table of the top, i.e. the island nowadays, from the north side. This side is divided with defense trench carved in the rock. The outlines of three town gates and remains of numerous structures are clearly visible around it.

**Attractiveness:** island scenery, wonderful view towards Lake Kaliman and the ravine, archeological findings, wild “untouched” nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** fishing, nature observation, kayaking, boat stopping during a lake route.



Figure 14. Lake Kaliman with the island Kalata (original).

**Note:** The island is truly attractive, but poorly known in general and even less in the wider region. There is no tourist information board or a signpost for it. There is no opportunity for organized visit, or opportunity to rent a boat. Moreover, the accessibility to the island is risky and it can be significantly improved by setting a small wooden platform for boats, by setting and arranging a path leading towards the surface of the island and belvedere for rest.

**(41) Lake Berovo** is located six kilometers southeast of Berovo. The concrete dam at the valley of Ratevska Reka and the accumulated lake was built in 1971. The dam is 46 m high, with its crown length of 200 m. The lake itself is 2,3 km long and 0,25 km wide. The total length of the coastal line around the lake is 8,3 km, and the area is 0,57 km<sup>2</sup>. The largest depth of Lake Berovo is around 42 m and it is located at 200-300 m from the dam. Due to the relative high altitude, Lake Berovo and its surrounding is characterized by cool summers and cold winters. Summer temperatures range between 23°C and 25°C during the day, and at night they decrease to 12°C. During winter time the temperatures may decrease to -20°C, and even lower. Actually, the absolute lowest temperature in Macedonia of -31,5°C is measured in the town Berovo. Such climate makes this region an excellent hideaway, especially in the summer period of the year. A lot of visitors come here not only “to recharge their

batteries” but also for rehabilitation due to the high concentration of oxygen. The coast of the lake is rich in dense pine and beech forests. The plains have terrains with colorful flowers, forest fruits and different tea plants. A lot of tourist capacities are built around the lake because of the favorable location, in the pristine nature at the altitude of 1000 meters. The lake provides sports fishing and there is a restaurant, tourist bungalows and children’s resort along the shore. A great number of holiday homes for rent, wonderful terrains for picnic, recreation and sports are present along the lake. Lately, this lake is visited by organized groups of foreign tourists. A lot of traditional medicine from natural ingredients is being prepared in Berovo and Maleshevija, which are used to treat different diseases. For example, the pine syrup or honey is used to treat respiratory diseases.

**Attractiveness:** lake scenery, dense mixed forest, clean air, and mild climate, wonderful view towards the valley of Ratevska Reka, wild “untouched” nature, walking paths, and kayak on peaceful waters.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, walks around the lake, fishing, health-recreational, nature observation, kayaking, picnic, congress.

**(42) Lake Gradche** was created in 1959, after the construction of the reinforced-concrete dam, 32 m high, which divides Kochanska Reka. During maximum level (elevation of 467 m) the lake is 1.2 km long and 0.2 km wide, while the length of the shore line is around 3.5 km. The average area of the water mirror is 0.19 km<sup>2</sup>, and the maximum depth is 29 m, while the volume of the accumulated water is 2.4 million cubic meters. The water from the lake is used for water supply of the town Kochani, and a smaller part is used to water Kochansko Pole. The lake itself fills part of the valley of Kochanska Reka at the mouth of Mala to Golema Reka, which is geomorphologically quite interesting. On the bridge of the dam Gradche there is a memorial plaque in honor of the construction of the dam. There are also other interesting landmarks such as the spring of Boro the lemonade maker, who used to walk almost every summer night to Carev Vrv to obtain ice for cooling his lemonade. This took place 30 years ago. Another interesting landmark is the waterfall Golem Vodopad, with height of 20 meters, which was created by filling a small protective dam above the present lake. There are a lot of places which can be seen in the vicinity of Lake Gradche. It is interesting to note that the lake itself can be walked around through mountain walking paths, as the length of the shore is only 3,5 km. Higher up the mountain there is a belvedere, near the lakes there are waterfalls and a path towards the monument “Makteon”. From the other side we can visit the church “St. Pantelejmon” and the archeological locality “Dolno Gradishte” is located on the north side of the lake. Considering the vicinity of the town, its connection with the asphalt road (which is not in proper condition) and the wonderful nature, Gradche is an excellent tourist locality.

**Tourist attractiveness:** lake scenery, dense beech forest, clean air, mild climate, diverse biodiversity, anthropogenic waterfall.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, walks around the lake, fishing, health-recreational, nature observation, kayaking, picnic, congress.

**Note:** Lake Gradche and the area around it are already arranged to a certain degree (paths, signalization, etc.). However, they are not sufficiently utilized and there are large opportunities for improvement of the offer.

**(43) Lake Pishica** is located above the village with the same name near the town Probishtip (south of the town). The dam is made of stone and earth and the lake was formed around it with approximately 800 000 m<sup>3</sup> of water, mainly used for watering the surrounding fields. The lake itself is around 800 m long, up to 240 m wide and with the greatest depth of 15 m. The length of its shore line is near 2 km. The lake is rich in fish and it represents a significant recreational place for around 200 fishermen. A concessionaire from Probishtip manages the fish fund. On February 26, 2013 the dam was quite damaged due to the heavy rainfall, and the lake was almost completely released for fear of



flooding the village. This is why a project for strengthening and reconstruction of the dam has been initiated.



Figure 15. Lake Pishica above the village with the same name before it dried out in 2013.

**Tourist attractiveness:** lake scenery, fish abundance.

**Potential types of tourism:** fishing, walks around the lake, picnic tourism, rural tourism.

**Note:** Lake Pishica has a small but interesting local tourist potential.

**(44) Lake Kundino** is a small natural lake located 2,5 km northwest from Probishtip, in the foot of the volcanic mountain Plavica (1297 m). It is located at the bottom of one naturally carved elliptic depression of volcanic rocks, at the altitude of 745 m. Actually, the basin of the lake was formed with erosion of the less resistant zeolites, opposed to the more resistant andesite, which form the frame. The lake has a specific position and arch appearance, with dominant direction of stretching ENE-WSW. At maximum level (during intensive rains), the length of the lake is 250 m, its width is 30-70 m, and the length of the shore line is 580 m, and the surface is 13.500 m<sup>2</sup>. Then its largest depth is up to 3 m. The lake obtains its water almost exclusively from atmospheric rainfall from its basin area (0.34 km<sup>2</sup>), and loses the water through spilling from the canal with the same name, through evaporation, through sinking, etc. This unique small lake was almost completely destroyed in the 1970s, after incomprehensible digging of a drain canal. Nowadays, it has periodical character and it appears more as peat bog, with rich vegetation of reed and typha. However, due to its interesting appearance, picturesque nature and impressively rich biodiversity on a small area, Lake Kundino is attractive for visitors who appreciate and love pristine nature.



Figure 16. Lake Kundino in summer, photographed from the east side (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** specific appearance and position, rich biodiversity.

**Potential types of tourism:** tracking, walks around the lake, nature observation.

**Note:** In the recent past Kundino Lake has been turned into a peat bog because of man's influence. Unless some measures are applied to protect and restore this lake, any further massive man's presence will worsen the situation.

**(45) Lakes of Chengino Kale** are two small periodic lakes-peat bogs at the altitude from 1670 up to 1750 m, almost at the border with Bulgaria. The lake to the top is bigger, with length of 38 m, width of 10 m and highest depth of 0,8 m. The length of the shore line of this lake is 88 m, and the lake area during maximum level is 300 m<sup>2</sup>. The smaller lake is 1 km north with almost round form and a diameter of 17 m. The length of the shore line is 59 m, and its largest depth is around 0, 5 m. They obtain their water exclusively from the atmospheric rainfalls and snow melt. Therefore, they exist as lakes from April until September. From a biological aspect, they are considered ombrotrophic peat bogs, obtaining their total water and nutrients from the atmosphere. So far, they are the only known lakes in the Republic of Macedonia of this type.



Figure 17. The smaller of both lakes at Chengino Kale (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** specific appearance and position, rich biodiversity.

**Potential types of tourism:** mountaineering, nature observation.

**Note:** These are rare natural lakes and care must be taken to protect them.

**(46) Lake Sandanski** is a small artificial lake located 3 km south of Delchevo, near the river Bregalnica and next to the regional road for Berovo. It has irregular elliptic form with largest length of 205 m, width of 145 m and area of 2 ha. The shore line is very jagged and quite long with up to 1100 m, with 2 small islands and peninsulas, as well as few bays. The lake is filled from a spring, the average depth is around 2-3 m, and the maximum is 12 m. The lake is restocked with carp, tench, chub, grass carp, nase, belvica and barbel. This attracts the fishermen from Delchevo and fishermen and visitors from different parts of Macedonia and even neighboring Bulgaria. The surrounding of the lake is well arranged, there are around ten tamed roe does walking freely, peacocks, domestic and wild ducks, horses and other animals. Until 2002 this location was agro-landfill which was formed after an experimental coal mining. In the same year the firm "Optima" from Delchevo took the property under concession from the Ministry of Agriculture and turned it into a beautiful place. The owner Ivan Sokolov will continue to make this place even more beautiful.

**Tourist attractiveness:** interesting small lake, fish abundance, arranged surrounding.

**Potential types of tourism:** fishing, picnic, wellness.

#### 4.2.4. Flora and fauna as factors for development of tourism in EPR

From the aspect of biological diversity, the East Planning Region reveals an interesting contrast. On one side there are Maleshevo Mountains, Vlaina, Osogovo Mountains and Plachkovica with mountain ecosystems, forests and the presence of continental elements, and on the other side there are lowlands along the lower course of the river Bregalnica and its tributaries with Mediterranean elements, as well as the specific zones of halophilic biotypes in Ovche Pole.

## Vegetation

The forest vegetation is considered the most significant type of vegetation in the region. It consists of height zones, which is actually the case in the entire country of Macedonia. The lowest parts mainly consist of oak forests in various degree of degradation (represented in the community of oak and horn beam *Quercus-Carpinetum orientalis*). On the higher altitudes this forest is replaced with oak and Turkey oak, which gradually change to forests of ash and oak (represented in the community *Quercus-Carpinetum orientalis*), submountainous beech forests (*Festuco heterophyllae-Fagetum*) and mountainous beech forests (*Calamintho grandiflorae-Fagetum*). The specific feature about the forest vegetation in the beech zone is the presence of vast communities of pine forests, especially on Maleshevo Mountains. White and black pines are dominant in the evergreen forests in the region. However, there are also stands with fir (*Abies borisii-regis*). It is important to mention the juniper stand (*Picea abies*), which have the most southern point in their range in Europe, here, on the mountains in this region.

Aside from the zone forest vegetation, there are also few azonal forests which are usually found along the rivers: zones and forests of willows (*Salix alba*, *S. fragilis*, *S. elaeagnos*), black alder (*Alnus glutinosa*) and poplars (*Populus alba*, *P. nigra*), communities of salt cedar (*Tamarix* spp.) and few communities of plane tree (*Platanus orientalis*).

Also, aside from the typical forest vegetation, there are also numerous dry pastures and grass communities in the region. Some of them have spread additionally after cutting the forests and the bushes (especially those with oak). The dry pastures are characteristic with several different plant associations. The salty soils with halophilic vegetation and halophyte (plants which grow on salty base) are specific for the parts between Shtip, Bogoslovec and Slandol (in Macedonia these types of habitats are usually located in the region of the valley of the river Vardar).

The wet habitats are represented with small stands along the rivers (Bregalnica, Kriva Lakavica) and peat bogs on Maleshevo Mountains and Vlaina. The most famous wet habitat is Judovi Livadi (near Pehchevo) due to the presence of insect-eating plant round leaved sundew (*Drosera rotundifolia*).

## Flora

The flora in the east region is very diverse corresponding to the diverse vegetation and habitats. The total number of plant species in the east region is still not estimated. To illustrate, there have been around 1000 species identified on Osogovo Mountains.

The variety of the plant species is mostly noted in the low lands of the East Planning Region. West of Shtip there are known locations where rare and endemic species of plants are found (*Hedysarum macedonicum*, *Onobrychis megalophylla*, *Ferulago macedonica*, *Salvia jurisicii*), halophytes (*Artemisia maritima*, *Krashennikovia ceratoides*, *Camphorosma monspeliaca*) and steppe species of plants (*Astragalus parnassi*, *Morina persica*, *Convolvulus holosericeus*). Some of these species can be found on the slopes of Osogovo Mountains.

With the exception of the most western part of the East region, there are several plant species in the mountain parts and they are: *Drosera rotundifolia*, *Picea abies*, *Verbascum lesnovoensis*, *Genista fukarekiana*, *Lycopodium clavatum*, *Dryopteris borrieri*, *Festuca thracica* ssp. *violaceo-sordida* var. *osogovoense*, *Viola orbelica* etc.

**(47) Judovi Livadi** is located around 2,5 km east from Pehchevo, in the spring part of the brook Rakavec, the left tributary of Negrevska Reka, at the altitude of around 1200 m. The area belongs to the continental biogeographic region. On the peat bogs and wet meadows on the locality Judovi Livadi there is an insect eating plant *Drosera Rotundifolia*. The plant feeds on insects. This carnivore type of nutrition is adaptation to habitats rich in organic material where the non organic material is inaccessible and the pH of the soil is sour. The insects are attracted to the red color of the plant and the shining drops of gelatin material which is being produced. Furthermore, it uses its enzymes to decompose the glued insects, using their nitrates and other nutrients which it lacks. This locality is the



only habitat of this plant species on the territory of the Republic of Macedonia. The presence of few swamp plants with very limited range - *Cetunculus minimus*, *Juncus capitatus*, *Juncus tanageia*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Dianthus quadrangulus*, *Ranunculus fontanus* in the remaining parts of the territory of the Republic of Macedonia.

**Tourist attractiveness:** endemic insect eating plant, pristine nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** nature observation, tracking.

**Note:** Mass visits and immediate observation of the plant should be avoided. The plant could be observed from a proper distance or the visitors may get acquainted with the plant through information boards around the locality.

**(48) The oak at the village Beli** so called plane-tree is located on the hill elevation (566 m) in the monastery complex St. Ilija, 1 km north of the village Beli. This oak is considered to be around 600 years old, which makes it one of the oldest trees in this region, and thus it is protected by law as a natural monument. Its dimensions are imposing: the circumference of the trunk is around 7 m, and its height is around 20 m. In 2003 the oak was conserved, cleaned from rotten layers and parasites and its life span was prolonged for another 100 years. However, in June of 2012 the oak was struck by thunder and the trunk was burned, so the oak will be conserved once more. The oak is frequently visited after the construction of the asphalt road in 2011 and the partial arrangement with benches and other items.

**Tourist attractiveness:** old oak, beautiful view, pristine nature, proximity of the monastery.

**Potential types of tourism:** nature observation, tracking, mountain biking, monastery.

**(49) Daboski Andak** is a locality on Maleshevo Mountains which has mixed forest plantation of black pine (*Pinus nigra*) and beech (*Fagus Sylvatica*). The plantation is partially open with forest paths. It can be reached via forest path through the village Ratevo. It is a mixed high stem plantation of black pine and beech of mesophilic place of growth, ass. *Pinetum silvestris nigrae macedonicum*. The black pine makes the upper level of the forest plantation, and the beech makes the lower. The plantation has eastern exposition; the terrain is moderately steep up to 20°, on silicate geologic base. The soil is district cambisols, brown, forestlike, with thick layer of hums and fallen leaves.

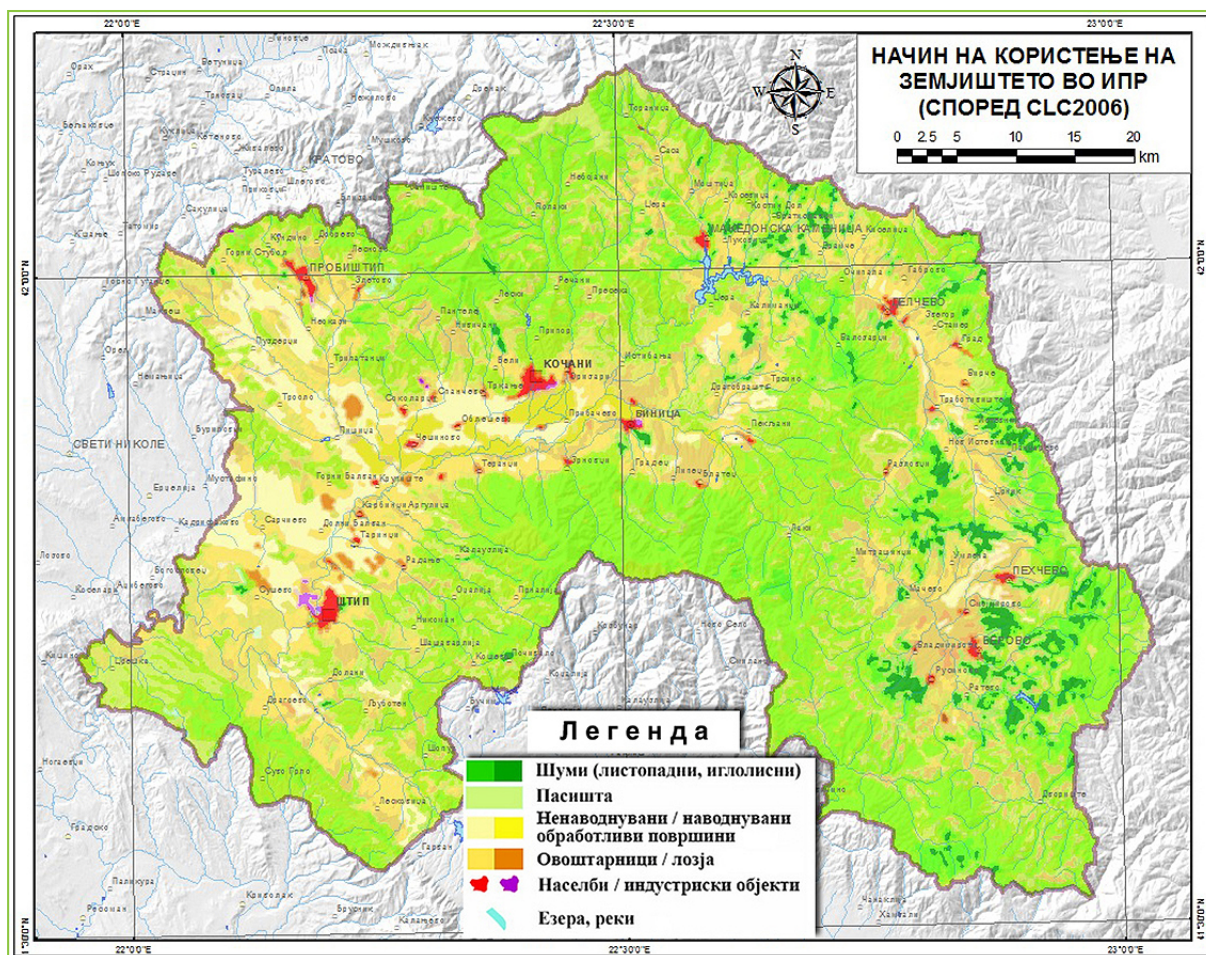


Figure 18. Method of land utilization in NEPR (original).

**(50) Temniot Andak** is a black pine reserve (*Pinus nigra*) located in the forest economy unit “Gubenek-Pauca”, in the western parts of Maleshevo Mountains. It is a clean black pine stand where pine trunks have large dimensions, and they are in a very good health condition. Few trees from the reserve have traces of past resining.

**(51) Murite** is a locality which is made of mixed stand of fir (*Albies Alba*), beech (*Fagus Moesiaca*), white pine (*Pinus silvestris*) and spruce (*Picea Excelsa*) which grows on the basis made of two-mica porphyroblast gneiss of Precambrian Age. The plantation which consists of fir tree and spruce, with minor parts of white pine and beech, covers an area of around 10 ha. The stand is located in the Forest-economy unit “Maleshevo Mountains”. The main species here is the fir. Here it reaches the most eastern range of stretching in Macedonia. It is the only fir habitat on Maleshevo Mountains. The facility is managed by PE Makedonski Shumi, forest economy "Maleshevo" from Berovo.

**(52) Crna topola (*Populos nigra*)** is located 1 km east of the village Machevo, from the right side of the river Bregalnica. This poplar is the largest trunk of this type in the eastern part of the country. The height of the trunk is 26 m, and the circumference of the trunk is 8,30 m.

**Tourist attractiveness:** attractive forests and trees.

**Potential types of tourism:** walking, tracking, relaxation in nature.

## Fauna

The fauna of fish in the river Bregalnica consists of more than 25 species, some of them are important for the economy, and few of them are endemic species for the basin area of the river Vardar or for South Balkans (*Cobitis vardarensis*, *Alburnus macedonicus*, *Sabanejewia balcanica*, *Romanogobio elimeius*, *Chondrostoma vardarensis*, *Squalius vardarensis*, *Salmo macedonicus*, *Oxynoemacheilus bureschi*, etc.). The amphibians are represented with more than 10 species (*Lissotriton vulgaris* smooth newt, *Salamandra salamandra* –fire salamander, *Bombina variegata* – yellow-bellied toad, *Rana temporaria* –common frog, *Rana graeca* –Greek stream frog, *Pelophylax ridibundus* –marsh frog, *Rana dalmatina* –agile frog, *Bufo bufo* –common toad, *Pseudepidalea viridis* – European green toad, *Hyla arborea* –European tree frog, *Pelobates syriacus* –eastern spadefoot).

There are around 25 species of reptiles in EPR. The high mountainous areas are the home of several rare species like *Zootoca vivipara* viviparous lizard and *Vipera berus* European adder. However, the most interesting types are located in the lowland parts: *Eurotestudo hermanni*–Herman's tortoise, *Testudo graeca* - spur-thighed tortoise, *Ablepharus kitaibelii* – European copper skink, *Podarcis erhardii* - Erhard's wall lizard, *Lacerta trilineata* – Balkan green lizard, *Typhlops vermicularis* – European blind snake, *Platycephalus najadum* – Dahl's whip snake, *Dolichophis caspius* – Caspian whip snake, *Eryx jaculus* – Javelin sand boa, *Vipera ammodytes* – horned viper and *Telescopus fallax* – European cat snake. The fauna of birds is also quite diverse. The total number of birds species present in the East region has not been estimated. The most significant species are *Neophron percnopterus* – Egyptian vulture, *Coracias garrulus* –European roller, *Falco naumanni* – lesser kestrel, *Falco peregrinus* – Peregrine falcon, *Accipiter brevipes* – Levant sparrow hawk, *Buteo rufinus* – long-legged buzzard, *Falco biarmicus* – lanner falcon, *Circaetus gallicus* – short-toed snake eagle, *Aquila heliaca* – Eastern imperial eagle, *Aquila chrysaetos* – golden eagle, *Bubo bubo* - Eurasian eagle-owl, *Ciconia nigra* –black stork and *Ficedula semitorquata* – semicollared flycatcher, which are key species when defining and establishing the important areas for birds. The fauna of mammals in the east region is also not sufficiently documented. The most interesting minor mammals are: *Clethrionomys glareolus* – bank vole, *Microtus guentheri* - Günther's vole, *Mus macedonicus* – Macedonian mouse and *Nannospalax leucodon* – Lesser mole-rat. The presence of European otter (*Lutra lutra*) and European pine marten (*Martes martes*) increase the value of the mammal fauna. The east region is also the home of few large beasts: constant home of wild bear (*Felis silvestris*) and the wolf (*Canis lupus*), temporary home of the brown bear (*Ursus arctos*) and it is very likely that the Carpathian lynx lives on Osogovo Mountains (*Lynx lynx carpathicus*).

**(53) Hunting ground “Polaki”-Kochaniis** located 150 km from Skopje, on part of the south slopes of Osogovo mountains, with total area of 15 250 ha. The variety of relief forms and the large height difference (altitude of 500-2.084 m), the presence of different types of forests and the abundance of running water during the entire year, enable zone distribution and survival of more types of large game such as deer, fallow deer, roe doe, mouflon and wild boar. In the hunting ground there is a fenced area of around 1.000 ha where large game is being intensely bred and shot. The access to roads and the presence of hunting-technical facilities enable fast and safe hunting in the fenced part of the hunting ground throughout the entire year. The hunting home “Pashajikovo” is located in the hunting ground with useful area of 200 m<sup>2</sup> and capacity for 10 people. Except in the hunting home, hunters can be accommodated in the facilities of the winter-tourist center “Ponikva” which is located near the hunting ground.

**Tourist attractiveness:** wonderful nature, clean air, abundance of game.

**Potential types of tourism:** hunting tourism, relaxation in nature, gastronomic tourism, tracking.

**Note:** The hunting ground Ponikva, and the remaining hunting grounds should have assigned a responsible concessionaire who will maintain the hunting ground.



**(54) Hunting ground “Konechko”** covers an area of 4375 ha, 1200 of which are fenced. It is located at twenty kilometers from Shtip in the direction towards Negotino and with the hunting ground “Polaki” they are the only fenced hunting grounds in the east part of Macedonia. These hunting grounds are mainly visited by a small group of elite hunters, which mainly hunt mouflons, wild boars and Cretan goats. The guests are overwhelmed by the conditions offered in the hunting ground, by the accommodation and the food. They come for three to four days organized through tour-operators. Local hunters are also present and they often hunt wild boars and deer. Shooting a wild boar costs 50 Euros and 20 Euros for organizing the hunt. Shooting a young deer costs 200 Euros, including the organization of the hunt and the hunters keep the meat. Since 2002 when this hunting ground for large game was given under concession, the game fund was increased with 33 mouflons, 143 fallow deer, 23 Cretan goats, which are not present anywhere else in Macedonia. There is a facility with four rooms with modern design with ten beds. Actually, the hunting ground Konechko is considered one of the most beautiful and most profitable hunting grounds in the Republic of Macedonia. It also represents an excellent example for successful management and development of hunting tourism.

**Tourist attractiveness:** abundance of various game, well-arranged facilities.

**Potential types of tourism:** hunting tourism, relaxation in nature, gastronomic tourism, tracking.

**(55) Hunting ground “Golak”** mainly covers the area south of Delchevo and it is considered one of the best hunting grounds in this part of Macedonia. It covers an area of 14 000 ha and it is a typical hill-mountain hunting ground. The river Bregalnica flows through the hunting ground and divides it to the western part-towards the slopes of Golak and Obozna and the eastern part which covers the slopes of Bejaz Tepe. The higher parts of the hunting ground are rich in roe deer and wild boar. Many hares are present in the lower parts and their hunting is allowed and also there is the gray partridge and other species. Due to the relatively developed road network, the hunting ground is quite accessible, as it covers a part of the bordering area with Bulgaria and the game often cross from one side to another. Besides, the presence of border police helps in minimizing poaching.

**Tourist attractiveness:** abundance of various game, interesting nature.

**Potential types of tourism:** hunting tourism, relaxation in nature, gastronomic tourism, tracking.

**Note:** The hunting ground has no proper tourist facilities as a good hunting home or other food and beverage and accommodation facility.

**(56) Hunting ground “Sokolarci”** is located in the further southwest foot of Osogovo Mountains between the village Sokolarci and the village Cheshinovo. The total area of the hunting ground is 8350 ha, 8110 ha of which are under the hunting area, 7270 ha hunting-productive area, 840 ha hunting non-productive area and 240 ha of which are non-hunting area. The aim of the hunting ground is to breed, protect and hunt small game. The following species of animals without protection can be found in the hunting ground: red fox, weasel, stone marten, skunk, Northern goshawk, black-billed magpie, grey wolf and other. Regarding the number of animals without protection, they are not overpopulated, with the exception of the red fox. The game under protection in the hunting ground Sokolarci is brown hare, grey partridge and rock partridge.

**Tourist attractiveness:** abundance of various game, interesting sceneries in Kochansko Pole.

**Potential types of tourism:** hunting tourism, relaxation in nature, gastronomic tourism, tracking.

**Note:** The hunting ground has no appropriate tourist facilities such as a good hunting home or another food and beverage and accommodation facility.

**(57) Hunting ground “Jami Tepe”** is located in the administrative territorial borders of the municipality of Berovo, stretching with its entire area west of Berovo. Up north along the pass Obozna



it goes along the road to Berovo up to Budinarska Reka, on the east side it goes through the villages Rusinovo and Vladimirovo and along the old road for Strumica it reaches to “Jami Tepe” and the administrative-territorial border with the municipality of Vasilevo (“Palazlija”). On the south side of Palazlija it turns towards west and following the administrative-territorial border with the municipality of Vasilevo it reaches Goten. Then it continues along the crest and it comes down to the locality of Karaghuzlija, Gramadiche and continues along the road i.e. along the horse hill up to the pass of Obozna. The total area of the hunting ground is 22 800 ha. There are two roads here from a higher category; Berovo – Vinica and Berovo - Strumica. The hunting ground has many cart and supply roads which make it accessible for most of its localities which are important for hunting. The hunting ground has roe doe -118 animals and wild boar - 46 animals. The following types of animals are also present and they are not protected: wolf, fox, stone marten, badger, skunk, Northern goshawk and other. The number of these species of animals is not stable, but there is no case of overpopulation at present.

**Note:** Aside from the hunting ground Jami Tepe, the municipality of Berovo also has the following hunting grounds: Palazlija, Ratevska Reka and Machevo. They are smaller in area and with a smaller number of game.

#### 4.2.5. Valorization of natural values

Following the process of taking inventory of tourist resources, the values of tourist potential have been estimated i.e. their usage and “market” value has been determined. The valorization has been based upon the methodology of World Tourism Organization (WTO) by the United Nations, with certain modifications and amendments relevant for the area of EPR. According to WTO, there are two main groups of factors which are important for tourist valorization, such as internal and external. The internal factors refer to the resource, its values, existing and possible degree of utilization. They include tourist positions, tourist and infrastructure facilities. The external factors for tourist valorization refer to the resource availability in the sense of traffic accessibility, particularity, amenities, etc. All parameters are presented in Table and marked with grade 1 (lowest) to 3 (highest).

- Tourist position signifies vicinity to emitting centers, vicinity to important roads and other close and important localities and it could be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Tourist facilities reveal if there are facilities for accommodation, restaurants, tourist paths, summerhouses and similar, in the locality itself or near and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Infrastructure facility of the resource, the locality or the neighboring area with electricity, water, health stations, etc., and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Traffic connection to the tourist resource in the sense of type and quality of roads (railway) and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Access to the resource itself: open- if it is a museum, accessible, safe – if it is a rock, etc. and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Particularity in the sense of uniqueness and attractiveness of the resource in the regional frames and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Amenities refer to how many attractive elements are present in the resources and its immediate surrounding and it can be rated as: poor (1), average (2) and good (3).
- Significance refers to the importance (distinguishing) resource compared with other such resources in the Republic of Macedonia and it can be rated as: local (1), regional (2) and national (3).
- Level of visitation frequency is an approximate estimation of how many visitors are attracted by the resource during the year and it can be rated as: low (1), average (2) and high (3).
- Seasonality or time opportunities for a visit within one season (1), two seasons (2) or the entire year (3).

The sum of values for all factors indicates the value of the tourist resource. However, in the process of valorization, EPR was considered as a whole reference area and not certain parts or localities. Regionally important tourist resources are considered those with cumulative value of factors above 20, while locally important are the ones with lower cumulative value.

Table 4. Consecutive presentation of natural tourism resources in EPR.

Item number	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connection	Access	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													X	Y
1	Lesново Crater	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	25	22.232	42.016
2	Stamer	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	19	22.803	41.960
3	Osogovo Mountains	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	28	22.477	42.081
4	Carev Vrv – Ruen	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	24	22.455	42.124
5	Ponikva	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	27	22.352	42.034
6	Ratkova Skala	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	17	22.319	42.005
7	Plachkovica	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	22	22.556	41.784
8	Vlaina	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	15	22.935	41.798
9	Vrtena Skala	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	16	22.934	41.770
10	Ilin Kamen	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	20	22.818	41.978
11	Maleshevo Mountains	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	21	22.916	41.621
12	Ograzhden	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	16	22.897	41.540
13	Suvi Laki	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	22	22.825	41.560
14	Golak with Obozna	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	22.722	41.881
15	Bejaz Tepe	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	14	22.811	41.819
16	Kukulje – Istevnik	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	23	22.822	41.841
17	Mangovica	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	15	22.120	41.909
18	Serta	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	16	22.201	41.606
19	Kochansko Pole	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	24	22.359	41.879
20	Ovche Pole	3	1	2	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	21	22.093	41.807
21	Istibanjska Klisura	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	24	22.542	41.957
22	Razlovechka Klisura	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	17	22.763	41.827
23	Zletovska Klisura	2	1	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	22	22.255	42.007
24	Zrnovska Klisura	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	21	22.456	41.830
25	Osojnica	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	22	22.641	41.811
26	Kamnik	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	17	22.319	41.743
27	Badlands	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	1	2	22	22.893	41.808
28	Turtelska Peshtera	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	20	22.425	41.794
29	Konjska Dupka	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	19	22.854	41.933
30	Kiselichka Peshtera	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	16	22.744	42.029
31	Smrdлива Voda	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	14	22.940	41.771
32	Sveta Voda	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	15	22.806	41.869
33	Springs Bregalnica	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	20	23.020	41.711
34	Kezhovica	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	27	22.177	41.733
35	Kochanska Banja	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	3	21	22.334	41.909
36	Istibanja	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	21	22.507	41.927
37	Bregalnica	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	1	20	22.487	41.917
38	Waterfalls Bregalnica	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	21	22.978	41.731
39	Lake Kalimansko	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	25	22.593	41.991
40	Kalata	3	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	1	2	20	22.590	41.984
41	Lake Berovo	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	26	22.902	41.669
42	Lake Gratche	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	22	22.406	41.964
43	Lake Pishichko	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	17	22.202	41.876
44	Lake Kundinsko	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	15	22.155	42.023
45	Lake Chengino	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	3	18	23.030	41.721
46	Lake Sandanski	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	21	22.784	41.955
47	Judovi Livadi	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	18	22.915	41.766
48	Oak in village Beli	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	23	22.371	41.941
49	Daboski Andak	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	16	22.794	41.653
50	Temniot Andak	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	19	22.835	41.662
51	Murite	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	21	22.963	41.677
52	Crna Topola	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	18	22.793	41.751
53	Hunting ground “Polaki”	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	23	22.333	42.002
54	Hunting ground “Konche”	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	22	22.258	41.564
55	Hunting ground “Golak”	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	22.812	41.919
56	Hunting ground “Sokolarci”	3	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	22	22.455	42.124
57	Hunting ground “Jami	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	19	22.955	41.602

Table 5. Consecutive presentation of natural tourist resources, valorized according to the cumulative value.

Item number	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connection	Access	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													X	Y
3	Osogovo Mountain	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	28	22.48	42.08
5	Ponikva	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	27	22.35	42.03
34	Kezhovica	3	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	27	22.18	41.73
41	Lake Berovo	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	3	26	22.90	41.67
1	Lesново Crater	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	2	25	22.23	42.02
39	Lake Kalimansko	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	3	25	22.59	41.99
4	Carev Vrv-Ruen	3	1	1	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	24	22.46	42.12
19	Kochansko Pole	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	24	22.36	41.88
21	Istibanjska Klisura	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	3	2	2	24	22.54	41.96
16	Kukulje-Istevnik	1	2	2	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	23	22.82	41.84
48	Oak in village Beli	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	23	22.37	41.94
53	Hunting ground "Polaki"	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	23	22.33	42.00
7	Plachkovica	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	22	22.56	41.78
13	Suvi Laki	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	3	22	22.83	41.56
23	Zletovska Klisura	2	1	2	3	2	3	3	2	2	2	22	22.26	42.01
25	Osojnica	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	22	22.64	41.81
27	Badlands	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	3	1	2	22	22.89	41.81
42	Lake Gratche	2	3	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	3	22	22.41	41.96
54	Hunting ground "Konche"	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	3	2	2	22	22.26	41.56
56	Hunting ground "Sokolarci"	3	1	1	2	3	2	2	3	2	3	22	22.46	42.12
11	Maleshevo Mountains	1	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	21	22.92	41.62
20	Ovche Pole	3	1	2	3	3	1	2	2	2	2	21	22.09	41.81
24	Zrnovska Klisura	2	2	1	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	21	22.46	41.83
35	Kochanska Banja	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	3	21	22.33	41.91
36	Istibanja	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	3	21	22.51	41.93
38	Waterfalls Bregalnica	1	2	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	21	22.98	41.73
46	Lake Sandanski	2	2	2	2	3	2	1	2	2	3	21	22.78	41.96
51	Murite	2	1	1	2	3	2	3	2	2	3	21	22.96	41.68
10	Ilin Kamen	3	2	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	20	22.82	41.98
14	Golak with Obozna	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	22.72	41.88
28	Turtelski Peshteri	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	20	22.43	41.79
33	Springs Bregalnica	2	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	20	23.02	41.71
37	Bregalnica	2	1	2	1	2	2	3	3	3	1	20	22.49	41.92
40	Kalata	3	1	1	2	1	3	3	3	1	2	20	22.59	41.98
55	Hunting ground "Golak"	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	20	22.81	41.92
2	Stamer	2	1	2	1	2	3	2	3	1	2	19	22.80	41.96
29	Konjska Dupka	2	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	2	19	22.85	41.93
50	Temniot Andak	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	2	19	22.84	41.66
45	Chengino Lake	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	3	18	23.03	41.72
47	Judovi Livadi	1	1	1	1	3	3	2	3	1	2	18	22.92	41.77
52	Crna Topola	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	18	22.79	41.75
6	Ratkova Skala	1	1	1	1	2	3	3	2	1	2	17	22.32	42.01
22	Razlovechka Klisura	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	1	2	17	22.76	41.83
26	Kamnik	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	2	2	17	22.32	41.74
43	Lake Pishichko	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	17	22.20	41.88
9	Vrtena Skala	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	2	16	22.93	41.77
12	Ograzhden	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	2	16	22.90	41.54
18	Serta	2	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	16	22.20	41.61
30	Kiselichka Peshtera	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	2	16	22.74	42.03
49	Daboski Andak	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	16	22.79	41.65
8	Vlaina	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	15	22.94	41.80
17	Mangovica	1	1	1	3	2	1	2	1	1	2	15	22.12	41.91
32	Sveta Voda	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	1	2	15	22.81	41.87
44	Lake Kundino	1	1	1	1	3	2	2	1	1	2	15	22.16	42.02
15	Bejaz Tepe	1	1	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	14	22.81	41.82
31	Smrdлива Voda	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	14	22.94	41.77



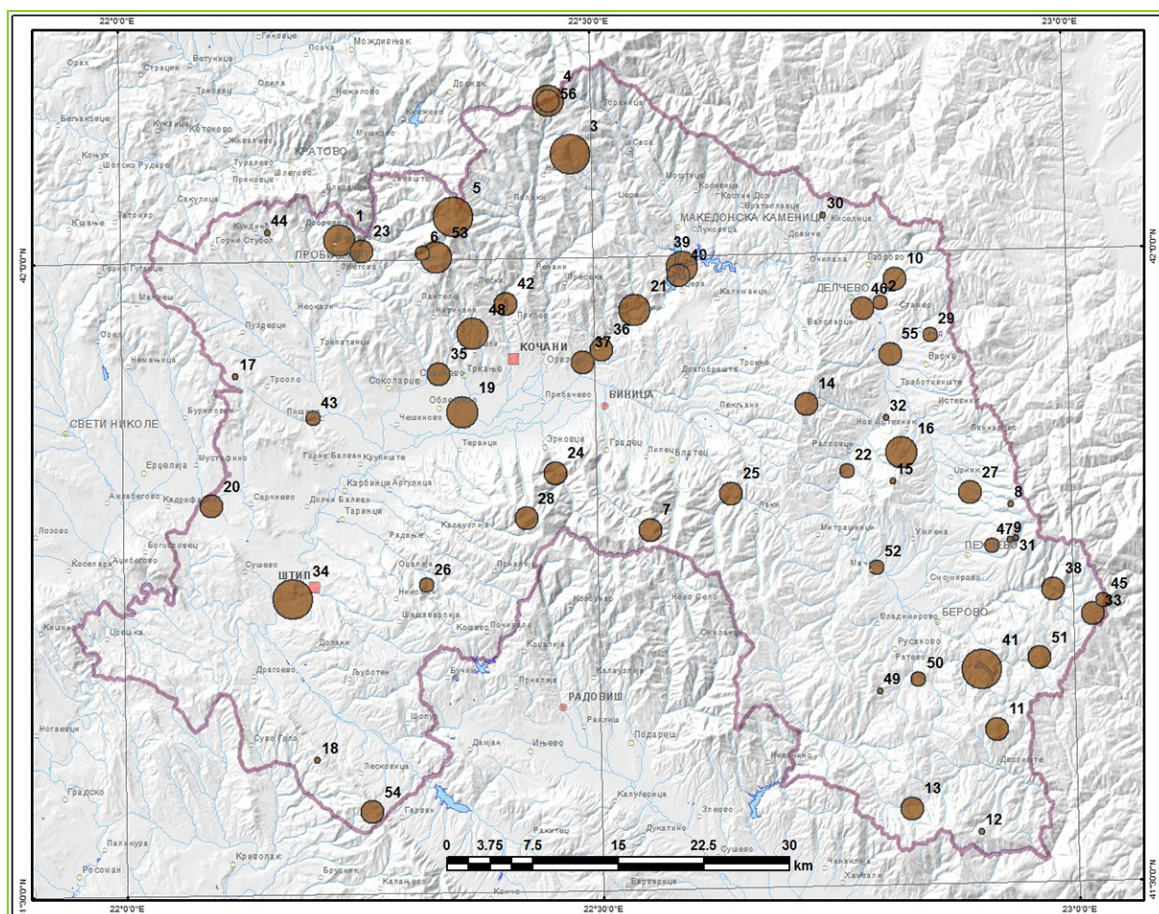


Figure 19. Graphic display of natural attractiveness according to the values obtained with the valorization process (the size of the circle corresponds to the importance of attractiveness; the number next to the circle indicates the item number of attractiveness)(original).

The given presentation pursuant to the effectuated valorization clearly reveals the tourist values of the natural resources-localities in EPR. However, we should take into consideration that we have considered only the most significant and presently known and renowned localities and sights. Also, the values of the mountains as a whole, especially in the case of Osogovo Mountains, must be considered with a doubt due to the vast area within the region and the large number of smaller localities therein, as every locality is unique. On the other hand, it is clear that Osogovo Mountains and their variety, vastness, height and south sun exposition have great, but unutilized tourist potential (except partially in the part of Ponikva). Aside from the mentioned localities, numerous other springs, small lakes, ravines and other, which were not mentioned here, also have certain value of attractiveness. They could receive even greater tourist importance if roads or the necessary infrastructure are constructed. For example, if an asphalt road is constructed from the village Razlovci towards the village Mirashinci towards Berovo, then the ravine Razlovechka Klisura, Bejaz Tepe and Obozna will obtain greater tourist value. The future researches of geodiversity, biodiversity, hydrological sights and other could be organized in that direction and they could bring new and interesting attractiveness.

We must also note that valorization does not consider the future needs, expected and unexpected tourist requests which are variable and dynamic. However, the modern present trends in tourism (rural, tracking, eco) are expected to be sustained for the period of preparation of the Study, i.e. to be valid for EPR.

### 4.3. Demographic and socioeconomic factors

From a demographic aspect, the region has similar demographic trends as the entire Republic of Macedonia. Depopulation and reduction of the number of the population have been recorded in the last 5 years.

Table 6. Total population in the Republic of Macedonia and in EPR per years.

Population per year	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Republic of Macedonia	2.052.722	2.057.284	2.059.794	2.062.294	2.065.769
East Planning Region	179.846	179.695	179.080	178.551	177.988

Table 7. Index of number of population in 2013.

Population index	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Republic of Macedonia	100	100.22	100.34	100.47	100.64
East Planning Region	100	99.92	99.57	99.28	98.97

The participation of population from the East Planning Region in the total population of the Republic of Macedonia has been decreasing in the last 5 years. The participation of the East Region in the total number of citizens in the Republic of Macedonia is shown in the following table.

Table 8. Participation of the region in the total population of the country.

Participation	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Republic of Macedonia	100	100	100	100	100
East Planning Region	8.76%	8.73%	8.69%	8.66%	8.62%

The population density in the East planning region is **50,4 inhabitants** per square kilometer. Pursuant to the population density, the region has conditions for development of all life spheres, i.e. the population density provides opportunity for normal living of a larger number of inhabitants. However, the fact that EPR has a high rate of **mortality** (between 10,1 and 10,8 permilles). The highest value of mortality rate which is beyond 10 permilles is noted in the municipalities of Zrnovci, Karbinci, Berovo, Pehchevo and Cheshinovo-Obleshevo, which is due to the age structure.

On the other hand, **the birth rate** is lower than the average rate in the Republic of Macedonia. The variation of the municipality birth rate is significantly pointed out. The highest rate of 16,1 permille (2012) was noted in the municipalities Karbinci, and the lowest in the municipality of Pehchevo, 5,1 permille. In the East Planning Region the fertility rate is below the level which is necessary for simple population renewal. Similar situation in the region has been present for over two decades. In the last years, the total fertility rate (average number of live children born by an average woman in her fertile period) decreases from 1,43 in 2002 to 1,30 in 2012. The tendency of **negative natural growth** began in 2005, it is still present and it will continue in the following period. Thus, during 2013 there were only 1540 newborns which create a natality rate of 8.6 permilles. In the same period the number of

deceased people was 1.851, which gives a negative natural growth of 311 people, or a rate of natural growth of -1.74 permilles.

The previous information lead to the conclusion that the East Planning Region has unfavorable demographic characteristics, which is also confirmed by the **projection until 2030** (Jakhimovski and others, 2015), presented in the chart below. According to our knowledge and analysis, in view of the increased pace of emigration, variant 1 is most likely, which implies that in 2024 the number of the population will reach only 154 639 inhabitants. However, with the increase of efforts for greater economic development through different measures and methods, including tourism, it is possible to reach the more optimistic variant 2, according to which in 2024, the total number of population in EPR would reach 164 514 inhabitants (Jakhimovski and others, 2015).

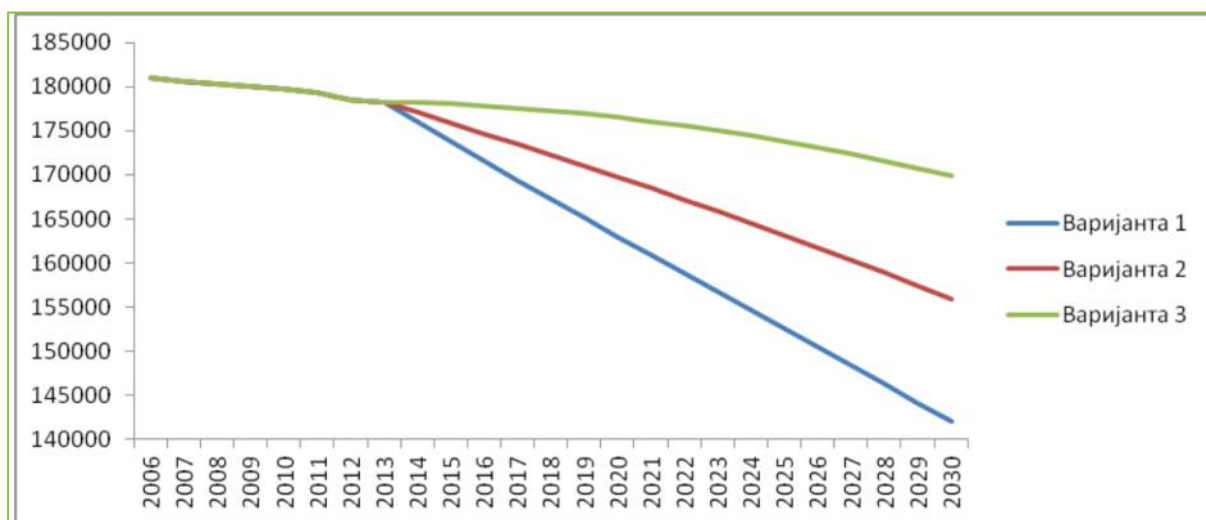


Figure 20. Chart of population projection in EPR by 2030 according to 3 variants (Source: Jakhimovski and others, 2015).

The region is also faced with an intensive **migration** process within the region, within the country and beyond its borders. The consequences from migration are significant as they cause decrease of smaller populated places and increase of concentration of population in the larger city centers. Even though they are still present, the most significant repercussions in the East Planning Region caused by them have been felt during the '60s and the '70s from the last century, with the location and construction of the textile industry in the towns of this region. With the migration of the rural population in the cities, which was the most reproductive, the participation of the urban population in the East Planning Region has increased from 26.7% in 1953 to 66.3% in 2002. In the same period, the urban population revealed fast growth. The urbanization process is one of the most significant factors of extensive redistribution of population in the East Planning Region. This resulted in constant flow of population in the urban settlements (beginning from the '70s in the past century), which is also reflected on the secondary demographic balance. The population in the urban settlements is constantly increasing, while in the urban settlements it is constantly decreasing. The cause for the increase of urban and the decrease of rural population is not only in the migrations, but also in the aging process and its final effect is the decline of the natural growth in the rural environments. This is why in the given period 16 villages were depopulated and few tens of villages are facing depopulation, as the only people living in them are usually few elderly inhabitants. However, when we are discussing about villages which do not have conditions for economic survival, we should not regret their disappearance. But among some of the villages which are facing depopulation and disappearance there are such villages which have conditions for survival and conditions for economic development with certain help from the state and the local self-government (Jakhimovski and others, 2014).

The information about the migration movements reveal constant tendency towards reduction of the population living in rural settlements, and an increase of the population in the urban settlements. This is mostly predominant among the working population, and according to the surveys, 62.6% of the working people who were interviewed, live in the urban settlements, while 37.4% live in the rural settlements (Jakhimovski and other, 2015).

The following table reveals the number of population in the municipalities in the East Planning Region pursuant to the applied estimation of population on 31.12.2013 per gender (territorial division of 2004):

Table 9. Estimation of gender structure of the population in EPR per municipalities.

Municipalities in EPR	Total	Men	Women
<b>R. Macedonia</b>	<b>2.065.769</b>	<b>1.034.841</b>	<b>1.030.928</b>
<b>Berovo</b>	13.094	6.620	6.474
<b>Vinica</b>	19.486	9.958	9.528
<b>Delchevo</b>	16.515	8.394	8.121
<b>Zrnovci</b>	3.093	1.604	1.489
<b>Karbinci</b>	4.034	2.056	1.978
<b>Kochani</b>	37.950	18.995	18.955
<b>Makedonska Kamenica</b>	7.690	4.016	3.674
<b>Pehchevo</b>	5.034	2.556	2.478
<b>Probishtip</b>	15.406	7.853	7.553
<b>Cheshinovo-Obleshevo</b>	7.084	3.670	3.414
<b>Shtip</b>	48.602	24.274	24.328
<b>Total in EPR</b>	<b>177.988</b>	<b>89.996</b>	<b>87.992</b>

Source: Publication – Estimation of population on 30.06.2013 and 31.12.2013 pursuant to gender and age, per municipalities and per statistical regions, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, July 2014, Skopje.

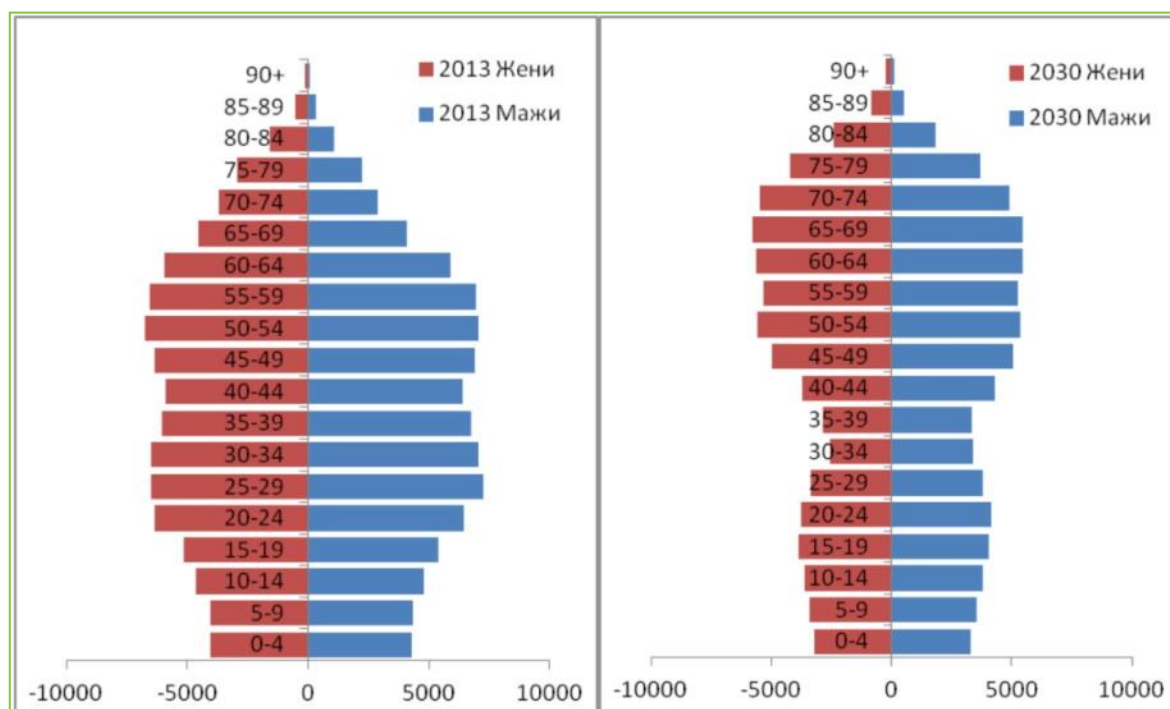


Figure 21. Projection of age pyramid for EPR, pursuant to Jakhimovski and others, 2015.



The number of population per gender and age is presented in Table 10. The presented information reveals that the young and working population is the most present in the East Planning Region, i.e. the age population of 15 – 64 prevails. However, in the past few decades, a decrease has been noticed of the population in the younger age groups, and an increase of population in the older age groups, especially older than 45. The changes in the age of the population reveal that the process of deep demographic age is quite widespread.

With reference to education, the information reveal constant decrease of the percentage of people without education, as well as people who have not finished elementary education, and an increase of the percentage of people who have completed high school and university education. This trend is also noticed at the level of each individual municipality and also at the level of the entire region. The literacy rate of the population is relatively high (96.1%).

Table 10. Age and gender structure of the East Planning Region (HTEC 3-2007), 31.12.2013

Age	Total	Men	Women
<b>Total</b>	<b>177.988</b>	<b>89.996</b>	<b>87.992</b>
<b>0</b>	1.528	804	724
<b>1-4</b>	6.743	3.473	3.270
<b>5-9</b>	8.275	4.287	3.988
<b>10-14</b>	9.339	4.733	4.606
<b>15-19</b>	10.365	5.320	5.045
<b>20-24</b>	12.572	6.332	6.240
<b>25-29</b>	13.647	7.158	6.489
<b>30-34</b>	13.617	7.080	6.537
<b>35-39</b>	12.814	6.771	6.043
<b>40-44</b>	12.268	6.384	5.884
<b>45-49</b>	13.114	6.848	6.266
<b>50-54</b>	13.710	7.008	6.702
<b>55-59</b>	13.537	6.984	6.553
<b>60-64</b>	11.898	5.943	5.955
<b>65-69</b>	8.923	4.210	4.713
<b>70-74</b>	6.617	2.911	3.706
<b>75-79</b>	5.121	2.208	2.913
<b>80-84</b>	2.821	1.127	1.694
<b>85+</b>	1.073	412	661
<b>Unknown age</b>	6	3	3

Source: Publication – Estimation of population on 30.06.2013 and 31.12.2013 pursuant to gender and age, per municipalities and per statistical regions, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, July 2014, Skopje.

According to the declaration for nationality in the East Planning Region, the data from the last census in Macedonia in 2002 reveals the following:

Table 11. National structure of population in EPR.

Municipalities in EPR	Total	Macedonians	Albanians	Turks	Romas	Vlachs	Serbs	Bosniaks	Other
<b>Total in R. M.</b>	<b>2.022.547</b>	<b>1.297.981</b>	<b>509.083</b>	<b>77.959</b>	<b>53.879</b>	<b>9.695</b>	<b>35.939</b>	<b>17.018</b>	<b>20.993</b>
Berovo	13.941	13.335	/	91	459	6	20	3	27
Vinica	19.938	18.261	/	27	1.230	121	32	/	22
Delchevo	17.505	16.637	7	122	651	4	35	/	49
Zrnovci	3.264	3.247	/	/	/	13	2	/	2
Karbinci	4.012	3.200	/	728	2	54	12	/	16
Kochani	38.092	35.472	1	315	1.951	194	675	2	90
Makedonska Kamenica	8.110	8.055	/	/	14	/	24	8	9
Pehchevo	5.517	4.737	/	357	390	2	12	/	19
Probishtip	16.193	15.977	/	6	37	37	89	1	46
Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	7.490	7.455	/	/	/	30	4	/	1
Shtip	47.796	41.670	12	1.272	2.195	2.074	297	11	265
<b>Total in EPR</b>	<b>181.912</b>	<b>168.046</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>2.918</b>	<b>6.929</b>	<b>2.535</b>	<b>594</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>546</b>

Source: Publication–Census, households and apartments in R. Macedonia-2002, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, May 2005, Skopje.

Pursuant to the presented data, the population of Macedonian nationality is the most numerous with 92,37% from the total population in the East Planning Region, 3,80% is of Romas nationality, 1,60% is of Turkish nationality and 0,32% is of Serbian nationality.

Table 12. Numerical state of the population in EPR as per literacy.

Municipalities in EPR	Total		Men		Women	
	literate	illiterate	literate	illiterate	literate	illiterate
<b>Total in R.M.</b>	1.693.044	63.562	863.289	14.993	829.755	48.569
Berovo	12.306	147	6.209	44	6.097	103
Vinica	16.644	840	8.729	211	7.915	629
Delchevo	15.173	483	7.900	103	7.273	380
Zrnovci	2.728	155	1.467	29	1.261	126
Karbinci	2.993	472	1.619	152	1.374	320
Kochani	32.143	1.468	16.465	434	15.678	1.034
Makedonska Kamenica	6.766	356	3.674	90	3.092	266
Pehchevo	4.830	90	2.465	18	2.365	72
Probishtip	13.971	609	7.322	113	6.649	496
Cheshinovo- Obleshevo	6.321	406	3.405	79	2.916	327
Shtip	41.362	1.331	20.943	385	20.419	946

Source: Publication–Census, households and apartments in R. Macedonia-2002, State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia, May 2005, Skopje.

The East Planning Region is economically relatively well developed compared with the other mountain regions, with the exception of Skopje Planning Region. Its participation in the gross domestic product in the Republic of Macedonia is at the level of 8.1% which is less than the participation of the region in the total territory (around 14%) and it is at the level of participation of the population in the total number of the population of the country.

Table 13. GDP of the East Planning Region, 2009-2011.

	2009	2010	2011
<b>Republic of Macedonia</b>			
<b>Gross domestic product (mil. denars)</b>	410.734	434.112	459.789
<b>Participation</b>	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%
<b>East region</b>			
<b>Gross domestic product (mil. denars)</b>	30.683	37.171	37.092
<b>Participation</b>	7.5%	8.6%	8.1%

Source: State Statistical Office of R. Macedonia.

In 2012 the East Planning Region had a gross domestic product per inhabitant of 204.748 denars, as measured per inhabitant.

Table 14. GDP per inhabitant for 2009-2012.

GDP per inhabitant (denars)	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Republic of Macedonia</b>	200.293	211.246	223.357	222.519
<b>East Planning Region</b>	170.486	206.770	206.773	204.748

Source: State Statistical Office of R. Macedonia

The entire previous period was characterized by a rapid trend of economic activity in the region and gradual approximation of the gross domestic product in the region to the average of the Republic of Macedonia, which is a favorable result and it indicates revitalization and modernization of economy.

Table 15. Ratio of GDP in the East Planning Region in relation to the Republic of Macedonia.

GDP per capita (denars)	2009	2010	2011	2012
<b>Republic of Macedonia</b>	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%
<b>East Planning Region</b>	85.12%	97.88%	92.58%	92.01%

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

The gross added value in the East region in 2012 was 395,335 million denars.

Table 16. Gross added value in the East region.

Gross added value (million denars)	2010	2011	2012
<b>Republic of Macedonia</b>	381,148	402,392	395,335
<b>East region</b>	32,363	32,462	31,560
<b>Participation in the region</b>	8.49%	8.07%	7.98%
<b>Index (2010=100)</b>	100	100.31	9.75

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

The structure of gross added value according to activities is presented in the following Table. With reference to the structure of gross added value according to activities, the participation of agriculture is on state level, while the participation of the industry is almost two times larger than the state average.

Table 17. Structure of GAV per activity in the East Planning Region.

Gross added value	Republic of Macedonia	East Planning Region
Total	395,335	31,560
Agriculture	40,705	3,663
	10.30%	11.61%
Industry	70,198	9,675
	17.76%	30.66%
Construction	31,166	2,999
	7.88%	9.50%
Trade	85,261	4,297
	21.57%	13.62%
Other activities	168,005	10,926
	42.50%	34.62%

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

The East Planning Region had 5.796 active business entities in 2013. The dynamics of the number of active enterprises in the previous period per year is presented below:

Table 18. Active business entities in EPR.

Active business entities	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Republic of Macedonia	70.710	75.497	73.118	74.424	71.290
East Planning Region	5.788	6.069	5.845	5.913	5.796

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia

Even though the number of business entities should not be a good indicator for the level of activity, it still indicates that the region had the largest number of enterprises in 2010 and that this number varies.

In view of the size of the business entities, it is discovered that the largest part of them (84%) are practically micro enterprises with low accumulation force and formed mainly to provide economic existence of the founder and the few employees, but not for more serious or larger business ventures. The entire region has only 175 firms of average size and 18 large enterprises. Therefore, the ratio between small and medium sized – total enterprises is 97% versus 3%.



Table 19. Enterprises in EPR pursuant to the number of employees.

Number of employees	Number of enterprises
0	254
1-9	4,894
10-19	281
20-49	174
<b>Total small</b>	<b>5,603</b>
50-249	175
<b>Total medium</b>	<b>175</b>
250 +	18
<b>Total large</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>5,796</b>

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

Agriculture and industry are the most significant sectors of economic activity (food industry, meat industry and metal industry, textile and shoes. The scope of investments in the main resources in the region is not greater than the relative size of the region, and a great concern is the fact that the region fails to keep up with the other regions which invest much more in fixed funds.

The information about the rate of active population, employment and unemployment are more favorable from the national average, but the region, despite these results fails to keep up with the more developed regions. This is probably due to the fact that the economic activity in the East Planning Region is with smaller newly added value and it is more labor intensive, unlike the one in the developed Skopje region.

Table 20. Population structure in EPR per activity and employment.

Working population	Republic of Macedonia	East Planning Region
<b>Active population</b>	1.672.460	150.184
<b>Rate of activity</b>	57.2	61.0
<b>Rate of employment</b>	40.6	49.1
<b>Rate of unemployment</b>	29.0	19.5

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

The structure of unemployed people in the region, compared with the average and the total of the state and pursuant to gender and place of living indicates that unemployment in the urban and rural part of the region is below the average of the state, especially for women, which is due to the large participation of textile in the structure of the industry.

Table 21. Structure of unemployed people in EPR.

Structure of unemployed people per gender and place of living	Republic of Macedonia	East
<b>Total</b>	<b>29.0</b>	<b>19.5</b>
Men	29.0	22.0
Women	29.0	16.6
<b>Urban part</b>	<b>30.6</b>	<b>22.4</b>
Men	30.8	26.3
Women	30.4	17.9
<b>Rural part</b>	<b>26.7</b>	<b>14.0</b>
Men	26.7	14.1
Women	26.6	13.8

Source: State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia.

According to the survey by Jakhimovski and others (2015), the rate of unemployment is the highest with the interviewed people with university education and the interviewed people with completed high school education. The survey revealed large structural demographic problem – high rate of unemployment of 33%. The high rate of unemployment with the interviewed households in Karbinci, Vinica, Berovo and Kochani is of high concern. On the other hand, the survey revealed lower rate of unemployment in the municipalities of Zrnovci, Makedonska Kamenica, Pehchevo, Probishtip, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo and Shtip. The insufficient income (43.7%) and the lack of employment conditions (38.1%) greatly affect the households in the East Planning Region. The insufficient income mostly affects the households in the municipalities: Pehchevo (63.2%), Karbinci (61.5%) and Delchevo (60.2%). The households in the municipality of Berovo (51.1%) and Vinica (45.6%) assume that the largest problem is lack of employment conditions.

Only 17% of the total number of interviewed households answered that their financial position has improved compared to the one in 1990. The above average answers that the financial positions have worsened were noted in the municipalities Berovo (60,2%), Delchevo (55,9%) and Pehchevo (52,6%). For 85.9% of the interviewed people, the economic and social positions affect the decision of the young people to get married.

If given an opportunity to choose a place of living, 42.7% would choose to live outside of Macedonia, and 42.4% would stay in the current place of living. Among pupils and students, 60.7% would choose to live outside of Macedonia, and 62.5% of the interviewed people with the title Doctor of Science and Master's Degree would choose to live abroad. Unlike them, only 36.8% from the interviewed people without education and 37.0% with unfinished elementary education would leave the state.

## 4.4. SETTLEMENTS IN EPR AND THEIR CHARACTERISTICS

### 4.4.1. Types of rural settlements and their functions in tourism

The total number of settlements in the East Planning Region is 217. Due to the migration from the villages to the cities, especially in the '60s and '70s of the past century, the number of population in many populated places has decreased. In turn, this has contributed for an increase of 4.9 times of the number of villages with up to 99 inhabitants from 1953 until 2002. Due to the spontaneous migration, certain number of rural settlements which existed in the 1960s are completely depopulated. Pursuant to the estimations until 2015, over 20 settlements have been depopulated and according to the census from 2002, up to 16 in the municipalities of Shtip (9), Karbinci (4) and Kochani (3). A special problem are the villages with less than 50 inhabitants. The region has 60 such villages or 27.6% from the total number of villages in the East Planning Region. From this subgroup of villages (up to 50 inhabitants), it could be expected that some villages, especially those with up to 10 inhabitants, to be completely depopulated in near future. There are 23 such villages, 10 in the municipality of Shtip, 7 in the municipality of Karbinci and 3 in the municipalities of Kochani and Probishtip (state in the year of 2002). The strongest emigration cores are the rural settlements in the municipality of Shtip and Karbinci which are affected even before the emigration of the Turks. In the past years the changes in the population structure are especially evident according to the place of living. They are emphasized for the sake of increasing the urban population. The urban population in 1953 was 26.73% or 36 975 people from the total number of population in the region and 101 350 or 73.23% in the rural environments. In 2002 this ratio changed significantly when two thirds of the population lives in the city (66.29%), and one third in the rural environments (33.71%). The participation of urban population in the total population at municipality level ranges from 50.22% in Berovo to 91.32% in Shtip. The municipality of Kochani has higher values of this indicator (74.37%). During the intercensus period 1953-2002, the urban population noted a significant increase in the municipalities with mining activities, such as Makedonska Kamenica and Probishtip. The area-demographic polarization has reflected on the changes in the redistribution of population in the urban settlements according to their size. In 2002 the east region has 6 smaller towns (from 3 000 to 12 000 inhabitants) and 2 medium (20 000 to 50 000 inhabitants). With reference to area distribution of the urban population, its concentration in the cities according to their size is quite interesting. Thus, the participation of the population from smaller towns in the total urban population is 40.29%, while in the medium towns (Shtip and Kochani) it is 59.71%. Pursuant to the territorial organization from 2004, the East Planning Region has three rural municipalities (Zrnovci, Karbinci and Cheshinovo-Obleshevo) with a total of 14 293 inhabitants or 7.99% from the total population in the region (Jakhimovski and others, 2014).

Pursuant to the tourist offer, the rural settlements may be divided in:

- Independent tourist villages with complete tourist offer (accommodation, food, recreation, cultural events, etc.)
- Tourist villages with partial tourist offer accompanied with other segments of tourist requests (villages near the lakes, baths, mountain centers, etc.)
- Villages with manifestation, tourism, cultural offer (bazaar, fairs, festivals, rural celebrations, art colonies, etc.)
- Transit tourist villages (villages near the roads)
- Picnic tourist villages (villages near the city centers)
- Villages which could provide different services (hunting, fishing, sports, religious activities, outdoor school activities, etc.)

Aside from their basic residential function, the rural settlements increasingly receive a recreational-tourist function. The term recreational-tourist function implies temporary stay of urban population in a rural area, located near the city. The tourist function represents a temporary stay in the rural area by visitors coming from distant places (Chomikh 2001).

The Republic of Macedonia is mainly rural based upon its geographic and demographic characteristics, and the application of an integral approach towards the term rural tourism enables development of regional approach and promotion of hot-spot destinations for rural tourism.

The Republic of Macedonia possesses a rich fund of authentic, cultural, natural and traditional resources and products, which pursuant to the global trend in the past decades in rural tourism, offer serious possibilities for development of this branch. Simultaneously, the unique approach towards traditional products with the population is a good basis for creating a specific and unified model and concept for development of rural tourism in Macedonia.

The national strategy for agriculture and rural tourism for the period 2009-2013 accentuates tourism and agriculture as priority sectors for development in the country and offers analyses of the conditions and a range of responsibilities of the Ministry of agriculture, forestry and water supply. The national strategy for rural tourism 2012-2017 defines the priority goals for development of rural tourism, and the program IPARD enables access to funds for development of rural tourism via the measure 302.

#### 4.4.2. Handicraft

Handicraft is hand production of objects with a certain skill. With the rise of industrial production, and especially the inexpensive goods from Turkey and China, handicrafts have almost disappeared. We live in an era when the industrial rise of massive production gradually makes room for the handicrafts to return. The old handicrafts are returning with their entire splendor of individuality and uniqueness. The hand creations, original products touched by human hands are more valuable as they carry the specific added value in the production.

Handicraft is well recognized in the world trends and politics. It attracts large investments and reveals possibilities which it offers as an employer, unemployment regulator, as an option for a small, family business and existence. Handicraft offers an economic potential where the handicraftsman is the main instigator of his own upgrade and creator of economic basis for future generations of handicraftsmen. The position of handicraft now and the opportunities which it offers, encourage the need of complete and organized approach for further development, in order to answer to the needs of the handicraftsmen. Following the European strategy 2020 which refers to the development of economy in the European Union for the following period, the European strategy for employment, the Strategy of handicraft chamber of the Republic of Macedonia is aiming to increase employment, is aiming towards structured education of the existing and potential handicraftsmen, and towards provision of new opportunities mainly for young people.

Pursuant to the collected data, handicraft is poorly present and mainly performed by elderly people. Organized sale and exhibits occur only during certain manifestations. There are no organized shops or education of the local population for the benefits and opportunities from handicraft. There are few associations in several municipalities which are working towards this aim but they need institutional support, education and networking. According to the conducted surveys and the processed questionnaires in all 11 municipalities from the East Planning Region, the results are the following:

##### 1. Municipality of Shtip

Handicrafts:

- Woodcarving
- Smithery
- Embroidery, knitting
- Wine and brandy production in a traditional method

There is an active association of handicraftsmen of the East Planning Region, with permanent office and an executive secretary in the municipality building, president Krstev Venco, mobile phone number: 077/761413.



## 2. Municipality of Probishtip

- Milling
- Woodcarving
- Pottery

There is no special municipal association of handicraftsmen.



Figure 20. An old watermill along the course of Zletovska Reka (source: Municipality of Probishtip).

## 3. Municipality of Kochani

- The watermill on Kochanska Reka in the locality Balchaluk, on the road towards the dam Gratche, as well as the watermill on Orizarska Reka in the village Orizari,
- Valavnici at the village Kostin Dol and the village Rechani on Bela Reka which is an integral part of Orizarska Reka,
- Smiths
- Barrel producers
- Producing ropes and saddles
- Loom weaving in the village Orizari and in private homes
- Embroidery and knitting
- Production of wine and brandy in distilleries in a traditional method
- Barbers
- Tinsmith
- Watchmaker
- Goldsmith
- Shoemaker
- Tailors

There is no special municipal association of handicraftsmen.

## 4. Municipality of Pehchevo

- Loom weaving
- Embroidery, knitting

- Tinsmith
- Production of wine and brandy in distilleries in a traditional method

There is no special municipal association of craftsmen.

#### **5. Municipality of Vinica**

- Smithery in Blatec, Lipeč and Istibanja
- Woodcarving in Blatec
- Production of ropes, saddles, etc.
- Loom weaving (small weaved, woolen carpets, small weaved cotton carpets)
- Felt products (souvenirs and products for sale): hats, shawls, slippers, miniature dolls, table covers, etc.
- Knitting woolen and cotton products
- Knitting belts, bracelets, chains from beads
- Embroidery in different techniques

The weaving workshop in the village Istibanja IE Stoimenova Olga registered in CRM and actively working from 2004-2014 for design, production and marketing of authentic Macedonian handicrafts which provide existence for the workshop.

#### **6. Municipality of Berovo**

- Woodcarving
- Slippermaker
- Iconography
- Fresco painting
- Silversmith
- Weaving and yarning
- Felt products
- Knitting and embroidery

There are two active associations in the municipality: “Serafim” – Berovo and “Rakotvorbi” – village Rusinovo.

#### **7. Municipality of Delchevo**

- Textile production,
- Embroidery, knitting,
- Souvenirs made of recycled material, jewelry, wooden products (brooches, purses, belts), photos made of dry and pressed flowers, watches,
- Icons on glass, marble and wood,
- Carving and pyrography.

Some local NGO are involved in crafting.

#### **8. Municipality of Zrnovci**

- Farrier (horse farriering)
- Production of wine and brandy in distilleries in a traditional method

There is no special municipal association of craftsmen.

#### **9. Municipality of Karbinci**

- Milling
- Loom weaving
- Embroidery, knitting

There is no special municipal association of craftsmen.

#### **10. Municipality of Makedonska Kamenica**

- Barrel productions,
- Loom weaving,
- Embroidery, knitting,
- Production of wine and brandy in distilleries in a traditional method

There is no special municipal association of craftsmen.

#### **11. Municipality of Cheshinovo-Obleshevo**

- Woodcarving
- Production of wine and brandy in distilleries in a traditional method

There is no special municipal association of craftsmen.

#### **List of handicrafts:**

##### **Construction**

Sawing, Welling, Limeburning, Carpentry, Fresco Painting, Bricklaying, Stonemasonry, Roofing, Constructioning, Woodcarving, Painting, Brickworking.

##### **Alimentary**

Milling, Watermilling, Breadbaking, Chickpea producing, Butchery, Milk producing, Sieving, Roll and pie baking, Pastrybaking, Seed oil producing.

##### **Attire and jewelry**

Tailoring, Wooling, Spining, Cordmaker and Silkmaker, Combmaker, Bower, Goldsmith, Shoemaker, Slippermaker, Sandalmaker, Weaver (sewing), Silvery.

##### **Household**

Barrelmaker, Rolling-miller, Combmaker, Pottery maker, Ropemaker, Quiltmaker, Kettlemaker, Tinmaker, Hatter, Smith, Leathermaker, Furrier, Founder, Whitesmith, Covermaker, Knivemaker, Hip flask maker, Rush man, Saddlemaker, Weaving, Brushmaker, Tailor.

##### **Transportation**

Carting, Renting, Carriaging, Saddling.

##### **Trade**

Cotton trader, Silk trader, Charburner, Caftan trader, Horse trader.

##### **Other**

Gunpowderer, Hairdresser, Ironworker, Bellmaker, Scalemaker, Nailmaker, Wickerwork, Broommaker, Farrier, Riflemaker, Printing work, Soapmaker, Saddler, Candlemaker, Wheelmaker, Photographmaker, Clockmaker, Combmaker.

The list is not final.

\*\*\* Extract from the Strategy for development of handicraft of RM 2012-2016.

## **4.5. Cultural-historical and archeological heritage**

### **4.5.1. Archeological localities**

According to the archeological map of the Republic of Macedonia, the East Planning Region is rich in localities, i.e. there are around 600 archeological localities. The grouping of these localities is

made according to the old territorial distribution of municipalities. However, it could be said that they are grouped on the basis of their proximity to larger towns. Thus, in the proximity of Shtip there are 135 archeological localities, in the proximity of Kochani, 111, Probishtip 42, Berovo 94, Vinica 97 and Delchevo 112.

In Shtip - Argulica 2, Baltalija 1, Batanja 1, Brest 4, Vrsakovo 1, Golem Gaber 2, Gorachino 2, Gorni Balvan 4, Gorni Kozjak 2, Gorno Trogerci 2, Dobroshani 1, Dolani 8, Dolni Balvan 3, Dolni Kozjak 5, Dolno Trogerci 1, Dragoevo 3, Kalauzlija 1, Karbinci 1, Krivi Dol 4, Krupishte 4, Leskovica 7, Novo Selo 3, Novo Selo – Shtip 5, Penush 1, Piperovo 3, Poshivalo 5, Puhche 5, Radanje 1, Ruljak 4, Sarchievo 1, Selche 2, Skandalci 1, Sofilari 2, Star Karaorman 6, Stepanci 1, Suvo Grlo 3, Sudikh 3, Tarinci 3, Toplik 1, Tri Cheshmi 1, Haji Hamzali 1, Crvulevo 4, Creshka 4, Chardaklija 2, Shashavarlija 1, Shopur 6, 10,

In Kochani- Banja 5, Bezikovo 3, Beli 4, Burlichevo 6, Vidovishte 4, Vraninci 4, Vrbica 1, Glavovica 1, Gorno Gratche 1, Dolno Gratche 2, Zhiganci 2, Zrnovci 2, Jastrebnik 2, Kochani 14, Kuchuchino 2, Lepopelci 1, Leshki 2, Morodvis 3, Nebojani 1, Nivichani 5, Novoselani 1, Orizari 12, Pantelej 1, Polaki 2, Preseka 3, Pripor 1, Rajchani 1, Sokolarci 5, Spanchevo 7, Teranci 2, Trkanje 6, Cear 2, Chiflik 1

In Berovo- Budinarci 8, Berovo 14, Vladimirovo 12, Dvorishte 5, Machevo 11, Mitrashinci 6, Negrevo 3, Pancharevo 5, Ratevo 6, Robovo 2, Rusinovo 11, Smojmirovo 2, Umlena 2, Crnik 1, Chiflik 6.

In Probishtip 42- Gajranci 1, Gorno Barbarevo 1, Gorni Stubol 1, Grizilevci 4, Gujnovci 1, Dobrevo 2, Drenok 3, Dreveno 1, Zelengrad 3, Zletovo 4, Jamishte 2, Kukovo 2, Lezovo 3, Lesново 1, Petrishino 1, Pishica 1, Pleshanci 1, Ratavica 1, Strmosh, Tripatanci 1, Troolo 2, Shtalkovica 3.

Vinica ( 97) - Blatec 10, Vinica 5, Vinichka Krshla 9, Gradec 5, Grljani 3, Dragobrashta 7, Istibanja 8, Jakimovo 5, Kalimanci 10, Krushevo 1, Laki 10, Leski 3, Lipec 6, Pekljani 7, Troino 1, Trsino 5, Crn Kamen 2 Pehchevo 6.

Delchevo (112) – Bigla 6, Virche 6, Vratislavci 1, Gabrovo 3, Grad 3, Delchevo 8, Dramche 7, Dulica 7, Zvegor 5, Ilievo 2, Kamenica 5, Kiselica 5, Kosovo Dabje 3, Kostin Dol 3, Kosevica 3, Lukovica 2, Moshtica 7, Nov Istevnik 1, Ochipale 5, Razlovci 5, Sasa 9, Selnik 1, Stamer 1, Star Istvenik 3, Todorovci 1, Trabatovishte 5, Turija 1, Crkvenec 3, Chiflik 1.

It is important to take into consideration that the number of localities is increasing every day and the largest part of these localities are not presented and available for visitors. The following archeological localities have been presented and they have a potential for development.

**(1) Isar – Shtip** is located in the southwest part of Shtip at 150 meters above the level of the river Bregalnica. It is surrounded with steep slopes, the bed of river Bregalnica on the west side and the bed of Otinja on the south side. This hill has an exceptionally favorable strategic position which enables overview and control of the entrance and the exit of the town. Due to this position and purpose, a medieval fortress with the same name was built, which is one of the symbols of the town Shtip nowadays. There is an interesting legend about the fortress Isar and the town Shtip and their invasion by the Ottomans during the reign of Sultan Murat I in 1383. The famous writer of travel books, Evlija Celebi wrote about this event, who came to visit Shtip in the 17 century. According to Celebi, the town was under siege by large Turkish army, but the siege and efforts to invade the fortress were unsuccessful. The soldiers stayed by the river Bregalnica and noticed that the defenders used a tunnel to supply the fortress with water. They used the same tunnel and they conquered the fortress. The archeological researches in 2009 revealed the 30 m long tunnel leading from the river to the top of Isar, which confirms the most famous Shtip legend. The fortress is composed of two parts, surrounded with individual wall zones. The castle was set on the highest part of the hill, and the other part was located on the slopes north-east and south from the castle. With the use of firearms the fortress lost its function and it became abandoned.



**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality in the town Shtip, the custom “Feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs”, panoramic view of the town.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The positive side of this locality is its location in the town Shtip, which enables its inclusion in the total tourist offer. A big plus is the custom the “Feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs” which is closely related to this locality and it is the first element of Macedonia on the representation list of the World’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

**(2) Grncharica** – Archeological locality near the village Krupishte is an early Neolithic settlement and also the oldest locality in Southeastern Europe. Here a Neolithic skeleton was found which the archeologists called “Slave the Macedonian” and which, according to the radiocarbonanalyses made at the Institute of Archeology in Glasgow, Scotland, it is nearly 6700 years old, which makes it the oldest archeological exponent in Southeastern Europe. The skeleton was found in an entombing position typical for the Neolithic period, i.e. the deceased person was laid on the side, with the head close to the legs.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality, Neolithic skeleton –Slave the Macedonian.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not presented and it is not suitable for tourist visits. The Neolithic skeleton is exhibited in the museum of Shtip. The presentation of this locality would increase the tourist offer of this region, but if this is not possible, then it is recommended to place signage which would help in marking this locality and denoting its importance.

**(3) Archeological locality Pilevo** at Burilchevo–Cheshinovo Obleshevo is abundant in ceramics in various forms and methods of decoration.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not presented and it is not suitable for tourist visits. The presentation of this locality would increase the tourist offer of this region, but if this is not possible, then it is recommended to place signage which would help in marking this locality and denoting its importance.

**(4) Archeological locality Bargala**–Karbinci is an established settlement from late ancient times and one of the most significant late ancient towns in Macedonia. The town grew from a Roman fort – the inscription on the memorial plaque from the year of 371 confirms its existence. The memorial plaque was accidentally found in the village Karbinci during the Second World War. This memorial plaque reveals the location of the ancient town Bargala along with the problems on the border of Macedonia towards Thrace and Dacia. The name of the town has Thracian origin. The old ancient settlement with urban character named Bargala was located at Dolni Kozjak. Towards the end of the IV century this town served as a military camp of the Roman legions in their campaigns towards east. Later the town was ruined and the inhabitants erected a new town beside Kozjachka Reka at Gorni Kozjak, which was confirmed by archeological findings. After losing its strategic importance, Bargala began to appear as a civil settlement. During the period of IV-VI century the town grew into a powerful Episcopal center of Middle Bregalnica, and especially during the period of Justinian I (527-565), the town reached its peak. Towards the end of the VI century the town suffered several attacks by the Avaro-Slavs and then it was reinhabited again. In the middle century a new settlement was formed beside the south wall and the southeastern tower, beyond the borders of this locality, on the location of the church “St. Gjorgji”, built towards the end of the second half of IX century. Coins were discovered in Bargala from the period of Anastaij I, Justinian I, Justinian I, Justin II, Tiberius and Maurice. The archeological locality Bargala is located at 12 km northeast of Shtip, in the locality of Goren Kozjak beside Kozjachka Reka in the foot of the mountain Plachkovica.



Figure 21. Archeological locality Bargala (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality, church “St. Gjorgji”.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage, religious tourism.

**Note:** Since this archeological locality is located approximately 12 km north-east of Shtip and there are no important traffic connections passing through it, the locality requires greater promotion and combination with other types of tourism.

**(5) Archeological locality Crkvishte**—village Morodvis is located in the eastern part of Macedonia, 10 km south of Kochani, located in Kochanska Kotlina, in the foot of the mountain Plachkovica. The archeological locality is located in the center of this village and it represents an integral part of the old Roman town Morobisdon, which is also mentioned in written documents from XI and XII century as a large town and an Episcopal center in the Bregalnica region. Remains from four churches have been found in Morobisdon. The oldest church is from the period between V and VI century and two churches date from XI and XIII century. The smaller church which was built in the XIII century on top of the basilica from the V century is the best evidence of the continuity of civilization of this place.



Figure 22. Archeological locality Crkvishte in the village Morodvis (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage, religious tourism.

**Note:** The locality is in the village and in the vicinity of the newly constructed ethno house and the monastery “St. Simeon Stolpnik”, which additionally increases the tourist offer. Since the locality is outside of the larger town centers and more significant traffic connections, it should be combined with other types of tourism.

**(6) Archeological locality Lokubija – Kochani** with the help of probe researches on the locality Lokubija at Kochani, a necropolis from the Roman Imperial Period, i.e. II-III century was recently discovered. Aside from the larger number of discovered items, there were also remains of a wall which implies the existence of a fortress or a protective wall of some town or inhabited place.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not presented and it is not suitable for tourist visits. Its presentation would increase the tourist offer of this region, but if this is not possible, then it is recommended to place signage which would help in marking this locality and denoting its importance.

**(7) Archeological locality Vinichko Kale** – Vinica, is located southwest from Vinica and it is far known for the terracotta icons discovered on its territory. The locality reveals remains of several facilities and the remains of an old church from the first half of the IV century, located in the southwest part of the locality. Vinichko Kale was first noticed as an archeological locality in 1954 by Miodrag Grbikh, under the name “Gradishte”. The first more serious researches of this locality began in 1985 which confirmed that there was life in this settlement since the Neolithic period until the Middle Age. The settlement was located at an exceptionally suitable location on the road from Stobi to Pautalija and Sedika. The terracotta icons from the famous Vinichko Kale have been found in the debris between



the walls of the residential part of the locality and they have priceless artistic, theological and archeological value. They date from V - VI century and they contain iconographic presentations with Christian subjects, as well as Latin inscriptions with liturgical contents.



Figure 23. Archeological locality Vinichko Kale - Vinica.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality, terracotta icons, panoramic view of the town.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage, religious tourism.

**Note:** Vinichko Kale and the vicinity of Vinica are especially interesting for archeological researches and based upon the present work and the initiatives of the officials, this trend is expected to be continued.

**(8) Archeological locality Gradishte**, village Grad – Delchevo; many archeological findings reveal the presence of an important urban settlement since Roman Age in the village Grad.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not sufficiently researched and presented and it is not suitable for tourist visits. It is recommended to place signage which would help in marking this locality where an important urban settlement existed during Roman Age.

**(9) Archeological locality St. Petka** – Pehchevo is located 4 km from Pehchevo in the locality known as Manastir. This place reveals remains of the monastery complex which was large in size and which included several accompanying facilities.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality, remains of the monastery.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage, religious tourism.



**Note:** More detailed researches are necessary for this locality in order to place it in the function of tourism.

**(10) Medieval town Raven – Pehchevo.** Pursuant to certain historical sources, there is a possibility that the town Raven – the cradle of Slavic alphabet was located on this place, 5 km from Pehchevo. Raven is the place where Methodius wrote the Slavic alphabet.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** More detailed researches are necessary for this locality in order to confirm or deny the allegation that it is the town Raven – the cradle of Slavic alphabet.

**(11) Archeological locality Kalata, Kalimanci.** Kalata is a peninsula during summer and an island in winter at the accumulation Kalimanci. It is located 4 km from Makedonska Kamenica. This was an exceptionally fertile land where the late ancient town once existed and its remains are covered with water nowadays. Kalata is an abbreviation of “the city of tin” as gold and tin were extracted from this place in the past.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not sufficiently researched and presented. Additional researches are required and it is recommended to place signage, which would help in marking the locality and denoting its importance.

**(12) Village Tarinci** in the municipality of Karbinci. According to the archeological researches in the proximity of this village, it has been confirmed that the village has a long history. On the locality “Vrshnik” in the area of the village, a settlement was discovered from the Neolithic period, and on the locality “Knezhevska Mogila” archeological exponents were discovered from the ancient period.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The localities around the village are not sufficiently researched and presented. Additional researches are required and it is recommended to place signage, which would help in marking them and in denoting their importance.

**(13) Archeological locality St. Atanas, village Spanchevo.** Near the church St. Atanasij in the village Spanchevo, municipality of Cheshino Obleshevo, there is an archeological locality Gradishte. During Roman Age there was a settlement here and its remains can be seen nowadays.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(14) Besh Tepe – Karbinci.** Besh Tepe is a characteristic necropolis from the Roman Age (I - II century) where the burying was carried out under tombs. It is located at around 1500 up to 2.000 m southeast from the village Karbinci on the left side of the road to Radanje. The Roman settlement called Anche is located in its vicinity, which leads to the presumption that this necropolis was used for burying famous military leaders and priests.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** There are 5 such tombs and one of them was excavated and conserved and it is open for tourist visit.

**(15) Kale – Krupishte.** Kale in the village Krupishte is a settlement from late ancient and medieval age. It is believed that the town was consolidated but the defense walls were ruined when the settlement began to expand and when the terrain was flattened for rice fields. The largest part of the ruining occurred after the First and especially after the Second World War, with the construction and the rebuilding of the village, but mostly with the street tracing.

The archeological researches conducted with small interruptions from 1975 until 1990 confirmed that there was life here since Bronze Age, and then ancient times and it continued until today. Aside from the minor archeological materials (ceramic fragments and dishes, architectural stone plastic), the archeological researches revealed two facilities: Crvena Crkva and penta-apsidal basilica construction (cathedral temple).

Crvena Crkva (Red Church) has rectangular shape with protruded apsidis, semicircular from the inside and polygonal from the outside. The carved cross in the rectangle is formed by four equal cross sides. The church was a narthex on its west side. Two entrances have been discovered, one wide entrance on the west side, which is also the main entrance and a secondary entrance in the northern perimetric wall.

The penta-apsidal basilica is a representative church construction with five massively constructed apsidis and its width is 28,90 .

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality is not presented.

**(16) Neolithic settlement Vrshnik - Tarinci.** The Neolithic settlement Vrshnik is located 1 km northeast from the village Tarinci, 3 km south of Karbinci. The settlement had several levels with four living horizons, which was confirmed with parts from the living facilities and a large number of objects from the material culture. Pursuant to the typological characteristics, especially of the ceramic dishes and the cult plastics, it has been determined that people lived here continuously from the early to the late Neolithic period.

Until the researches of the locality Barutnica, the village Anzabegovo was separated as a special cultural group and later, after the researches in Anzabegovo, it was named Anzabegovo-Vrshnik cultural group, which includes the Neolithic settlements from Eastern Macedonia, with the exception of the newly discovered settlement Grncharica at the village Krupishte. The objects from the archeological researches in 1970 – 1971 were exhibited at the Institute for protection of cultural monuments and the Museum of Shtip.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological locality.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage.

**Note:** The locality is not presented.

## 4.5.2. Urban and rural architecture in EPR

### 4.5.2.1. Rural architecture

In the process of formation of villages, the natural and geographic conditions played a significant role. Water for drinking and irrigation, arable land for food and pastures, were always the primary factors for the location of villages and towns. An important factor is also the surrounding with other inhabited places and the proximity to some more important roads for communication and exchange of goods, along with the changes in the social-political organization. For example, during the Turkish invasion of the Balkan Peninsula, the Christian population was forced to leave their homes and to form new settlements in safer, but less comfortable mountain areas for living. The Turkish authority in Macedonia and the newly created serfdom system created specific type of settlements called serfdom, which were concentrated around the property of the bey and they remained until the end of the XIX century. With the help of the reforms implemented by the Ottoman Empire and the larger freedom given to the Christian population, the traditional form of the villages began to change in the beginning of the XIX century. A large number of villages received a structure and architecture which is still preserved even nowadays and it provides an excellent opportunity for development of this type of tourism. Basically, the villages in Macedonia may be grouped in two types: clustered and dispersed villages. Clustered villages arose from the need of rational land utilization and collective defense and land cultivation. These types of villages are mainly found on the mountain and hill settlements. Dispersed types of villages are made of several smaller groups (neighborhoods) which gravitate towards one center. Each village has its own center “middle of the village”, a location with usually a larger church or mosque and a fountain, and lately with a shop or a tavern. However, we must not forget the fact that after the Second World War, Macedonia was faced with immigration trend from the villages. Therefore, the villages were left to the mercy of time and a number of representative examples from the traditional Macedonian rural architecture are eternally lost. Nowadays, many locations in EPR have many excellent examples of the traditional Macedonian rural architecture, but unfortunately only a small number of them are actually properly preserved. The trend of using new “modern” construction materials is evident and this permanently ruins the appearance of these facilities. Additionally, by abandoning the traditional way of life and land cultivation, a large number of accompanying facilities and objects and a part of the rich history of this area are disappearing for good. A positive step is the reconstruction of several ethno houses which recapture the traditional life in this area. However, special attention must be paid towards the conservation of the original traditional architecture and its presentation.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Rural architecture, authentic constructions, accompanying facilities used in the past.

**Potential types of tourism:** Tourism of cultural-historical heritage, rural tourism.

**Note:** Due to the size of EPR, large difference in living conditions, terrain configuration, etc., it is impossible to provide short description of the characteristics of rural architecture. In attachment to this document we provide a list of houses which are protected as cultural heritage. It is important to note that this list is not final, i.e. the value of each facility is altering over time. For example, with the use of new construction materials and illegal interventions on the facilities, a large number of unique examples of the traditional rural architecture have lost its value irreversibly. Proper marking of more representative samples and their appropriate presentation before tourists is necessary for placing them in the function of tourism.

### 4.5.2.2. Urban architecture

From early time the territory of Macedonia provided especially good living conditions and development of civilizations living on its territory. Part of the present towns in Macedonia are located

on the same place as in ancient times, and parts of them have been built on changed locations near the ancient settlements. When the Slavs inhabited these areas they encountered higher culture and at certain points life continued in the old urban settlement, while at other places they created new settlement near the old ones. As time went by, the old settlements and the new settlements gradually became one and thus, the more intensive architectural creation could be seen before the end of the IX and the beginning of the X century, with the strengthening of the church organization and power of feudal lords. During this period, the most prominent living place in the urban areas belonged to the feudal lord, which had the best protection and which was surrounded by the homes of the population. Additionally, during this period the churches had more prominent positions as well, especially with their dimensions and architectural constructions.

After Macedonia fell under Ottoman rule, there are significant changes of the architecture in the towns, when the new social changes brought new significant changes on the structure of towns. The rulers began to settle and to gradually change the appearance of towns which obtained urban landmarks such as mosques, madrasas, tekkies, hamams, bedestens, etc. A great number of the Christian population left the towns and looked for a new life in the mountain parts, and this significantly changed the ethnical structure of towns. The changes which took place during the Ottoman Empire and the greater freedom for the Christian population in the middle of the XIX century brought a more intensive development of handicraft and trade. This resulted with increased economic power with the Christian population and creation of more favorable conditions for religious, cultural and educational activity. This situation brought an increase of population in towns and created conditions for their faster development and development of architectural construction. When the Macedonian population began to settle in the towns they mainly inhabited the peripheral and the hill side of the towns, where clustered formations of houses began to appear, which were rationally built on many floors. The houses of beys and pashas were located on the vast yards and they were mainly located in the center of the town. An important element of the towns was its clustering into neighborhoods which were a type of special urban entities with their neighborhood centers, expansions, fountains and some facility offering service. The marketplace was situated in the center of the towns as an economical center with facilities of social character. Almost all marketplaces in the towns in Macedonia had a similar character; narrow facilities were built parallel to the narrow alleys and depending upon their location they were grouped by handicraft. The newly built churches were the peak of architecture in that period, and their size clearly reveals the necessities and possibilities of the economically stronger Christian population. These facilities also reveal western influence and they were built by local workmen, among them was Andreja Damjanov, one of the most famous constructors from that period. The church "St. Mary" in Novo Selo, Shtip is one of the works of the family Damjanov from Veles, a family involved in construction who finished this monumental sanctuary in 1850.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Urban architecture, authentic constructions.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historic heritage tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** EPR is a relatively large region with a great number of representative examples of urban architecture. However, it is still evident that a large number of these facilities are not properly marked and they are not protected and conserved which would help in their conservation as excellent examples. A list of houses which are protected as cultural heritage are provided in attachment to this document. It is important to note that this list is not final, i.e. the value of each of these facilities is changing with time. For example, with the use of new construction materials and illegal interventions on the facilities, a large number of unique examples of the traditional urban architecture have lost its value irreversibly. Proper marking of more representative samples and their appropriate presentation before tourists is necessary for placing them in the function of tourism.



### 4.5.3. Museums and memorial houses

**(1) City museum – Shtip.** The institute and museum of Shtip was formed in 1950 as a town institution which grew into a Museum of the area of Shtip in 1955. The museum owns several collections and funds from the area of archeology, ethnology, history, history or art and modern Macedonian history. There are also historical valuable displays made of ceramics, bronze, silver, coins, etc. found in the past period. In the museum complex Anevi-Gochevi there is an archeological display with over 1200 objects. There are archeological objects from the Neolithic period until the XVIII century. From the Neolithic period (6200-3500 B.C.) there are materials from Neolithic settlements: Barutnica (Amzabegovo), Rug Bair (village Gorabinci), Vrshnik (Tarinci) and others. From the Eneolithic period (3500-2000 B.C.) there are archeological materials from Pilovo (Burilchevo). Important displays from the prehistoric period from the localities Babi, Fortuna, Krivi Dol and Karaorman are also present, while the Roman period (II until IV century B.C.) is presented with Knezhevska Mogila from the village Tarinci and a tomb at the village of Crvulevo. The archeological display also includes many objects from the Middle Ages (VII until XIV century), and the fans of numismatics can enjoy the rich series of coins dating from the period between IV B.C. until XX century. This complex also includes the latest discovery –the oldest human skeleton in this part of Europe called Slave the Macedonian.

**Tourist attractiveness:** the most representative and largest museums in EPR, rich archeological display, rich numismatic collection, Slave the Macedonian.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The museum of Shtip is one of the key links for development of tourism in this town and in the EPR.

**(2) Ethno–house in the village Morodvis – Zrnovci** was recently opened and it offers exhibited objects which were used for centuries by the local population. This facility additionally enriches the tourist offer in this area for development of ethno-cultural tourism. The ethno-house was built with the funds from the Bureau for equal regional development and the municipality of Zrnovci and it is located in the vicinity of the archeological locality Crkvishte, the location of the former Roman town Morobisdon.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Rich ethno collection which is constantly being complemented.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, rural tourism.

**Note:** The archeological locality Crkvishte and the monastery “St. Simeon Stolpnik” are located near the ethno house, which additionally increase the tourist offer.

**(3) Ethno house and city museum** in Kochani is a project which was co-financed by the European Union via the IPA program for cross-border cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Bulgaria. It is located on the street “Rade Kratovche” with an architectural style characteristic for this part of the country. Photographs and traditional authentic objects are exhibited in the house and they reveal the everyday life of the population in this location.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Ethno house.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(4) Museum of Vinica** is located in the center of the town, as part of the Municipality Assembly Building. The largest collection of terracotta icons of Macedonia is located in this museum. They were created in the ceramic workshop within the archeological locality Vinichko Kale in the Middle Ages and they witness the high artistic achievement of Christian art in Macedonia. The Museum of Vinica is open from Monday to Friday and if scheduled in advance, it can also be open during weekends for a visit by a larger group of tourists.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Collection of terracotta icons.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.



Figure 24. Museum of the town Vinica (source: Municipality of Vinica).

**(5) Memorial ossuary in the village Cera**, municipality of Makedonska Kamenica. One of the most frightening battles during the Second Balkan War took place near Makedonska Kamenica in the locality „Govedar“. During this battle many soldiers lost their lives and there were also many casualties among the local population. The remains of the killed soldiers were gathered in a memorial ossuary which was built by the Serbian authorities in 1933 at the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Second Balkan War. The memorial ossuary is located in the basement of the school building.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Memorial ossuary.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, memorial tourism.

**Note:** In this case larger emphasis should be placed on the battle itself, and its importance and the consequences from the battle upon the local population and the outcome of the battle. It is also recommended to make proper marking of the location where the battle took place and to place signage to share information.

**(6) Museum of the town Delchevo** is located in the Memorial home of ASNOM in the center of Delchevo. The archeological-ethnological collection was open on 19.11.2001 as a theme exhibition titled “Pijanec from prehistory until today”.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Archeological-ethnological collection.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The locality needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(7) Memorial-house from Razlovechko uprising** in Razlovci – Delchevo. Razlovechko uprising occurred in 1876 in the village Razlovci, when the population from this area rose against the Ottoman army. Despite the failure of the uprising, it had significant effect upon bringing national awareness among the Macedonian people. Therefore, in 1976 a memorial house was built in this village, with a library, with permanent historical presentation and an art exhibit. The village Razlovci is located 20 km from the town Delchevo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** library, permanent historical presentation, art exhibit.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet. If possible, it is recommended to place proper signage on several places which have historical value and which are related to a certain event from the uprising.



Figure 25. Memorial home from the Razlovechko uprising in the village Razlovci (original).

**(8) Museum of the town Berovo** is located in the center of the town, in a facility which was reconstructed to match the original architecture from the end of the XIX century. This facility is one of the more representative facilities in the town, as this is where the first national school was open and the first Assembly for national freedom for Berovo. The museum presentation is divided in two parts – historical and ethnological. The historical presentation includes documents and objects related to the history of Maleshevija, from the period of grandfather Iljo Maleshevski, Nikola Petrov Rusinski, Dimitar Pop Georgiev Berovski, Razlovechko uprising, World War I and World War II and after. Additionally, it includes ancient and middle age coins, to witness the presence of Roman civilization in this part of the world. From an ethnological aspect, the reconstruction of the Maleshevska room is especially interesting, along with the excellent examples of Maleshevski traditional costume, jewelry, musical instruments, pottery and the reconstruction of the Maleshevska blacksmith.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Reconstructed facility with original architecture, which also provides historical value for the town, historical and ethnological museum presentation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(9) Museum of IMRO activists from Shtip and Shtip area, Novo Selo, Shtip.** This museum is the home of wax figures of eminent historical activists from the Ilinden and post Ilinden period, which come from Shtip and its surrounding. The museum of these Macedonian revolutionaries honors their deed and provides cultural interaction between the past and present, between history and modern living. The museum is located in the reconstructed house which belongs to the family Andonov, which was bought off by the Ministry of culture for the purpose of conserving this valuable cultural monument and providing its sustainable use. The museum owns an exhibit area of 160 m<sup>2</sup>, seven separate rooms with remarkable and valuable exhibits, photographs, authentic documents, personal



items, military equipment and weapons related to the most significant people from this region which were involved in the activities of the Macedonian revolutionary organization from its formation until Thessaloniki in 1893, and until the activities in Marseilles in 1934.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Reconstructed house with original architecture and a museum of wax figures therein.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

#### 4.5.4. Cultural and historical landmarks

**(1) Monument of deported Jews - Shtip.** On March 11, 1943, 160 Jewish families were taken from their homes early in the morning and sent to the concentration camp Treblinka where more than 7200 Jews were killed from the entire country (551 of them came from Shtip). Jews lived in harmony with the remaining communities and they were known merchants, handicraftsmen, educated and honorable men who lived in Shtip for centuries. They were responsible for the main trade in town and they maintained trade connections with Thessaloniki. In honor of the Jews, a monument was erected in 1985 by the artist Methody Andonov, which symbolizes the life journey of the Jews whose life line was interrupted on March 11, 1943. The monument was recently restored and its damaged parts were repaired by the young artist from Shtip, Nikola Smilkov. The monument is located near the building of the Institute and Museum – Shtip.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Memorial landmark of the deported Jews from Shtip.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Aside from Bitola and Skopje, Shtip is the third town in Macedonia which had a large Jewish community, existing there for centuries. With the preparation of proper promotional materials which would provide more information about the life of Jews, there is a possibility to attract Jewish tourists from around the world. However, this also includes marking of other facilities such as the Jewish cemetery, houses where the Jews resided, etc. With the opening of the Museum of the Holocaust in Skopje, an increase of tourists of Jewish origin has been noted and part of these tourists could also be attracted to come and visit Shtip.

**(2) Monument of fallen fighters in PLW Shtip – Shtip.** More than 2000 residents of Shtip were involved in the People's Liberation War and 814 of them lost their lives, 88 in direct confrontation with the enemy. In honor of the victims, Memorial monument was erected in 1974 according to the conceptual idea of the architect Bogdan Bogdanovich. The memorial monument of the fallen fighters in PLW is located on the eastern side of the Isar.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Memorial monument of the fallen fighters in PLW.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(3) Novo Selo – Shtip** is a constituent part of Shtip located on the road to Radovich, in the ravine of Bregalnica, behind the Isar. According to one legend, after the Turks invaded Shtip, a large part of the eminent Christian families moved to this location and named it Novo Selo. A large number of eminent people who were and who are part of the Macedonian history and present, originate from this exact location. This location is also known after the Macedonian revolutionary Goce Delchev, who worked as a teacher in the school in Novo Selo, which is the home of the rectorate of the University of Shtip "Goce Delchev" nowadays.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Rich architecture, relation with numerous people from the Macedonian history.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Novo Selo is especially interesting for tourists from other towns of Macedonia in view of the fact that this place is connected with numerous people from Macedonian history.

**(4) The monument of Dame Gruev** is located at around 5 km from Berovo in the center of the village Rusinovo. On December 23, 1906 this Macedonian revolutionary, founder and one of the most prominent members of the Macedonian revolutionary organization was killed on the top Petlec in the vicinity of the village Rusinovo.



Figure 26. Monument of Dame Gruev in the village Rusinovo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Historical landmark.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** More efforts should be invested for greater promotion of this location through an integrated offer with other types of tourist offers.

**(5) The home of ASNOM in the center of Delchevo** is a grandiose facility in the center of Delchevo built in the second half of the XX century and it was one of the largest houses of culture in former Yugoslavia.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Grandiose facility in the center of Delchevo.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility alone is not especially attractive for tourists, so it is recommended to emphasize its importance during the period of its construction, accompanied by a presentation of part of the events which took place in this facility during history.

**(6) The Tower – Middle Age locality – Delchevo.** In the region Pijanec there were many important transit routes which were used in XIII and XIV century. These routes were controlled with the help of towers which have ceased to exist by now, except the tower near the village Chiflik which remained to witness the famous past of this area. The village Chiflik is located 4 km from the center of Delchevo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Middle age tower form the XIII and XIV century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Since the tower is located outside of Delchevo, it should be combined with other types of tourist offers in order to become more interesting for a visit by the tourists.

**(7) House of culture – Probishtip** has a permanent presentation related to the mining in this area along with a display of ethno collection composed of traditional folk costumes and objects which were utilized in the past.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Presentation related to mining, ethno collection.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(8) Monument of the national hero Vera Jocikh – Makedonska Kamenica.** The bronze monument of the national hero Vera Jocikh is the work of the famous Macedonian sculptor Tome Serafimovski and since 1982 this monument has been placed in the city park in Makedonska Kamenica. Olivera (Vera) Jocikh was born on August 21, 1923 in the Skopje village Singelikh, and she fought in the NLW since the very beginning and by the end of the war she was wounded in the village Sasa, and she passed away on May 22, 1944.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monument of the national hero Vera Jocikh.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(9) Memorial bust of the national hero Vera Jocikh – in the village Sasa.** On May 22, 1944 in the village Sasa the national hero Vera Jocikh passed away. On this day many inhabitants come to visit her memorial bust and to pay respect to this heroine who sacrificed her young life for the freedom of Macedonia. According to the legend, the soldiers carried the wounded heroine for three days and eventually she passed away. This legend is presented in the famous poem “Eyes” by the famous Macedonian writer Aco Shopov.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Memorial bust of the national hero Vera Jocikh.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(10) Monument of Mile Janevski – Jingar–Makedonska Kamenica.** On April 28, 2001 eight members of the Macedonian police forces were massacred near the village Vejce, Tetovo. Mile Janevski – Jingar from Makedonska Kamenica was among them, and in his honor a bust has been placed in front of the school which was named after him.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monument of Mile Janevski – Jingar.

**Potential types of tourism:** /

**(11) Landmark monument of Nikola Karev – Cheshinovo Obleshevo.** Nikola Karev was killed on April 27, 1905 near the village Rajchani in the locality Svilanovo. He was a member of the

Macedonian revolutionary movement, member and head of the Macedonian Revolutionary Organization and president of the Krushevo Republic. On this location there is a landmark monument which is being visited every year by many visitors to honor the first president of the first Republic on the Balkan.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Landmark monument of Nikola Karev.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Greater efforts should be invested in greater promotion of this place and it should be combined with other types of tourist offers.

**(12) The last watermill at Kochanska Reka.** Karakashka or Belska watermill is one of the rare places in Macedonia where one can still see an active watermill. Here the inhabitants from the village Beli used to come to mill their wheat. The mill is located in the locality Bavchaluk, on the road to the dam Gratche and it was built towards the end of the XIX century.

**Tourist attractiveness:** One of the rare examples of an active watermill in Macedonia.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Visiting the active watermill, i.e. the place to see how wheat is milled. This tourist attraction would be equally interesting for domestic and foreign tourists. The facility needs greater promotion and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(13) Monument of freedom in Kochani** is located on the hill Lokubija on the northwestern part of the town. This artistic and architectonic work was created by Gligor Chemerski and Radovan Raghenovikh. They created a large mosaic display and they presented the century-long fight for freedom of the Macedonian people. This monument has a historic and artistic value in addition to its functional role as it is used as an amphiteatrical scene for various events and manifestations. The monument was open on November 28, 1981.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Memorial landmark.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The monument of freedom is one of the more representative locations which are interesting for a visit for foreign and domestic tourists who are visiting Kochani.

**(14) Middle Age Towers Kochani.** Many locations in Macedonia have fortified towers with massive walls made of stone which were built by richer inhabitants and which served for personal protection. The towers in Kochani are exactly like this, two of them are located in the town and the third one is located in Dolni Podlog. Those were bey towers and they provided living conditions for a longer period during the threat. One of these towers was later turned into a clock tower. The towers originate from the end of the XVII and the beginning of the XVIII century and they were recorded as feudal defense towers and from 1957 they were proclaimed as cultural monuments and they are under state protection;

**Tourist attractiveness:** Middle Age towers.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** In order to place the towers in the function of tourism, it is necessary to carry out proper marking of the towers and to emphasize their value and purpose from the period when they were constructed.



#### 4.5.5. Events

**(1) Festival “Radosta na gradot (Joy of town)” – Probishtip** is a children’s festival taking place in Probishtip every year on March 8.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Children’s festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** The festival “Joy of town” is especially interesting for the inhabitants of Probishtip and efforts should be invested for its further promotion and for attracting more participants from the region and abroad.

**(2) The custom “Chetrse (Feast of the Holy Forty Martyrs)” in Shtip** is the first intangible cultural heritage from Macedonia on the representative list of the World’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO, voted during the conference in Baku, December 2-7, 2013. This unique and century-long custom is carried out during the religious holiday “St. Forty Martyrs” (March 22) when people from all generations climb the Isar and greet at least 40 people along the way. Then the youngsters collect 40 small rocks and they throw 39 of them in the river Bregalnica, and they place one under their pillow to help them dream of their future spouse according to the religious belief.



Figure 27. Custom “Chetrse” in Shtip, by climbing the Isar.

**Date:** March 22.

**Tourist attractiveness:** First intangible cultural heritage from Macedonia on the representative list of the World’s Intangible Cultural Heritage of UNESCO.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(3) Profest** is a festival with a long tradition with amateur musicians from Macedonia which takes place every spring in Probishtip.

**Date:** spring time.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Amateur music festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**(4) Easter egg – Berovo.** The celebration of the important Christian holiday Easter in the municipality of Berovo is a very interesting manifestation. Along with the remaining religious activities, there is a diverse cultural and entertaining manifestation in the center of Berovo. The most interesting activities are the competition of the strongest egg (Easter “kachor”) and the best decorated egg.

**Date:** Easter.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Easter kachor and best decorated egg.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** Even though the manifestation has a local character it should be especially interesting for foreign tourists and efforts should be made for its greater promotion.

**(5) International Roma Day – Kochani.** Every year on April 8, the celebration of the International Roma Day takes place in Kochani with numerous manifestations celebrating the Roma culture and raising the awareness of their issues.

**Date:** April 8.

**Tourist attractiveness:** International Roma day.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**(6) Amateur drama festival – Kochani** is a theatre manifestation which took place in 1961 for the first time in Skopje and later it spread to other towns such as Bitola, Shtip and Strumica. In 1977 the festival had its premiere in Kochani and this tradition continues every year in June and it lasts for 5 days. The festival has a competitive character and in the last few years it gained an international character with numerous international guest appearances.

**Date:** May.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Amateur drama festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** In view of the relatively long festival history and its 5 day duration, it can be concluded that this festival is especially interesting for tourism. Efforts should be made for its greater popularization and increase of number of participants.

**(7) Art colony Lesnovo – Probishtip.** The art colony Lesnovo is one of the most famous colonies in Macedonia which already has an international character with numerous participants from the entire world. The colony takes places in June and it lasts for one week.

**Date:** June.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Art colony with multiannual tradition and international character.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, monastery (religious) tourism.

**Note:** Even though it is mentioned that the colony takes place every year in the Lesnovo monastery, this was not the case in the past period. Additional information is necessary for its location and also greater affirmation.

**(8) Pechevo's Pavlov's Day** – Traditional ethno fair – Pehchevo. The traditional ethno fair Pavlov's Day takes place every year on July 13 to celebrate the religious holiday Pavlov's Day. A lot of handicraftsmen participate in this fair and the visitors may taste the traditionally prepared local specialties.

**Date:** July 13.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Ethno fair, traditionally prepared local specialties.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism, gastronomic tourism.

**Note:** Greater promotion and popularization of the festival is necessary for the purpose of increasing the number of participants.

**(9) Festival of brass orchestras – Pehchevo.** Every year in honor of the holiday Pavlov's Day, the municipality Pehchevo organizes a Festival of brass orchestras. The purpose of this festival is for the municipality of Pechevo to promote the traditional music and to enable greater affirmation of the brass orchestras. The Christian holiday Pavlov's Day is also a holiday of the town.



Figure 28. Festival of brass orchestras in Pehchevo.

**Date:** July 10-13.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Festival of brass orchestras.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** The festival of brass orchestras is an especially interesting manifestation as part of the Pavlov's Day celebration in Pehchevo.

**(10) Vlachs gatherings on Petrovden – Kochani.** The Vlachs gathering takes place on the terrain of the mountain Ponikva for several consecutive years and this gathering is named "Everybody on the mountain on Petrov's Day".

**Date:** July 12 (Petrov's Day).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Vlachs gatherings.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**(11) International art colony "St. Pantelejmon" - Kochani.** The international art colony "St. Pantelejmon" is organized on the beautiful landscapes of Osogovo Mountains every year towards the end of the month of August. During the art colony which lasts for several days there are also other accompanying cultural and artistic activities.

**Date:** August.

**Tourist attractiveness:** International art colony.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** It is necessary to provide greater promotion and popularization of the colony and greater affirmation on the internet.

**(12) "Raspeano Maleshevche (Singing Maleshevo child)" – festival of children's songs – Pehchevo.** Raspeano Maleshevche is a festival of children's songs which has been organized since 1994 and the children participating in this festival age from 7 to 14.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Children's festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** This is already a traditional festival which is especially interesting for the inhabitants of Pehchevo and the region.

**(13) Cultural summer in Shtip** is a prestigious manifestation from the area of culture which takes place every year in Shtip. During the summer months, different types of manifestations take place in several locations in Shtip, with acknowledged artists from all over the world.

**Date:** June-August.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Summer festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** The summer period is the time when Macedonia is visited by foreign tourists and also by a large number of Macedonians who live abroad and they are considered our tourists and their number should not be overlooked. The frequency of the local population during the summer period is also far greater, and thus such events like the Cultural summer in Shtip are already proven as a perfect solution for tourism and efforts should be made for their further development.



**(14) Pavlov's Day – Vinica.** St. Apostle Pavle is the protector and patron of Vinica and it is being celebrated every year on July 13 in honor of the Christian holiday Pavlov's Day by organizing many events and cultural and art manifestations.

**Date:** July 13.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Events and cultural and art manifestations.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** The celebration of Pavlov's Day has a local character and it is especially interesting for the population from Vinica and its vicinity.

**(15) Golak's folklore gatherings on the mountain Golak – Delchevo** which take place every year on the summer scene near the monastery St. Pantelejmon under the top Chavka on the mountain Golak. It was formed 20 years ago and during this international event the participants such as solists, folklore groups, cultural artistic associations and orchestras from Macedonia and beyond perform original songs and dances.

**Date:** August, 8.

**Tourist attractiveness:** International event, original songs and dances, folklore groups, cultural artistic associations and orchestras.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** In view of the fact that the event is already traditional and it attracts many participants, it is necessary to make efforts for its further support and promotion.

**(16) Ethno festival Berovo.** Every year on August, 27 and 28, the municipality of Berovo sponsors the Ethno festival, which presents the abundant tourist potentials of Berovo and Maleshevija to the visitors from all over the world. During these two days Berovo lives as a true ethno town where the rich tradition of this region is being implemented through the creativity and the labor of the people from Berovo in integrated promotional events. Traditional products, music workshops, folklore, cultural heritage, healthy food, local specialties, handcrafts and souvenirs are only a small part of the offer of this far known festival, which is already receiving an international character.

**Date:** August 27 and 28.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Ethno festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**(17) Pijanec-Maleshevo wedding – Delchevo** is an event which traditionally takes places every year in Delchevo. During this event many couples get married with traditional rituals and customs. The couples are chosen through competition and at least one of the spouses should be from Malesh or Pijanec. The cultural artistic association "Goce Delchev" from Delchevo is the organizer of such weddings.

**Date:** Summer.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Pijanec-Maleshevo wedding.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** The example with Galichka wedding is an excellent indicator of the benefits of such event. Further promotion and popularization of the Pijanec-Maleshevo wedding is recommended in that direction.

**(18) Istibanjsko zdravozhivo (greeting) – Vinica** is an international folklore festival of folk dances which takes place every year in September. The festival is organized by the ensemble “Kitka” from the village Istibanja, sponsored by the municipality of Vinica.



Figure 29. Folklore festival “Istibanjsko zdravozhivo” (source: Municipality of Vinica).

**Date:** September.

**Tourist attractiveness:** International folk festival.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.

**Note:** The event needs greater promotion and popularization.

**(19) First rice harvest – Cheshinovo Obleshevo.** On September 21 (Little Virgin Mary) which is also the holiday of the municipality Cheshinovo –Obleshevo, a manifestation is organized called “First rice harvest”. This manifestation celebrates rice – the symbol of this area. The most impressive moment is the harvest of the first plant, preceded by blessing the crops and the upcoming harvest.

**Date:** September 21 (Little Virgin Mary).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism.

**(20) Kochani’s rice days – Kochani** takes place every year on the rice fields in the village Dolni Polog, Kochani area. This manifestation celebrates rice – the symbol of Kochani area. This manifestation is a blend of tradition and modern artistic expression which reveals the passage of rice culture from the soil to the table. The first harvest is the most interesting event which reveals the

authentic way of manual reaping of the crops with a sickle, accompanied by all other customs. The event “Contest of harvest beauty” is especially popular and the manifestation usually opens with this event. This celebration is accompanied by other events such as book promotions, art exhibits, fair of handicrafts and traditional foods, ensemble performances from other towns and states, etc.

**Date:** September.

**Tourist attractiveness:** International manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** Kochani’s rice days are a manifestation which already has an international character and it represents an excellent example of tourist promotion in the region.

**(21) Todor’s race in Vinica.** In honor of the religious holiday St. Todor, the far known Todor’s races take place every year in Vinica. These races are an integral part of the past and the tradition of this area for centuries. The purpose of this event is to practice the sports customs which used to be practiced hundred and more years ago on this location. This is how the tradition is continued and the regional cooperation and communication is strengthened among the people from different age and cultures.

**Date:** Religious holiday St. Todor.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Authentic sports customs.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**(22) Makfest – Shtip** is a festival of pop music taking place every year in Shtip. This festival has produced over 1000 songs and most of them are hits and now evergreens. During the period of former Yugoslavia this festival had an international character with many guest appearances by famous international musical names. The festival is a member of the International federation of festival organizations (FIDOF) with its head office in Los Angeles, and in view of the excellent results, it has received recognition from this organization twice. The festival usually takes place every second weekend in October.

**Date:** October.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Festival of popular music.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**(23) The Pastrmajlija event – Shtip.** Pastrmajlija is a Macedonian special type of pie made of dough with meat. The traditional pastrmajlija has an oval form with chopped meat spread on top. The name originates from the word pastrma which means salty and dry sheep or lamb meat. Every year the town Shtip organizes one of the most visited events in this region – Shtip’s Pastrmajlija event and in the period of several days the visitors have the chance to be entertained by numerous performers and to taste this popular specialty.

**Date:** September - October.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional specialty.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, gastronomic tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** The Pastrmajlija event is an excellent example of promoting the Shtip region and the traditional Macedonian food.

**(24) In Vinica Veritas** is a festival of humor and satire which is traditionally organized every year in the House of Culture in Vinica. It is the only festival of this type in Macedonia. It originates from 1993 and recently it also received international character with participants from other countries. The festival is usually organized towards the end of the month October and it lasts for five days, with awards in several categories.

**Date:** October.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Festival of humor and satire.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** The festival is quite interesting for the inhabitants of Vinica and the surrounding area. A significant factor of the festival is its duration of five days and thus it already has an international character.

**(25) Days of fashion in Shtip** is a recently formed manifestation organized by the Municipality of Shtip for the purpose of promoting Shtip as the town of fashion. Shtip is a town with many ready-made clothings and shoe factories functioning successfully, so this type of manifestation is an excellent occasion for promotion of new collections. Since its establishment in 2013, this manifestation is planned to be organized twice a year.

**Date:** Twice a year.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Fashion events.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** Excellent events for promotion of diverse textile industry in Shtip and the surrounding.

**(26) Cultural summer of Kamenica** is one of the largest cultural manifestations in Eastern Macedonia which takes place every year towards the end of August in Makedonska Kamenica. The central event of this manifestation is the celebration of August 28 which is also Municipality Day and Miners' Day. This manifestation has a musical-stage character and the most famous Macedonian and Balkan stars have taken part in it so far.

**Date:** The end of the month of August.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**(27) Babina Banica** is a manifestation which is traditionally organized in June in the monastery-tourist complex "Elenec" in the village Cera, Makedonska Kamenica. This manifestation is organized by the Association of retirees from Makedonska Kamenica, supported by the municipality of Makedonska Kamenica and CIC "Romansa" from Makedonska Kamenica. This manifestation gathers several thousands of retirees from the entire country in one place. The diverse cultural and artistic program is accompanied with a competition for preparing pie baked under batch.

**Date:** June

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism.





Figure 30. “Babina banica” in the village Cera, Makedonska Kamenica (source: [www.plusinfo.mk](http://www.plusinfo.mk)).

**(28) The music festival True Sound of Kamenica** is a festival of urban character, with guest appearances by the most popular Macedonian and Balkan DJs, performers and bands. The festival takes place every summer in Makedonska Kamenica and it is visited by a great number of young people, mainly from Eastern Macedonia.

**Date:** Summer.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Festival of urban character.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism, urban tourism.

**(29) Goce’s Days** is the most significant cultural-science manifestation which is traditionally organized every year in June in Delchevo. This manifestation was organized in 1966 for the first time and at present it has an international character.

The program of this manifestation begins by placing fresh flowers under the monument of the patron of Delchevo—Goce Delchev, whose name is given to this manifestation. Then many cultural, artistic and science events take place with many participants from around the world.

**Date:** Beginning of the month of June.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Festival of international character.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism.

**(30) Days of the plum in Pijanec**—This manifestation is held every year towards the end of the month of September in Delchevo and it begins with a symbolic beginning of collecting the first plums. The area of Pijanec has excellent conditions and a long tradition in plum cultivation, a product which provides existence for a large number of people from this area.

In the range of this manifestation there are also many competitions in preparation of various plum products such as plum brandy, plum preserve, jam, stewed fruit, etc. Additionally, this manifestation offers various cultural, artistic and entertaining programs every year.

**Date:** The end of the month of September.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, shopping tourism.

**(31) St. Spas in the village Karbinci.** St. Spas (40 days after Easter) has been the protector of the village Karbinci for many years and after the municipality was formed it began to be officially celebrated as the Municipality Day, every Thursday, 40 days after Easter. The date changes but the day remains the same - Thursday. Even though it is a working day, for many people it is a true holiday and on this day they celebrate and entertain themselves. On this day the local self-government organizes a cultural-artistic manifestation for the population with the most famous entertainers.

**Date:** St. Spas (40 days after Easter).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Traditional religious manifestation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Manifestation tourism, religious tourism.

#### 4.5.6. Churches and monasteries

**(1) Church “Virgin Mary” (Novo Selo) – Shtip.** The construction of this monumental temple devoted to the Assumption Day began in the 40s of the XIX century. The construction family Damjanov from Veles finished this grandiose project in 1850 under the management of master Andrea Damjanov. According to the stories of the local population, the church was being constructed for a long period, which is probably due to the fact that the family was building the church St. Nikola in Kumanovo at the same time, which explains the similarity between these two churches. The church has basilica form with three-vessel disposition, similar to the monumental minster churches which were being built at the same period in the following towns: Bitola, Prilep, Veles, Star Dojran and other places in Macedonia. Similar to other churches built in that period in Macedonia, the inside of the church is spacious and the walls are decorated with relief, plastic presentations, decorated medallions with vegetable and animal figures. The church has a large carved iconostasis created by Nikola Damjanov which has icons, works of the most famous painters in the second half of the XIX century who were active in this region: Stanislav Dospevski, Dimitar Andonov Papradishki, and Kostadin Vangelov. The church has hidden locations and tunnels which the insurgents used to hide and run away from the Turks. Among them was Goce Delchev.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monumental temple the work of Andrea Damjanov, large carved iconostasis, hidden locations and tunnels used by the insurgents.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historic heritage tourism.

**Note:** The sanctuary Virgin Mary in Novo Selo, Shtip is one of the locations which must be visited. However, greater internet promotion is necessary.

**(2) “St. Nikola” – Half way to Shtip – Kochani.** On the northeast exit from the village Krupishte, half way to Shtip — Kochani there is an old Middle Age church St. Nikola. According to the writing above the western entrance, the church was built during the period of bishop Makarie in 1625 and it was painted in 1627. From the outside part of the western entrance the writing is also preserved. The writing mentions the painter Isaija Debreleli, who is presumed to have carried out interventions on the painting from the naos in 1880 and simultaneously he painted the area of the narthex. The church has

one vessel, arched semicircularly and with semicircular apsis from the outside. The entrance is on the west side, and on the south side there is one window and one lunette. The church was built of crushed stone with irregular size and installed parts of early Christian plastics with written signs and letters. The entire church is picturesque and the remains of the old paintings are either destroyed or repainted.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old sanctuary from 1625.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** If we take into consideration the favorable geographic positions, with stronger promotion this sanctuary has the potential to attract a large number of domestic and foreign tourists. Near the church there is the archeological locality Grncharica, the location where the Neolithic skeleton named “Slave the Macedonian” was found. With proper signalization the village Krupishte may become one more station for the passengers who travel to Shtip — Kochani.

**(3) Church “St. Nikola” – Shtip** is one of the most representative holy facilities in this part of Macedonia and it is also a minster church of the Bregalnica parish. It was built on the foundations of an older church dating from 1341. The construction was lead by the constructor Georgi Novakov Jonga, following the example of the constructions of Andreja Damjanov in the period of the Kyustendil and Shtip archbishop Ignatij, who also consecrated the church on the May 10, 1867. The church is three-vessel basilica, surrounded with entrances from the western, northern and southern side. On the floor there is a gallery of icons from many churches and monasteries, as well as old church books. The inside of the church is decorated with paintings on the domes, and few frescoes on the walls. A large part of the icons on the iconostasis were made by the Macedonian painter Dimitar Andonov Papradishki in 1869, but there were also other painters such as: Zaharie Samokovlija, Atanasie Hrizu, Haji Kostadin from Veles, Jovan Prilepchanin, Jovan Atanasov, Kosta Krstev. The fresco painting and the wood carving pieces: richly decorated canopy in the altar part and the bishop’s throne in the naos of the church were created by Kostadin Ivanov Vangelov from Shtip.

**Tourist attractiveness:** One of the most representative holly objects in this part of Macedonia, minster church of Bregalnica parish.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(4) Church “St. Spas” — Shtip.** On the left coast of the river Otinja, on the flattened rocky plateau there is one small single-vessel church St. Spas. It is believed that the church was erected by a certain leader Dimitar in the XIV century and it was restored in 1601 when the second painting was carried out. The church was built from crushed and cut stone and bricks were used to create the arches. The painting dates from the early years and it is partially preserved with dominating frescoes from 1601, which were made by the painter Jovan according to the signature in the founder’s inscription. Towards the end of the 2014, the professional teams of the Institute for protection of monuments and culture and the Museum of Shtip have carried out another covering of the church to prevent moisture and they cleaned the paintings and this process of repair is expected to be fully completed in 2015 for this sanctuary, which is exceptionally important for the Shtip region.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Single-vessel church from the XIV century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** An exceptionally important sanctuary with fresco-painting currently under conservation by the professional teams of the Institute for protection of monuments of culture and museum – Shtip.

**(5) Church “St. Arhangel Mihail” – Shtip** is a single-dome church with base in the shape of a cross erected in the first half of the XIV century from protosebastos Hrelja. The façade is decorated with blocks made of processed stone and the arches of the niches are made of brick. The façade on

the western side is especially interesting. This is where the entrance of the church is. Since nowadays the church has no remains of any frescoes, it is interesting to note that even though the church dates from an early period, it was not painted. The church is located on the way which leads towards the fortress Isar on the east side of the hill.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary from the XIV century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(6) Church “St. John the Baptist” – Shtip** is located on the south side of the Isar. The church was built in 1350 with the support of Jovan Probishtipovikh during the period when the land was owned by despot Oliver. The church St. John is a small single-vessel construction without a dome located on an exceptionally bad location and constantly exposed to harmful atmospheric influences. This is the reason why there is only a small part left from the paintings and solely on the south wall there are traces of the faces of czar Constantin and his wife Elena.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary which was built in 1350.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The sanctuary has a very poor location.

**(7) Church “St. Arhangel Mihail” – Berovo.** The Berovo monastery is one of the rare monasteries in Macedonia with consecutive monk tradition of more than two centuries. The first monastery church was built in the period from 1815 until 1818 and its consecration was attended by the Macedonian teacher Joakim Krchovski. According to one legend, the construction of this church was carried out under exceptionally difficult conditions, but the people from Berovo were persistent and under the leadership of the local priest Peco, they managed to finish in forty days, pursuant to the conditions of the Turkish authorities. The foundations of the first female monastery in Berovo were erected twenty years later. The first nuns in the monastery were the daughter and daughter-in law of the pastor Risto, son-in-law of the pastor Peco. The monastery reached its highest peak in the first half of the XX century, when there were up to sixty nuns, developed diverse economy, divine school and a silk mill. The church has a large porch, it was built in an architectural opus from the XIX century and it dominates in the monastery yard. There is only one icon preserved from the original iconostasis with representation of the holy prophet Noe, the work of the iconographer Georgi Veljanov from Strumica and created in 1818. Today the sisterhood in this monastery creates icons in a Byzantine style and the monastery is open for the spiritual needs of every good-hearted visitor. The most unique feature of this monastery is its location. Unlike the remaining monasteries in Macedonia which are located in unpopulated locations, the Berovo Monastery is located at the exit of Berovo, on the road which leads to the dam and the lake.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery church from 1815, constant monk tradition of more than two centuries, creation of icons in Byzantine style, active female monastery.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, monastic tourism.

**(8) “Assumption of Virgin Mary” – Berovo** is a men’s monastery located on the outskirts of Berovo. The sanctuary Virgin Mary was built in 1972, in the style of Byzantine-Macedonian churches from the middle age. The monastery celebrates the holiday “Great Virgin Mary” on August 28 and since 2002 there is an active monk life in this monastery.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Active men’s monastery.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, monastic tourism.



**Note:** The monastery has a favorable position for development of monastic tourism.

**(9) Church “The Birth of Virgin Mary”** is a single-vessel sanctuary with larger dimensions and one of the most remarkable landmarks of Beroovo. It was built in 1912 and consecrated in 1922 and in 1930 the bell tower was built.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Single-vessel sanctuary of larger dimensions.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(10) Church “Saint Czar Konstantin and Czarina Elena”**, in the village Razlovci was built in the middle of the XIX century. Despite the opposition by the Turkish authorities, the inhabitants were clever and they managed to build the church. The village Razlovci is located 20 km from Delchevo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary built in the middle of XIX century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(11) Monastery “St. Mary - Balaklija” in Delchevo** was recently reconstructed and it is one of the more representative facilities in this region. The wonderful surrounding, picturesque landscape, walking paths and clean springs are just a small part of the amenities which made this place one of the most popular picnic location in the region. The monastery is located 3 km from the center of Delchevo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery near Delchevo, popular picnic location.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** The monastery St. Mary Balaklija is already one of the most visited picnic locations in Delchevo and the surrounding and it is a significant factor in development of tourism in this region.

**(12) The church “Assumption of Virgin Mary” in Delchevo** was built in the middle of the XIX century by the minor Christian population of the former Carevo Selo. The church suffered serious damages during the large earthquake in 1904 and later it was repaired and reopened for a visit. Today this church is the main sanctuary for the people of Delchevo and for their religious practice.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Main church sanctuary in Delchevo.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(13) The church “St. Petka” in the village Selnik, Delchevo** originates from the XVI century and it is the oldest church in this area. The church is single-vessel and made of crushed stone and limestone. There are several layers of fresco painting which is in a bad condition and the oldest frescoes are believed to originate from XIII – XIV century and according to this the church originates even earlier. The church celebrates October 27– Petkov’s Day with a large celebration with many guests in its yard.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary from the XVI century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Since the church is located in the village Selnik and it is far away from the larger towns and roads, it is necessary to integrate it with other types of offers, such as rural tourism, mountain tourism, etc., in order to place it in the function of tourism.

**(14) Church “St. Arhangel Mihail”, village Dramche, Delchevo.** This church is known as Sharena (colorful) Church due to the painting which it used to have. The church originates from the end of the XVII century, it was set on fire several times and today there are only minor signs of old frescoes from the past. In the yard of this church there used to be the first school in the village

Dramche, which was established in 1869. The monastery celebrates St. Arhangel Mihail (November 21) and a large celebration is organized in the yard of the church with traditional dance Kopachka.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Church which originates from the end of the XVII century, dance Kopachka.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Since the dance Kopachka has been placed on the representative list of intangible heritage of UNESCO and since the dance is traditionally performed in this location, the sanctuary has the potential to be placed in the function of tourism.

**(15) Church “St. Joakim Osogovski”** is located in the village Jakimovo near Vinica and it is the most representative religious facility in this area. The construction began in 1993 and the church was consecrated on May 6, 2002. The icons and the fresco paintings are the works of the painter Venko Cvetkov from Skopje.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Relatively new sanctuary, one of the more impressive in this area.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**(16) Lesnovo monastery, Lesnovo.** The monastery St. Gavril Lesnovski is located in the village Lesnovo near Kratovo and Zletovo. The monastery church is devoted to St. Arhangel Mihail and the “the hermit” Gavrilo and it dates from 1341 from the period of despot Jovan Oliver. The church was erected on the foundations of an older church which existed in the period of Gavril Lesnovski, who was buried here, and later his remains were transferred to Bulgaria in Trnovo church St. Apostles. Aside from the architecture and the paintings, the iconostasis is also especially valuable which was made in modern carving, the work of the famous master Petre Filipovski from the village Gari, who worked from 1811—1814. Lesnovo monastery is significant for the history of the Slavic literacy and literature. A large number of handwritten and printed books from this famous scriptorium have been taken outside of Macedonia since XIX century and they are being kept in the libraries of other countries. In 1950 the monastery was proclaimed for the monument of culture and it is protected by law. This monastery is a men’s monastery with an active monk’s life.



Figure 31. Monastery church in the Lesnovo monastery (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery church since 1341, iconostasis work of Petre Filipovski, a monastery with active monk life.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, monastic tourism.

**Note:** Excellent example of monastic tourism in the Republic of Macedonia and wider.

**(17) “Assumption of Virgin Mary”** – Pirog. Ten kilometers northeast from Zletovo there is the monastery Pirog with the church “Assumption of Virgin Mary”. It is assumed that the church was erected in XIV century and it is a single vessel construction arched with semioblique dome. The remains of the paintings have been removed from the wall surfaces and presented in the museum in Shtip.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary from XIV century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism.

**Note:** Sanctuary Assumption of Virgin Mary is located in a surrounding which is especially suitable for development of religious tourism.

**(18) Women’s monastery “St. Spiridon Miracle Worker”– Probishtip** is a metochian of the Lesnovo monastery and since its construction in the XIII century it has functioned as a men’s monastery. It was ruined during the Ottoman Empire and left to the mercy of time. The monastery was restored in 2006/2007 and since then it functions as a women’s monastery. The sanctuary in the monastery is painted by Dragan Risteski from Ohrid and Lazar Lechikh from Vojvodina. The monastery is located seven kilometers northeast from Zletovo on the road to the new dam Knezhino along Zlatovska Reka near the village Zelengrad.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Active women’s monastery.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, monastic tourism.

**Note:** Women’s monastery St. Spiridon Miracle Worker is located in the surrounding which is especially suitable for development of religious tourism.

**(19) Old church “St. Apostles Petar and Pavle” – Pehchevo** which exists on this location was built in 1856 with the efforts of the local population. Next to the church they built an imposing bell tower and there was also a church school within the church. Unfortunately, this was all destroyed in the catastrophic earthquake in 1904. In 1978 the old church was ruined and a new church was built on the same location, with a large central dome and three apses. The church was consecrated on October 9, 1988.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Church sanctuary in Pehchevo.

**Potential types of tourism:** Religious tourism, cultural-historical heritage tourism, monastic tourism.

**Note:** The church St. Apostles Petar and Pavle in Pehchevo is primarily interesting for the local population and it may become part of the tourist offer of the town.

**(20) Church “St. Dimitrij”** is the only church in Zrnovci and the main parish church in the Zrnovo parish. The church was built in the beginning of the XVIII century on the foundations of an older church dating from XII century. The frescoes date from the beginning of the XX century and the fresco painter is unknown. The church celebrates the great Christian holiday Mitrovdan which is also a municipal holiday. St. Dimitrij was voted a patron of the village Zrnovci in 2010 and on November 8, 2014, a monument of this saint was erected on the square of the village. It was made of bronze and created in the art high school “Lazar Lichnoski” by the artist Daco Nikolovski.

**Tourist attractiveness:** The only church in Zrnovci, main parish church of Zrnovo parish.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(21) Monastery “St. Simeon Stolpnik” – Morodvis** was built and consecrated in 1968 and restored in 2002. The icons and the fresco painting were created by Valentin Gjurovikh and Angel from Kochani.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery built in 1968.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism.

**Note:** The tourist offer is additionally enlarged with the locality Crkvishte in the village and the recently built ethno house.

**(22) Monastery “St. Petka” in the village Vidovishte – Zrnovci** was built in 1988 and consecrated on October 2, 1988 by the archbishop Bregalnichki Stefan.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery built in 1988.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism.

**(23) The sanctuary “St. Arhangel Mihail” in the village Spanchevo** was built in 1874 and part of its painting has been preserved. Near the sanctuary in 2007 many female figurines have been found during certain agricultural activities. The figurines date from the Eneolithic period which aroused additional probe researches and confirmed the presence of life in this area since the fourth millennium before Christ.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary built in 1874.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** In view of the fact that figurines have been found near the monastery which originate from the Eneolithic period, it is recommended to prepare proper signage which would highlight the importance of this place in the past.

**(24) Church “Assumption of Virgin Mary” in Makedonska Kamenica**, recently built sanctuary located in the center of Makedonska Kamenica. The sanctuary was recently painted.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Recently built sanctuary in the center of Makedonska Kamenica.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(25) Monastery “St. Pantelejmon” – village Pantelej.** The monastery complex St. Pantelejmon is located near the village Pantelej, 12 km from Kochani. There is an interesting story about the origin of this monastery, built towards the end of the XIX century. Pursuant to the legend, there was a young blind girl Nejtana and she dreamed a dream about going to a place where there were ruins from an older church and if she were to start digging out there she would find water which would heal her. The following day she visited that location and began to dig out. The inhabitants tried to dissuade her to abandon the idea, but she continued to dig for a while and she kept silent about her intentions. She became tired from the extensive digging and she felt ill and passed away after a short period of time. On her death bed she told the inhabitants about the dream and she asked them to continue to dig out. Shortly after her death, the inhabitants found water on that place and later this location became far known for its healing qualities. The location grew into a gathering point for many people searching for their cure and in the following period the monastery was erected. The spring in this monastery is presently a place visited by a large number of people who are seeking for a cure from various diseases.



The monastery was recently restored with an asphalt road and picturesque nature and it is one of the most famous weekend locations of this region.

**Tourist attractiveness:** the monastery was built towards the end of the XIX century, spring with water which is believed to have healing powers. Fresco paintings and part of the icons in the sanctuary were created by the famous painter Dimitrija Papradishki, of which 44 have been protected by the state.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism.

**(26) Monastery “St. Ilija” village Beli – Kochani.** The foundations of the monastery St. Ilija were placed in 1964 and it is believed that there was a monastery on this location dating from a long time ago, just like the old famous oak growing on this location. The old oak is seven centuries old and it is called “the oak from the village Beli”. It belongs to the territory of this monastery and it is a monument of nature protected by law and also a symbol of this village. There are two large piles under the oak which the inhabitants call “the stone of tears”. There is also a legend about the two meter long whip snake which used to live in the oak and often times it would come out in front of the monastery visitors and the people called it “the saint”, and no one ever tried to kill or remove the snake. In 2004 the oak was repaired and the whip snake left the opening and the opening was closed. The snake has not been seen since then, however many locals believe that the snake found another opening and that it is still dwelling in the oak. In 2012 the oak was struck by thunder and it burned and suffered serious damages.

**Tourist attractiveness:** The monastery was built in 1964, seven centuries old oak.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, rural tourism, mountain tourism.

**(27) Church “St. Gjorgji” in Kochani** was built in 1917 and according to the presumptions, it was built on the foundations of an older sanctuary. The old icons in the church date from the XIX century by the painter Venjamin and an unknown author and in 2003 and 2004 new icons have been created for the iconostasis and the church was fresco painted at the same period. The icons and frescoes are the works of the painter Venko Cvetkov from Skopje.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary built in 1917.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(28) Monastery “St. Spas”, Polaki – Kochani** is located in the heart of Osogovo Mountains at the altitude of around 1000 meters, surrounded by oak and beech forest. It was built in the period of 1930-35 on the foundations of an older sanctuary, and due to the poor quality of the materials used during its construction, it began to deteriorate, so in 2001 they began activities for its complete reconstruction. Today the monastery is being visited by a large number of worshippers, tourists and mountaineers who enjoy the picturesque nature and one of the most beautiful panoramas in this area. This is the reason why this location has aroused a large interest and activities have begun for construction of monastic accommodation.

**Tourist attractiveness:** The monastery is located in the heart of Osogovo Mountains.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism, mountain tourism, winter tourism.

**Note:** The monastery has an especially favorable position and it is an attractive destination for domestic and foreign tourists.

**(29) Monastery “St. Vasilij Veliki” – Ponikva.** As part of the tourist complex “Ponikva” on the Osogovo Mountains, at the altitude of 1.640 meters the monastery St. Vasilij Veliki was built. Near the monastery there is accommodation facility which is currently being constructed and it could host a large number of visitors for lunch and there is also a part which is planned for staying overnight.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Monastery within the tourist complex “Ponikva”.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism.

**Note:** With the construction of the accommodation and its especially favorable position, this monastery has the potential to become an attractive destination for domestic and foreign tourists.

**(30) Church “St. Gjorgji”, village Gorni Kozjak – Karbinci** is located tens kilometers northeast of Shtip in the locality Gorni Kozjak and it is one of the oldest churches in Macedonia. According to the method of construction of the church, it dates from XI—XII century, and it is also believed that the church is even older, i.e. it is being related to the rule of the Bulgarian rulers Boris and Simeon (IX—X century). It is assumed that the church was restored in XIV century. The church is painted in several phases and by several masters and a large part of those paintings have been destroyed.



Figure 32. Church “St. Gjorgji” at the village Gorni Kozjak is among the oldest churches in Macedonia (original).

**Tourist attractiveness:** One of the oldest churches in Macedonia.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(31) Monastery “St. Petka” near the village Kalauzija - Karbinci.** The monastery is located on the road to the archeological locality Bargala and in its proximity there are several springs for which the local population believes to have healing powers. The monastery celebrates St. Petka (August 8) and it is being visited by many visitors on this day. The monastery has accommodation facilities.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Springs of water for which the local population believes to have healing powers, monastery which offers accommodation.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, monastic tourism.

**(32) Church “Christ’s Ascension” – Karbinci** was built and consecrated in 1876. The icons date from the XIX century and the beginning of the XX century and their author is unknown.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Sanctuary built in 1876.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(33) Monastery “Elenec” –Virgin Mary’s Veil** is a monastery complex situated deep into the Osogovo Mountains, at the altitude of thousand meters and 12 kilometers from Makedonska Kamenica in the picturesque village Cera. There used to be a monastery on this location even during Roman time and the present monastery complex originates from 1880 with large central monastery church devoted to the Virgin Mary’s Veil. Part of the monastery-complex “Elenec” is renovated in 2014 with funds from the IPA Program for cross-border cooperation and there is also a new asphalt road to the monastery.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Renovated monastery located in the picturesque parts of Osogovo Mountains.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.



Figure 33. Monastery “Elenec” – Virgin Mary’s Veil in the village Cera (original).

**(34) The cave church “St. Mary” - Lesnovo.** The most attractive locations which are still enigma and mystery are located near Lesnovo. The cultural landmarks are especially attractive, most of them located in the ravine part of Lesnovska Reka. For the admirers of such natural treasure this is a true novelty and discovery. The cave church ascetic is located on the steep slope of the ravine and it is quite impressive with its mysticism and it also hides numerous legends and stories which are being narrated to the visitors by the local population.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Cave church.



**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(35) Cave church “St. Ilija” – Lesnovo.** On the top of Ilin cross there is the cultic cave ascetic St. Ilija, which is very impressive with its holiness and beauty and it is a special place for the local population and monks’ brotherhood from the monastery for celebration of the holiday St. Ilija.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Cave church.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(36) Assumption of Virgin Mary** is the main rural church in Zletovo which is believed to have been built in three phases (1848 until 1853), upon an older church from the 18 century. Zletovo, as an older settlement, was known, among other things, as the center of Zletovo episcopacy, since there were many churches and monasteries in its surrounding. The church Assumption of Virgin Mary is one of the rare representative facilities which can be seen today in Zletovo.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Christian objects from the middle of the 19 century.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

#### 4.5.7. Islamic architecture

**(1) Sultan’s bridge Emir Khuchuk – Shtip.** The bridge was named after the sultan Emir Khuchuk and built in 1672 and it is a rare example of such Ottoman architecture. In the past the bridge played an exceptionally important communication role, but once the level of the river Bregalnica deceased, nowadays this bridge has cultural and historical significance. During the First Balkan War the demarcation line passed through this bridge, which divided the town to a Bulgarian and Serbian part. The bridge is located at the entrance of the town Shtip on the passage above the river Bregalnica.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture, rare example of Ottoman architecture.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, urban tourism.

**(2) Clock tower – Shtip,** also known as Bey’s tower. This cultural monument dating from the XVII century is related to two interesting stories which are being narrated in Shtip even nowadays. According to the first story, the tower was built by a certain bey who lived in Shtip and it was used to protect him and his family during critical periods, and this explained the presence of embrasures and a balcony. The second legend talks about an Ottoman bey who fell in love with a beautiful maiden from Shtip named Anka. The bey wanted to convert Anka and was quite persistent in his intentions. Anka wished to free herself from him so she asked him to leave a nice memory to the town, i.e. to build a tower which would be a clock tower. The bey was madly in love with Anka and so he built the tower and he took the young maiden with him. The clock mechanism of the tower was installed one century later after its construction, and part of the tower was ruined in 1934.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, urban tourism.

**(3) Husamedin Pasha Mosque in Shtip** is located on a hill from the left side of the river Otinja. The people also know it as the church St. Ilija as it is believed that it had been built above the fundamentals of the so-called church existing on this location. The mosque existed in XVI century and it was even mentioned by the writer of travel books Evlija Celebi in 1662, during his visit in Shtip. He mentioned that the mosque Husamedin Pasha was artistically built, with a stone minaret and a leaden roof. This mosque had a square shape in the base with six-sided tambour lying directly above the four side walls and the half-oblique dome. It belongs to the single space Seljuk type of mosques. A special

feature of this mosque which makes it different from the remaining mosques of this type of structures in Macedonia is the heptagonal, shallow arched part which “exits” on the south façade and where the mihrabniche is located. This shape of the apsis of mihrab, which can be found since the 14 century is the result of the intensive mutual influences of the early Ottoman and the late Byzantine architecture. South of the mosque there is turbe where Shejh Muhjudin Rumi Baba is buried (also mentioned by Evlija Celebi). In 1950 the mosque was restored and until 1956 there was a museum presentation of the town of Shtip. This object is no longer in function nowadays.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, urban tourism.

**(4) Kadin Aga Mosque – Shtip** is a main religious structure of the Muslim population in Shtip. It was built in the 19<sup>th</sup> century and this is where the worshippers of the Muslim religion performed their Muslim religious traditions.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism, urban tourism.

**Note:** This mosque could be placed in the function of tourism as an active religious structure through its proper marking and promotion and also as place for performing religious activities.

**(5) Besistan – Shtip.** One of the more representative examples of the Ottoman architecture in Shtip is the Besistan, located in the center of the town on the right side of the river Otinja.



Figure 34. Besistan in Shtip.

The period of its construction is unknown, but according to the method of construction it is assumed that it might originate from XVI/XVII century. During the Ottoman period it served as the main street where different types of fabrics and other precious merchandise were sold. Once the oriental way of trading disappeared, its use suffered some changes and during the end of the XVIII and the beginning of the XIX century it was used as a prison. During the Austrian-Ottoman war the Besistan was set on fire. The Besistan was constructed of full stone with a rectangular base and three separations in height of which the last one is the dome. The inside has three rooms and a remarkable



dome. Every wall has small windows to allow light on the inside. Nowadays the Besistan has been adapted and it functions as an exhibition area.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture, exhibition area.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, manifestation tourism, urban tourism.

**(6) Mosque Sultan Fatih Mehmed in Delchevo** was built in 1448 and it is the oldest structure in Delchevo. It is located in the center of Delchevo and mentioned in the travel books of Evlija Celebi from 1670. This mosque and the mosque in Trabotivishte are one of the rare mosques in the world where the minaret is located on the left side of the entrance of the mosque.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Oldest facility in Delchevo, one of the rare mosques in the world where the minaret is located on the left side of the entrance.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

**(7) Muhamed Aga Mosque.** Muhamed Aga Mosque was built in 1668 as a foundation of the czar regent Mahmud Aga. The mosque is located in the south part of the village Radanje, 6 km away from Karbinci. The mosque and its style characteristics and architectural characteristics are a significant monument of the Ottoman period. The use of well-processed stone utilized during the construction of several mosques and churches in the Kumanovo and Shtip region provides information that the mosque was built by domestic masters. The precise creations of decorative colored elements visible in the interior of the mosque give information about the importance of this religious structure. At present the mosque is under conservation and reconstruction and soon it will be ready for presentation before the wider public and for performing religious customs.

**Tourist attractiveness:** Old architecture.

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural-historical heritage tourism, religious tourism.

#### 4.5.8. Macedonian folk dances in EPR

On the territory of ethnic Macedonia there are five dance areas distinguished according to certain style characteristics existing in the proper regions. They are the eastern, western, northern, southwestern and southern dance region. The East Planning Region is largely similar to the eastern dance region i.e. Eastern dances include the Macedonian folk dances which originate from: Kumanovo, Kriva Palanka, Delchevo, Pehchevo, Kochani, Berovo, Shtip, Radovich and Pirinska Macedonia.

**(1) Kopachka** is a Macedonian folk dance originating from the village Dramche, Pijanechko. It has been inspired by the difficult and burdensome life of the Macedonian people and their desire and fight for freedom. The dance is performed by men who hold themselves on their belts, the left hand before the right hand. The dance is lively and temperamental with small fast steps of the half feet and it includes plenty of jumps, landings, side movements and scissors. Since this dance originates for many centuries in this region and in view of the fact that it is still being danced even nowadays, it has been placed on the representative list of intangible cultural heritage of UNESCO in November 2014. The application was submitted by Dimitar Uzunski and the Association "Folk group Kopachka" in the village Dramche, Delchevo area, with the support of the Ministry of culture of the Republic of Macedonia. Kopachka is a folk dance being performed at numerous national celebrations and it is an excellent example of how cherishing folk dances and tradition may also contribute to development of tourism.

**(2) Potrchulka** is a moderately fast folk dance with moderate movements, small steps and jumps of half feet. Originally it is being danced in the Kochani region usually performed by women holding their belts.

(3) **Berovka** is a Macedonian folk dance which is originally being danced in Maleshevo region. It is usually danced by women holding hands freely falling downwards. The dance is lively, with fast and small steps of the half feet and it includes many jumps and landings.

(4) **Do you remember sweetheart Todor** is a female dance originally danced in Shtip and the surrounding area. It is a lively women's dance with small steps and jumps, with the dancers holding hands freely falling downwards.

(5) **Osogovka** is a male folk dance originally danced in Kochani and the surrounding area. It is also known as Arnautski dance. This is a typical male temperamental dance with expressive balances, jumps, landings and sharp movements of both feet where the dancers hold their shoulders.

(6) **Zhetvarki** is a folk dance which is originally danced in Kochani and the surrounding area. The composition of the dancers is mixed – men and women holding shoulders and or hands which fall freely downwards. It is a temperamental dance with jumping steps.

(7) **Ratevka** is a folk dance with mixed composition (men and women) which is originally danced in the Maleshevo region. The dancers hold hands which fall freely downwards. The dance is lively with jumps and landings and small steps of the half feet.

#### 4.5.10. Tourist valorization of cultural values in EPR.

The tourist valorization of the cultural heritage is carried out in the similar way as for the natural heritage, with certain modifications and taking into consideration the large differences between certain categories: facilities, customs, manifestations, etc.

**Seasonality** - almost all attractions have the highest grade for seasonality as they present immobile cultural heritage, except the events which usually take place once a year.

**Archeological localities** have a high grade of significance, good traffic connections and a large part of them have a good tourist position, average access and only a small number have tourist equipment. Seasonality is not a problem for the archeological localities. There is no precise information about the visitation frequency at the archeological localities. A small number of them have been presented, i.e. only few of them have been presented for visitors and are ready to accept tourists.

**Museums, memorial houses** are located in the towns and the urban environments; they have excellent tourist position, access and traffic connection and high grade of seasonality. Their significance, the amenities and the particularity is graded with good marks.

**Cultural-historical landmarks and memorial landmarks** have access, traffic connections and good tourist position as the largest part of them are located in urban locations. This is why their seasonality is good. The tourist equipment is poorer as well as their particularity. Their significance and amenities are graded with average grade, as well as the particularity of these attractions.

**Events, festivals and manifestations** occur in towns and villages which have a good traffic connection; they are accessible and have good tourist position. Most of them have a large importance and are graded with good or average grade. Only few events and manifestations have highest grade for amenities and particularity, i.e. they are graded with average grade. Seasonality is logically lower as they occur once a year, but it is not decisive for their attractiveness.

The attractions from the **Islamic architecture** have a good tourist position, traffic connection and accessibility. However, the facilities of Islamic architecture have poorer tourist equipment and average particularity and amenities.

**Churches and monasteries in the East Planning Region** has a relatively favorable tourist position and almost all of them are accessible, with minor exceptions. They have average grades for amenities, particularity and few of them have the highest importance in EPR. The churches in the towns or the larger known monasteries have a relatively good tourist infrastructure, while the remaining facilities have poor tourist infrastructure.

**Visitation frequency for all attractions** - No information has been obtained for the visitation frequency of the valorized attractions from the area of cultural heritage, but this will be the subject of research in the following phase.

Table 22. Consecutive presentation of archeological localities, valorized according to their sum value.

Item No. on the list	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connection	Accessibility	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation frequency	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													X	Y
7	Vinichko Kale	3	3	2	3	2	3	3	3	/	3	25	22.502521	41.877069
1	Isar-Shtip	3	3	2	3	2	3	2	3	/	3	24	22.186279	41.737714
5	Crkvishte - Morodvis	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	/	3	23	22.418391	41.848491
4	Bargala – Karbinci	2	2	2	3	2	3	3	3	/	3	23	22.290665	41.798814
6	Lokubija – Kochani	3	1	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.413977	41.914900
2	Grncharica, Krupishte	3	1	1	2	1	3	1	3	/	3	18	22.250278	41.842222
14	Besh Tepe – Karbinci	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	3	/	3	16	22.234354	41.815905
8	Gradishte – village Grad	3	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	/	3	16	22.843922	41.940021
11	Kalata – Kalimanci	2	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	/	3	16	22.590329	41.984998
3	Pilavo – Burilchevo	2	1	1	2	1	2	1	2	/	3	15	22.292070	41.847652
16	Vrshnik- Tarinci	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	/	3	15	22.230094	41.798918
15	Kale – Krupishte	1	1	1	2	1	2	2	2	/	3	15	22.249940	41.842149
9	St. Petka – Pehchevo	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	/	3	14	22.891142	41.766787
12	Tarinci – Karbinci	1	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	/	3	13	22.230278	41.798889
10	Raven – Pehchevo	2	1	1	2	2	/	/	/	/	3	11	22.883164	41.761575
13	St. Atanas - Spanchevo	2	1	1	1	2	/	/	/	/	2	9	22.307932	41.905846

Table 23. Consecutive presentation of museums and memorial houses, valorized according to their sum value.

Item No. on the list	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connection	Accessibility	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation frequency	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													X	Y
15	Museum – Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	3	27	22.189673	41.736520
18	Museum – Vinica	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	3	27	22.504868	41.884197
16	Ethno-house in Morodvis	2	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	/	3	24	22.417472	41.848647
17	Museum – Kochani	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	24	22.411541	41.923280
20	Museum – Delchevo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	24	22.773341	41.966630
22	Museum – Berovo	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.856511	41.707742
21	Mem. house – Razlovci	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	3	/	3	21	22.767922	41.843624
19	Mem. Oss. – Cera	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	/	3	14	22.508826	42.059228

Table 24. Consecutive presentation of valorized cultural-historical landmarks.

Item No.	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connect.	Accessibility	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													X	Y
24	Mon. Jews – Shtip	3	2	/	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	20	22.190488	41.736429
25	Mon. NLW Shtip	3	3	2	2	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.187720	41.738471
27	Novo Selo - Shtip	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	/	3	22	22.182540	41.734855
29	Home of ASNOM - Delchevo	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.773341	41.966630
23	House of culture – Probishtip	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.176683	42.000065
36	Middle Age Towers Kochani	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.412095	41.923357
36	Middle Age Towers Kochani	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.409026	41.921519
35	Mon. of freedom - Kochani	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	1	18	22.406987	41.918876
26	Mon. Dame Gruev – Rusinovo	2	1	2	2	2	3	1	3	/	1	17	22.805177	41.690493
30	Mon. Vera Jocikh - M. Kamenica	3	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	/	1	17	22.588126	42.021115
31	Mon. Bust Vera Jocikh - M. Kamenica	2	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	/	1	16	22.544711	42.077589
32	Mon. Mile Janevski – M. Kamenica	3	2	1	3	3	1	1	1	/	1	16	22.589373	42.022896
33	Mon. Nikola Karev - Chesh. Oblesh.	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	3	/	1	16	22.293121	41.945667
34	Last watermill – Kochani	2	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	/	3	16	22.409177	41.934715
28	Tower – Delchevo	2	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	/	3	15	22.780512	41.943409
24	Kukulje – Nov Istvenik	1	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	/	3	14	22.825666	41.849811



Table 25. Consecutive presentation of events, valorized according to their sum value.

Item No.	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connec.	Accessibility	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation	Seasonality	Total	Coordinates	
													x	y
2	„Chetrsë“ – Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	/	1	25	22.187179	41.738193
22	Makfest – Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	3	/	2	25	22.193281	41.737499
23	Pastrmajlija event – Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	/	2	25	22.194737	41.738309
17	Pijanec – Mal. Wedding	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	/	1	24	22.767115	41.976534
25	Days of fashion in Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	/	2	24	22.198786	41.738205
6	Drama amat. festival – Kochani	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	2	23	22.412007	41.920964
7	Art colony - Lesnovo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	2	23	22.227359	42.013292
13	Summer of culture in Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	2	23	22.195111	41.737827
28	True Sound of Kamenica	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	/	1	23	22.587901	42.020991
16	Ethno fest. Berovo	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	/	1	23	22.856767	41.706885
18	Istibanjsko zdravozhivo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	2	23	22.499863	41.929502
30	Days of the plum in Pijanec - Delchevo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	2	23	22.778145	41.966123
19	First rice harvest	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	/	1	23	22.311536	41.871297
29	Goce's Days – Delchevo	3	3	3	3	3	2	3	2	/	1	23	22.778145	41.966123
20	Kochani's days of rice	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	/	1	23	22.410934	41.921422
3	Profest – Probishtip	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.177891	41.999882
26	Kamenica's summer of culture	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	3	/	1	22	22.587901	42.020991
4	Easter egg – Berovo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.849962	41.710015
8	Pehchevo's Pavlov's Day	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.887094	41.762084
31	St. Spas – Karbinci	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.235288	41.816489
27	Babina Banica	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.511383	42.059134
9	Fest brass orchestras – Pehchevo	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	1	22	22.888424	41.762308
14	Pavlov's Day – Vinica	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	1	/	1	21	22.505045	41.884588
24	In Vinica Veritas	3	3	2	3	3	2	2	1	/	2	21	22.508001	41.883460
5	Intern. Roma Day – Kochani	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	/	1	20	22.412786	41.920783
12	Singing Maleshevo child	3	3	3	3	3	1	2	1	/	1	20	22.887125	41.762618
10	Vlachs gatherings – Kochani	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	1	19	22.411675	41.921475
11	Inter art colony "St. Pant" – Kochani	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	2	18	22.310017	41.968374
15	Golak's folklore gatherings	2	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	/	1	18	22.730918	41.901588
21	Todor' races	2	2	2	3	3	2	2	1	/	1	18	22.507577	41.886150
1	„The Joy of town“ – Probishtip	2	2	3	3	3	1	1	1	/	1	17	22.181260	42.002226

Table 26. Consecutive presentation of churches and monasteries, valorized according to their sum value.

Item No.	Attractiveness	Tour. position	Tour. facility	Infrastructure	Traffic connect.	Accessibility	Particularity	Amenities	Significance	Visitation	Seasonality	Total	Координати	
													x	y
1	St. Mary – Novo Selo	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	/	3	25	22.182074	41.736070
3	St. Nikola – Shtip	3	3	3	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	24	22.188852	41.736649
16	Lesново Monastery	2	3	3	3	3	2	2	3	/	3	24	22.228426	42.013238
7	St. Arhangel Mihail – Berovo	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	/	3	23	22.858777	41.701093
9	Birth of St. Mary – Berovo	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.856931	41.706112
30	St. Gjorgji – Gorni Kozjak	2	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	/	3	22	22.290735	41.797299
11	St. Mary.-Balaklija in Delchevo	3	2	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	22	22.758706	41.965575
29	St. Vasilij Veliki – Ponikva	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	22	22.352132	42.040448
2	St. Nikola -Shtip – Kochani	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	3	/	3	21	22.255696	41.841106
8	Assumption of Virgin Mary – Berovo	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	20	22.861948	41.696607
14	St. Arhangel Mihail – Dramche	2	1	2	3	3	2	2	2	/	3	20	22.712306	42.009932
12	Assumption of Virgin Mary - Delchevo	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.767167	41.976112
34	Cave church St. Mary - Lesново	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.227921	42.013650
13	St. Petka – Selnik	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	/	3	19	22.731926	42.040475
18	St. Spiridon Miracle Worker – Probishtip	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	19	22.269284	42.033100
19	St. Petar and Pavle – Pehchevo	2	1	2	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.886360	41.762671
35	Cave church St. Ilija Lesново	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	/	3	19	22.227921	42.013650
27	St. Gjorgji – Kochani	3	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	/	3	19	22.408948	41.917232
4	St. Spas – Shtip	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	18	22.184813	41.734801
33	Monastery Elenec – Cera	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	3	/	3	19	22.507650	42.060425
6	St. John the Baptist – Shtip	2	2	2	2	1	2	2	2	/	3	18	22.185133	41.736081
15	St. Joakim Osogovski in Jakimovo	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	18	22.512915	41.901311
24	Assumption of Virgin Mary - M. Kamenica	3	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	18	22.588291	42.021835
26	St. Ilija – Beli	2	1	1	2	2	3	2	2	/	3	18	22.372924	41.937280
5	St. Arhangel Mihail – Shtip	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	17	22.188102	41.738984
17	Assumption of Virgin Mary – Pirog	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	2	/	3	17	22.259614	42.014096
20	St. Dimitrij – Zrnovci	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	17	22.447468	41.852872
21	St. Simeon Stolpnik – Morodvis	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	17	22.415836	41.847753
22	St. Petka – Vidovishte	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	17	22.396694	41.846699
25	St. Pantelejmon – Kochani	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	17	22.310017	41.968374
31	St. Petka – Klauzija	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	17	22.327871	41.788491
10	St. Konstantin and Elena in Razlovci	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	16	22.768148	41.843454
36	Assumption of Virgin Mary – Zletovo	2	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	/	3	16	22.235002	41.987685
23	St. Arhangel Mihail – Spanchevo	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	16	22.309927	41.903000
32	Christ's Ascension – Karbinci	2	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	/	3	16	22.232633	41.816432
28	St. Spas – Polaki	2	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	/	3	15	22.417152	42.050062

## 4.6. Gastronomy

Gastronomy (from the old Greek word “gastros” meaning stomach and “nomos” meaning knowledge or law) is a science about the relationship between culture and food. Often times the word gastronomy is erroneously connected exclusively with cooking, which is only a small part of this discipline: not every cook is a gastronomer. Gastronomy studies different cultural components with food as the focal point. Therefore, it is related to fine arts and social studies and even natural studies in the context of food digestion in the human body. The main activities of the gastronomer include discovery, tasting food, doing food research, confirming the learned information and writing about

this. This is why gastronomy is an interdisciplinary activity. The intelligent observation brings us to the conclusion that food relates dance, drama, painting, sculpturing, literature, architecture and music; in other words, fine arts. It also includes physics, mathematics, chemistry, biology, geology, agronomy and anthropology, history, philosophy, psychology and sociology. The application of scientific knowledge into cooking and gastronomy is called molecular gastronomy. The first formal treatment of gastronomy is found in the book *Psychology of taste* by the French gastronome Jean Anthelme Brillant-Savarin (early XIX century). Contrary to the traditional cook books, this work studied the relationship between senses and food, treating the joy of tasting food on the table as science. Lately we notice special dedication to the principles of gastronomy with the establishment of the movement called Slow Food in 1986, which grew into an organization in 1989 and nowadays it is present in 160 countries with 1300 local branches called conviviums. This organization opened a university for gastronomic sciences in Bra, Italy in 2004.

Gastronomy as science is not developed at all in Macedonia and there is only a small number of written materials from this area. There are individual works from university professors and master's papers which is not sufficient to say that the gastronomy in Macedonia has obtained its deserved place. Gastronomy and tourism are inseparably related. Each tourist wishes to research new tastes, so the authentic and organically produced food and beverages are significant segments of every tourist product which influences the development of tourist destination. Unfortunately, they are not sufficiently valorized in Macedonia and this is why the authentic food and beverages are not used as a comparative advantage. The gastronomic tourism is part of the cultural tourism where history and culture of a certain area are being researched and discovered. Aside from the cultural tourism which is based upon the old traditional meals, the gastronomic tourism is based upon certain traditional beverages, such as wine tourism. The significance of the authentic, specific and organic products is large and it could contribute towards the development of tourism, agriculture, food industry and many other branches, or in general, it could contribute towards economic growth. The gastronomic tourism is different from the agro-tourism as it is a subgroup of the cultural tourism, while the agro-tourism is the undersum of rural and of the gastronomic tourism. In conclusion, gastronomic and agrotourism are inseparably related. Macedonia and the East Planning Region have a range of specific and authentic meals which use authentic or organically grown plants and animals for their preparation. The advantage of gastronomy with regards to the services is that food is a material product which could be stored, preserved and taken along, unlike the services which are non material and intangible. The gastronomic tourism encourages development of agriculture and economy directly or indirectly. Rice is especially interesting agricultural culture for the East Planning Region. The development of the cultural-gastronomic tourism through the paths of rice is a competitive advantage of the East Planning Region. Wine, food and tourism are inseparably related, but only recently their role in attracting tourists to a certain destination is finally explicitly admitted and as such it became recognized as:

- Part of the local culture used by tourists
- Part of tourist promotion
- Potential component of the local agricultural and economic development
- Regional factor influenced by the desires and wishes of tourists

The benefit of the gastronomic tourism for EPR includes:

- Increased demand for agricultural products and gastronomic specialties
- Brand creation
- Marketing information for producers and suppliers (immediate insight in the taste of the consumers)
- Educational possibilities for the visitors and also for the local population

- Regional and local distribution and consumption
- Protection of intellectual property

Along with the rice, the East Planning Region also has other authentic valuable and safe gastronomic products which could be successfully placed on the tourist market. The existing potentials are not utilized at all for the purpose of development of tourism. The institutions and all tourist facilities must participate in the creation, formation, development and organization of the gastronomic potentials of EPR. It is necessary to make mapping of products, their protection and promotion. It is also necessary to carry out education for development of gastronomic tourism.

## 4.7. General review of the valorized attractiveness in EPR

The placement of all natural and cultural attractiveness which were taken into consideration in a mutual GIS basis in the form of a cartogram creates an interesting cartographic presentation. It reveals relative dispersion of attractive amenities throughout the region. Also, there is no special “center” or focus of tourist attractiveness, i.e. there is no attractiveness of large national or even international importance.

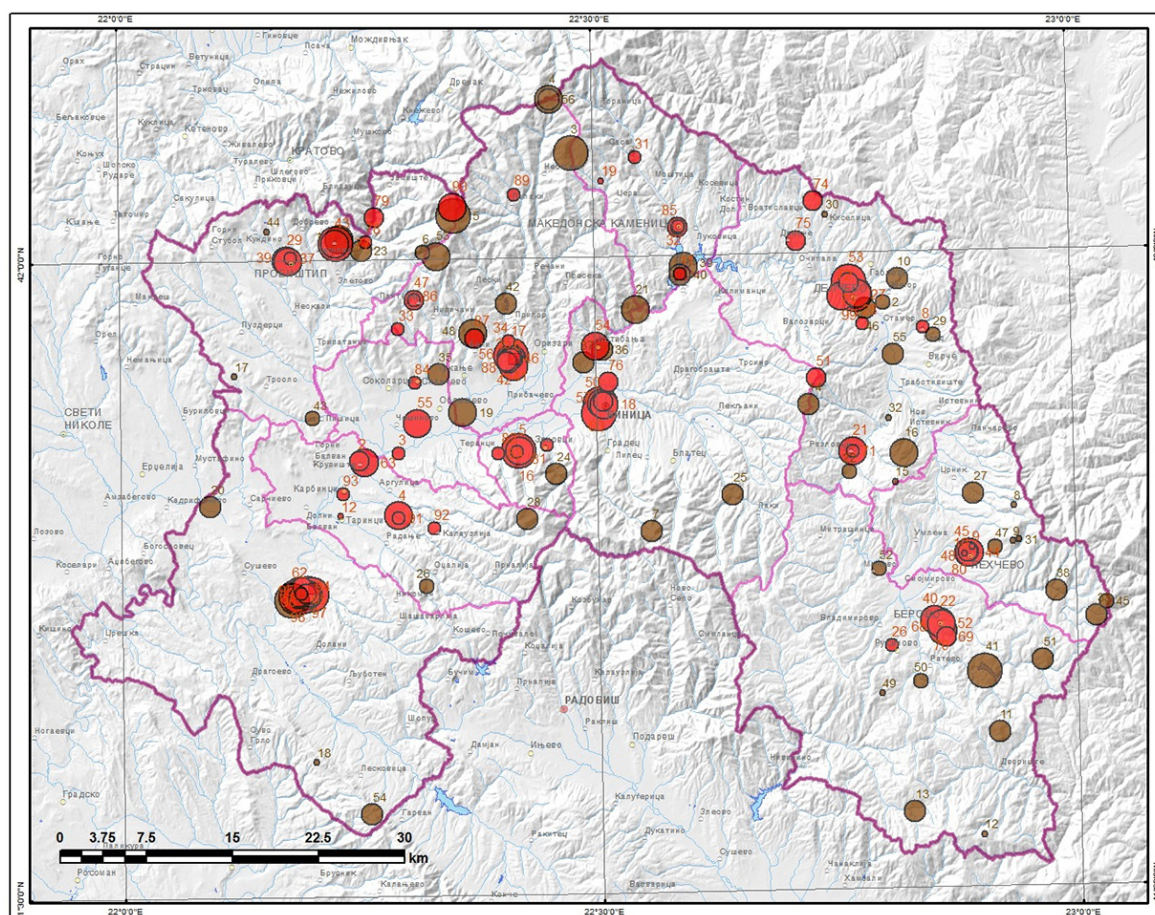


Figure 35. Cartographic-graphic presentation of natural (brown color) and cultural (red color) attractions in EPR pursuant to the valorized value (the size of the circle). The presented attractions are those which could be presented in a circular shape (original).

The presented information reveals that for the area of EPR the so called dynamic tourism and inclusion (visit) of more attractiveness (localities) in one tourist offer is the most suitable. This is mainly dependent upon the type of tourism, the interest of the tourists, etc., which is analyzed in the Strategy in more details.



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## 5. TYPES OF TOURISM ACCORDING TO THE POTENTIALS OF EPR

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### 5.1. Rural tourism

The analysis of certain characteristics and term interpretation of rural tourism, eco-tourism, wine tourism, gastronomy as a tourist product, hunting tourism, fishing tourism, tourism on a farm, tourism on agricultural farm, cultural tourism and religious tourism, indicate one common component, which is activities in rural surrounding. Rural tourism is a new type of tourism with double advantage both for tourism and for the rural area. The definition of rural tourism is different in different countries in Europe. Also, there is no single definition for rural tourism. Rural tourism mainly includes all services and activities which are being offered in the rural area. The common key elements of rural tourism are:

- rural area,
- preserved nature,
- accommodation in traditional rural households,
- bed and breakfast with a possibility for independent food preparation,
- traditional rural gastronomy,
- communication with hosts,
- Introduction to and/or participation in agricultural activities, tradition and way of living of the local population.

The development of this type of tourism can help regenerate the rural areas and it can also lead to an economic growth and nature preservation. Pursuant to the analyses of WTO (World Tourism Organization) and ETC (European Travel Commission), Europe as number 1 tourist destination in the world reveals a tendency of increased number of tourists which used extended weekends as a way to relax and to avoid the stressful way of living in urban environments. In the selection of destinations for using the extended weekends of 3-4 days, tourists choose close destinations which are accessible by car and bus transportation or transport organized with low budget airline companies. In the selection of the destination for a short stay the destination offering different forms of rural, mountain tourism and spa tourism, have priority. Primary factors influencing the destination selection are:

- internet promotion of the destination, comments by the visitors of the given destination and their recommended experiences,
- the authenticity of the destination,
- price of the service package (transport, accommodation, food and beverage services, tickets and other accompanying expenses),
- the quality of the service as a total perception of all points of contact with the local population, culture and way of living.

The main characteristics of the East Planning Region reveal that the region possesses significant natural resources and an interesting cultural-historical heritage. Based upon these resources a possibility opens for development of rural tourism, and the rice cultures are especially important as a competitive advantage of EPR. Many mineral springs and thermal waters in Vinica area (Istibanja) and Shtip area (Kezhovica), then the natural reserves: Goten, Linak Malesh, Zrnovska Reka, river Lomija, the monuments of nature: Zvegor, cave Konjska Dupka, Morodvis, Machevo, Crna topola and a large number of villages are also important in EPR. Famous archeological localities in EPR are Vinichko Kale and Bargala. This all leads to the conclusion that the development of destination for rural tourism is possible in EPR.

The condition of the road infrastructure which connects villages with urban settlements is in relatively poor condition. There is an asphalt road everywhere but interventions are necessary for road improvement as one of the main conditions for tourism development. Only a small number of villages in EPR are connected with regular bus lines and at certain locations there are also private minibuses. Taxis or private vehicles are necessary to reach the bus stops.



There is no tourist infrastructure in the largest part of the villages in EPR. The accommodation in the rural areas of EPR is currently taking place in the houses of friends, relatives or holiday homes owned by the residents of the town. Contrary to that, the commercial accommodation facilities (boarding houses, bungalows) in the rural area are poorly developed. In part of the villages there are small accommodation capacities and monastery accommodation. There are also villages with preserved traditional rural architecture typical for this area which could be adapted into accommodation capacities. There are several commercial accommodation facilities in Berovo. The quality of the hospitality which could be offered by the rural population, the clean air, beautiful nature and additional activities may largely contribute towards the development of rural tourism in EPR, and in turn provide additional income for the local population and prevent depopulation of the villages.

### Valorization of villages in EPR per municipality based upon the obtained and processed questionnaires

The inherent factors obtained the largest number of points along with the anthropogenic factors. The pristine nature, ecological production, hunting grounds, flora and fauna in EPR may provide competitive advantages before the remaining regions.

The anthropogenic factors also received high number of points, which points out that these are the strong sides of rural tourism in EPR which need to be used for development of villages and for the returning or keeping the local population in them.

The total number of proposed villages by the municipalities in EPR is 42. The best results were obtained in inherent/anthropogenic factors. The valorization has provided the following results:

- The tables reveal the villages which the municipalities from EPR consider as potential for development of agro and rural tourism in general.
- Taking into consideration the entire offer of the region with reference to rural tourism, it is necessary to invest in infrastructure and tourist amenities for the purpose of full valorization of the existing capacities.
- The access to the given villages is relatively good.
- The lack of human resources is evident.
- The inherent characteristics of the region are positive and valuable (attractive mountain area with diverse flora, fauna, hydrography, landscapes and cultural historical values) which must be preserved.
- The particularity of tourist resources is also large.

#### **Tourist activities which may take place in rural environments in EPR:**

- Tours (through the passage of rice, walking, riding, biking, moto tours, fitness training, and health tours).
- Water activities (fishing, swimming, canoe and rafting, sailing, etc.).
- Air activities (sports airplanes, paragliding, etc.).
- Sports activities (tennis, golf, rock climbing).
- Activities for discovering interesting facts (local production, old handicrafts, agriculture, etc.).
- Cultural activities (archeology, courses for hand creations, artistic and creative workshops, folklore groups, cultural events, religious events, gastronomy, etc.).
- Activities related to health.

Table 27. Tourist values of the villages in EPR according to the performed valorization.

	VILLAGE	MUNICIPALITY	Tour. position	Tour. Equipment	Infrastructu.	Traffic connection	Accessibility	Amenities	Significance	Visitation frequency	Anthropog. factors	Total
1	Zrnovci	Zrnovci	2	3	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	23
2	Lesново	Probishtip	2	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	3	22
3	Zletovo	Probishtip	2	2	2	3	3	2	3	2	3	22
4	Istibanja	Vinica	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	22
5	Rusinovo	Berovo	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	22
6	Vladimirovo	Berovo	2	2	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	22
7	Ratevo	Berovo	3	1	2	3	3	3	2	2	3	21
8	Pantelej	Kochani	1	2	2	2	2	3	2	2	2	21
9	Shtalkovica	Probishtip	2	2	1	2	2	3	3	2	3	20
10	Cera	Makedonska Kamenica	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	19
11	Sasa	Makedonska Kamenica	2	2	1	2	2	3	2	2	3	19
12	Obleshevo	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	2	1	2	3	3	2	1	1	3	18
13	Razlovci	Delchevo	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	18
14	Gabrovo	Delchevo	1	1	2	2	3	3	2	1	3	18
15	Karaorman	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	2	1	3	17
16	Banja	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	3	17
17	Cheshinovo	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	1	3	17
18	Zvegor	Delchevo	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	3	17
19	Grad	Delchevo	1	1	2	2	3	3	1	1	3	17
20	Leskovica	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
21	Pipero	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
22	Puhche	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
23	Dragoevo	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
24	Sudik	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
25	Brest	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
26	Toplik	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
27	Edeklerci	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
28	Jamularci	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
29	Dolani	Shtip	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	16
30	Virche	Delchevo	1	1	2	2	2	3	1	1	3	16
31	Zhiganci	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	15
32	Burilchevo	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	1	2	2	2	2	1	3	15
33	Negrevo	Pehchevo	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	15
34	Pancharevo	Pehchevo	1	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	15
35	Beli	Kochani	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	15
36	Crvulevo	Karbinci	2	1	1	2	3	2	1	1	3	14
37	Jastrebnik	Kochani	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	14
38	Sokolarci	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	13
39	Teranci	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	1	2	1	1	1	3	13
40	Ularci	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	13
41	Chiflik	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	2	2	1	1	1	2	13
42	Spanchevo	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	12
43	Kuchichino	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	1	2	12
44	Lepopelci	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	10
45	Vrbica	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9
46	Novoselani	Cheshinovo-Obleshevo	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	9

**Potential types of tourism:** Cultural itineraries, hunting, fishing, archeological, rural tourism, religious tourism.

**Note:** The largest problems are depopulation of the villages (the largest number of them are with aging population), poor road infrastructure, poor accessibility, lack of accommodation capacities and poor human resources. The development of rural tourism in EPR implies setting short term and midterm goals which should be based upon the following main goals: Creation of entertaining-recreational activities in tourist zones of the rural areas. Tourist arrangement of rural area must be based upon the creation of an ambience which would allow for the physical and spiritual needs of the modern people to be met. The equipment for entertainment and recreation in EPR should be concentrated around the following topics:

- Water (water surfaces – rivers for bathing, kayaking, fishing, water parks).
- Forest (marked and arranged paths, walking, bird observation, collecting plants, etc.).
- Mountains (walking, riding, biking, mountaineering, etc.).
- Agriculture (participation of tourists in farming activities of the rural households, especially with processing rice).
- Hunting tourism.
- Cultural activities (gastronomy classes, especially rice specialties) of traditional handicrafts, festivals, folklore, country celebrations, monuments, etc.).

Tourism must be developed in cooperation and correlation with the local community. It is also necessary to implement the GIS system. Tourist clusters must be established or at least support strong local associations which would work together with the local authority for development of tourism. Particular activities must be defined, and their influence on the environment and the limits of the acceptable changes. The process of educating the local population must be initiated at once, along with the employed persons in the institutions, for the purpose of development of rural and other types of tourism.

## 5.2. Mountain tourism

Mountain tourism entails a large spectrum of tourist activities which take place on the mountain. If we take into consideration that 56% of the area of EPR belongs to the mountain area and that there are up to 9 mountains, one of which is higher than 2000 m, then the importance of mountain tourism for this region is clear. The mountains differ in height – low mountain from 1500 m (3), to medium high 1500 up to 2000 m (5) and Osogovo Mountains with over 2000 m, and they also have large difference in the values, climate, waters, forestation and the remaining biodiversity. Besides, some mountain parts are poorly populated, further from the town centers, but with preserved natural values (Ograzhden, southeastern part of Plachkovica, the western part of Maleshevo Mountains). Actually, from the main types of tourism (lake, lowland, urban and etc.), the mountain tourism has the highest perspective in EPR. Almost all 6 mountains which are higher than 1500 m have a possibility for development of different mountain tourist activities, which are presented further in the text in more details.

## 5.3. Tracking

Tracking as a dynamic and sports-recreational tourism is becoming quite popular in the world. It is exceptionally suitable for areas with initial tourist development, without luxury resorts and with excellent nature. Tracking implies walking on marked medium difficult to difficult paths in wild nature with frequent observation and enjoying nature, especially at points with excellent view. Tracking does not require high investments, but also the financial effect is not very high either. The area of EPR provides excellent conditions for development of tracking tourism. There are various natural amenities: mountains, ravines, canyon parts, waterfalls, dense forest areas, belvederes, etc. According to the measurements and analyses, there are marked paths on the area of EPR or it is possible to mark tracking paths with total length of over 600 km. These paths are mainly mountain paths, narrow forest paths, narrow so called goat paths, and wider and clearly set earth or macadam paths at some

locations. In order to have a good tracking tourism, it is necessary to mark the paths, to set signalization, info-boards, presentation and promotion of paths and their conditions (type of terrain, denivelation, springs i.e. drinking water, wild animals danger) etc. It is recommended to have an internet page with a map and information about the tracking paths, as well as suitable brochures, maps and guides. It would be especially useful if the tracking paths and their amenities are accessible in electronic format for GPS devices to facilitate tracking.

The marked paths delivered from the municipalities of Berovo, Delchevo and Pechevo have been presented within the Study and they are given in the text.



Figure 36. Tracking along the canyon Kamnik at the village Golem Gaber (original).

There are five marked walking paths on the territory of municipality of **Berovo**. Part of these walking paths may also be used for mountain biking.

Path No. 1: Transversal path which connects the southeast and the northeast part of the Maleshevo area with total length of 45 km and climbing on a height difference of 730 m. The period of walking is 12 hours. Due to the length and the transversal character of the path it is recommended to use local guides. There are rest areas in the village Dvorishte, a pen near the Sentry Divna and a motel after descending from Klepalska Reka, near the descend at Ravna Reka.

Path No.2: It stretches from Lake Berovo, through Babin Chukar and the village Ratevo to the final destination Berovo, with total length of 21,5 km and time of walking of 6 - 7 hours. The path passes through several pens and a company of the local guides is recommended. Rest areas are the Lake Berovo, a pen near Babin Chukar, village Ratevo and Berovo. The highest height difference of climbing is 400 m with insignificant oscillations and gradual climbing.

Path No.3: It starts from the tourist settlement Lake Berovo with initial climbing to the top Shaban and passes through plateau picturesque forest parts of white pine which gradually change to beech forest. Through Babin Chukar the path goes back through vast pastures and thin pine forest through the village Ratevo to Berovo. The total length of the path is 25,6 km and the period of climbing



is 7 hours. The path passes through many pens and the company of local guides is recommended. The rest areas are the Lake Berovo, the pen on Bresa, Ravna Reka, Berovo. The path passes through beech and pine forest.

Path No. 4: The walking path from Berovo (Juovec) through the tourist settlement Ablanica to the Lake Berovo is realized within the project "Following the paths of my grandfather". The total length of the path is 6 km. The path passes through plateau and forest areas through the river Bregalnica under the shadows of numerous oaks, beech and pine trees. Along the path you can enjoy in the multitude of healing plants and forest fruits. The path has two rest areas where you can stop to take a fresh breath and it is adapted for biking.

Path No. 5: The path/the line of Ilinden heroes is the location where in 1906 the great revolutionary Damjan Gruev was killed. The path is 15 km long and it can be walked in 5 hours. The path starts from the village Rusinovo through Petlec and goes back to the village Rusinovo. Lately there have been intensified construction activities for the construction of walking and biking path around the Lake Berovo. The walking path is divided in three parts with total length of 1620 m and it complements the tourist amenities of Berovo, through which a tourist infrastructure will be built, intended for pedestrians and bikers who could enjoy the beauties of the natural partsof flora and fauna around the Lake Berovo.

On the territory of municipality of **Pehchevo** there are four marked walking paths which provide observation of nature and the surrounding of Pehchevo.

Path No.1: The mountain path Ravna Reka is 4.1km long and it connects the two exceptionally important tourist settlements: Ablanica (Berovo) and Ravna Reka. This path passes along the valley of the river Bregalnica, in a dense forest area.

Path No.2: Track path which stretches from Berovo through Juvec (838m) and continues northeast through Kutenec (965m) to Parkach (1095m), then towards northeast towards Konar (1098m), then north towards Shipkovo and Skalite (1334m), east to Gushterica (1568m), north through Kadan Bunar (1793m) to the highest point in the Maleshevo area, Kadiica (1932m). This path is 15 km long.

Path No.3: This path begins from the highest top of the Maleshevo area, Kadiica (1932m) and continues south towards Kadan Bunar(1793m), then east towards Vlashki kolibi (1683m) and it continues in the same direction with minor climbing up to 1703m (Ajduchko brdo), through the most eastern point in the Republic of Macedonia, Chengino Kale(1690m). Then it descends southeast towards Golem Trebomir (1620m) and it maintains a south direction through Breza (1443m) to Kriva Reka.

Path No.4: The path Ajduchki Kladenec connects Ramno Borje, Skalite, Gushterica and Ajduchki Rid. Ajduchki kladenec is the name of the border crossing between the Republic of Macedonia and the Republic of Bulgaria, but it is not in function.

On the territory of the municipality of **Delchevo** there are several known tourist paths which offer possibilities for development of alternative tourism.

Path No.1: The path "Holly Waters" leads to 3-4km from the village Trabotivishte located at 15 km from the town Delchevo and it has picturesque, colorful and fantastic views of the surrounding natural environment. It is believed that the three natural springs of water which are devoted to the three saints, have a healing power for different diseases.

Path No.2: There are two trim paths for walking, running and other sports activities on Golak which are suitable for preparation of sportsmen in a natural and picturesque ambience.

Path No.3: Paths to the locality Kukulje at 4km from the village Nov Istevnik and the locality Kukulje at 3 km from the village Trabotivishte which are the geomorphological forms – earth pyramids developed with erosion and related to different legends, local stories and beliefs, surrounded with fascinating natural beauties. Along the path leading to the localities there are traditional stockbreeding farms and pens in the naturally diverse and developed forest surrounding.

Path No.4: The path from Delchevoto to the lake Sandanski is a mountain path with length of 12km. Along the way one can visit the monastery St. Gjorgji, the middle age fortress Markova Kula and



the springs with healing water. The other two paths which have tourist significance are the paths to Markova Kula (Markovo sedlo), near the village Grad and the path of the plants.

According to the above said, the length of all mentioned paths in the municipalities of Berovo, Pehchevo and Delchevo is around 180 km. Also, the region has many other quite interesting marked and unmarked paths in the mountain and in the valley parts. The main problem for tracking -tourism in EPR is the lack of appropriate accommodation facilities in the mountains, especially regarding mountain homes, small motels, homes, etc. This is why tracking of several days is impossible to make or it is possible to make but only by spending the night in a tent, which complicates the planned or foreseen line. If we take into consideration that the optimal daily tracking-walking on the average difficult terrain is around 20-30 km, that means that in order to pass more interesting tracking tours one must spend at least 1-2 nights, i.e. accommodation facilities. On the mountain Plachkovica, an excellent opportunity during tracking tours is provided by the mountain home Vrteshka (which should be renovated), and one more similar facility is missing between Lisec (1754 m) and Bel Kamen (1707 m) or Chupino (1725 m), on the territory of municipality of Vinica. The condition with Osogovo is even less favorable. Despite the large area on the mountain, there is no accommodation facility even along the valley of Zletovska Reka, or between Kochanska, Orizarska and Kamenichka River. And the same situation implies for the remaining mountains.

The main problem for tracking in EPR (as well as for many other types of tourism) is the lack of mountain homes or any other facilities for accommodating tourists on their route. And this is a loss both for the tourists and for the municipalities and the entire region. If there is an established network of accommodation facilities, then the present one day routes will be replaced by two day or three day tours and the tracking tourism in EPR will increase several times. The accommodation facilities might be even holiday homes for the beginning, properly equipped rural houses or households ready to host tourists.

The following problem is the lack of information boards, markings and signposts which should be at least written in Macedonian and English. The routes lack proper descriptions, maps and information on the internet, not to mention any more modern amenities (coordinates, GPS lines, etc.). All of this leads to poor visitation frequency and utilization of tracking as a very good form of tourism in EPR.

According to the estimations for optimal capacity of tracking-tourism in EPR from around 5-20 participants in the tour and on the average around 10-20 tracking routes in the region per day, it leads to the conclusion that tracking tourism may be practiced by 30 000 to 50 000 tourists per year, half of which are usually interested in two-day tour. This would result with around 60 000 to 80 000 nights in previously provided/built facilities or a financial effect of around 1,0-1,5 million Euros per year.

**Tracking:** In all mountain areas of EPR with marked paths.

## 5.4. Mountaineering

In view of the terrain characteristics, mountaineering is an important tourist activity in EPR. Unlike tracking, one of the main goals of mountaineering is climbing some impressive or high peak and usually as soon as possible. The best opportunities for mountaineering are provided by the mountains Osogovo, Plachkovica, Vlaina, Maleshevski and others.

For Osogovo Mountains, the most significant mountain route includes climbing, i.e. reaching the highest top Ruen (2252 m) or the lower top Carev Top (2085 m). This is usually done from the direction of the village Sasa through the spring part of Kamenichka Reka through the mountain path of around 9 km (4-5 hours). The second alternative is from the direction of the village Gorna Cera through Carev Vrv to Ruen in the length of 15 km (7-8 hours). The more distant access is from Ponikva with a distance of 20 km, when the return tour should consist of two days (unless it is accessed by jeep through Lopensko Bilo). A large disadvantage for mountaineering on Osogovo is the lack of proper mountain home near the highest tops or the lack of suitable signalization along the paths or the tops.

There is no accommodation possibility at the mentioned starting points at the village Sasa, and Gorna Cera and there is no modern accommodation facility in Makedonska Kamenica.

For the mountain Plachkovica, the most attractive is the climbing on the top Lisec (1754 m). There are two alternatives for climbing these tops, one of which is more difficult and the other one is less difficult. The first alternative which is longer and more difficult begins from the mountain home Vrteshka. The duration of the tour is around 10 hours and the path is 24 km long, and the height difference is 3000 m. The tour requires 2-3 meals and 2 liters of water per person. The second tour begins at the village Zrnovci or the village Gradec and then climbing through the crest up to the top Lisec, and descending in the same direction or through the valley of Zrnovska Reka. The length of this line is smaller (15-20 km) with duration of around 8-10 hours. The top provides an excellent view towards this part of Macedonia, and in the south direction it provides a view all the way to the Thessaloniki Bay.

The mountain Vlaina with its highest top Kadiica from 1932 m is also attractive for mountaineering. The best track for climbing on Vlaina is from the direction of Pehchevo, through the top Bukovik (1723 m) to the top Kadiica, with length of 15 km (7 hours) in both directions with moderate pace. During the climbing it is possible to pass through the locality Judovi Livadi with the unique insect eating plant in Macedonia. From Kadiica there is an excellent panoramic view towards the Macedonian and especially towards the Bulgarian side, the mountains Pirin and Rila, Blagoevgrad, etc.

Chengino Kale on the Maleshevo Mountains is considered the most interesting top with an excellent view even though it is not the highest top. It is the most eastern point in the Republic of Macedonia, near the spring of the river Bregalnica and a small lake at the top itself. The climbing leads from the direction of Ravna Reka-Pechevo or Lake Berovo. The length is around 20-25 km, and the duration is around 8-10 hours.

**Mountaineering:** Ruen (2252 m), Carev Vrv (2085 m), Lisec (1754 m), Kadiica (1932 m), Chengino Kale (1745 m).

## 5.5. Winter (winter-sports) tourism

The high mountain part of Osogovo at the altitude of over 1800 m, between Carev Vrv (with Kalin Kamen and Kitka) and Ruen have the most favorable conditions for development of winter-sports tourism within EPR. Its area is 15,5 km<sup>2</sup>, and above 1900 m there are 5,2 km<sup>2</sup>. Due to its height, the temperatures are low (average temperature is around 4-5°C), the rainfalls are heavier (700-900 mm annually) and during winter period they appear as snowfall. Snow usually remains from December until April, especially on the northeastern side (towards the spring part of Kamenichka Reka and Kriva Reka). There are excellent and vast high mountain terrains at Carev Vrv and the surrounding crests, where many ski paths and other amenities may be placed (Trpevski and others, 2010). This is why it is necessary to prepare a good feasibility study with special accent on the influence on the environment together with NEPR i.e. municipality of Kriva Palanka (which has the north part of Carev Vrv). From technical point of view, a proper infrastructure is needed at first, access, locations, etc. then it is necessary to form and prepare ski paths, snowboard paths, sledging and other winter-sports activities. According to the detailed analyses, it is possible to place around ten ski paths with total length of around 24 km and average denivelation of 300-500 m. In the part which belongs to EPR it is recommended to provide accommodation capacities above the village Gorna Cera or above the village Sasa, which would attract tourists and they would stay more than one day. From the village Sasa (750 m) it is possible to provide an easy access to the crest Kitka (1850 m) and to the ski paths south from Carev Vrv with a cable car (gondola) 6 km long. This would shorten the way from Makedonska Kamenica from 27 km through the village Gorna Cera to only 15 km with the gondola. With reference to the complementary accommodation, the local population should be informed and encouraged to place into function the properly equipped holiday homes and houses in the village Cera and Sasa, as well as the apartments (houses) in Makedonska Kamenica. At the same time activities should be

initiated for attracting investors for construction of modern mountain home, preferably hotel, food and beverage facilities at proper suitable locations above the village Gorna Cera and on Kitka. It is also necessary to prepare tourist maps, signposts and guides to the given and the remaining interesting localities in the area. The guides for the area should be properly trained. The long term aim is for the locality Kalin Kamen – Carev Vrv – Gorna Cera to grow into a winter-sports center of national importance, with ski paths, sledging paths, cable cars, hotel-food and beverage capacities, accompanying amenities, etc.

The possibility for typical winter-sports tourism and activities on snow at other localities on Osogovo Mountains and the remaining mountains in EPR are quite small, especially if we take into consideration the clear effects of global warming. This is simply due to the fact that the heights at Ponikva, Golak, Lake Berovo, Plachkovica are even 300-500 m lower, the temperatures are lower, and the snow remains 1-1,5 months shorter and it is with poorer quality. In that sense Lake Berovo, Golak, Plachkovica at to a certain degree Ponikva, do not have possibilities to develop into large winter-sports ski centers as the natural conditions do not allow this. The artificial maintenance of snow outside of the natural season which usually lasts around 2-3 months is expensive, irrational and ineffective, and the length of the existing and the new ski, snowboard and other paths, as well as their denivelation is small. In that sense, instead of typical ski tourism, the given locations should have an emphasized recreational, wellness and even spa function, and to act as all year resorts with amenities for all seasons.

**Winter-sports, high mountain, ski tourism:** Carev Vrv – Kalin Kamen - Kitka

**Mountain-recreational and wellness tourism:** Ponikva, Lake Berovo, Golak, Turtel, Chupino.

## 5.6. Cultural-historical heritage tourism (cultural tourism)

The plentitude of cultural heritage in the East Planning Region gives clear signals that the cultural tourism has a large potential. EPR may promote and offer to the tourists its well kept stories and secrets through its material and spiritual heritage. According to the definition of the American association for planning and management of cultural resources, cultural tourism entails “visiting people outside of the home community which is completely or partially motivated by the interest for historical, artistic, scientific and other offers related to the lifestyle–cultural heritage which is offered by the community, region, group or institution”. According to the other definition of the World’s tourism organization, cultural tourism is a journey of a certain person exclusively for satisfying cultural needs, beginning with visiting festivals, concerts and other events, visiting cultural monuments, folklore or religious trips.

The Strategy is expected to research which category of a tourist is potential in the East Planning Region. Important researches have been conducted on this topic in the literature and McKercher and Cros have specified five categories of tourists of culture:

- Purposeful cultural tourists
- Sightseeing (picnic) cultural tourists
- Unexpected cultural tourists
- Random cultural tourists
- Uninterested cultural tourists

Cultural tourism may be beneficial as it can strengthen the local economy, promote protection of cultural heritage, increase visitors’ consumption, create employment, increase the pride and awareness of the local population of the heritage which they possess, etc. Cultural tourism may also cause damage from increased visit, overuse, and improper use of protected cultural heritage not taking into consideration its value, which can cause permanent damage.

The international charter for cultural tourism of ICOMOS, 1999 points out four general aims as follows: cultural heritage should be accessible for the public, local population and the visitors, to develop and conduct tourist activities by respecting cultural heritage, local cultures and way of living, to create dialogue and balance between the conservative interests and the tourist industry about the importance of cultural heritage, including the necessity for achieving sustainable future for them and to contribute for long term and careful use of cultural heritage by adopting strategies and protection and conservation.

Within this Study a total of 100 attractions, i.e. archeological localities, museums, churches, monasteries, mosques, festivals, monuments and memorial landmarks, etc., have been valorized. They are: **Archeological localities** -Isar, Grncharica - Archeological locality near the village Krupishte, Archeological locality Pilavo at Burilchevo–Cheshinovo Obleshevo, Bargala, Archeological locality Crkvishte- Morodvis, Archeological locality Lokubija–Kochani (with additional facilities) Archeological locality Vinichko Kale–Vinica, Archeological locality Stamer–Delchevo, Archeological locality Gradishte, village Grad–Delchevo, Archeological locality St. Petka –Pehchevo, middle age town Raven –Pehchevo, Archeological locality Kalata, Kalimanci, village Tarinci in the municipality Karbinci. All localities need tourist signalization, **museums** – Town museum–Shtip, Ethno – house in Morodvis–Zrnovci, Ethno house and town museum in Kochani, museum of Vinica, memorial ossuary in the village Cera, municipality Makedonska Kamenica, museum of Delchevo, memorial home of Razlovechko uprising in Razlovci–Delchevo, museum of Berovo, **Ottoman architecture**, the bridge of sultan Emir Khuchuk–Shtip, Clock tower –Shtip, Husamedin Pasha mosque –Shtip, Kadin Aga mosque –Shtip, Besistan–Shtip, Mosque Sultan Fatih Mehmed in Delchevo, **Cultural historical landmarks, monuments and memorial landmarks**, the monument of deported Jews–Shtip, Monument of fallen fighters in NLW Shtip–Shtip, Novo Selo–Shtip, Monument of Dame Gruev in the village Rusinovo, Home of ASNOM in the center of Delchevo, Kukulje–Nov Istvenik–Delchevo, the Tower–middle age locality –Delchevo, House of culture –Probishtip, Monument of national hero Vera Jocikh–Makedonska Kamenica, Memorial bust of the national hero Vera Jocikh – Makedonska Kamenica, Memorial landmark of Nikola Karev–Cheshinovo Obleshevo, the last watermill at Kochanska Reka, Monument of freedom Kochani, middle age towers Kochani.

## 5.7. Monastery and religious tourism

The East Planning Region has many monasteries and churches which are a significant cultural heritage from different periods. A greater number of them contain masterpieces of paintings, icon painting, architecture and iconostasis, etc. The number of monks' communities for men and women is increasing in the past years.

The development of monastic tourism in the East Planning Region depends upon the interest of tourists for visiting monasteries, but it also largely depends upon the monks' permission for visiting. The monasteries always welcome tourists with religious motives or tourists who are fond of cultural heritage. However, the life and order of the monks should not be interrupted at any time. At the moment there are relatively little monasteries where there is an active monk's life and they are as follows: Lesnovo monastery – St. Arhangel Gavril –men's monastery, St. Spiridon women's monastery and St. Arhangel Mihail in Berovo – men's monastery. In the remaining valuable or famous monasteries often times there are religious celebrations with organized lunches with the worshippers.

There is no noted organized accommodation for tourists in the monasteries.

This type of tourism is possible as a combination with other type of tourism, i.e. organized visit of other cultural monuments. In the surrounding of the East Planning Region there are many known and attractive monasteries located on the territory of other regions. Therefore, it is good to consider creating a route with included several monasteries from different regions.

At the workshops which were organized during the preparation of the Study, a large number of participants, representatives of the municipalities from the East Planning Region have pointed out that monastic tourism has a large potential for development in this region. But this does not depend



only on the attractiveness of the monastery or the churches, but also from many other factors, which were elaborated within the valorization which was made and presented in the tables with individual grades and ranging of the following churches and monasteries: St. Gjorgji next to Bargala, church St. Mary (Novo Selo) –Shtip, St. Nikola – half way to Shtip –Kochani, church St. Nikola–Shtip, church St. Spas–Shtip, church St. Archangel Mihail–Shtip, church St. John the Baptist–Shtip, church St. Arhangel Mihail–Berovo, church the Birth of Virgin Mary–Berovo, church St. Czar Konstantin and Czarina Elena in the village Razlovci –Delchevo, monastery St. Mary-Balaklija in Delchevo, church Assumption of Virgin Mary -Delchevo, church St. Petka in the village Selnik, Delchevo, church St. Arhangel Mihail village Dramche, Delchevo, St. Joakim Osogovski in Jakimovo, Lesnovo Monastery, Lesnovo, Assumption of Virgin Mary–Pirog, women’s monastery St. Spiridon Miracle Worker –Probishtip, church St. Apostles Petar and Pavle –Pehchevo, church St. Dimitrij–Zrnovci, monastery St. Simeon Stolpnik–Morodvis, monastery St. Petka–Vidovishte –Zrnovci, St. Arhangel Mihail in the village Spanchevo, church Assumption of Virgin Mary in Makedonska Kamenica, monastery St. Pantelejmon–village Pantelej, monastery St. Ilija village Beli–Kochani, church St. Gjorgji in Kochani, monastery St. Spas - Polaki –Kochani, monastery St. Vasilij Veliki- Ponikva, church St. Gjorgji, Gorni Kozjak-Karbinci, monastery St. Petka near the village Kalauzija–Karbinci, church Christ’s Ascension –Karbinci, etc.

## 5.8. Manifestation tourism

The East Planning Region offers a great number of one day or several day traditional manifestations, events and festivals. Despite the fact that most of them have local significance, some of them have the potential to become attractive for tourists from the country and wider in international ranges. The following have been valorized within the Study: custom „Chetrse“–Shtip, festival „Joy of town“–Probishtip, festival Profest–Probishtip, Easter Egg–Berovo, International Roma Day–Kochani, Drama amateur festival –Kochani, Art colony Lesnovo–Probishtip, Pehchevo Pavlov’s Day –Traditional Ethno Fair–Pehchevo, Festival of brass orchestras –Pehchevo, Vlachs greetings at Petrov’s Day–Kochani, International art colony St. Pantelejmon–Kochani, Singing Maleshevo child – festival of children’s songs–Pehchevo, Summer of culture in Shtip–Shtip, Pavlov’s Day–Vinica, Golak’s folklore gatherings on the mountain Golak–Delchevo, Ethno festival Berovo, Pijanec-Maleshevo Wedding–Delchevo, Istibanjsko zhivozdravo–Vinica, First rice harvest –Cheshino Obleshevo, Kochani’s days of rice–Kochani, Todor’s races in Vinica, Makfest–Shtip, Pastrmajlija event–Shtip, In Vinica Veritas–festival of humor and satire–Vinica, Days of fashion in Shtip.



Aqua park fest in Probishtip (source: municipality of Probishtip).

Pursuant to the conducted surveys through questionnaires submitted to all municipalities from the East Planning Region, and also through the conversations with the local population, the following results are evident:

- The organizers of the manifestations in EPR are usually the local self-governments, associations of citizens, church boards, folklore dancing groups, etc.
- Most of these manifestations have religious characters i.e. they are organized during rural celebrations or church holidays and the purpose of these manifestations is to promote the traditional religious customs, to cherish, to sustain the cultural spiritual heritage and to introduce the young population and the other visitors to the folk customs. The religious manifestations have a long tradition and the visitors of these manifestations are usually local residents, expatriates from that area and sometimes people from other parts of the state.
- Part of the manifestations are organized for the purpose of promotion and sale of certain products such as the Shtipska pastrmajlija event, days of rice in the village Banja, Zrnovce and others (usually take place during the days of the celebration of the municipalities, when different rice meals are being tasted) and in some parts (Cheshinovo-Obleshevo) the first rice harvest is performed by a church representative, followed by celebration. There is also a day of the honey, as well as other traditional products. The most frequent visitors are the local residents and lately the Shtipska pastrmajlija event has visitors from other regions from the Republic of Macedonia since more funds have been invested in this organization along with greater marketing.
- The international folklore festival “Istibanjsko zhivozdravo” takes place in Vinica with folklore motives, organized by the Folklore dance association in cooperation with the municipality, etc. This festival has participants from many countries, folk dance groups, where the largest emphasis is placed on the traditional costumes. However, the festival lacks marketing and promotion, i.e. higher investments in order to become more distinguishable within the state and beyond, which would attract a greater number of visitors.
- The financing of the manifestations is often from the budget of the municipalities, church boards and sponsors.
- Only a small number of the manifestations have a commercial character, i.e. generating income for their further growth and their perfection and expansion.

- Professionals or event agencies are not hired for organization of these manifestations, but instead the municipalities, non-government organizations and church boards are organizing them.
- Part of the manifestations have the potential to become generators of a large number of visitors, but only by investing more funds and by hiring professionals in their organizations, as well as investing in marketing and promotion, i.e. branding them as a tourist product.
- The support of the public sector is necessary for maintaining and organizing these manifestations.

## 5.9. Bath-wellness spa tourism

Over the centuries the area of EPR was known for geothermal waters. This is where the largest thermal potential on the Balkan is located with several larger geothermal pools: Podlog Bath, Istibanja and Kezhovica. The geothermal bed Podlog – Bath lies on the largest geothermal basin on the Balkan Peninsula with total static reserves of 150 million m<sup>3</sup>, with average temperature of 75°C. In chemical terms, the geothermal water is natrium bicarbonate with pH value of 7, non-aggressive in closed systems. Thermal waters in the village Banja in the municipality Cheshinovo – Obleshevo were used as baths long time ago, especially in the 1970s and the 1980s. The bath is provided with enough quantity of thermomineral water which has high temperature of 63°C. The healing qualities of the water help in healing the following diseases: gall canals and gall bladder, gynecological diseases, nerves inflammation, rheumatic diseases and other diseases. The water has reached its highest healing effect in curing stomach ulcer and duodenal ulcer. This water may also be used for inhalations and it might also have a healing effect on catarrhal inflammation of the respiratory organs. The hydrogeothermal system Istibanja is located in the vicinity of the village Istibanja in Vinica. This system is similar to the system Podlog – Bath and it is characterized with a capacity of 56 l/sec and a temperature of 67°C. Kezhovica has been functioning as town's bath for eight decades. As a bath it has been known since Ottoman time when it was used for health purposes and for personal hygiene of the residents. According to their radioactivity, the thermomineral waters from the springs which are located near the bath Kezhovica have been placed on the list of most radioactive thermomineral waters not only in Macedonia but also wider on the Balkans. Nowadays, the bath Kezhovica uses water from two shallow wells with quantities of 4,5 l/sec with temperature of 63°C.

Notwithstanding of the large possibilities offered by the region, bath tourism is poorly developed. The bath Kezhovica is not equipped and arranged to accommodate foreign or domestic tourists with reference to the quality of the accommodation capacities to the versatility and the level of services. Before the inception of any type of activities for attracting and accepting any foreign tourists, the facilities of the bath should be modernized; new additional amenities should be built, such as bath-spa complex (open and closed pools, children's pool, whirlpool baths, sauna, Turkish bath, massage salons). The complex would be attractive for the people with certain diseases and also for those who wish to enjoy and relax in the benefits of thermal water. This especially if we take into consideration the proximity of the town Shtip and the numerous amenities which it can offer. Pursuant to the position, the area from the village Istibanja to Vinica also offers excellent possibilities for construction of a modern spa center. Actually, there are initiatives from the municipality of Vinica for a spa center in this area. Its realization in the future period could be an excellent base for significant increase of tourist visits in this area. The situation with the bath in the village Banja (Kochanska Banja) is similar, where the ruined bath complex should be replaced with new constructions and amenities. Bath tourism of the area of EPR (in all three mentioned centers) would require significant investments in the following 10 year period in view of the existing condition. However, the return effect would be great, and with successful management the invested funds would be returned in a relatively short period of time. This is quite clear if we take into consideration that the geothermal mineral water is "nature's gift" which at present is almost unutilized.

With reference to the spa-wellness tourism, the existing and future hotel-accommodation facilities in EPR should try to provide modern amenities which include wellness-spa. This includes construction of smaller or larger pools, whirlpool baths, sauna, steam bath, massage area, fitness or only few of these. The trends reveal that any type of wellness-spa amenities with satisfactory quality

significantly increase the interest for visiting that facility compared to other such facilities without such amenities (even for reasonably higher price). Actually, the existing examples in EPR already confirm this conclusion and in that sense, the facilities in Kochansko Pole which can use the geothermal water have a certain advantage.

**Bath-spa tourism:** *Istibanja-Vinica, Kezhovica, village Banja.*

## 5.10. Jeep safari, safari, off-road, moto tourism

If we take into consideration the size and the diversity of the landscapes in EPR and the desire of the tourists to see as much as possible for a limited period of time which they have available, one of the obligatory activities should be jeep-safari tourism. Jeep tours may be half a day, one day or sometimes two days. The longest recommended daily distance should be up to 100 km, maximum speed of the asphalt roads should not be greater than 50-60 km/h, and from 20-30 km/h on macadam roads (due to safety reasons, and also for landscape observation). Also, a break is recommended at every half an hour of ride at a nicely selected or marked place. The jeeps should be fully functional, clean and half open during summer, if possible. The jeep safari could be practiced as a main activity previously arranged through a tourist agency or complementary or optional, as part of a complete offer. Jeep safari is recommended on the existing asphalt local roads with partial off-road on better macadam roads. In the second case, the eco-component must be taken into consideration, i.e. to avoid visiting untouched, protected and valuable natural parts and higher mountain areas. An example of a half a day jeep safari – starting from Shtip through the village Shashavarlija, village Prnalija, Radanjska Reka-Shtip or from Kochani through Ponikva, the ravine at Zletovska Reka, village Zletovo, village Lesново, village Tursko Rudari, village Pantelej, Kochani (and the same tour may be done from Probishtip). From the locality Lake Berovo or from Berovo to Pehchevo waterfall through Parkach, then badlands at the village Crnik and Kukunjeto at the village Nov Istevnik. The off-road jeep safari may be done on the mountain Mangovica, through the mountain Serta, lower south parts of Osogovo, Vlaina, etc. It is not necessary to pass through the dense forest areas due to the above mentioned eco reasons and the possible interruptions of nature (in that case one can consider the possibility of special eco-tax or special vehicles with certain eco-standards or electro-vehicles). Jeep safari tourism may contribute with significant financial effects and to be an excellent base for promotion of resources in EPR. In order for it to function, good organization measures should be taken through local tourist organizations which would provide and promote such attractive and flexible offer, independently or through hotels and other tourist subjects. The region offers the possibility to take around 100-200 jeep vehicles per day in different areas, or around 500 to 1000 tourists per day or an annual financial effect of several millions Euros.





Figure 37. Jeep-safari Plachkovica, 2009.

In this part we could also consider moto-safari, i.e. passing through and sightseeing the landscapes by motor or four-wheel motor which could be rented or it could be personal. All principles which are valid for jeep safari also apply for moto-safari, i.e. avoiding valuable and ecologically preserved mountain areas.

In order to accomplish the above said it is necessary to carry out mapping of all roads and paths suitable for jeep and moto safari, as well as their marking, i.e. signalization. The possibility for renting a jeep, motorcycle, four-wheel motor, scooter, etc., should especially be available through local agencies, which is practiced almost everywhere in the developed tourist world.

**Jeep-safari tourism:** Almost all parts of EPR, especially around Shtipsko, Mangovica, Serta, from Probishtip to Kochani, from Kochani to Makedonska Kamenica through the low parts of Osogovo from Berovo to the village Razlovci, Kukulje, Badlands, Ravna Reka, etc.

## 5.11. Mountain biking

Mountain biking is a modern trend of dynamic sports recreational tourism which has excellent possibilities for development on the area of EPR. Most of the marked paths for tracking and mountaineering could be used for this type of tourism, except the inaccessible places and passages. In that sense, the length of the potential mountain biking paths in EPR could be between 500 and 700 km, where the paths should be categorized according to the weight and the conditions. The paths around the mountain crest could be used as easy paths, while the paths from the crests towards the river valleys or the valley bottoms could be used as more difficult – to the level of downhill run. The best conditions for mountain biking are present on Osogovo Mountains, then Plachkovica, Maleshevo Mountains and Ograzhden. The main problem is the same as that of tracking - lack of accommodation facilities, unorganized paths, lack of promotion, information, inability to rent a mountain bikes, etc.



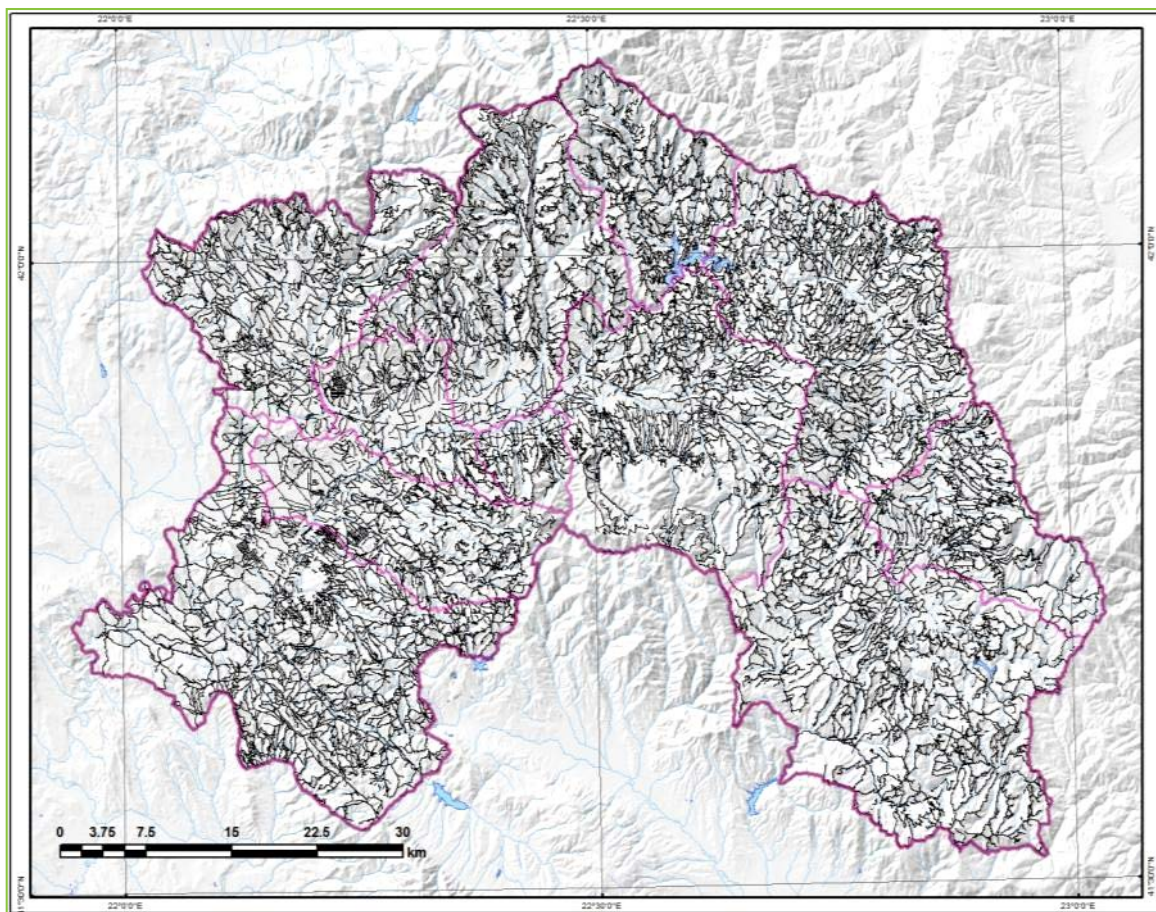


Figure 38. Potential paths and roads for mountain biking, tracking, mountaineering and jeep-safari in EPR (original).

**Mountain biking:** In all typical mountain parts of EPR where there are tracking conditions.

## 5.12. Geotourism

Geotourism implies visiting, sightseeing, photographing and enjoying rare and interesting geo-attractions. This is usually part of the activities such as tracking, mountain biking, jeep-safari and other types of nature observation. In that sense, geotourism has the possibility of good development in the Pechovo area, through the interesting, remarkable and rare erosion forms – badlands, especially the few large badlands at the village Crnik. The badlands at the village Smojmirovo, i.e. the locality Parkach are also equally interesting. The visit and sightseeing of the stone dolls and the sight Kukulje at the village Nov Istevnik is especially impressive. The starting point for visiting these locations could be Pehchevo, Berovo or Delchevo, as they are located at a small mutual distance (8-10km). One daily route could include a relaxed visit of all these mentioned attractions. In this area (Pijanec) there are stone dolls (Kukuljeto) at 3 km southwest from the village Trabotivishte, then the rocks and the cave Konjska Dupka at the village Grad near Delchevo, the cave Kiselica at the village Kiselica and of course the locations where they found (and where they are located) fossils at the village Stamer. All these locations have their values and significance, while the caves provide an adventure challenge as they are 40-80 m long. Towards north, the entire valley of Kamenichka Reka is quite interesting from the aspect of geotourism, with its numerous and large alluvial fans, large layers of alluvial material, landslides and other sights in the area. Makedonska Kamenica may be the starting point due to much other attractiveness in its vicinity. On the west side there is the impressive ravine Istibanjska Klisura with high rocks, steep sides and numerous segments with different forms. On the entire area from the village Sasa to the village Istibanja the rocks occasionally reveal black layers of slates rich with ore

deposits. The surrounding of Probishtip has a special geotouristic value. There is unique mineral collection in the town which will soon receive a new and representative area. In the vicinity of the town there are around ten volcanic peaks, and Lesnovo crater which is one of the most preserved and most interesting on the Balkan, located at only 3km. It reveals the wild geological history of this area in the past 30 million years. At 5 km south of Probishtip along the way to the village Zletovo there are volcanic balls or volcanic bombs, some of which are perfectly rounded and similar sights are present in the village Dobrev. The most beautiful ravine in EPR is located at the village Zletovo, with its steepest and most fascinating part (next to the village Kojkovo), 10 km long. Here tourists can enjoy the wild nature, deep almost canyon sides, many waterfalls, wonderful sights towards the remains of the past volcanoes and many other just by walking along the good asphalt road. On the east side from the village Zletovo there is also another excellent geolocality, Ratkova Skala, which has vast, frightening rocks made of quartzite. Near Shtip, the most interesting geotouristic locations are Isar and the small gorge on Bregalnica, then the valley of Radnjanska Reka with its almost alien appearance, and the small but interesting canyon Kamnik which connects with the valley, and the caves under the top Turtel.

**Geotourism:** Lesnovo crater, ravine of Zletovska Reka, Istibanjska ravine, Badlands- village Crnik, Kukulje – village Istevnik, Radanjska Reka and the canyon Kamnik, the valley of Kamenichka Reka.

**Speleotourism:** Turtel caves, Kiselichka cave, Konjska Dupka, cave at the village Grad.

### 5.13. Lake tourism

Kalimansko Lake has conditions for typical lake tourism in EPR. This lake is 14 km long, and 200-500 m wide, with its area of 4,2 km<sup>2</sup>. Its average depth ranges from few meters up to over 80 m near the dam. According to its shore line of 40 km and its spread position, Kalimanci is among the most interesting and the largest artificial lakes in Macedonia. There are good conditions for tours with tourist boats and rafts. The length of its round sailing route is 22 km. It is also possible to organize sailing routes from Makedonska Kamenica to the village Todorovci or/and vice versa (8,5 km), or from the village Lukovica to Makedonska Kamenica (7,5 km). It is possible to place platforms for boats and rafts on these three given places, which would be the starting or final sailing points. The route and visit of the island Kalata would be quite interesting as it is the only island on the lake and one of the three lake islands in Macedonia. In that sense, it would be a great convenience to arrange the island (which never gets flooded) with a walking path, belvedere and a platform for harboring small sailing objects. The lake offers enjoyment and when sailing it is possible to see different amenities along or on the coast, archeological remains, rural and traditional objects, etc. It is necessary to place information boards and signalization for all of them. Kalimanci offers the possibility of kayaking on peaceful waters, then pedaling boats and other recreational sailing activities. There are also proper conditions for a summer bathing tourism and placing and arranging several beaches. Even though the lake attracts transit tourists and passengers, there is no accommodation or food and beverage facility along the shore, which would allow the observation of the spectacular view. At present there are only 3-4 wild and unorganized parking places where one can stop but only in the direction towards Delchevo (it is dangerous to go in the opposite direction). Therefore, it is necessary to enable and stimulate tourist construction and arrangement of the coastal attractive zone. According to the performed estimations, during the summer period the Lake Kalimanci would be able to host around 500-1000 tourists per day, i.e. around 30 000 during the year, which would provide a financial effect of around 1-3 million Euros.

Lake Berovo and Lake Gradche already have a certain degree of development of lake tourism. Lake Berovo has wonderful scenery and a small annual fluctuation of the level. This enables recreation and water sports such as kayaking, boat tours around the lake (5 km long), pedaling boats, fishing and other activities. A kayaking competition is already organized here. It would be advisable to find a way for tourist sightseeing of the lake with an electric boat for a group of 10-20 tourists, a picnic with a boat to some locality on the opposite shore, then renting rubber or wooden boats, etc. Lake Gradche has the same opportunities as the previous lakes, even though it is considerably smaller. Actually, the development of lake tourism is already in progress here, with marked paths and facilities around the

lake, renovated hotel, beach on the lake (which needs improvement), several sailing facilities (a harboring platform is necessary) and other.



Figure 39. Kayaking competition on the peaceful waters of Lake Berovo.

**Lake tourism:** Lake Kalimansko, Lake Berovo, Lake Gradche.

## 5.14. Summer bathing tourism and water activities

The summer bathing tourism has good conditions for development in the area of EPR. Kalimansko Lake has especially favorable conveniences. The lake itself has at least 3 parts which are suitable for beaches, especially at the village Todorovci and the village Lukovica. During the summer period the lake water temperature is usually 20-25°C, which makes it convenient for bathing. Also, its quality ranging in class II is satisfactory (except in the bay towards Kamenica). The only problem is the oscillation of the level of water due to process of emptying the lake in the summer period. In the future this period may be solved only by constructing one smaller accumulation at Bregalnica upstream from Kalimanci to the village Ochipale or several smaller accumulations of the tributaries of Bregalnica over Kalimanci.

Aside from Kalimanci, Lake Gradche has good conditions for a bathing tourism and water activities, especially considering its vicinity to the town Kochani. Lake Berovo and its lower water temperature do not offer bathing tourism, but water activities such as: kayaking, rafting, pedaling boats, etc. The rivers do not offer possibilities for typical bathing capacity tourism due to the small and very changeable flow, the unsatisfactory water quality and other reasons. However, it is possible to build/renovate/upgrade pools in almost all towns except Probishtip which already has an attractive aqua park. The working experience of several years of this aqua-recreational object reveals how it is possible to attract a large number of tourists in a short period of time. If we take into consideration the demographic-gravitation condition of EPR, the aqua park amenities (pools, recreation on and in water) are necessary in Shtip, Kochani and Delchevo. Care must be taken of the selection of the location, type of object, offered amenities, price, etc.





Figure 40. Aqua park in Probishtip - model (source: Municipality of Probishtip).

**Summer bathing tourism:** Lake Kalimansko, Lake Gradche, pools and aqua parks in Shtip, Kochani, Delchevo and Probishtip.

**Water activities:** Lake Kalimansko, Lake Gradche, Lake Berovo.

## 5.15. Hunting tourism

The area of EPR offers excellent conditions for development of hunting tourism, both for domestic and foreign tourists. However from around 40 hunting grounds in the region only few are arranged and ready for tourist function. Such is the case for two fenced hunting grounds Polaki and Konche, then the hunting ground Golak, etc. Actually, almost all hunting grounds may develop tourist activity, especially the mountains with large game which is in high demand and which is highly paid. According to the available data, the area of EPR is visited by around 1000-1200 foreign hunters per year for hunting tourism. In order for them to come, the hunting associations send an invitation verified by a notary to the regional center for border issues at MIA. The daily ticket for hunting which should be paid is usually 50 Euros, and when hunting a protected game, the daily ticket is from 20 Euros and 20-30 Euros for shot game. When they go hunting they are accompanied by hunting guides of the association, which take care of the shot game, they make sure that the hunters do not hunt on the same place to avoid scaring the birds, etc. Foreign hunters usually come with their own equipment, terrain vehicles and hunting weapon. Often times they take their hunting dogs with them which are being trained during the hunt. The entire community benefits from the stay of the hunters and their participation in sports tourism. They use the facilities for accommodation and they visit the food and beverage facilities in town. The largest part of these sports tourists return the following year. The best areas and existing hunting grounds for development of hunting tourism are on Osogovo Mountains (hunting ground Polaki), on Konechka mountain (hunting ground Konche), at Delchevo (hunting ground Golak), on Mangovica (the existing hunting ground should be arranged) etc. In order for the hunting ground to accomplish good results, tourist formation is necessary, construction/provision of a motel or a hunting home, hunting manifestations, competition, additional offers and activities, etc.



**Hunting tourism:** Hunting ground Ponikva, hunting ground Konche, hunting ground Golak.

## 5.16. Fishing tourism

In view of the numerous mountain waterfalls and abundance of fish, as well as the presence of a large number of artificial lakes, EPR has quite solid conditions for development of fishing tourism. The best opportunities are offered by Lake Kalimansko, Lake Gradche, Lake Berovo, Lake Sandanski (which is actually used for that), Lake Loshana at the village Trabatovishte, Lake Pishichko then Bregalnica from Kalimanci to the entrance in Kochansko Pole, Zletovska Reka to the village Zletovo, river Osojnica through the ravine, etc. According to the Fishing base for Bregalnica catchment (2011), the area of EPR is divided in 5 fishing territories from the spring („Bregalnica 1“) to the catchment of Svetinikolska Reka („Bregalnica 5“). In the upper flows of the constant rivers there is the river trout, and lower there is common nase, chub, smelt, carp, barbel and other. Lake Kalimanci also has catfish. For development of fishing tourism at a necessary level, the following activities should be carried out in the following period: arranging the fishing territories and suitable locations for fishing, including this type of tourism in the offer of the fishing associations, agencies and other involved institutions, simplifying the procedure for issuing fishing license for more days, opportunities to buy or rent fishing equipment, setting up fishing platforms, especially on the lakes, creating complete fishing-tourist arrangements, promotion and presentation of this type of tourism, etc. In that sense, the accommodation capacities and the local tourist agencies/bureaus should cooperate with the fishing associations and more information should be shared through brochures, contacts, etc. Again we face the same problem here as well, the lack of accommodation-food and beverage capacities near the larger water facilities such as Lake Kalimansko, Pishica, Loshana and others.

**Fishing tourism:** On all artificial accumulations and on the larger rivers in the region, especially the “clean” sectors.

## 5.17. Gastronomic tourism

When discussing gastronomic or culinary tourism, we refer to a voyage which motive is experience, adventure, in a certain country, region, and area, related to characteristic food/drinks which are prepared by the local population. The food of one destination is as important to tourists as the climate, accommodation and sightseeing. Many experts consider the gastronomic tourism as part of the cultural tourism as food represents the culture of the people. Tourists are looking for something unique, authentic, something to remember. It would be ideal for tourists to be able to observe the techniques of preparation and even to involve them in the preparation. This type of tourism is often times combined with another motive for traveling to a certain destination.



Figure 41. Traditional meals in Kochani field - source: Municipality Cheshinovo-Obleshevo.

Since every tourist needs three meals a day, the gastronomic tourism can definitely be a generator of income for a certain destination. The purpose is not only to satisfy the desire for food as a physical need, but also to broaden the experience. A travelling motive could be food and beverage festival. The East Planning Region has many food festivals which could serve as a travelling motive.

EPR must use rice for the development of gastronomic and rural tourism, as it is the largest producer of rice in Macedonia. The specific rice specialties of this region are rice pudding, porridge, rice pie, chicken and rice, risotto. Other specialties include:

- Pie baked under batch is a traditional meal and every year a manifestation is organized called „Grandmother’s pie“.
- Lesnovo lamb is far known for centuries as it is bred in good conditions such as clean mountain air, clean water, pastures.
- The remaining meals are prepared in a traditional local way of preparing (Zletovska pastrmajlija, polenta with meat, meat and leek, rural stew, etc.).
- Pie, kneaded pie, stuffed peppers, musaka, sarma, sheep, goat, cow cheese, baked pork, Shtip string beans (meal with sauerkraut, leek and beans) meatballs in onion, etc.

**Typical products:** Berovo cheese, Maleshevo cheese, Maleshevo potatoes, Shtipska pastrmajlija, Lesnovo lamb, potatoes, cereals, blue plum and sour cherries in Berovo.

**Zrnovci:** endemic river trout and the river crab, hot pepper know as “Zrnovo hot” and the industrial pepper called “Amphora” and “Kurtovska kapija”, the delicious Zrnovo leek, Zrnovo pink tomato known for its size and sweet taste, peas, plums, peaches, cherries, pears and the common plum (janka).

**Karbinci:** wheat, rye, oat, corn, sunflower, poppy seed, potato, onion, garlic, beans, peas – grain, lentil, cabbage and wild cabbage, tomatoes, pepper, watermelon, cherries, sour cherries, apricots, quince, apples, pears, plums, nuts, almonds and wine plantations.

**Pehchevo’s** yellow cheese, cheese, potato.

All these products, along with some other specialties and beverages which are not mentioned here, are a large potential for development of the entire region.

It is necessary to take activities for promotion and branding of the gastronomic specialties, which would help the development of tourism and the entire economy of EPR. The food industry is also one of the more significant in the municipality of Shtip. More important capacities are the factory for candy and chewing gums, “Evropa”, the factory for oil with high quality “Brilijant” and few wine cellars: “Ezimit”, “Imako”.

**Note:** In the preparation of the strategy for development of tourism in EPR activities and proposal projects for development of gastronomic tourism will be especially analyzed, with special accent on the passage of rice.

## 5.18. Shopping tourism

Shopping tourism plays a key role in the trip of the tourist, notwithstanding whether shopping is the main motive or a parallel activity, i.e. within some other type of traveling. Large income is produced in the large tourist destinations which have shopping centers in their suburbs and which are visited by tourists.

The East Planning Region has a potential for shopping tourism in Shtip, where the producers of apparel and shoes have large shops and outlets in the vicinity of their capacities. “Days of fashion” are also an opportunity for shopping as well as the manifestations with ethno character (for example Berovo) where tourists can buy souvenirs from local handicrafts. Souvenir shops in the towns of the East Planning Region or near the attractions enable tourists to buy promotional materials and characteristic souvenirs and products. Different types of tourists have different habits and requests and we must also take into consideration the different age of the tourists. The key element in shopping tourism is to understand the behavior of the tourist, his needs and requirements and expectations. Good quality merchandise with acceptable prices have predisposition to be attractive for tourists who come to the region, but this requires promotion. Recently there are some organized tours for shopping tourism.

**Shopping tourism:** Shtip.

## 5.19. Paragliding

Several places in EPR have excellent conditions for paragliding. They are Turtel and its surrounding towards Kochansko pole; village Leshki towards Kochani; Lesново towards the village Zletovo; Golak towards Delchevo and others. Turtle offers best conditions as it has an asphalt road almost all the way to the top, the area around the top is wide, the north slope is quite steep, and Kochansko pole is flattened and wide. Also, the height difference is quite large and at 5 km horizontal distance it is up to 1000 m (to the village Zrnovci, village Morodvis and village Vidovishte). Above the village Vidovishte and the village Zrnovci there are also beautiful terrains for downhill run with a paragliding from a small height (300-400 m height difference at 1,5 km horizontal distance), with a good macadam road. This area also has favorable winds blowing on the hills of Plachkovica from south to north.

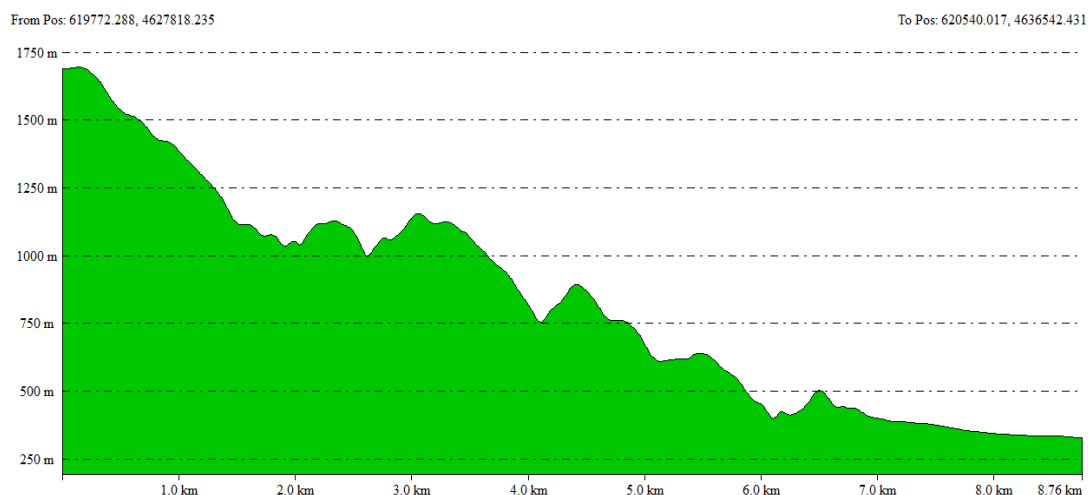


Figure 42. Excellent paragliding profile from the top Turtel (left) to the village Zrnovci (right)(original).

There is a good and open terrain for paragliding on Osogovo, at the village Leshki (980 m) above Kochani on the road towards Ponikva. The length of the line is 6-7 km, while the denivelation is around 500 m. Around Probishtip there are good terrains for paragliding from Lesnovo peak and from Crni Vrv (1115 m). On the southwest edge of Lesnovo crater, at the locality "Belo Mesto" there is a plain with diameter of 50 m, at height of 890 m. It is possible to fly from here for 2-3km in the direction of the village Zletovo, village Dreveno or Probishtip, at denivelation of 300-350 m. The terrain from the village Zletovo to the village Dreveno and Probishtip have a small inclination, open, tamed and suitable for landing. Similar conditions are present at Crni Vrv, but here the weather conditions could change at once. On the mountain Golak there are several places which are suitable for paragliding on the road to the recreational complex at the top Chavka, especially above Vidkovec (830 m). Here, at the distance of 2,5 km towards northeast (towards Delchevo), the denivelation is around 250 m. It is important that all given locations offer good natural conditions and they already have some infrastructure and they are also close to the local towns (Kochani, Probishtip, Delchevo).

**Paragliding:** Turtel and the plains above the village Zrnovci and the village Vidovishte (Plachkovica), Golak (especially the side towards Delchevo, i.e. the eastern slopes), the steep part west of Lesnovo (on the Lesnovopeak), the slopes of Osogovo above Kochani.

## 5.20. Adrenalin parks

The adrenalin parks are built and arranged sports-recreational amenities on a relatively small area (usually few hundred m<sup>2</sup> up to few hectares) and at certain height above the bottom (usually from few meters to few tens of meters). They are made of different passages through ropes, rope hanging bridges, high platforms etc., which creates strong excitement, sometimes fear, and also pleasure once the path is finished. The adrenalin parks do not request large investments, and they are excessively requested by tourists who are eager for adrenalin and adventure experiences. However, they imply severe safety and other standards which must be observed. Almost every recreational tourist locality with accommodation-food and beverage capacity within EPR may set an adrenalin parks for adults or children. However, this is usually done in the localities which are located in the forest area, with clean air and further away from the urban areas. With small investments in adrenalin parks (few ten to hundred thousand Euros), the offer of a certain tourist center will increase, and so will the interest for its visit.





Figure43. Smaller adrenalin park in Crkvenica – Croatia  
(source: [www.adrenalinpark.eu](http://www.adrenalinpark.eu)).

**Adrenalin parks:** around Lake Berovo, around Lake Gradche, on Golak, at Ravna Reka, at Ponikva, at the village Zrnovci, at Suvi Laki, etc.

## 5.21. Zip-lines

Zip-line is a tourist attraction which is similar to the adrenalin parks and in the last ten years it is becoming more requested and more present in the World, in Europe and even on the Balkan Peninsula. This attractiveness is expected to expand in the Republic of Macedonia. It represents a tight, steel rope (sometimes 2 ropes for better safety) which connects two close places at different height and it enables descending from higher to lower places and it is a true adrenalin experience. Such amenity, which does not entail large financial funds, will increase the attractiveness of several places and it will additionally attract a significant number of tourists. The placement of zip-lines does not have a negative influence on the environment, but it enables a fantastic view of the landscapes. When placing zip-lines it is important for them not to be too long (no more than 500-600 m) and to have enough, but not too large inclination, etc. There are many suitable locations for zip-lines in EPR but the most rational action would be to place them next to or near the existing, i.e. the potential attractive tourist localities at smaller altitude (places with higher temperatures in the year and with minor wind). For the beginning, the suitable traces for zip line would be the elevations and hills at Shtip, around the village Zletovo, near Kochani and Delchevo, at Lesново, in the ravine of Zrnovska Reka, at Badlands and Kukulje, above Kochani, at the village Grad and etc. Zip-lines may also be part of the adrenalin parks.



Figure 44. An example of a simple but attractive zip-line above the canyon of Cetina in Croatia (source: [www.zipline-croatia.com](http://www.zipline-croatia.com)).

**Zip-lines:** At more locations near or as part of the tourist localities.

## 5.22. Aerotourism and gliding

The area of EPR has quite favorable conditions for flying and for sightseeing with light sports-tourist airplanes and gliders. One of the best aero-clubs originates from Shtip, established since 1924. The aero-club uses the sports-tourist airport in Shtip. Together with the aero-club there is also an aviation school conducting training for pilots for airplanes, pilots for gliders, modelers, parachuters and paragliders. For ten consecutive years the club is the organizer of the world's cup in rocket modeling and it also participates in the European and World's championships where it has significant success. The aero club has airplanes from the type Cesna (four-seats), Utva (two-seats) and gliders (two-seats and single seat). Two-seat gliders are used for tourists who do not have permission to fly and they are operated by a pilot. The flight might last several hours, and it is possible to fly over large distances, and the flight costs thirty Euros and it is a truly exciting experience. Since 2000 onwards there is an increased interest for flying among tourists and their number is constantly increasing. These services are used by around thirty tourists per year, and most of them are domestic tourists. As flying is related to the weather conditions, the best season for flying are spring and summer months, but it is not an exception to fly in autumn or winter. The most frequent periods for flying are the weekends. The modern world trends impose the need for new activities. The future development of the aero-club is planned to be directed towards the formation of a taxi-aviation due to the increasing interest by the business sector for traveling to famous European destinations (Tashkov and Metodijevski, 2009). In order for this type of tourism to be more present, it is necessary to increase the number and the quality of the planes (if possible to provide 2 smaller civil helicopters), then greater promotion and information, preparation of offers, web-presentation, etc. Also, an interesting opportunity would be to make a round sightseeing of EPR or to land at another sports airport in the region (even to arrange a new sports airport in Berovo) with a short visit of that part.

***Aerotourism and gliding:*** Aero club Shtip.

## 5.23. Mountaineering

On the area of EPR, a typical mountaineering could be practiced in the locality Ratkova Skala. There are solid rocks-quartzite, with abysses more than 150 m high. The largest height difference from the bottom of the rock to the top is 350 m, over 3 verticals. Several mountaineering directions with different level of difficulty for climbing are possible. At present the locality can be reached through a dirt road from the village Shtalkovica, but with the construction of the road Probishtip-Ponikva it will become more accessible. However, mountaineering and the increased anthropogenic influence may have a negative impact on the unique biodiversity and some endangered species of birds such as the Egyptian vulture, golden eagle, etc. Such influences and threats should be estimated by a certain study. In the wider area, especially through the ravine of Zletovska Reka there are several other locations with vertical abysses between 30 and 80 m, but their attractiveness is much smaller in terms of mountaineering.

***Mountaineering:*** Ratkova Skala.

## 5.24. Other tourist activities

Aside from the given types of tourism, in the analyzed period 2015-2024 attention should be paid to the development of tourism related to riding horses, then a donkey walk, flying with a balloon, skydiving (flying with a wing), base-jumping (jumping with a parachute from a vertical rock), carting, 7D virtual walk through the region, walking with a tourist wagon – train from Veles to Kochani, etc.

In view of the numerous mines on the area of EPR, as well as the old deserted mines and pits, and pursuant to the interest of the tourists for visiting such objects, it is possible to organize visits of the mines in Sasa or Dobrev, i.e. Probishtip. Mining dates from a very old period in this area, with certain archeological traces of mining since ancient times. However, in the process of organizing such tourist offer, care must be taken of the safety of tourists, then proper information about mining, abundance of different minerals, etc.



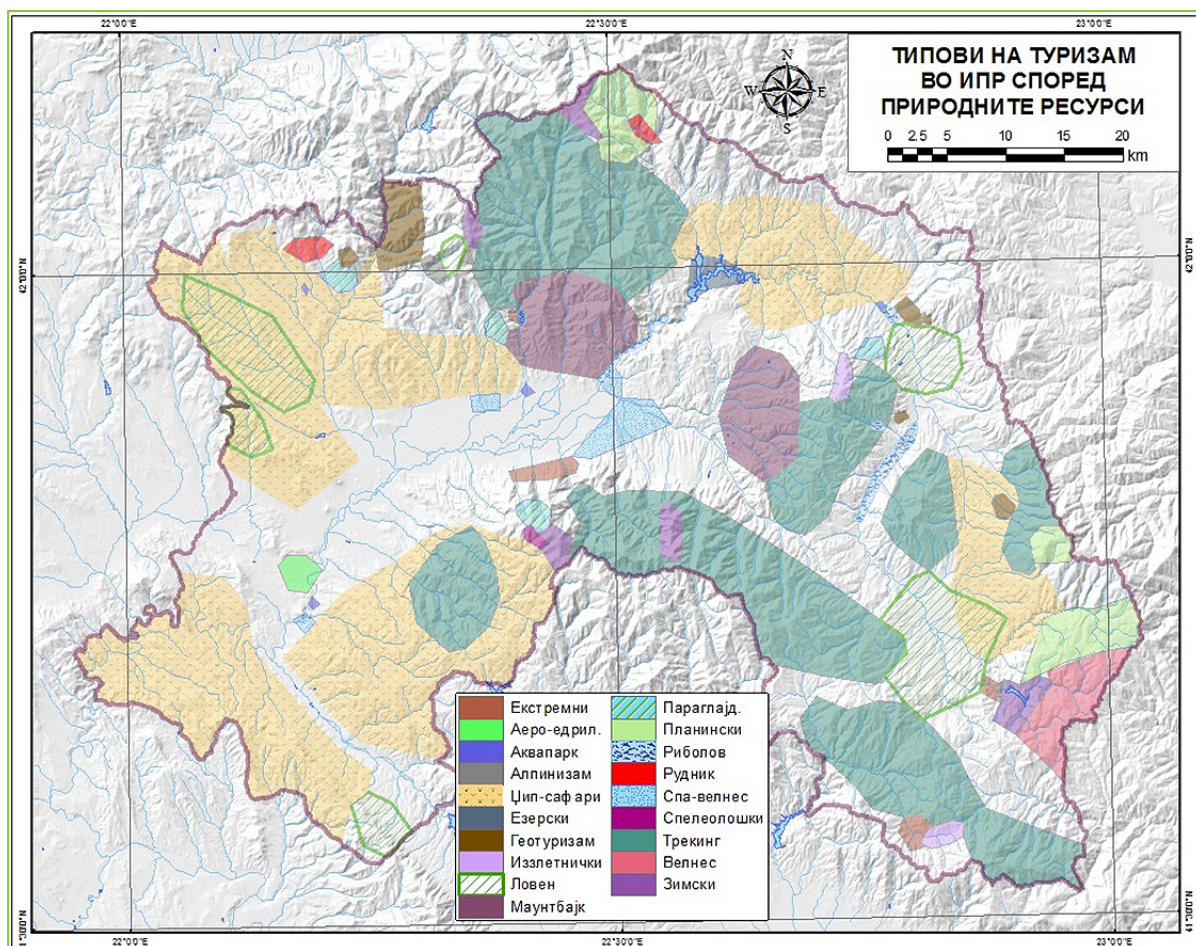


Figure 45. Map of types of tourism in EPR related with the natural attractiveness (original).



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## 6. EXISTING TOURIST LOCALITIES AND AREAS

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According to the current situation, almost all previously analyzed natural and cultural resources in EPR are smaller or larger tourist areas and localities. However, typical tourist localities with significant turnover and visitation frequency can be considered the following:

- Lake Berovo with the town Berovo, Ablanica and Ravna Reka (Municipality Pechevo),
- Ponikva with the town Kochani, Lake Gradche and the monastery St. Pantelej,
- Town Shtip with Novo Selo and the bath Kezhovica,
- Town Vinica with Vinica Fortress and the area to the village Istibanja, part of the ravine of Osojnica,
- Suvi Laki, tourist settlement on the mountain Ograzhden,
- Town Delchevo with the mountain Golak and the surrounding rural settlements (Zvegor, Grad, Stamer),
- Town Probishtip with the aqua park, surrounding volcanic sights, Lesново and Zletovska Reka.

According to the statistical information per municipality, the most visited municipalities in the region for the entire period are the municipalities of Shtip, Kochani and Berovo, i.e. the given localities therein.

Ponikva is a tourist center and a weekend settlement located 20 km north of Kochani, in the southwest part of Osogovo Mountains. It is located at the altitude of 1560 m in a dense beech forest and diverse vegetation. Ponikva is planned as one of the 34 winter tourist centers in the Spatial plan of the Republic of Macedonia and it holds a special place in the development of tourism and the general development of EPR. An asphalt road with two lanes leads to Ponikva from Kochani and the road is impeccably cleaned and properly covered with salt and sand during winter time. At the entrance of the tourist center Ponikva there used to be a small sports airport which was used for military purposes in the past. After passing the airport there is an asphalt parking area which is free of charge and available for all tourists. Around the parking area there are few food and beverage facilities and two active ski-lifts where ski lovers can enjoy the snow. At only 400 m from the parking area there is the newly built church St. Vasilij. The natural beauties, ecologically clean ambience and the mild climate are excellent preconditions for rich vegetation, so the visitors would be able to enjoy the untouched beauties of Osogovo Mountains. The surrounding has many walking paths and Carev Vrv (2085 m) is located at only 18 km. The top can be reached with a terrain vehicle or on foot. A special tourist attraction for all hunting lovers is the hunting ground "Polaki" located in the immediate vicinity, which offers the visitors an opportunity to hunt deer, fallow deer, mouflons, wild boars, etc. The urban area of Ponikva includes 2 ski-lifts, weekend houses (single and double), auto camps, bungalows, facilities for daily supply, multipurpose areas, terrains for sports and recreation, hotels, resorts, food and beverage facilities, repair and service for ski equipment. Along with the weekend settlement and few motels, Ponikva also has a resort.

The tourist locality Lake Berovo is located 6 km from Berovo, on the road to the border crossing Klepalo. Its altitude is around 1000 m. Along the lake there are many villas which can be rented, beautiful terrains or picnic, recreation and sports. The urban plan for development of this locality foresees places for construction of holiday homes, hotel complexes and other recreational amenities, taking into consideration not to interrupt the natural balance. In the immediate vicinity of the tourist settlement Lake Berovo there is the tourist settlement Ablanica which is second in size. It is located on both sides of the river Bregalnica, 2 km east from the town Berovo. This location has the highest number and the most attractive archeological localities in the municipality of Berovo. The newly constructed church St. Petka with fresco painting and iconostasis made by the local artists is open for

a visit. At present, the tourist settlement Ablanica has around 130 weekend houses and part of them are private accommodation capacities in the municipality.

The tourist locality and settlement Ravna Reka is located in the lavish nature of the Maleshevo Mountains, at ten kilometers from Pehchevo towards the border line with Bulgaria, marked after the Balkan wars in 1913, when the Maleshevo region and entire Macedonia was divided. The springs of the second largest river in Macedonia – Bregalnica are located here, tens waterfalls on it and on its small tributaries there, of which the tallest one is 14 m, and the entire complex is covered with high beech and pine forest. The two most attractive tourist localities in the Berovo part of Malesh –Ablanica and Lake Berovo are located in immediate vicinity. It is still unknown how the river Ravna obtained its name, maybe from the old Roman town Raven, which location is still undetermined, but it is considered that it is somewhere nearby. The founders of the Slavic literacy and culture, Cyril and Methodius used to stay in the town Raven, during their famous Bregalnica mission, crowned with the creation of the Glagolitic alphabet. There are excavations from an old settlement at few kilometers away from the tourist settlement, but their origin is still unknown. From Ravna River to the border with Bulgaria there is another ten kilometers with pristine nature. There is no populated place near both sides of the border. The dirt road which is hard to pass leads to the deserted former sentry of YNA, which the Pehchevo local self government plans to renovate into an accommodation capacity, mainly for hunting tourism. The new urban plan foresees locations for construction of 4 hotels and around 300 holiday homes.

Suvi Laki is a tourist settlement located at 25 km from Berovo, on the road to Strumica on the slopes of the mountain Ograzhden. The settlement is completely urbanized in 1978. At the moment there are 450 weekend houses, 2 children's resorts and it is planned to build another hundred weekend and commercial facilities. The church St. Cyril and Methodius was built for the tourists, due to the large popularity of the settlement.

The presented localities could also be considered as localities of **national rank**, i.e. they could attract tourists from outside the region due to their values, tradition, visitation frequency, location, etc.

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## 7. ANALYSES OF THE CURRENT CONDITIONS OF TOURISM IN EPR AND THE PRESENT DEVELOPMENT

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The development of tourism in the area of EPR has been analyzed from three exceptionally different social periods, until 1945 (as part of the kingdom of Yugoslavia), then from 1945 until 1991 (as part of Yugoslavia as FR Macedonia) and from 1991 until today.

### 7.1. Development of tourism on the area of EPR until 1945

Certain forms of recreation on the area of EPR appear even since ancient times. Namely, according to the available archeological remains, the abundance of themormineral springs have conditioned the erection and the visit of many thermal baths, especially in Bargala, Morodvis and many other places. This tradition continued later in the Ottoman period, and the baths Kezhovica, Istibanja, Kochanska Banja (i.e. the springs at the village Banja) and other places, were often used and visited. This area was also known for the important roads which were used for the caravans towards the Middle East. However, tourism in the real sense of the word took place only in the beginning of the last century. Between the two World Wars, several tourist facilities were built on the territory of EPR. Aside from the baths which were important for resting and healing in the past kingdom SCS (later Yugoslavia), the first facilities were erected at Ponikva. In the beginning, they were used as resting places for the army, and later they began to be used for civilians. In 1925 the construction of the railways line Veles-Shtip-Kochani was finished, and this gave an additional impulse for connecting this area with the remaining parts of the former Kingdom. In 1930 the first tourist associations were formed on the area of EPR, such as the tourist association “Bregalnica” from Shtip.



Figure 46. Celebration of the construction of railway to Kochani in 1925.

### 7.2. Development of tourism on the area of EPR from 1945 until 1991

After the Second World War a general fast development of Macedonia began, and with it the part of EPR as well. With the progress of the industry, depopulation of the villages and the increase of towns, a hotel was built in almost every town, which was mainly used for accommodation of delegations, business associates and other guests. During the same period, in 1960, due to the increased needs of water supply and irrigation, many dams and artificial accumulations were built. Some of them, like the Lake Berovo and Gradche, became attractive for relaxation and short stay, which initiated the construction of smaller resorts, hotels and motels. Children's resorts, mountain homes and similar facilities were built on the attractive mountain places such as on Golak, Plachkovica, Ograzhden (Suvi Laki) and other places. Actually, the 1980s were the “golden age” for tourism, not only in EPR, but in the entire country. Almost all tourist facilities were operating in full capacity:

children's resorts at Ponikva, Golak, Plachkovica, Suvi Laki, Lake Berovo, many workers' resorts (Lake Berovo, Suvi Laki), baths (Kezhovica, Kochanska), town hotels in Shtip, Kochani, Probishtip, Makedonska Kamenica and others, hunting grounds with hunting homes, etc. According to the available data, in 1987-1988 there were a maximum number of domestic and foreign tourists in all parts of Macedonia, and also on the area of EPR. In 1987 in Macedonia there were a total of 1 183 000 tourists with 3,9 nights. Up to 2,4 million nights were made by domestic guests, and the remaining 1,5 million from foreign tourists. During the same year, if we add the number of tourists from the past municipalities on the area of EPR, we come to the result of 45 000 tourists with around 115 000 nights in that year (for the area of EPR the municipalities of Shtip, Probishtip, Kochani, Vinica, Delchevo and Berovo were included). According to the statistical data, in 2013 in the Republic of Macedonia there were 702 000 registered tourists with almost 2,2 million nights. Pursuant to this, the number of tourists and nights is almost twice smaller than in 1987.

### 7.3. Development of tourism after 1991 (in independent Macedonia)

The wars in the 1990s, the change of the social system, the problem with the ownership of the facilities and other, caused a drastic deterioration of the existing facilities. Part of them were almost completely ruined and destroyed and left to the mercy of time. Only recently the accent was placed on the forgotten tourist potentials of this area. Meanwhile, the requirements, habits, and needs of tourists have changed significantly in the sense of greater dynamics, versatility, fastidiousness and flexibility of the offer. The future development of tourism in EPR should be in this direction. Due to the war conflict in the Republic of Macedonia and in EPR, the lowest number of tourists from 1970 onwards was noted in 2001. During this year the total number of registered tourists in the entire country was solely 333 000 (only 98 000 were from abroad) and there were 1,2 million nights (only 212 000 were from abroad). The number of tourists on the area of EPR in 2001 is slightly higher than the previous and the following years, which are probably the result of safety and the distance of this region from the war conflict.

Table 28. Number of tourists in the area of EPR for the period 2001-2010.

Year	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
<b>Total</b>	12 762	14 517	8 602	9 865	9 377	12 069	10 813	13 739	12680	13054
<b>Local</b>	10 305	11 344	6 571	7 520	7 061	8 959	7 021	9 230	8135	8463
<b>Foreign</b>	2 457	3 173	2 031	2 345	2 316	3 110	3 792	4 509	4545	4591
<b>Nights</b>	/	/	22 171	26 406	19 909	28 989	21 694	28 449	15742	14504

Source: State Statistical Office of R.M.

According to the overview, it is evident that the number of tourists in the period 2001-2010 is stagnating, so the total number of tourists is around 12 000. The positive side is the trend of continuous growth of number of foreign tourists, which continues to the last (2013) analyzed year.

### 7.4. Modern condition of tourism EPR

The East Planning Region at the level of the state is one smaller tourist developed entity. The following table provides table overview of the main data for tourism in the east region.



Table 29. Scope, dynamics, structure and percentage ratio of tourists visit in the East Planning Region.

-Year	Number of local tourists	Index base 2009	Number of foreign tourists	Index base 2009	Total number of tourists in the region	Index base 2009	Total number of tourists in R.M	Participation in total number of tourists in R.M
2009	8135	100,00	4545	100,00	12680	100,00	587770	2,16 %
2010	8463	104,03	4591	101,01	13054	102,95	586241	2,23 %
2011	7948	97,7	5667	124,69	13615	107,37	647568	2,10 %
2012	12275	150,89	6590	144,99	18865	148,77	663633	1,85 %
2013	13582	166,96	7165	157,65	20747	163,61	701794	1,94 %

Source: State Statistical Office of R.M.

The previous table reveals that the number of tourists marks almost a continuous growth, for both domestic and foreign tourists. This trend of growth with the foreign tourists is almost the same with the exception of the fact that it does not show any decrease in the past period, and the index of growth is 157,65 in 2013. With reference to the percentage ratio of the number of tourists who visited the East Planning Region, we can see a relatively low participation. It amounts to around 2% with a tendency of decrease in the past 2 years below 2%.

Table 30. Scope, dynamics, structure and percentage ratio of nights spent in the East Planning Region.

Year	Effectuated nights by domestic tourists	Index base 2009	Effectuated nights by foreign tourists	Index base 2009	Total number of effectuated nights in the region	Index base 2009	Total number of effectuated nights in RM	Percentage participation of the total number of nights in the region in the total number of nights in RM
2009	15742	100,00	11767	100,00	27509	100,00	2101606	1,31 %
2010	14504	92,14	11183	95,04	25687	93,38	2020217	1,27 %
2011	15614	99,19	13238	112,5	28852	104,88	2173034	1,33 %
2012	20930	132,96	16428	139,61	37358	135,80	2151692	1,74 %
2013	24987	158,73	17235	146,47	42222	153,48	2157175	1,96 %

Source: State Statistical Office of R.M.

The effectuated nights for domestic tourists reveal a decrease and an increase in a different time interval. In the first 3-year period there are values below the level of 2009, while in 2013 there is an increase of over 58% (24.987 effectuated nights). For foreign tourists, the effectuated nights are almost continually increasing, with the exception of 2010 where there is a decrease of almost 5% with reference to 2009. Here we can also note an increase of their number of almost 50% in 2013, which points out to achieved positive results in that sense.

Similar to the number of visitors, the nights in the East Planning Region in the total number in the Republic of Macedonia reveal quite low values. Thus, the average percentage participation is 1,52% with a tendency of increasing in the past 5-year period to 1,96% in 2013.

It can be concluded that despite the growth of the number of domestic and foreign tourists and effectuated nights, their participation in the total number in the Republic of Macedonia is at a very low level. Therefore, activities and measures should be taken for attracting a larger number of domestic and foreign clients in the future period.

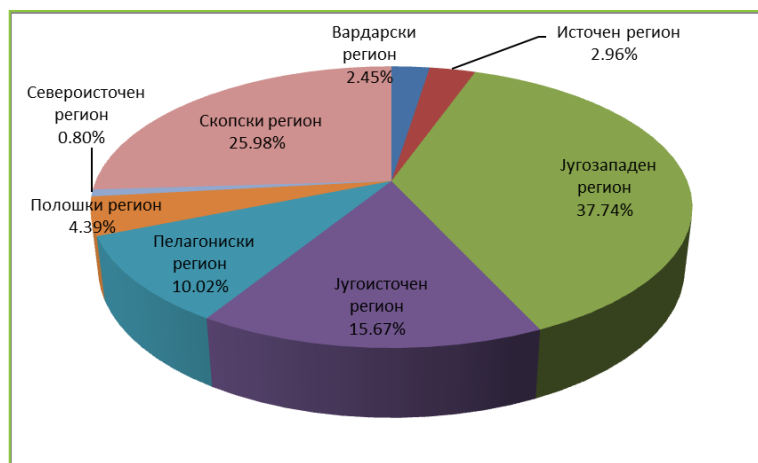


Figure 47. Graph of the percentage ratio of the number of visitors in the regions of RM for 2013.

The presented data show a disparity in the participation of the number of visitors in the mountain regions of the Republic of Macedonia. The largest number of visitors comes from the southwestern and Skopje region with a total of over 60%, while the remaining part is also unequally distributed between the other regions. The East Planning Region in 2013 reveals a participation of almost 3% (2,96%) which is a very low level. Right behind it are Vardar and the Northeast mountain region. Based upon this, it can be concluded that the future strategic plans and activities in the domain of tourism, i.e. the increase of visits by domestic and foreign tourist clientele should be directed to these three regions.

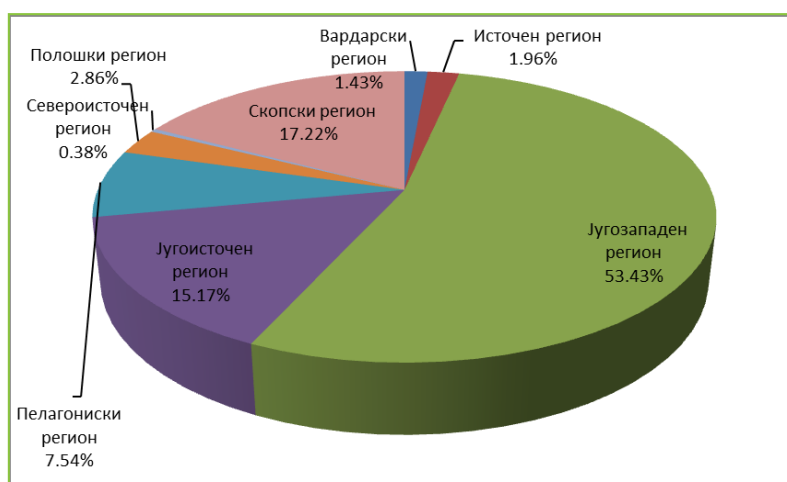


Figure 48. Percentage ratio of nights of the visitors in the regions of RM for 2013.

The graph shows the percentage participation of effectuated nights in the mountain regions of the Republic of Macedonia. In that sense there are similarities for the number of visitors, i.e. the largest participation is noted with the Southwestern mountain region (53,43%) and Skopje region (17,22%). These two regions are ahead with reference to the others, and the least effectuated nights for 2013 are present in Vardar and northeastern mountain region. Then we have the east region with participation of almost 2% (1,96%) and before that we have the Polog and Pelagonija mountain region with also relatively low participation. In that sense, the future strategic undertakings within the tourist development should be directed towards these regional units which have low percentage participation in the total number on state level.

Table 31. Average stay of tourists in the East Planning Region in days.

Year	Average stay of domestic tourists	Average stay of foreign tourists	Average stay of the total number
2009	1,94	2,59	2,17
2010	1,71	2,44	1,97
2011	1,96	2,33	2,12
2012	1,71	2,49	1,98
2013	1,84	2,41	2,04

Source: State Statistical Office, private calculations.

The table overview reveals a difference in the average stay at the domestic and foreign tourists. It is higher for the foreign tourists and then there is a decrease compared to 2009. Consequently, in 2009 the average stay of foreign tourists is 2,59 days and in 2013 it decreases to 2,41. The average stay of domestic tourists has also decreased with reference to the first analyzed year, i.e. it was 1,94 in 2009, and in 2013 it was 1,84 days. The table also provides an overview of the average stay of the total number of tourists (domestic and foreign) which reveals a decrease in the past 5-year period. In 2013 it was 2,04.

Accommodation capacities in EPR for the past several years are presented in the graph below.

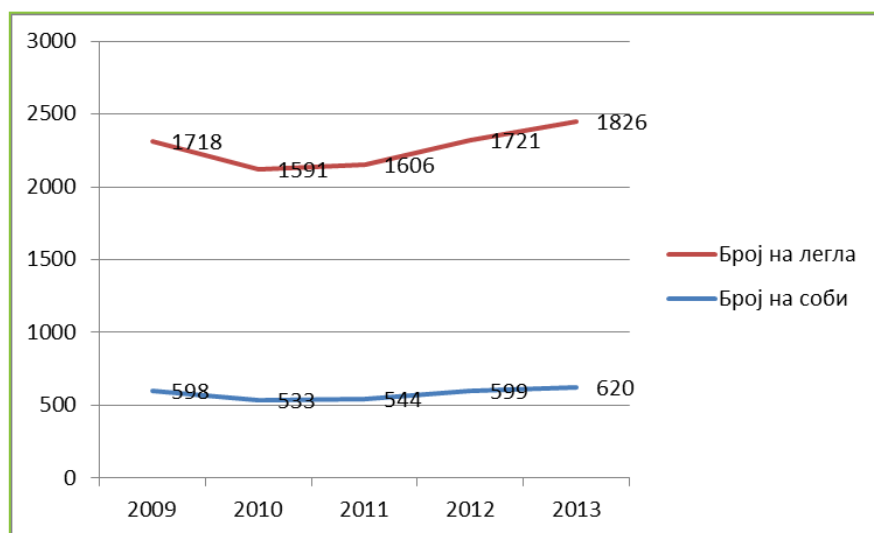


Figure 49. Accommodation capacities in the East Planning Region per years.

The presented data reveal that the East Planning Region shows reductions of accommodation of capacities and increase as well. In 2010 there was a rapid decrease of the number of rooms to 533. They increase in the following three years, which is a positive occurrence in 2013, when the number of rooms amounts to 620, which is an increase with reference to the first analyzed year.

The number of beds in the East Planning Region notes similar tendencies, which is quite logical. So in 2010, there is a large decrease compared to the first analyzed year, and the following period marks an increase up to 1.826 beds in 2013.

Table 32. Accommodation capacities per type in the East Planning Region for 2010.

Types of objects	Number of objects	Number of apartments	Number of beds
Total	23	65	1499
Hotels total	9	39	514
Hotels *****	/	/	/
Hotels ****	/	/	/
Hotels ***	2	16	161
Hotels **	3	12	129
Hotels *	4	11	224
Motels	1	3	60
Bath healing facilities	1	/	33
Workers' resorts	2	/	114
Children and youth resorts	3	5	538
Uncategorized facilities	7	18	240

The previous table reveals the types of accommodation capacities in the East Planning Region. However the last data refer to the year 2010 as the State Statistical Office of the Republic of Macedonia does not have information after that period. It can be noticed that the largest participation in the total number of facilities is by hotels and uncategorized facilities. This is also valid for the number of apartments, where hotels have a total of 39 apartments and the uncategorized facilities have 18 apartments. The number of beds in the East Planning Region is the largest in the children's and the youth's resorts which come before the total number of beds of hotels and uncategorized facilities. Namely, the children's and youth's resorts have 538 beds, which brings us to the conclusion that the tourist infra and suprastructure construction enable service provision for accommodation and food and beverage of the market segments which use these type of capacities. Accent should be placed on promotion of the number of the remaining accommodation capacities of higher category in the following period.

### Tourist consumption

Tourist consumption is represented through the turnover in the food and beverage facilities. The following table presents such overview for the Republic of Macedonia and for the East Planning Region.

Table 33. Tourist turnover in food and beverage facilities in RM and the East Planning Region in thousand denars.

	2011		2012		2013	
	Board consumption	Out of board consumption	Board consumption	Out of board consumption	Board consumption	Out of board consumption
Tourist turnover in food and beverage facilities in RM, in thousand denars	7428958	387385	7782534	383730	6389528	398687
Tourist turnover in food and beverage facilities in the East Planning Region, in thousand denars	475494	10402	518463	10685	481173	13323
Percentage participation of the board consumption in the total board consumption of RM	6,40%	2,69%	6,66%	2,78%	7,53%	3,34%

From the previous table we can note the difference between board and out of board consumption in the last 3-year period. Namely, a logical consequence is that the amount of the board



consumption is higher, but there is no noted continuous growth at the level of the region or the level of the republic. In 2012 there was an increase of the board and out of board consumption in the Republic of Macedonia and in the East Planning Region with reference to 2011. The East Planning Region reveals 518.463.000 denars in the board consumption and this amount was reduced in 2013 (481.173.000 denars). The out of board consumption reveals continued increase and in 2013 it amounted to 13.323.000 denars. The percentage participation of tourist turnover of the East Planning Region in the total turnover of the Republic of Macedonia is relatively low. Namely, the board consumption is only 7,53% in 2013, while the out of board is 3,34%. A positive change is the increase of participation in the last three years.

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## 8. TOURISM AND PROTECTION OF ENVIRONMENT IN EPR

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### 8.1. Sustainable tourism in EPR

Mass tourism, according to its social and economic importance, is a **dominant form** in the modern tourist movements. It generates uniformed types of tourism, which according to the number of participants and the spatial scope are mass and expansive, while in terms of the economic effects they are especially useful for the environment in which tourism is being developed. The base of these mass type of tourism is seasonal motivation sun -water (sun - mountain), which generates analogue motives, most often related to the need for vacation and recreation.

The mass types of tourism are generally available for all categories of tourists. The large number of modern nomads who travel around the globe as the consequence of the guaranteed right for free time and the necessity of satisfying the tourist needs—over one billion in international and around three billions in domestic tourist flows—it is not simple to reduce this in a way which would be most appropriate for the needs for protection and promotion of the environment. Also, the constant increase of the number of world's population is even more beneficial for mass tourism, as well as the modern-technological achievements, especially in the sphere of traffic, computer technology and computer science.

This is why the direct confrontation with mass tourism would be completely unproductive and it would lead somewhere in the domain of the battle with the “wind mills”. However, due to the more expressed problems which mass tourism faces, the impression is that sustainability should be imposed as the best alternative solution for development of tourism in modern conditions. Namely, the development concept of mass tourism is dominated by strategic aims with **quantitative characteristics**, especially connected to accomplishing greater scope of utilization of accommodation capacities, increased range of tourist turnover and tourist consumption. Unlike the mass approach, in the new alternative development concept, **dominant qualitative characteristics** have a decisive role. However, they should not be taken as counterpart of quantitative determined goals of mass tourism, but only as an option for repositioning of their values in the context of different – qualitative relations. Namely, sustainability, as alternative of the mass as a concept, hides an aspiration for apostrophizing the positive and minimizing the negative effects from the development of tourism. Without a doubt, achieving profit and good economic results remains a priority, but quantity and physical growth are replaced by specific development, which is based upon permanent **sustainability of available resources**. This is a tourism which prefers a product with clear identity, recognizable for the aspiration for ecological and cultural–historical protection, high quality, authenticity, ambience and individual approach towards the requirements and the needs of the tourists. This is the so called **selective tourism**.

From the large number of offered explanations and definitions of the phenomenon sustainable development, the most valid and widely accepted is the definition of the World Commission on Environment and Development - WCED from 1987. In its official documents, **sustainable development** is presented as “...development which satisfies the present needs, and simultaneously does not reduce the possibility of the future generations to meet their needs. Sustainable development is not a fixed state of harmony, but a process of constant changes in which the exploitation of resources, direction of investments, the orientation of the technological development and the institutional frames are in the function of the present and future needs.”

According to this definition, the principle of sustainable development is a proper economic, technological, social and cultural development, harmonized with the necessities for protection and promotion of the entire system of **the environment**. The sustainable development recognizes the existence of natural borders which arise from the capability of the biosphere to absorb the negative

effects of human activity. This is about a specific development which should simultaneously enable the present and the future generations to equally satisfy their needs and to improve the quality of life in full.

The essence of this concept hides in the interaction between the economic prosperity and the harmony of the environment, as well as the high level of interdependence and the complementarity of the development politics and the politics for protection of the surrounding, which completely validate the laws of nature and the **ecological systems**. Notwithstanding of the increasing social pressure for further fast growth and intensive economic prosperity, the concept for sustainable development gives priority to the quality of environment and gives priority to the protection of ecosystems and rational use of natural resources. For that matter, in the nomenclature of the International organization for standardization, a whole series of special **ecological standards** have been established, known as ISO 14000 - EMS (Environmental Management Systems)–System for management with protection of the environment. These generally accepted standards enable following and measuring of the influence of all economic activity over the environment, for the purpose of bringing any such influence to a minimum. Also, there is a proper series ISO 26000, which is used by the International organization for standardization to group the criteria which are used to measure the level of social responsibility.

Such concept of acceptable sustainability in the development of society requires preventing exploitation of natural goods in dimensions which might worsen the possibilities for a better life, today and in the future. The concept requires a global attitude towards the protection of the systems of which the life on the Earth depends, here including: atmosphere, water resources, soil and live organisms. In most cases, here we talk about universal categories which are hard to regenerate and whose final limits for exploitation are being surpassed slowly but surely. Therefore, the primeval value of the strategy for sustainable development is a universal scope and proper implementation of the concept of **integral protection**, which marks a totally new social attitude, new applicative philosophy, which will be in the function of the economic prosperity, but also for maintaining the harmony in the surrounding.

Sustainable development of tourism is an issue which concerns all relevant subjects in the destination, the region and the country as a whole. Taking into consideration the general definition for sustainable development, it can be concluded that its implementation in the sphere of tourism in the East Planning Region should enable simultaneous and universal meeting of the needs of literally all participants in the complex tourist process, but primarily of the following three relevant categories:

- tourists;
- carriers of tourist offer; and
- domicile population.

The basic principles of the global concept for sustainable development should serve as basic parameters in management of development of tourism in the East Planning Region. Actually, here we are talking about a specific tourist development, which will provide accomplishment of the economic, demographic and social goals, but with simultaneous protection of the basic cultural and ecological values on the entire area where tourism acts. Moreover, during the implementation of activities in the destination area, certain conditions must be provided, which will enable accomplishments of the planned goals, and in the future, on the same or even on a higher more qualitative level. Such development of tourism, without doubt, should strongly affirm the necessity of **intergeneration equality**.

Sustainable development of tourism should not cause negative reversible effect, such as for example the irreversible destruction of the natural surroundings of cultural values, complete depletion of resources or social unrest. That should be development which will not cross the border of tolerance

of capacity of the destination and it should not cause serious or irreparable changes. These premises have crucial importance for the East Planning Region, taking into consideration that the largest attractiveness of the tourist product of this region actually comes from the natural and anthropogenic elements. The implementation of the concept of sustainable development of tourism in the East Planning Region should be based upon the following **three universal principles**:

- Ecological principle which implies proper development of tourism which does not oppose the ecological laws and natural reproduction of the resource basis;
- Sociocultural principle which should enable a compatible development of tourism through the protection of cultural benefits and the identity of the local community, as well as active participation of the domicile population in planning and management of development of tourism; and
- Economic principle which enables investing in so called “regular” development of the tourist destination, based upon the local authentic values, as well as making profit which is necessary for a better life of the present and future generations.

Yet, the concept of sustainable development of tourism should rely upon several main principles, which must be observed in all documents for development, such as this Study for the condition of the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region:

- utmost careful attitude towards nature;
- overprotection of the available resources—good quality water, air, soil, electrical energy, etc.
- integral protection of the natural, social and cultural surrounding;
- respecting the needs and desires of the domicile population and their authentic culture;
- strategic planning with long-term concepts and their harmonization at the destination level;
- encouraging the local economic subjects to increased business activity and cooperation;
- including the domicile population in all new projects from the tourism domain;
- permanent education of all tourist workers, public service and all other participants which come into immediate contact with the tourists;
- responsible marketing.

Finally, in the East Planning Region, tourism based upon a long term sustainable components is not actually a novelty. Here, sustainable development originates since the beginning of tourism in these areas. Primarily, due to the diversity and the geographic dispersion of the attractive resource base, and also due to small range of accommodation capacities and the low level of their utilization, the tourist development in the East Planning Region has all the attributes of sustainability and longevity.

## 8.2. Tourist capacities of EPR

With an area of 3.651 km<sup>2</sup> and around 180.000 inhabitants, the East Planning Region is just one part of the total tourist offer of the Republic of Macedonia, i.e. a small fragment of the receptive area of our country, which covers an area of 25.713 km<sup>2</sup> with population of over two million inhabitants. According to this global approach, the East Planning Region presents a partial tourist destination for the domestic and the international tourist clients, located in the eastern part of our country, with participation of 14,2% in the territory, i.e. only 8,8% of the total population.

The present situation on the terrain reveals that the East Planning Region, especially compared with the other mountain regions, offers **poorly recognizable and less qualitative** tourist product. Undoubtedly, this has strong influence on the poor competition in this region on the tourist market.



On the other side, some individual places within the region deserve attention, mainly due to their micro area basis, which provides a combination of the respectable natural and anthropogenic values with noticeable attractive power and high level of competitiveness. Here, we should primarily mention Berovo, Ponikva and Shtip.

In the sense of the necessity of a regional approach towards tourist development, the East Planning Region should be imposed as a separate unit, especially in the perception of the domestic tourists. It is only 100 kilometers away from Skopje, 40 kilometers from the Corridor 10 and 40 kilometers from the Corridor 8, the East Planning Region is in immediate vicinity of the greatest emitting zones in the Republic of Macedonia.

Also, this region may build an image of a spatial complex with a specific tourist product for the visitors from **the Republic of Bulgaria**. Namely, the East Planning Region is bordering with Bulgaria so it is logical to expect an increased number of tourists from this neighboring country–member of the European Union. In this sense we must emphasize once more the generally accepted opinion that the opening of the border crossing Klepalo at Berovo would only bring this region closer to the second most significant emitting zone and it will enable increased inflow of tourists.

The accomplishments in the past few years point out to the fact that the modest international competition of the Republic of Macedonia is almost fully based upon the attractiveness of the tourist offer of only two markets clearly determined individual destinations –Ohrid and Skopje. According to the statistical data, these exact two destinations have the largest concentration of qualitative accommodation capacities and every year they generate the largest part of the foreign tourist turnover in the country. However, the Study of the condition of the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region has a positive attitude towards the presence of tourists from abroad in Ohrid and in Skopje. They should be observed from the aspect of possibility to attract them. If the region offers a qualitative product (which basically has no similarities, i.e. it is not competitive with the products of our two main destinations), then it is completely normal to expect from the foreign tourists, especially the ones who visit our capital city, **to spend part of their time** on the territory of the East Planning Region.

In the process of positioning as an integral tourist destination, the greatest weakness occurs during the creation of a complex tourist product. The main issue here arises from the fact that it must incorporate in itself all original and derived elements of the entire tourist offer of the region, which have expressive heterogeneous and often incompatible nature. Simply said, the desire **to be accepted by as many municipalities as possible** might lead to a situation where such products could become unrecognizable on the market. Also, the creation of a product with too many components and too many carriers of offers may cause reduction of the possibility for their optimal harmonization. This will finally result with unwanted distance of the product from tourists, which are simply not able to recognize the attractive attributes of all integral elements.

**The integral destination approach** of the East Planning Region is acceptable in the process of its positioning on the Macedonian tourist market as a special, recognizable and attractive tourist destination. This is a situation in which its tourist offer will have to slowly counteract on the offer of the competitive regions in the country, and especially the offer of the mountain regions located in its immediate surroundings. However, at this moment there is a real problem with **competitiveness**. Namely, this originates from the objective danger in the process of positioning the East Planning Region as an integral tourist destination, to come across a large difficulty in precisely defining its competitive destinations. Actually, every possible research of the tourist market, i.e. any type of analyses of the tourist offer, will only emphasize the marginal role of the region in the developing tourist processes in the Republic of Macedonia. But, the integral destination approach towards the development of tourism in the East Planning Region has also its advantages, as it offers **numerous amenities, better quality for low prices and more possibilities for active and interesting holiday**. In

the wider range of attractive components, tourists have a better chance to find their own affinities and to satisfy their needs. Additionally, this model strongly affirms the less attractive municipalities which would not have great chances for success with a possible **independent access**. In this way they are encouraged to develop a new selective offer intensively, which often has only complementary characteristics (it will link to the existing one), but it receives a completely different qualitative dimension in the integral approach on the tourist market.

One of the basic characteristics which in a positive sense influence the development of tourism in the East Planning Region is the **large concentration and diversity of tourist resources on a relatively small area**. According to all relevant criteria, the distances between the attractive elements on the entire territory are very small, which enables a visit of more attractive entities for a short period of time. Also, the diversity of these values provides a solid degree of amenities of the tourist offer. According to such spatial basis, the region may impose itself to be an integral tourist destination. Actually, the spatial basis may allow the region to form a complex tourist product and to include itself in competitive relations with similar destinations, especially the immediate surroundings. If the East Planning Region is observed as an integral tourist destination, then its attractive power with reference to the potential tourist demand may be presented with the following mathematical formula:

$$PM_{ipr} = f (PM_{td1}, PM_{td2}, PM_{td3} \dots, PM_{tdn})$$

Where:

- $PM_{ipr}$  is the attractive power of the East Planning Region as an integral tourist destination; and
- $PM_{tdn}$  is the attractive power of individual tourist destinations within the region.

The given formula reveals that the attractive power of the East Planning Region as an integral tourist destination is a function of attractiveness of individual destinations therein. This functional dependence causes a strong synergy effect which is especially expressed in cases when there is concentration on certain tourist destinations on a relatively small geographic area, same as the example with the East Planning Region.

### 8.2.1. Limit of tolerance of the capacity of tourist localities

The limit of tolerance of the capacity may be defined as a certain level of presence of tourists in the destination, which has a positive and acceptable influence over the domicile population, over the physical surrounding, the remaining economic and social flows, as well as the tourists. This a matter of achieving specific harmony between all participants in the complex tourist process, which should provide a long term and stable development.

Basically, the sustainability of development of tourism in every destination depends upon total of 4 types of limits of tolerance of its capacity:

1. Physical limit of tolerance which is connected to the objective spatial limitation of the destination itself, where the tourist process may develop continuously. It is often defined through the number of beds in the accommodation capacities, the number of locations for consumption in the food and beverage facilities, the number of parking areas and similar categories which are easy to measure. Due to its accuracy, the physical limit of tolerance is the best indicator for planning and management control over the development of tourism in the destination;
2. The psychological limits of tolerance of the capacity of the destination on the other hand, are a relative category and it occurs as the result of a different individual perception of the tourist process by its participants. For example, some tourists and inhabitants in the destination have a high tolerance level with reference to the large concentration of people on a small area and they are not bothered by the crowds. On the other hand, certain tourists and part of the local population reveal animosity towards crowds of people and they prefer peace and quiet;

3. The biological limit of tolerance of the capacity of the tourist destination originates from the objective opportunity of the surrounding where tourism acts to absorb human impact without more serious consequences. This limit is accomplished in conditions when the fast tourist development without planned base causes devastation of the natural surroundings. Simply put, the uncontrolled development may easily create pollution of nature, interruption of the entire eco system, interruption of the food chain for certain animal or plant species, or even their extinction;
4. The social limit of tolerance which occurs as the result of the reaction from a certain social group in the environment where tourism acts. This type of limit of tolerance, similar to the psychological, basically has a relative character. Its exceeding occurs in conditions when the intensive development of tourism in the destination becomes unacceptable for a certain social structure for different reasons. Namely, the effectuation of the tourist process may sometimes be in collision with the interests and needs of part of the domicile population due to certain differences in the domain of culture, religion, business operation or the general civilization benefits. Therefore, the social limit of tolerance of the capacity of the tourist destination imposes a necessity of planning and controlling the sustainable tourist development in the greater social surrounding, with utter respect for the interests of all involved parties.

In this sense, we should take into consideration the multidimensional character of the phenomenon tourism, which is expressed through its strong influence over the economic, spatial, cultural, social, and political and many other spheres of modern society. Therefore, it is more than clear that the tolerance level is not at the same level for all four given categories. Also, we can freely suppose that its possible exceeding will not occur at the same time. However, notwithstanding in which domain it will be most felt, the exceeding of the tolerance of the capacity of the tourist destination may halt the total development process and cause irreparable damages which will finally reflect upon the decrease of pleasures experienced by tourists, decrease of their number and complete failure of the destination.

### 8.3. Protection of natural and cultural values in EPR

Every state, region and district which strives towards fast development of tourism, simultaneously pays special care for protection of natural and cultural values of that area. This is simply due to the fact that the largest numbers of tourists come from a certain destination to enjoy and to “discover” these unique attractiveness, which cannot be seen in their area or in their state. Consequently, the development of modern tourism is closely connected with protection and preservation of the locality, nature and cultural values.

The protection of nature does not imply care and maintenance of certain, selected areas or objects of animate and inanimate nature, which are being professionally valued and spatially restricted due to their specific natural values. Human beings, as part of nature and the main protagonists in the processes of its transformation, tend to use natural resources through their activities, for the purpose of satisfying their needs, but simultaneously changing the natural processes and interrupting the natural balance. All of this imposes the unavoidable need of establishing certain frames and directions of their activities, which must be based upon previous studying of natural regularities on expert level (Lukarevska, 2014).

### 8.3.1. Protection of biodiversity

The Strategy and the action plan for protection of biological diversity of the Republic of Macedonia, 2004 was prepared as an obligation towards the Convention for biological diversity which was signed by the Republic of Macedonia in 2007, but also as a necessity for tracing the directions and the identification of priorities in the area. The Strategy as a strategic document, defines the integral approach in protection and sustainable use of components from biological diversity, while the Action plan provides overview of the specific actions which should be realized in the function of achieving the main and basic goals, established in the Strategy for biological diversity. It is obvious that the accomplishments of the planned national goals does not occur with the planned dynamics. The slow implementation on state level certainly reflects on the protection of nature at local level. The National Strategy for biological diversity with action plan of the Republic of Macedonia is currently being prepared, which is actually a revision of the National Strategy and the Action plan for protection of biological diversity from 2004. Pursuant to the Law on protection of nature (Official Gazette of the R.M. No.67/04, 14/06, 84/07, 35/10, 47/11, 148/11,59/12, 13/13, 163/13 and 41/14), the protection of nature is regulated through the protection of biological and territory diversity and protection of natural heritage, in protected areas and outside of the protected areas, as well as protection of natural rarities. In the area of the river Bregalnica catchment, there are 7 registered protected areas, which acts for proclaiming are presented in the following table (Lukarevska, 2014):

Table 34: Protected areas within the East Planning Region.

Item No.	Name of the area	Category according to SP <sup>1</sup>	Year of proclaiming	Area (ha)	Municipality
1	Dab	MN	1983	n/a	Kochani
2	Zvegor	MN	1986	75	Delchevo
3	Konche	MN	1986	0,66	Konche
4	Morodvis	MN	1984	0,5	Zrnovci
5	Murite	MN	1987	10	Berovo
6	Crna Dudinka	MN	1962	n/a	Probishtip
7	Crna Topola	MN	1999	n/a	Berovo

The area of the protected regions, pursuant to the data from the Spatial plan of R.M. (Official Gazette of R.M. No.39/04) is 86,16 ha. The protected monuments of nature Dab, Crna Dudinka and Crna Topola are single stems for which there is no information about the area.

The proposed regions for protection in the East Planning Region, which fall completely or partially under the borders of the planning range, are the following:

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<sup>1</sup>Category according to the old Law for protection of natural resources - no longer in force



Table 35. Regions proposed for protection.

Item No.	Name of the area	Category according to SP	Area (ha)	Municipality
1	Goten	SNR	10	Berovo, Radovich
2	Daboski Andak	SNR	54	Berovo
3	Zletovska Reka	SRNR	320	Probishtip, Kratovo
4	Zrnovska Reka	SRNR	1000	Vinica, Zrnovci, Karbinci
5	Judovi Livadi	SNR	2,5	Pehchevo
6	Kartal	SRNR	10	Vinica
7	Linak	ASNC	300	Berovo
8	Malesh	ASNC	n/a	Berovo, Pehchevo
9	Machevo	MN	200	Berovo
10	Mocharnik	MN	n/a	Shtip
11	Parkach	MN	50	Berovo
12	Cave Konjska Dupka	MN	n/a	Delchevo
13	Ramna Reka	SNR	n/a	Pehchevo
14	River Ulomia	SNR	3	Vinica, Zrnovci, Radovich
15	Temniot Andak	SNR	56	Berovo
16	Trabotivishte	MN	n/a	Delchevo
17	Crvena Reka	SRNR	10	Makedonska Kamenica

The categorization of the areas according to the Spatial plan of the Republic of Macedonia is pursuant to the old Law on protection of natural rarities, which is no longer into force, which requires necessary (re)valorization and categorization of the areas pursuant to the new Law on protection of nature. Pursuant to the Law on protection of nature, the Ministry for environment and spatial planning has the responsibility of making revalorization of the protected regions, protected before the day of inception of application of the Law on protection of nature and to prepare new acts for proclaiming, pursuant to the provisions of the law. The areas which are protected and which are proposed for protection on the territory of the East Planning Region have not passed the procedure for proclaiming or repeated proclaiming, pursuant to the Law on protection of nature.

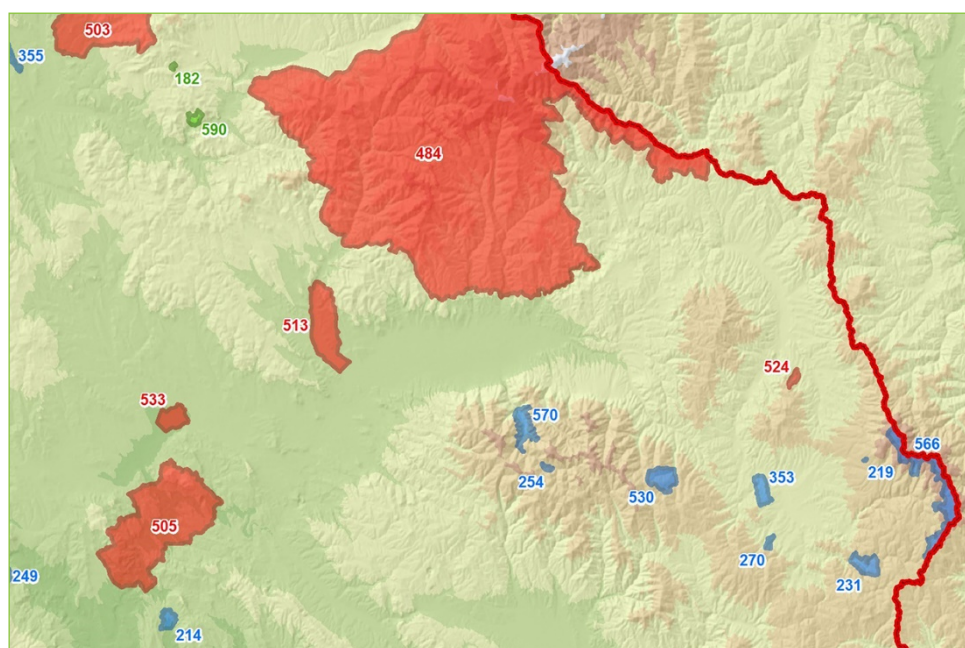


Figure 50. National system of protected areas in EPR.

(Blue – areas proposed for protection pursuant to the Spatial plan of R.M.; Red – Newly identified areas for protection pursuant to Brajanoska et al. 2011<sup>2</sup>) 484 – Osogovo Mountains (Protected region); 513 Lower Zletovica (Protected region); 505 – Lower Bregalnica (Monument of Nature); 570 – Zrnovska Reka (Park of Nature); 254 – River Lomija (Park of nature); 530 –Kartal (Park of Nature); 270 – Temniot Andak (Park of Nature); 231 – Lake Berovo (Protected region); 353 - Machevo (Monument of Nature); 219 – Judovi Livadi (Park of nature); 524 - Kukuljeto (Monument of nature); 566 – Maleshevo Mountains (Park of nature).

Table 36. National system of protected areas in the east region.

Code	Macedonian name	English name	Category of PA	Area (ha)
231	Berovsko Ezero	Lake Berovo	PA	428.17
570	Zrnovska Reka	River Zrnovska Reka	PN	484.84
219	Judovi Livadi	Judovi Livadi	PN	5.67
530	Kartal	Kartal	PN	592.79
566	Maleshevski Planini	Maleshevo Mountains	PN	1753.16
353	Machevo	Machevo	MN	360.47
270	Temniot Andak	Temniot Andak	PN	47.69
524	Kukuljeto	Kukuljeto	MN	97.92
254	Reka Lomija	River Lomija	PN	41.84
505	Dolna Bregalnica	Lower Bregalnica	MN	8817.24
513	Dolna Zletovica	Lower Zletovica	PA	2139.47
484	Osogovski Planini	Osogovo Mountains	PA	77226.15

According to the definition stated in the Law for protection of nature, natural rarities (as a new form of protection outside of the categories of protected areas) include parts of animate nature (rare, endemic plant and animal species and their parts and communities) and the inanimate nature (relief forms, geological profiles, paleontological and speleological objects, if their area is smaller than 100 ha). As objects of nature and thanks to their scientific, esthetic, health and other importance, as well as their cultural, recreational, educational and tourist function, they have a special type of protection at national level. The assigning of natural rarities is accomplished with a decision by the minister who is in charge of the body of public administration responsible for activities in the area for protection of nature, and thus, the necessary time for completing the procedure for their assigning is shorter, which accelerates the process of implementation of the specific measures for protection of these areas. There are a total of 91 territories identified and proposed for assigning as natural rarities at national level. Thirteen of them belong to the East Region.

<sup>2</sup> “Development of network from representative protected areas” (project activity Ref. RFP 79/2009). Project 00058373 - PIMS 3728: “Strengthening the ecological, institutional and financial sustainability of the system protected territories in the Republic of Macedonia”. UNDP, Ministry of Environment and Physical Planning, Macedonian Ecological Society.

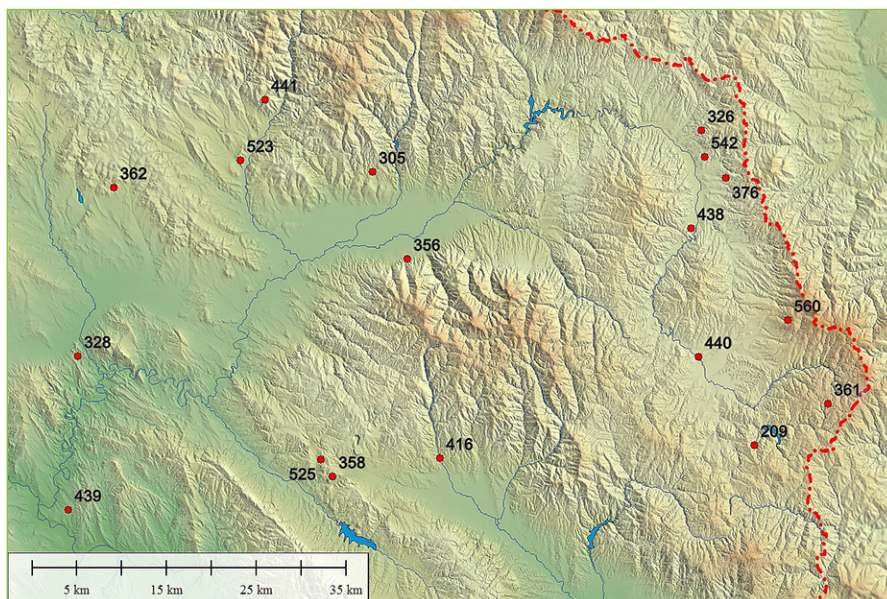


Figure 51. Proposed natural rarities in the east region.

(441 – Crna Dudinka; 523 – Volcanic bombs; 305 – Bel Dab, village Beli; 326 - Zvegor; 542- Stamer; 376 Cave Konjska Dupka; 438 - Trabotivishte; 560 Elensko Blato; 440 – Crna Topola; 361 - Murite; 209 – Daboski Andak; 356 - Morodvis; 358 - Mocharnik).

There are seven identified significant areas for birds in the East Region (SAB): Osogovo Mountains, Preod – Gjurgjance, the valley of river Zletovska Reka, Kochani's rice fields, Ovche Pole, Topolka – Babuna – Bregalnica and the accumulation Mantovo – Lakavica (Velevski et al., 2010).

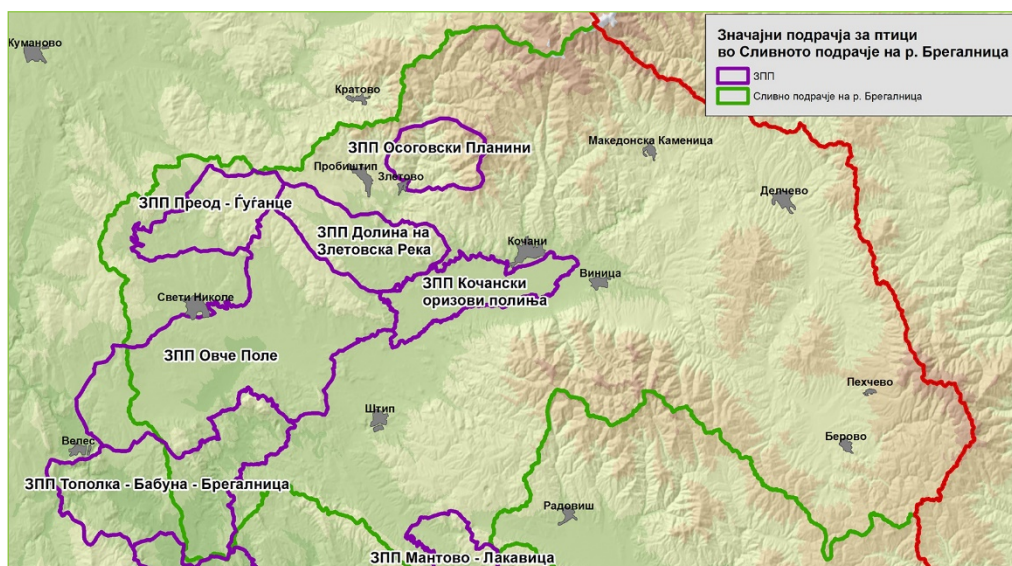


Figure 52. Significant areas for birds in the east region (presented through the river Bregalnica catchment).





Figure 53. Large stork's nest in Kochansko Pole, municipality Cheshinovo – Obleshevo which received the award “European village of the Stork” (source: municipality Cheshinovo - Obleshevo).

Table 37. Significant areas for birds in the East Region.

Name	Criterion	Year of assign.	Area (ha)
<b>Mantovo and Lakavica</b>	IBA A1, IBA B2	2010	6920
<b>Osogovo Mountains</b>	IBA A1, IBA B2	2010	7530
<b>Ovche Pole</b>	IBA A1; IBA B2	2010	48183
<b>Valley of the river Zletovska Reka</b>	IBA A1, IBA B2	2010	12687
<b>Topolna-Babuna-Bregalnica</b>	IBA A1; IBA A3; IBA B2	2010	27648
<b>Gradsko – Rosoman – Negotino</b>	IBA A1; IBA A3; IBA B2	2010	27692
<b>Kochani's rice fields</b>	IBA B2	2010	11192
<b>Preod – Gjugjance</b>	IBA A1, IBA B2	2010	10893

In the East Planning Region there are five identified significant areas for plants (SAP): Osogovo, Ovche Pole – Bogoslovec, Judovi Livadi, Krivolak – Serta and Plachkovica.

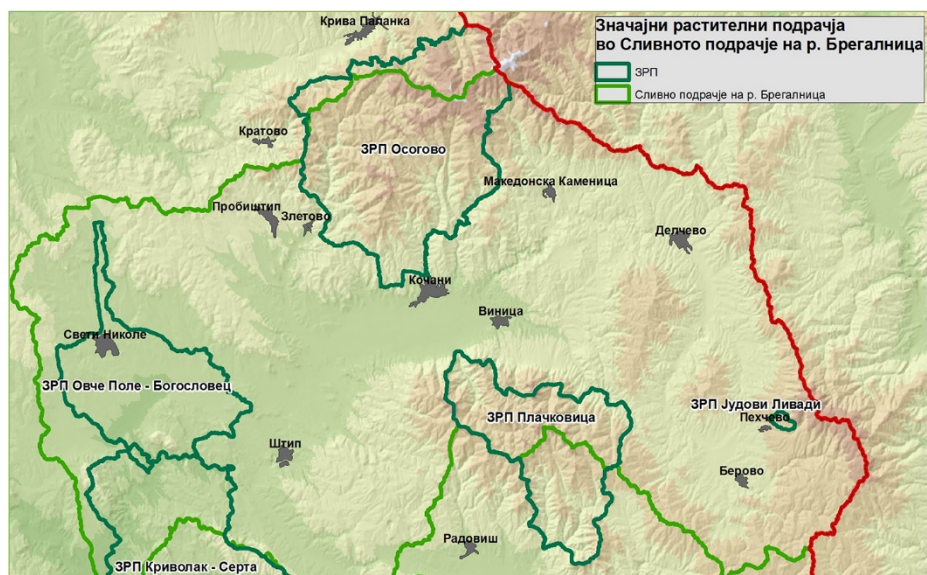


Figure 54. Significant areas for plants in the East Planning Region (presented through the river Bregalnica catchment).

Table 38. Significant areas for plants in the East Region.

No.	ID	Name	Criterion	Year of assign.	Area (ha)
1	50	Krivolak (Orlovo Brdo-Solen dol-Serta)	IPA (Aii); IPA (Aiii); IPA (Aiv); IPA (Ci); IPA (Cii)	2004	39366,96
2	517	Osogovo Mountains	IPA (Aii); IPA (Aiv); IPA (Cii)	2004	50542,86
3	55	Ovche Pole – Bogoslovec	IPA (Aii); IPA (Aiii); IPA (Aiv); IPA (Ci); IPA (Cii)	2004	25457,86
4	72	Pehchevo-Judovi Livadi	IPA (Cii)	2004	388,42
5	56	Plachkovica	IPA (Aii); IPA (Ci); IPA (Cii)	2004	26542,72

### 8.3.2. Protection of geodiversity

From the aspect of geodiversity, on the area of EPR there are several interesting and rare sights. Parts of them are protected, in the process of protection as monuments of nature, natural rarities, and some are proposed for protection (as it was stated in the previous chapter). However, it should be emphasized that especially important geodiversity sights which need to be protected and which must be looked after during the planning of the tourist (and other) activities are:

- The ravine of the river Zletovska Reka to the village Zletovo,
- Lesново peak and crater,
- The valley of the river Zrnovska Reka,
- Ravine Istibanjska Klisura,
- Kukuljeto at the village Nov Istevnik,
- Badlands at the village Crnik and at the locality Parkach,
- The high mountain part on Osogovo around the top Carev Vrv and Ruen,
- The locality Ratkova Skala in the southwest part of the Osogovo mountain,
- Paleontological location between the villages Zvegor and Stamer,
- Waterfalls in the spring part of Bregalnica,
- Sights of volcanic bombs around Probishtip,



- Caves at Turtel, Konjska Dupka – cave at the village Grad and the cave Kiselichka at the village Kiselica.



Figure 55. Unique erosion forms badlands at the village Crnik, municipality Pechevo (original).

All presented localities and sights are genuine rarities, documented with the present literature, and they are susceptible to increased human influence. In that sense, it is necessary to conserve them for future generations. Aside from the mentioned sights, further detailed researches should estimate the need of protection of the valley of the river Radanjska Reka and the small canyon Kamnik, then Kalata as the only island in EPR, the lakes under Chengino Kale and Lake Kundinsko, the waterfall at the river Jujevska Reka, few localities with sights of crystals and rare minerals and other should also be estimated.

### 8.3.3. Protection of cultural heritage

According to the Law on protection of cultural heritage from 2004, cultural heritage presents material and non material goods which are an expression or proofs of human creation in the past and the present, or as common works of man and nature, because of their archeological, ethnological, historical, artistic, architectonic, urbanistic, ambiental, technical, sociological and other scientific or cultural values, features, amenities or functions, have a cultural and historical significance and due to their protection and utilization, they are under legal regime pursuant to this and other law.

According to its features, cultural heritage can be **immovable, movable and spiritual**.

Protection goals –pursuant to Article 4 of the same law:

(1) Main goal of protection is: 1. Conserving cultural heritage in original state; 2. Creation of more favorable conditions for survival of cultural heritage and for preserving the integrity of all data which it carries as proof, source or actual document; 3. Dissemination of the knowledge for the values and the significance of the cultural heritage and its role in the cultural identification and 4. Enabling cultural heritage, pursuant to its use and significance, to serve for meeting the cultural, scientific,

educational, esthetic, religious, economic, touristic and other needs of the citizens and the society. (2) The operational goal of the protection is to take activities for preventing actions, occurrences and influences which cause or may cause damage, destruction, spoiling, disappearance, degradation and illegal adoption of cultural heritage.(3) The final goal of protection is passing cultural heritage to the future generations.

According to the “Law on memorial monuments and memorial landmark” from 2004, the memorial monuments, in the sense of this law, are individual or a group of objects and monumental works of architecture, sculpture, painting and applied art with historic and artistic contents and values which are being erected for permanent conservation of the memory of the events and people from Article 2 of this law, and which are exceptionally important for the Republic of Macedonia (further in the text: memorial monument). The events and people who are honored with a memorial monument should be of exclusive importance for the development of the nationality of the Republic of Macedonia and for its state-legal continuity and to be implemented in the historical development of the country. Article 4 Memorial –landmark, in the sense of this law, are busts, sculptures, plaques, fountains and other artistic and architectural works and creations which honor events and persons with their contents from Article 2 of this law or the national tradition, and which have local importance (further in the text:

Pursuant to Article 178 of the same law, the National organization Institute and museum Shtip is responsible for the protected cultural heritage within the East Planning Region.

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## 9. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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The Study for the condition with the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region is a strategic document of essential importance for the future tourist development of the eleven municipalities which belong to this region. Based upon the analyses of the existing conditions on the field of tourism, the purpose of the Study is to provide clear recommendations for implementing future sustainable tourist development and to impose itself as the basis for preparation of a Strategy for development of tourism (with action plan in the period from 2015 until 2024). Such strategic approach towards the preparation of these documents and the possible successful implementation of the recommendations provided in them should result with long term, stable and prosperous future for the inhabitants of the East Planning Region.

The entire text in the Study is based upon the objective estimation of the present situation on the terrain, as well as the respect of the available comparative advantages and limitations. Its basic vision is for the East Planning Region to supply few respectable tourist destinations in the following few years, which products will be based upon the natural and cultural heritage of the region and upon the tradition of the people who live here; products which are recognizable for their quality and which are completely adapted to the requirements and needs of modern tourists. The authors of the Study are convinced that this vision may also be imposed on a long term, as a common imperative of all eleven municipalities from the East Planning Region.

Such defined vision generates few strategic goals of this Study, which are connected to the development of tourism in the East Planning Region:

- Creating a positive picture for the East Planning Region as an attractive geographic-tourist area;
- Providing integral protection of the natural and cultural heritage which attractive component is the basic motivation for tourists in the region;
- Increasing tourist turnover and expanding tourist season;
- Offsetting the problem of unemployment in the municipalities by opening new working positions in tourism;
- Establishing and maintaining a recognizable brand;
- Initiating new investment activities; and also
- Stopping the process of depopulation and improving the welfare of inhabitants in all municipalities in the East Planning Region.

The East Planning Region has **favorable, but not exceptionally good** geographic tourist position. This is due to the fact that the region does not have a large tourist center. Near this region there is a tourist center on the territory of the Republic of Bulgaria (Bansko, Borovec, etc.), then the city of Skopje as a large tourist and emitting center. The tourist-traffic position of EPR will improve significantly with the construction of the highway Skopje-Shtip and the modernization of the international highway A3 towards the Republic of Bulgaria. Also, a wonderful convenience would be the opening of new border crossings towards Bulgaria (Crna Skala, Klepalo), by connecting the bordering municipalities. This would also imply increased transit through EPR, greater and easier visits by tourists, etc. In order to use the transit advantages, it is necessary to build food and beverage-accommodation capacities next to the roads, in their vicinity or in the settlements through which they pass, but especially at attractive locations (ravines, next to the Lake Kalimansko, etc).

### **Natural attractiveness**

EPR has numerous and diverse **natural values**: geological, relief, climatic, hydrographic, biological and soil. However, these values and sights, with the exception of few, are not of national or wider importance in the sense of rarity and uniqueness. The most characteristic natural values in EPR are **Lesново crater** and the total volcanic relief in its surrounding, the dense **forest complexes in Berovo area** (Maleshevo Mountains and Ograzhden) as well as the clean, fresh air in this area, **Badland with Kukulje**, **rich geothermal basins in Kochani area**, etc. The rare natural sights, areas and objects are proposed for protection, so parallel with the tourist development of EPR, care must be taken for all these unique values which may easily be endangered or destroyed (Kukulje, Badlands, ravines, rare and endemic species of plants and animals, etc.).

From the aspect of natural resources and values which are estimated and valorized in detail in the Study, the following have the largest tourist potential:

- Osogovo Mountains with certain localities on them: Ponikva, Top Carev Vrv-Ruen, Gorna Cera, Gradche, ravine of the river Zletovska Reka;
- Maleshevo Mountains in the area around Lake Berovo, spring part of Bregalnica, waterfalls of Bregalnica and the forest zone from there to Berovo;
- North side of Plachkovica, with Turtel, Lisec and Chengino, then the foot towards Zrnovci, Morodvis, Vinica to the ravine of Osojnica;
- Lesново peak and crater with the remaining volcanic relief around Probishtip and Zletovo;
- Lake Kalimansko with developed coastal line, the island Kalata, ravine Istibanjska Klisura, etc.;
- The mountain Golak with the surrounding of Delchevo, hunting ground Golak, Lake Sandanski, Kukuljeto, cave Konjska Dupka, paleontological locality at the village Stamer;

According to the type and structure of the localities, the largest potential has the mountain tourism expressed through several forms:

- Mountain wellness-recreational stay (all year round, notwithstanding of the season) in: eastern part of the Maleshevo Mountains around Lake Berovo and the adjacent localities, Ograzhden with Suvi Laki, the higher part of Plachkovica, medium-high mountain part of Osogovo, the highest part of Golak with Obozna.
- Summer sports-recreational mountain tourism (tracking, walking, mountaineering, recreation, wild and eco tourism): in the previously stated localities.
- Winter-sports mountain tourism, recreational for beginner skiers and children: Ponikva, above Lake Berovo, Plachkovica/Turtel-Chupino, the highest part of Golak;
- Winter-sports high mountains (skiing, snowboarding, etc.): the top Carev Vrv with Kitka and Kalin Kamen (municipality Kriva Palanka).
- Low mountain region (500-1500 m) with possibilities for tracking, mountain biking, jeep safari, paragliding, geotourism, mountaineering, adrenalin parks and similar amenities. Especially suitable locations are Lesново peak and crater with the entire paleovolcanic area, the west parts of Plachkovica, (from Shtip to Vrteshka with Kamnik, river Radanjska Reka, river Kozjachka Reka and other), Golak, Bejaz Tepe, Osogovo above Kochani, Orizari and Makedonska Kamenica.

Aside from mountain tourism, the following have a large potential in the region from the aspect of natural values:

- Spa-tourism in Kezhovica-Shtip, village Istibanja-Vinica and the village Dolni Podlog- village Banja. All given localities have geothermal waters with great quality, aside from having excellent position and accessibility.
- Lake tourism at Lake Kalimansko with excellent position, transit location, developed coast, one and unique island (Kalata) and a good gravitation range. Moreover, the potential of lake tourism should be used to the maximum at the Lake Gradche at Kochani.



- Landscape-gastronomic and manifestation-traditional tourism related to rice and rice fields in Kochansko pole and other.

On the area of EPR there are also possibilities for many other types of tourism related to the natural values, but they cannot be the base for tourist development (hunting and fishing tourism, aero-tourism and other). Actually, hunting tourism in the sense of eliteness and sustainability is suitable and necessary for the region, but its total financial effect cannot be large.

Mountain (wellness, recreational and winter-sports) and spa-tourism have the possibility to increase the average number of nights, as they usually include several days. The remaining tourist activities if they are well organized and included in the offer, present an excellent base for extending and enriching the tourist stay.

The previously stated information assumes numerous activities for arranging and reactivating the existing tourist localities, as well as construction of several new facilities at the area of EPR. In that sense, large investments and dedication are necessary, but the return effect will be noticeable and long term.

### ***Cultural attractiveness***

The general conclusion about the cultural resources in EPR is that the region has rich cultural heritage with exceptionally large value, which has the potential to be placed in the function of tourism. The various cultural heritage in the East Planning Region provides clear signals that cultural tourism has **large potential**. EPR may promote and offer to the tourists its well preserved stories and secrets through its material and spiritual heritage.

Cultural tourism might be **beneficial** as it may strengthen the local economy, promote the protection of cultural heritage, increase the consumption by the visitors, create employment, increase the pride and awareness of the local population about the heritage they have, etc. Cultural tourism may also cause damage from extensive visits and use, improper use of the protected cultural heritage without taking care of the value, which may lead to permanent damage.

In the international charter for cultural tourism of ICOMOS, 1999 it has been emphasized that the four general aims are: cultural heritage should be **available to the public**, the local population and the visitors should develop and carry out tourist activities by **observing** cultural heritage, local cultures and way of living, to create a dialogue and balance between the **conservatory interests** and the tourist industry of the importance of the cultural heritage, including the need for reaching sustainable future for them and to contribute for longer and **careful use of** cultural heritage by adopting strategies and protection and conservation.

During the research for the needs of the Study, it has been concluded that there are more than **600 archeological localities** registered on the territory of the East Planning Region, and according to certain relevant experts, the number of localities is even greater. However, it is important to take into consideration that only a small part of these archeological localities are presented, i.e. available to the public, and the condition of their use for the purpose of tourism is even worse. Most of the presented localities should be properly marked, arranged and made available for tourist visit as soon as possible. If we look at the map where the localities are noted, it can be concluded that they are usually located either around or in the town centers, where they additionally increase tourist offer and they represent an advantage.

**Museums and memorial houses** in EPR which are rich in exceptionally valuable items should increase their promotion, which would increase their visitation frequency. The facilities of **Islamic architecture** are facing the problem of improper signage and lack of necessary information. Almost all localities of cultural heritage **are lacking** substantial and necessary information for the potential tourists: working hours, ticket price, exact location, photographs from the locality, etc. An important segment which should be considered is the interpretation, i.e. **professional and precise guiding** of tourists to the locations of cultural heritage in the region which is especially important.

The East Planning Region has many **monasteries and churches** which are a significant cultural heritage from different periods. Most of them keep **masterpieces** of paintings, icon painting, architecture, iconostasis, etc. An increase in the monks communicates for men and women have been noticed in the past years. Development of monastic tourism in the East Planning Region depends upon the interest of tourists for visiting the monasteries, but it also largely depends upon the permission by the monks. The monasteries welcome tourists who come for religious motives or tourists who appreciate cultural heritage. However, the life and order of the monks should not be interrupted at any time. At the moment there are several monasteries where there is an active monk's life. Most often some valuable or known monasteries celebrate the religious holidays with organized mutual lunches with the worshippers. There hasn't been an organized accommodation of tourists in the monasteries. This type of tourism is possible as a combination with some other type of tourism, i.e. organized visit of other monuments of culture. Around the East Planning Region there are a lot of known and **attractive monasteries** which are located on the territory of other regions, so in that sense it is good to consider creating a route with included several monasteries from different regions. At the workshops which were organized during the preparation of the Study, a large number of participants, representatives of the municipalities of the East Planning Region have explained that monastic **tourism** has a large potential for development in this region. But this does not depend solely upon the attractiveness of the monastery or the churches, but also from a number of other factors, which have been elaborated during the valorization and presented in the tables with individual marks and ranking the following churches and monasteries.

One positive example for development of cultural tourism in EPR are the large number of **events and manifestations** which are becoming more popular every year and which result in a significant financial benefit for the municipalities in which they are being organized. In such manner they attract domestic and foreign guests. The guests extend their stay in the host town because of the offer of qualitative amenities and thus they contribute directly for the local economy. **The Organizers** of the manifestations in EPR are mainly the local self-governments, associations of citizens, church boards, folk dancing groups, etc. The largest part of these manifestations have a **religious character**, i.e. they are organized during rural celebrations or church holidays and the purpose of these manifestations is to promote traditional and religious customs, maintain cultural and spiritual heritage and to introduce the young population and other visitors to the national customs. Religious manifestations have long tradition and the visitors of these manifestations are often the local inhabitants, expatriates from that region and rarely people from other parts of the state. Part of the manifestations are organized in order to **promote and sell** certain products, such as Shtipska pastrmajlija event, days of rice in the village Banja, Zrnovce and other (usually during the days of celebration of the municipalities, when different meals made of rice are being tasted) and in some parts (Cheshinovo-Obleshevo) a church representative performs the first rice harvest, followed by celebration. There is also a day of the honey, as well as days of other traditional products. The most frequent visitors are the local inhabitants, and lately Shtipska pastrmajlija event welcomes visitors from other regions of the Republic of Macedonia, since more funds have been invested in the organization of this manifestation with greater marketing activities. **The financing** of these manifestations is most often from the budget of the municipalities, church boards and sponsors. Only a small part of the manifestations have a **commercial character**, i.e. generating income for further development and their extension and perfection, which should be more emphasized. In that sense, professionals should be hired to organize these manifestations instead of the municipalities, non-government organizations and church boards. Part of the manifestations have the potential to become generators of a larger number of visitors, but with investing greater funds and hiring professionals in their organization, as well as investing in marketing, promotion, i.e. their branding. In that sense, the support of the public sector is necessary in maintaining and organizing these manifestations.

The best option for the selective types of tourism with largest potential for development of tourism might probably be the **combination** of different attractions, except in the case when we have

actual target groups with actual interest. This would imply creating routes with the same type of attractions, but they should be properly prepared and with quality, or they should be combined.

The territory of EPR reveals **lack of trained personnel** from the area of tourism and management with destination, and in that direction we propose establishing a body which would manage the development of tourism, hiring experts who would be able to implement training with good quality and to create a professional personnel of good quality, along with training for raising awareness at the local population about the importance and the benefits from development of tourism.

Another exceptionally important but neglected factor is the **promotion** of archeological localities, i.e. the inaccessibility of essential and necessary information, necessary for the potential tourists. The working hours, ticket price, accessibility, exact location, photographs of the locality, etc, are only a small part of the information which is necessary for the potential visitors and which should not be neglected and which could be made easily available. This is a process which is free of charge if we use the services of the companies such as Google, and in turn it results with a large benefit.

An important segment which should be taken into consideration is the **interpretation** i.e. the professional and precise guiding of tourists on the locations from the cultural heritage in the region which is especially important. It is also suggested for the museums and memorial houses which have a lot to offer and which have many valuable items, to increase their promotion which would make them more attractive for a visit.

The structural analyses of rural tourism in EPR revealed that this type of tourism is very poorly developed in the region.

- The income from this activity is minimal,
- The infrastructure is in a bad condition, same as the tourist infrastructure, which is partially developed only in the municipality of Berovo,
- The sale of agricultural products is quite minimal because this type of tourism is not developed, i.e. tourists participate with a minimal percentage in the consumption,
- Handicrafts are maintained by adults and only a small number of young people show interest in practicing this activity, which leads to their extinction,
- Gastronomy –EPR has a large number of agricultural products, mainly rice and traditional specialties which are minimally used or not used at all in the direction of development of tourism in EPR,
- The manifestations with the exception of Shtipska pastrmajlija and Istibanjsko zdravozhivo have a local character with minimum funds invested,
- Religious tourism is not developed at all, but an agreement has been reached with MOC-OA and the visitors are unorganized -incidental,
- Human resources are poor and there are only few active associations in these sectors in the entire region,
- There are no local tourist organizations except the cluster in Shtip.

The indicators for sustainable tourism in the function of rural development coincide to a large extent with the indicators for the general social and material development of the region.

- **Recommendations for the infrastructure:** It is necessary to prepare infrastructure projects and to use the funds for rural development, the State Fund for Roads, Orion program, etc.
- **Recommendations for human resources:** It is necessary to educate the local population and the employees in the institutions which are directly involved in the field of development of

tourism (To utilize the Leader plus program and the program of the Ministry of economy for education in tourism)

- **Recommendations for accommodation:** To work on adaptation and construction of accommodation capacities and other tourist infrastructure. It is necessary to use the measure 302 from the program of IPARD for improvement of tourist infrastructure and building new capacities.
- **Recommendations for handicrafts:** Forming local associations, organized sale and promotion of products from the handicrafts. Education through creative workshops, using the funds from the Ministry of culture for development of creative industries and the Ministry of economy for development of handicrafts.
- **Recommendations for manifestations:** Hiring professionals and marketing agencies, selection of manifestation which could grow into regional and international. Utilization of funds from APSTRM for the support of the manifestations.
- **Recommendations for gastronomic tourism:** Protection of autochthonous products, branding and creating the passage of rice.
- **Recommendation for religious tourism:** Agreement between the local authority and MOC-OA with inclusion of the tourist sector.

Finally, we must mention that the Study for the condition of the potentials for development of tourism in the East Planning Region is just an initial base for further research of this specific problem. Based upon the analyses of the existing conditions in the field of tourism in the region, this Study opens up place for preparing a Strategy for development of tourism (with action plan in the period from 2015 until 2024), i.e. a new wide field for further research, which should provide a valid answer to the question of how to provide a solid future for tourism in the East Planning Region. Actually, the new strategic document will have to face several challenges, related to development of tourism in the region:

- Foreseeing competitive advantages, current weaknesses, expected possibilities and possible limitations in the development of tourism in the East Planning Region;
- Defining the goals for the destination development of tourism;
- Redefining tourist products upon selective base;
- Establishing totally new tourist identity and creating a positive tourist image of the East Planning Region as an attractive spatial unit;
- Researching the tourist market;
- Defining the price policy;
- Intensifying and directing promotional activities towards special market segments; and
- Permanent and complete marketing control over the entire process.

Additionally, the Strategy will have to answer to few bitter issues related to the identity of the existing tourist product of the East Planning Region (primarily winter-sports and monastic tourism), its life cycle and the competitive relations in wider regional and national frames. The accent will be placed upon the recommendations for improving tourist identity through creation and affirmation of few specific selective products: spa - wellness (bath tourism), hunting, walking, biking, gastronomic tourism, manifestation tourism, historic tourism and similar.

The strategy for development of tourism in the East Planning Region will have to offer more adequate solution for the organization of tourism, taking into consideration the specific organization of the Regional council and the competences of the local authority in all eleven municipalities. There



is no doubt that the structure of tourist destination will create a necessity of coordinating the activities of the numerous subjects which will take active participation in its creation and function.

Finally, the Strategy for development of tourism in the East Planning Region and also all future strategic documents which would add to the recommendations and the conclusions of this Study should result in faster development of tourism and in opening the possibilities for new investment projects, new employment and much better economic and social condition of the local population.

### **Key products**

Pursuant to the existing natural, demographic and cultural resources, in EPR there are actually 6 “overmunicipal” tourist areas, districts or subregions which are being developed, each with its own particularity and characteristics, such as:

- Shtip (shopping, bath-spa, hunting, cultural);
- Kochansko Pole (rice, gastronomic);
- Osogovo (winter-sports, mountain eco-tourism);
- Pijanec (lake, hunting, folklore, customs);
- Maleshevo (sports-recreational, wellness, gastronomic);
- Plachkovica (recreational, mountain eco-tourism).

**Shtip** on the west side, with the main center in the town Shtip. The main advantages of this subregion are the town Shtip as administrative, educational, cultural, health and other center, then shopping opportunities in the town, cultural heritage, the bath Kezhovica with its own potential and other. Aside from the municipality of Shtip, the municipality of Karbinci is gravitationally related to this subregion. Good traffic connections with Skopje and the remaining regions and regional center are also favorable for tourism.

**Kochansko Pole**, with main center in Kochani and with the following municipalities: Kochani, Vinica, Cheshinovo-Obleshevo, Zrnovci and part of Probishtip. The main tourist attraction and the main unique potential in this subregion is rice and everything related to rice (tradition, customs, way of life, and similar). The field with its geographic characteristics, population and rice fields are the only such landscape on the Balkans, especially in the months May-July. Another important tourist resource parallel to the rice is the geothermal energy and the possibility for construction of two larger spa centers in the villages Banja and the village Istibanja.

**Osogovo area** with the main center Kochani and the remaining centers Probishtip and Makedonska Kamenica (with proper municipalities). The main potential here is the mountain, the winter center Ponikva and the future center for winter sports at the top Carev Vrv. The remaining parts of the mountain are suitable for eco-tourism, because of the clean and preserved nature. The village Cera and the surrounding should be a good center of eco-tourism as larger part of the infrastructure is already constructed.

**Pijanec area** with centers Delchevo and Makedonska Kamenica. The main tourist potential here is Lake Kalimansko, which may attract a great number of tourists if it is arranged and if the water oscillation is reduced. This is especially true if we take into consideration the vicinity of the eco-mountain areas on Osogovo and on Golak. The construction of the highway Kochani-Delchevo would be especially important for tourism, and the old road through the ravine will receive a tourist function.

**Maleshevo area** with main center Berovo and second center Pehchevo. Lake Berovo and the eco-areas of Maleshevo Mountains and Ograzhden are an excellent but still insufficiently utilized tourist potential. There are sufficient accommodation capacities here, but the offer should be increased and upgraded in the subregion itself, or in combination with the neighboring tourist regions. Tourist settlements around Lake Berovo, then river Ravna Reka, Ablanica, Suvi Laki and other should be arranged, upgraded with necessary amenities, categorized, presented and to prepare complete offers for a stay of several days, with more different activities.

**Plachkovica**, without a dominant center, but it takes parts of several municipalities: Karbinci, Zrnovci, Vinica and Berovo. The mountain offers excellent opportunities for mountain recreational tourism, wellness, tracking, mountain biking, speleological attractiveness, paragliding and other.

For maximum tourist utilization of the advantages of the entire east region, it is necessary to have good connection and cooperation between the mentioned tourist areas - subregions, such as the example of Probishtip and Kochani. In that sense, it is necessary to provide:

- Increasing the number and the quality of services of the accommodation capacities in EPR,
- Increasing the variety in the accommodation (villas, small hotels, motels, mountain homes, families, houses, apartments and flats, weekend houses),
- Project and activities for presenting and advertising the accommodation capacities at Booking.com, TripAdvisor, AirBNB and other world known e-tourist portals,
- Entertaining guests during their stay, offering all day activities (sports, recreation, walks, introducing them to the culture and tradition in these areas),
- Provision of proper tourist signalization, marking the paths, placing information boards, signposts, etc.
- Increasing the tourist offer with new amenities,
- Building a policy of affordable prices and maximum use of domestic products and services,
- Inventiveness (jeep sightseeing, donkeys, participation in some domestic activities, religious celebrations, etc.),
- Significantly greater promotion of the region, its tourist attractions, possibilities, accommodation capacities, tradition, manifestations, customs, etc., through internet: establishing and maintaining web pages and portals in one or more international languages,
- Tourist GIS of the region which will lead to maps, web pages, brochures, etc.,
- Project for forming real and interesting two day tourist routes,
- Setting up tourist-information bureau in EPR,
- Bringing awareness that it is possible to live good of tourism in EPR, etc.

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