

## Summaries

### of the reviewed publications of Assist. Prof. Radenka Mitova, PhD

#### Indicator C.3. Habilitation work – monograph

C.3.1. Асенова, М., В. Маринов, В. Николова, Е. Петкова, **Р. Митова**, Ч. Истаткова (2021) Между културата и туризма: туристическите атракции, основани на културното наследство. Унив. изд. "Св. Кл. Охридски" ISBN 978-954-07-5167-2 (електронно издание); <https://kinnpor.uni-sofia.bg/resources/item/132-mezhdu-kulturata-turizma> Between culture and tourism: tourist attractions based on cultural heritage

The main objective of the study presented in the monograph is to partially fill the information gap regarding the status and use of heritage-based attractions and to provide key stakeholders with a theoretically grounded and practical typology of heritage-based attractions in support of their proper and sustainable management. The typology was derived based on a thorough literature review and analysis of the nature, scope and classification approaches of both cultural heritage and tourist attractions. In addition, the developed typology was tested in 2019 in our own empirical study. The research methodology covers:

- Cabinet study of the studied attractions based on secondary sources of information;
- Semi-structured interview with "operators" of tourist attractions, represented by their directors/managers or employees with the necessary competencies (46 sites are covered, 26 of which have the status of immovable cultural values of national and world importance) in order to analyze the offer;
- Study of the presentation of the tourist attractions researched in the field, based on the cultural heritage, in the Internet environment according to specially developed evaluation methodologies and indicators;
- Research among visitors to cultural-tourist attractions according to a specially prepared standardized questionnaire (face-to-face interviews were conducted with 668 respondents at 30 sites) in order to analyze the state of demand;
- Expert observations and evaluations.

As a result of the research, a definition of the concept of "tourist attraction" was proposed and a classification system of tourist attractions based on cultural heritage, applicable in Bulgaria, was developed. Besides theoretical importance, this result also addresses the better management of this type of tourist attractions. As a result of testing the typology in the field, numerous management problems of attractions based on cultural heritage have been highlighted and conclusions have been drawn about the volume of demand, the profile of visitors, visitor satisfaction, the identification of territorial clusters of demand, the state of tourist attractions, the presentation of heritage-based attractions on the Internet, management and funding issues, policy and regulatory framework.

**Indicator D.6. A published book based on a defended dissertation work for the award of an educational and scientific degree "Doctor" or for the award of a scientific degree "Doctor of Science".**

D.6.1. **Митова, Р.** 2020. Концепция за устойчиво развитие на туризма на Витоша. УИ "Св. Климент Охридски", С., ISBN: 978-954-07-5065-1

Concept for sustainable development of tourism in Vitosha mountain

The main goal of the study presented in the monograph is to propose a comprehensive and based on in-depth scientific research concept for the sustainable development of tourism in the Vitosha destination. The study focus is the tourism system and its environment in a structural-functional, spatial, and temporal dimension. The research object is the Vitosha mountain in its geographical boundaries, interpreted as an independent tourist destination. The topicality of the topic derives directly from the decades-long public debate on the tourism development in Vitosha, often escalating to media scandals and protests and expressed in a sharp opposition between nature protection and the development of tourism in the mountain. As the basic philosophy this study adopts the modern theoretical concepts, principles, and approaches of the sustainable tourism development concept to achieve an optimal balance between the environmental, social, and economic problems and challenges. The planning process is problem-oriented and follows the logical scheme of analysis of the current situation, diagnosis, forecast, and derivation of strategic goals. This study subordinates the systematic approach both in terms of the internal environment of tourism and the external one. For this purpose, we have adhered to a combined resource-environmental and product-market ("moderately green") approach. Given the nature protection status of the studied territory, special attention has been paid to the natural environment both as a prerequisite for development and as a limiter, considering the ecological state of the natural complexes in their capacity as the main object of nature protection and the foundation of the tourism system. For this purpose, the landscape-ecological approach was applied, where the concept of biological diversity was also reflected in the view of the status of the researched territory as a protected area from the European ecological network "Natura 2000" to derive the horizontal structure of the natural complexes in the mountain. On this basis, an attempt was made to apply the concept of ecological tourist carrying capacity. Adhering to the principle of equality of the three aspects of sustainable development, attention has also been paid to the socio-economic environment so that the development of tourism can contribute to the overall sustainable development and ensure a fair and even distribution of benefits (social and economic) for the local population and tourists in combination and accordance with the status of the territory and according to their needs. The legal and political environment is analyzed from the point of view of its prerequisites and limitations for the implementation of the policy for the sustainable development of tourism in the mountain, laid down in the regulatory framework, the organizational structure of tourism, attitude and intentions of the public subjects of the tourism policy, as well as the attitude of the main stakeholders in terms of synchronicity between goals and interests, as well as established partnership relationships. Special attention is paid to the core of the tourist system and its condition, and in particular – the ratio between demand and supply in both functional and

territorial aspects, considering the specific features of tourist systems for short-term recreation. A research emphasis has been deliberately placed on the problem of the state, possibilities, and expectations for the development of ski tourism in the mountains as the most controversial topic.

#### **Indicator D.6. Articles and papers published in scientific journals, referenced and indexed in world-famous databases of scientific information**

D.7.1 **Mitova, R.**, B. Borisova, B. Koulov. 2021. Digital Marketing of Bulgarian Natural Heritage for Tourism and Recreation. *Sustainability*, 13(23), 13071, ISSN:2071-1050; Ref. Web of Science IF (3.889 - 2021), Scopus (CiteScore 2021- 5.0, SJR 2021 – 0.664, SNIP 2021- 1.310), JCR - Q2 (*Environmental Sciences*) / CiteScore - Q1 (*Geography, Planning and Development*); <https://doi.org/10.3390/su132313071>

##### Digital Marketing of Bulgarian Natural Heritage for Tourism and Recreation

The need for a closer and enhanced connection with nature, as the basis for human wellbeing, reinforces the importance of natural heritage governance, including wider and much improved access to information about nature-based tourism and recreation. This research seeks to reveal how Internet content can support the digital identification of nature sites and their branding as tourist destinations. To this end, it analyzes 20 exemplary websites, each known around the world, and highlights important current trends in the structuring and attractiveness of the information provided. Based on the devised benchmarking criteria, the study develops a benchmarking approach that improves digital “packaging” and marketing of natural heritage for the purposes of tourism, recreation, leisure, and sports, and then tests it in Bulgaria. The procedure includes the selection of 57 natural heritage sites and rating the content of their official websites. The results show an unsatisfactory level of representation of the heritage value of the Bulgarian NH and a severe depreciation of the provision of the necessary tourism and recreation information, in comparison to the selected global benchmark. Besides the outline of the most frequent gaps and shortcomings, the results provide managers with suggestions about the development of a “natural heritage” brand for tourism and recreation, which features amplification of site identity and messaging, plus enhancement of its visibility. The conclusions are applicable to a wide variety of geographical contexts and audiences in nature-based destination governance.

D.7.2. **Митова, Р.** 2021. Ерозия на пътеките в района на циркуса на Седемте рилски езера, Национален парк "Рила", България. Списание на българското геологическо дружество, год. 82, кн. 3, стр. 256-258, ISSN 0007-3938, Ref. Web of Science, IF(N/A) <https://doi.org/10.52215/rev.bgs.2021.82.3.256>

##### Trail erosion in the area of the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque, Rila National Park, Bulgaria

The presented study is pilot in nature and aims to investigate and document road erosion in the area of the Cirque of the Seven Rila Lakes, Rila National Park. The adverse ecological effects on the lakes of visitor flow have been a topic of a wide discussion and concern in recent years, and especially since the construction of a cableway in 2009. It is generally accepted that increased visitor flow causes eutrophication of the lakes, due to increased erosion of the paths. Numerous concerns and warnings have been raised in the scientific literature, but targeted studies to establish the damage have not been undertaken yet. In the period 15–17.09.2020, the width and maximum

depth of the paths were measured at 31 predetermined points along the path network in the circus of the Seven Rila Lakes. The research is ex-post, considering the passing of the peak attendance. For the analysis of the collected data the semi-product of the width and the maximum depth of the trails was used. It was interpreted as cross-section of the path, respectively, as an indicator of degradation of the paths. The performed variation analysis shows that in nearly half of the examined points, the data speak of high levels of path degradation. The standard deviation of the mean value of the cross-section of the paths is also large, which may indicate an increased risk of expansion of the problem. This necessitates the implementation of active measures to reduce the negative impacts of the visitor flow on the natural heritage of the Seven Lakes - limiting the effect of trampling, stabilizing the trail surface, and providing drainage and anti-erosion facilities. In some monitoring points, self-recovery processes are detected. These results indicate that the degradation processes of the trails are characterized by a certain degree of reversibility, and the recovery processes take place within several years. The collected data are a good baseline for tracking future changes and can serve as a basis for building a monitoring system of the ecological impacts of recreation in the cirque of the Seven Rila Lakes, as well as for making informed sustainable management decisions.

**Indicator D.7. Articles and papers published in non-peer-reviewed journals with scientific review or published in edited collective volumes**

D.8.1. **Митова, Р.** 2017. Ландшафтно-екологичният подход – възможност за реабилитация на концепцията за туристически поемнен капацитет. ГСУ, Кн. 2 – География, т. 109, стр 313 - 338, ISSN 0324-2579 (print), ISSN 2535-0579 (online) [https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/t/fakulteti/geologo\\_geografski\\_fakultet/oficialni\\_izdaniya/kniga\\_2\\_geografiya\\_tom\\_109](https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/t/fakulteti/geologo_geografski_fakultet/oficialni_izdaniya/kniga_2_geografiya_tom_109)

The landscape-ecological approach – an opportunity to rehabilitate the concept of tourism carrying capacity

The study presents an attempt to develop an algorithm for determining the ecological tourism carrying capacity of natural complexes to derive a spatial model to support the sustainable development and management of tourism in a given territory. The algorithm was tested on the territory of the Vitosha mountain, which is used as a model territory in the quality of both a tourist destination, on the one hand, and an object of nature protection, on the other. The research has an interdisciplinary character, using theoretical and methodological approaches both from the field of complex natural geography and the geography of tourism. In addition, the algorithm is operationalized in a GIS environment. The horizontal structure of the landscapes in the mountains was deduced, and the degree of anthropogenization and tourism utilization of the natural complexes, their sustainability, ecological carrying capacity, and recreational attractiveness were evaluated. Based on the developed ecological capacity/attractiveness matrix, a spatial model (zoning) has been derived, based on which concrete guidelines for spatially differentiated sustainable planning and management of tourism in the mountains have been proposed.

D.8.2. **Митова, Р.** 2017. Настанителният сектор на Витоша: структурни особености и проблеми на използването. ГСУ, Кн. 2 – География, т. 110, стр. 313 - 334 ISSN 0324-2579 (print), ISSN 2535-0579 (online) [https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/t/fakulteti/geologo\\_geografski\\_fakultet/oficialni\\_izdaniya/kniga\\_2\\_geografiya\\_tom\\_110](https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/t/fakulteti/geologo_geografski_fakultet/oficialni_izdaniya/kniga_2_geografiya_tom_110)

#### The accommodation sector of Vitosha: structural features and problems of use

Against the background of the lively discussions provoked by the different visions, ranging from a resort of international importance to preserved "wild nature", as well as the importance of accommodation as the main element of the tourism system, there is a lack of in-depth analysis of the accommodation sector in Vitosha. An even bigger problem is the complete lack of clarity regarding the territory of the Vitosha Nature Park and the stated intentions to restore and even expand the accommodation facilities. In terms of structural characteristics and efficiency issues the research aims to analyze the situation in the accommodation sector in Vitosha Mountain as a tourist destination. The study is based on information collected and systematized from various sources – scientific and analytical publications, regulatory and planning documents, geodatabases, statistics, registers, etc., including field observations. The research was conducted in three stages: (1) GIS inventory of available accommodation and field verification; (2) statistical data processing; (3) analysis and synthesis of information. The main results of the study show negative trends in the demand for accommodation services and problems with the efficiency of the use of the establishments, which have a catastrophic nature on the territory of the Vitosha Nature Park. The total beds in operation and its variety are more than enough to meet the current market needs. The main factors for the localization of the accommodation sites are the proximity to the center of Sofia city, and the favorable ecological environment, but not the protected territory as the main tourist resource. The combined impact of these factors forms three zones, characterized by specific features in the provision of tourist services by type, category, and price level. The study confirms the conclusions of the studies in the accommodation sector in Sofia. It expands the awareness of the state and trends in the accommodation sector for the territory of the Vitosha Nature Park. It contests the predictions for a complete restoration of the accommodation in the nature park and its resort status. Finally, it raises questions about the choice of a vision for future development and the need to carry out specialized urban planning.

D.8.3. Дограмаджиева, Е., **Р. Митова**, В. Николова. 2018. Качествено изследване на местното туристическо развитие чрез интервюта с ключови информатори на примера на София. ГСУ, Кн. 2 – География, т. 111, стр. 179-202, ISSN 0324-2579

(print), ISSN 2535-0579 (online) [https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet\\_t/fakulteti/geologo\\_geografski\\_fakultet/oficialni\\_iz\\_daniya/kniga\\_2\\_geografiya\\_tom\\_111](https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet_t/fakulteti/geologo_geografski_fakultet/oficialni_iz_daniya/kniga_2_geografiya_tom_111)

#### Qualitative study of local tourism development based on interviews with key informants: the case of Sofia city

The paper presents a qualitative study of local tourism development in the city of Sofia aimed at identifying recent trends, main development drivers and current challenges, as seen by different local stakeholders. The study implements the method of personal semi-structured interviews that were undertaken in April-May 2017 with twenty-seven key informants selected to represent various sectors of the local tourism industry and related services, as well as the tourism

management body at the destination level. Information obtained from the interviews is analyzed using qualitative content analysis techniques of data coding and coding reliability verification.

Detailed analysis of the results is presented taking into account similarities and differences in subjective opinions. It is not limited to shallow counting of statements, but rather seeks their deeper meaning, and also utilizes direct quotes from the interviews' records. The main findings refer to the recent tourism development drivers that are associated with favorable coincidence of external circumstances rather than efforts put by local stakeholders. Conclusions are drawn considering both, the methodology of the qualitative study and the main results. Specifically, recommendations for further refinement of the methodology are suggested and the positive and negative tourism development trends are discussed, as well as the current challenges associated with the internal and the external environment.

D.8.4. Petkova, E., E. Dogramadjieva, **R. Mitova**. 2019. New Kids in Town: Dimensions of Innovativeness of the 'New' City Tours of Sofia, Bulgaria. Proceedings of the International Conference "Get Ready for I Generation: Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality 2019". 12-13 September 2019, University of Novi Sad, Serbia; ISBN 978-86-7031-523-5 [https://www.uni-vt.bg/userinfo/1733/pub/27165/ctth%202019%20\\_%20doklada.pdf](https://www.uni-vt.bg/userinfo/1733/pub/27165/ctth%202019%20_%20doklada.pdf)

New Kids in Town: Dimensions of Innovativeness of the 'New' City Tours of Sofia, Bulgaria

In the context of current trends and dynamic changes in tourism supply and demand, the issue of the need for innovations in the tourism sector is becoming increasingly important. The aim of the article is to investigate the innovativeness of selected city tours of Sofia based on six dimensions of innovativeness as outlined in the model of den Hertog et al. (2010), namely: new service concept; new customer interaction; new business partnership; new revenue model; new delivery system (personnel, organization, culture); and new delivery system (technology). The study presents a qualitative analysis of the information available on the websites of five organizations offering both "free" (tip-based) and paid city tours of Sofia followed by semistructured interviews with managers and tour guides. Results reveal implementation of service innovations in all studied aspects of the tours and stress the significance of those innovations considering customer interaction, delivery system, business partnerships, and revenue model, since they considerably affect the market and change Sofia's tourism scene.

D.8.5. Dogramadjieva, E., **Mitova, R.**, Petkova, E. 2019. Innovative Guided Tours of Sofia City as a Tourist Experience: Analysis of Customers' On-line Reviews. Proceedings of the International Conference "Get Ready for I Generation: Contemporary Trends in Tourism and Hospitality 2019". 12-13 September 2019, University of Novi Sad, Serbia; ISBN 978-86-7031-523-5 [https://www.uni-vt.bg/userinfo/1733/pub/27165/ctth%202019%20\\_%20doklada.pdf](https://www.uni-vt.bg/userinfo/1733/pub/27165/ctth%202019%20_%20doklada.pdf)

Innovative guided tours of Sofia city as a tourist experience: analysis of customers' on-line reviews The aim of the paper is to study innovative city tours from a customers' perspective in the context of tourist experiences, value creation and customer satisfaction. The study refers to thirteen recently developed guided tours of Sofia city offered by five providers that are selected on the ground of their TripAdvisor ranking and the type of supply, including both "free" (tipbased) and



paid tours. It is focused on identifying and analysing perceived value of the tours as revealed in the studied customers' on-line reviews. Results outline five main aspects in which people express their opinions that may be considered key dimensions or determinants of a valuable tour experience: 1) the guide's skills and personality; 2) enjoyable learning and deeper understanding; 3) local experience and discovery; 4) fun and entertainment; 5) freedom and flexibility. Conclusion summarises the paper contributions to understanding valuable tourist experiences, outlines the study limitations, and sketches possible future research directions.

D.8.6. Николова, В., М. Асенова, В. Маринов, А. Казаков, **Р. Митова**, Е. Петкова. 2019. Кулинарните празници и фестивали в България като културно-туристическа атракция. В: MICE туризмът: фестивали, инсентиви, конференции, изложения, Черноморски туристически форум, Варна 2019, изд. Славена, Варна. ISBN 978-

619-190-149-4; <https://kinnpor.uni-sofia.bg/resources/item/111-culinary-holidays>

#### Culinary holidays and festivals in Bulgaria as cultural and tourist attractions

On the map of culinary destinations in the world Bulgaria is not among the most famous countries. However, the country has interesting and authentic culinary traditions and practices that can make it a potential culinary destination. The rich culinary traditions in Bulgaria and their regional features are the basis for creating country-specific culinary holidays, festivals and fairs, which are an important tourist attraction and attract many visitors. The aim of the presented research is to study the culinary holidays and festivals as cultural and tourist attractions, representing an element of the product of culinary tourism in Bulgaria and to outline their regional specifics.

D.8.7. Маринов, В., М. Асенова, **Р. Митова**. 2020. Клъстери на туристическо търсене на атракции, основани на културното наследство.. В:- (Рибов и др. ред) 100 години УНСС и 30 години катедра Икономика на туризма - Сборник с доклади от юбилейна международна научна конференция "Туризмът отвъд очакванията", ИК – УНСС; ISBN 978-619-232-297-7 [https://www.cceol.com/search/chapter\\_detail?id=996213](https://www.cceol.com/search/chapter_detail?id=996213)

#### Clusters of tourist demand of cultural heritage attractions

Secondary data on tourist demand for cultural heritage attractions do not reveal the true picture of visitors' behavior when staying in areas with a concentration of attractions. The purpose of the study is to fill in the gap of primary information and to reveal the territorial concentration of tourist demand for cultural heritage sites along a selected route in 4 areas of the country, by identifying the immediate catchment area of attractions and the interconnection of cultural heritage tourist attractions. The research was conducted in the form of a questionnaire survey with visitors at selected cultural and historical attractions. The results demonstrate the formation of clusters of tourist demand, with clearly outlined hubs and their periphery.

D.8.8. Дограмаджиева, Е., **Р. Митова**, Е. Петкова. 2020. Иновации в туристическия продукт на София: проучване на избрани туристически турове. В:- (Рибов и др. ред) 100 години УНСС и 30 години катедра Икономика на туризма - Сборник с доклади от юбилейна международна научна конференция "Туризмът отвъд очакванията", ИК – УНСС; ISBN 978-619-232-297-7

[https://www.cceol.com/search/chapter\\_detail?id=996213](https://www.cceol.com/search/chapter_detail?id=996213)

## Innovations in the urban tourist product of Sofia: a study of selected city tours

The paper presents summarised results of a study on innovations in the urban tourism product of Sofia city, based on selected city tours and thematic routes. The study is focused on five organizations offering a combination of “free” (tip-based) and paid tours targeted mainly at the foreign visitors. These providers do not belong to the traditional tourism business but have recently enjoyed great market success. Qualitative analysis of information from a variety of sources has been performed covering vendor websites, semi-structured interviews with owners / managers and tour guides, and online customer reviews. Results outline the main aspects of innovativeness in the studied city tours of Sofia, as well as the key determinants of valuable tour experience from a customer perspective.

D.8.9. **Mitova, R.**, E. Petkova, M. Assenova, V. Marinov. 2020. Online reputation of cultural heritage attractions in Bulgaria. In: - 6th International Scientific Conference Geobalcanica 2020 Proceedings, 12-14 May 2020, Ohrid, North Macedonia; Geobalcancia Society – Skopje, North Macedonia; ISSN 1857-7636, <http://dx.doi.org/10.18509/GBP.2020.38> ;  
<http://geobalcanica.org/wpcontent/uploads/GBP/2020/GBP.2020.38.pdf>

### Online reputation of cultural heritage attractions in Bulgaria

In the context of the increasing importance of new technologies, digital marketing is an issue of utmost significance in the field of tourism and is particularly relevant in the scope of cultural tourism. Based on the information published on the Internet about selected 46 Bulgarian cultural heritage attractions, the aim of the study is to evaluate their presentation in the context of promoting and building a positive attitude towards the Bulgarian cultural heritage. The study is conducted using a specially developed methodology, simulating the presumptive online behaviour of a potential user, seeking information on the network for a specific object. The methodology seeks to gather and analyse information about the presence and distribution of content on the Internet for the sites under study, with focus on their online identity and image, resulting in and affecting the online reputation. The study revealed significant gaps and challenges with respect to the construction of online identity of cultural heritage attractions presented in detail in the paper and the serious impacts of informal electronic communication channels on their online image. Nevertheless, the online reputation of the Bulgarian cultural heritage attractions does not depend on the amount of information disseminated on the Internet and it is predominantly formed in real rather than in virtual environment.

D.8.10. Marinov, V., M. Assenova, V. Nikolova, A. Kazakov, **R. Mitova**, E. Petkova. 2020. Profile of visitor to cultural heritage attractions in Bulgaria. In: - 6th International Scientific Conference Geobalcanica 2020 Proceedings, 12-14 May 2020, Ohrid, North Macedonia; Geobalcancia Society – Skopje, North Macedonia; ISSN 1857-7636, DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.18509/GBP.2020.44> ;  
<http://geobalcanica.org/wpcontent/uploads/GBP/2020/GBP.2020.44.pdf>

### Profile of visitors to cultural heritage attractions in Bulgaria

The overall objective of the study is to collect empirical information on the supply and demand of cultural heritage attractions in Bulgaria, and the specific objective is to outline a detailed profile of visitors to tourist attractions based on cultural heritage. The methodological toolkit includes



preliminary desk research of the selected attractions, semi-structured interviews with the “operators” of cultural heritage attractions, questionnaire survey of visitors to cultural heritage attractions, as well as observations and expert assessments. The visitor typology is based on the methodology proposed by McKercher (2002). It aims to create a more precise classification (segmentation) of "cultural tourists" and is based on a combination of two dimensions - the importance of cultural motives (cultural tourism) in the decision to visit the destination and the depth of experience associated with the culture and heritage of the destination. Altogether 668 visitors were interviewed at 30 sites, identified as cultural heritage tourist attractions. The questionnaire design and the data obtained allow the outlining of a detailed profile of visitors in terms of their socio-demographic characteristics, and the characteristics of the trip, respectively of the tourists' behavior. A visitor typology in terms of cultural tourism is elaborated, including the profile of each of the distinguished types. Their relationship with visitor and travel characteristics is revealed and analysed. The results indicate that the cultural tourist type in most cases is a variable that explain the differentiation in visitors' behaviour better than the typically used socio-demographic characteristics.

D.8.11. Marinov, V., M. Assenova, V. Nikolova, E. Petkova, **R. Mitova**, A. Kazakov and Ch. Istakova. 2020. Typology of Cultural Heritage Attractions in Bulgaria: Theoretical and Management Implications. International Tourism Conference, Dubrovnik, 2019 "Tourism in The VUCA World: Towards the Era of (Ir)Responsibility"- Proceedings book, Publisher: Institute for Tourism, Zagreb, pp. 125-138, ISBN: 378-953-6145-45 4; [http://www.iztg.hr/UserFiles/file/publication/International\\_TourismConferenceDubrovnik\\_TOURISM-IN-THE-VUCA-WORLD-TOWARDS-THE-ERA-OF-\(IR\)RESPONSIBILITY\\_2019.pdf](http://www.iztg.hr/UserFiles/file/publication/International_TourismConferenceDubrovnik_TOURISM-IN-THE-VUCA-WORLD-TOWARDS-THE-ERA-OF-(IR)RESPONSIBILITY_2019.pdf)

#### Typology of Cultural Heritage Attractions in Bulgaria: Theoretical and Management Implications

Currently the tourist attractions are not well defined in the country despite of the recent significant financial public support for the adaptation and socialization of the rich cultural heritage for tourism purposes. The Ministry of tourism has launched an e-register of tourist attractions, festivals and events without clear guidance for local authorities on the selection of tourist sites and events to be inscribed and how they have to be classified. At the same time some policy documents are in process of elaborating - a Strategy for the development of Bulgarian culture and a master plan for cultural tourism development, requiring a practical typology of tourist attractions in order to mainstream the future activities. Thus, the main aim of the research is to provide to key stakeholders a theoretically sound, workable and acceptable typology of cultural heritage attractions to support their proper and sustainable management. In addition, the typology should guide the own empirical research of cultural heritage attractions ensuring that most if not all of attractions types are covered. The methodology of research is based on a thorough review of scientific literature on tourist attractions and their typology as well as of relevant legislation and strategies in Bulgaria. The proposed typology was tested through field research including semistructured interviews with attractions' operators and questionnaire surveys of tourists. The contribution is both theoretical – further development of existing definitions and typology, and

practical – improved focus of public policies and allocation of public funds for conversion of cultural heritage into tourist attractions.

D.8.12. **Митова, Р.** 2021. Пространствен анализ и оценка на влиянията на туристическите пътеки и палатковите лагери в района на циркуса на Седемте рилски езера, НП "Рила", ГСУ, Книга 2 - География, т.113, ГГФ; ISSN 0324-2579 (print), ISSN 2535-

0579

(online)

[https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/fakulteti/geologo\\_geografski\\_fakultet/oficialni\\_izdaniya/kniga\\_2\\_geografiya\\_tom\\_113](https://www.uni-sofia.bg/index.php/bul/universitet/fakulteti/geologo_geografski_fakultet/oficialni_izdaniya/kniga_2_geografiya_tom_113)

Spatial analysis and evaluation of trails and campsites impacts in the area of the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque, Rila National Park

The article presents the results of an inventory, analysis, and assessment of the undesirable ecological impacts of the informal trails and campsites in the area of the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque, Rila National Park in Bulgaria. The research is using remote sensing methods and GIS. The following negative environmental impacts of tourism and recreation are addressed: erosion, silting, and eutrophication of the lakes; damage to geoheritage sites; damage and loss of soil cover; fragmentation of landscapes; fragmentation of natural habitats; biodiversity damage and loss. The results of the carried-out inventory show an unacceptable expansion of the trail network — 34.5 km of informal paths on an area of 4.57 km<sup>2</sup>. The average density of trails is 7,545.1 m/km<sup>2</sup> (75.4 m/ha). An average of 102.2 trails pass through each square kilometer of area, and at least one trail passes through every hectare. In addition, two tent camps spread over on 6.9 ha or 1.4% of the cirque area. The analysis shows the uneven distribution of trail density and dispersion across watersheds, landforms, soil types, landscapes, and habitats. Fragmentation of landscapes emerges as the most serious threat with a relatively high impact intensity. The erosion, siltation, and eutrophication of lakes appears to be next in importance. The remaining influences have a very high impact intensity, but their manifestations are highly concentrated. The high concentration of impact increases the degree of their controllability. The results bring more clarity about the risks of damage to the natural heritage in the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque, provoked by the visitor flow and are a prerequisite for making informed decisions. Undoubtedly, additional field studies are needed, but the results are indicative of the potential to reduce the negative impacts of tourism and recreation by taking active and spatially differentiated visitor and trail management measures.

D.8.13. Silvestriev, M., B. Borisova, **R. Mitova**. 2021. Natural heritage: Provision of cultural ecosystem services from the Malyovitsa Range of the Rila National Park. Journal of the Bulgarian Geographical Society, special issue 45 - Heritage BG, 41-59, ISSN 2738-8115

(online) | ISSN 2738-8107 (print), <https://doi.org/10.3897/jbgs.e72500>

Natural heritage: Provision of cultural ecosystem services from the Malyovitsa Range of the Rila National Park

Nature-based tourism and recreation are attracting attention today as the most favourable form of direct connection between people and nature, and as a very successful tool to motivate people to protect their natural heritage. This study aims to develop and test a methodology to assess the potential of an acknowledged natural heritage site in Bulgaria - Malyovitsa Range and Urdini

Cirque in 'Rila' National Park to provide cultural ecosystem services. A holistic approach is applied, using landscapes as the main territorial unit, and source of information.

For the purpose of practicing representative types of mountain tourism: 'mountain hiking', 'nature education' tourism, 'ski touring' and 'mountaineering' a total of 15 ecosystem services were assessed based on 25 biophysical and social indicators. 'Primary forest landscapes on moraine materials' and 'Primary landscapes with mugo pine on igneous rocks' receive the highest score. Based on the results obtained, an assessment of the mainstream activity - access to mountain hiking provided by the landscapes was carried out and two touristic routes with very high potential to deliver this service were identified. The results of the study are directed towards the responsible parties in support of the natural heritage conservation in Rila National Park through sustainable management the potential to provide cultural (recreational) ecosystem services. The research was conducted within the scientific programme of the project "Conceptualization, Flexible Methodology, and a Pilot Geospatial Platform for Access of the Bulgarian Natural Heritage to the European Digital Single Market of Knowledge and Information Services" within the project BG05M2OP001-1.001-0001 Establishment and

Development of "Heritage BG" Centre of Excellence (Operational Program "Science and Education for Intelligent Growth", priority Axis 1 "Research and technological development").

D.8.14. Nedkov, S., **R. Mitova**, M. Nikolova, B. Borisova, D. Hristova, L. Semerdzhieva, M. Zhiyanski, H. Prodanova. 2021. Prioritization of ecosystem services related to the natural heritage in Bulgaria. Journal of the Bulgarian Geographical Society, special issue 45 - Heritage BG, 19-30, ISSN 2738-8115 (online) | ISSN 2738-8107 (print), <https://doi.org/10.3897/jbgs.e73687>

#### Prioritization of ecosystem services related to the natural heritage in Bulgaria

Natural heritage (NH) is an important element of the natural capital of each country, and as such, represents key assets that deliver various benefits to the citizens. The rich and diverse NH of Bulgaria is a prerequisite for the development of various activities such as recreation and tourism, but these activities have also negative impact on some of the NH's elements. The concept of ecosystem services (ES) has the potential for bridging the gap between the conservation and exploitation needs. In this paper, we propose an approach to prioritizing the ES provided by the natural heritage of Bulgaria for the needs of recreation and tourism. The approach is designed for the mapping of the NH but it can also support the overall process of mapping and assessment of ES. It is based on application of ES prioritization matrix (ESPM) and a five-step algorithm designed to differentiate ES into priority levels according to their significance to recreation and tourism. Through the application of the proposed approach we were able to sort out the ES into three groups (high, medium and low priority) according to their importance to recreation and tourism. The first group contains obligatory ES for each mapping and assessment activity from national to local level. The second group contains optional ES recommended for studies at regional level, while the services can be selected according to the specifics of the study. The low priority ES are recommended for local level studies in cases where the assessment requires high details and accuracy. The mapping of high priority ES at national level shows that the products of the approach can be easily adapted for various studies for assessment of NH and sustainable tourism practices using the conventional mapping methods.

D.8.15. Stoyan Nedkov, Bilyana Borisova, Mariyana Nikolova, Miglena Zhiyanski, Stelian Dimitrov, **Radenka Mitova**, Boian Koulov, Desislava Hristova, Hristina Prodanova, Lidiya

Semerdzhieva, Yonko Dodev, Ivo Ihtimanski, Velimira Asenova, Maria Gluschkova. 2021. A methodological framework for mapping and assessment of ecosystem services provided by the natural heritage in Bulgaria. Journal of the Bulgarian Geographical Society, special issue 45 - Heritage BG, 7-18, ISSN 2738-8115 (online) |

ISSN 2738-8107 (print), <https://doi.org/10.3897/jbgs.e78680>

#### A methodological framework for mapping and assessment of ecosystem services provided by the natural heritage in Bulgaria

Natural heritage (NH) includes natural features that can be described as outstanding universal value at a national level. It refers to the importance of ecosystems, biodiversity, and geodiversity for their existence value, and the ecosystems can be considered as the spatial units for its mapping and assessment. The ecosystem services (ES) concept provides an appropriate basis in the form of assessment and mapping methods that enable linking the state of ecosystems with human well-being. Thus, it can be used as a platform to find solutions to the problems related to the conflicts between conservation and the use of the NH. In this paper, we aim to present the process of developing a methodological framework for mapping and assessment of ecosystem services provided by the natural heritage in Bulgaria for recreation and tourism. The conceptual framework of the ecosystem-based assessment of NH in Bulgaria is based on the assumption that the generation of NH for the needs of tourism can be presented as the linkages between the natural systems and tourism in the form of ES potential, flow, and demand. The results demonstrate that the NH can be presented as a spatial phenomenon conceptualized by the flows of benefits from ecosystems to people which contribute to human well-being. The mapping and assessment procedures are fully developed for application at a national level, while for the regional and local level, few pilot studies mark some basic foundations for further development.

D.8.16. Nikolova, M., S. Nedkov, B. Borisova, V. Stoyanova, **R. Mitova**. 2021. Cultural Ecosystem Services Provided by Natural Heritage Sites in Karst Territories of Smolyan Region, Bulgaria. Бюлетин "Наследство-БГ"- Научни известия, Година I, бр. 1, стр.

65-81,

[https://www.nasledstvo.bg/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%83%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8](https://www.nasledstvo.bg/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%83%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%8f/%d0%b7%d0%b0-)

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[%d0%bf%d0%b5%d1%80%d0%b8%d0%be%d0%b4%d0%b8%d1%87%d0%bd%d0](https://www.nasledstvo.bg/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%83%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%8f/%d0%b7%d0%b0-)

[%be%d1%82%d0%be-](https://www.nasledstvo.bg/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%83%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%8f/%d0%b7%d0%b0-)

[%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b4%d0%b0%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b5/](https://www.nasledstvo.bg/%d0%bd%d0%b0%d1%83%d1%87%d0%bd%d0%b8%d0%b8%d0%b7%d0%b2%d0%b5%d1%81%d1%82%d0%b8%d1%8f/%d0%b7%d0%b0-)

#### Cultural ecosystem services provided by natural heritage sites in karst territories of Smolyan region

The authors propose and apply a new methodology based on the integration of methods for categorizing natural objects as natural heritage at the national level and methods for evaluating, prioritizing and mapping ecosystem services for the development of recreational industries. The results of the categorization of seventeen caves on the territory of the Smolyan region, nominated for inclusion in the "national natural heritage" category, are presented. It is evaluate their capacity to provide recreational ecosystem services based on a new approach to prioritizing ecosystem services. The assessment was carried out using the proposed Significance Index and Relevance

Index. Based on the results of the assessment, the caves that meet the criteria to be nominated as national natural heritage sites have been determined. The research shows the applied importance of the ecosystem approach to the development of recreational industries based on the actual capacity of natural heritage sites to provide relevant ecosystem services and benefits for recreation and tourism.

D.8.17. **Митова, Р.** 2022. Устойчивост на почвите в района на циркуса на Седемте рилски езера на почвена ерозия. В: Сборник Юбилейна научна конференция „30 години национален парк Рила – предизвикателство за идните поколения“, научни доклади, Благоевград, ISBN 978-619-90533-8-6, с. 83-95 (под печат)

#### Resistance of soils to trail erosion in the area of the Seven rila lakes cirque

This study investigates the resistance to trail erosion of different soil types in the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque. It uses trail width and trail maximum depth data collected in the field at 31 points along the trail network. On this basis, it analyses the trail condition and the factors for the occurrence of trail erosion according to different soil types. The results show that soils in the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque are highly vulnerable to trail degradation. Trail widening is a problem in all soil types, but Orthic Umbrosols are the most affected. Trail incision is an issue of an irreversible nature in the cases of Lithic Leptosols and Umbric Leptosols. Umbric Gleysols are relatively resistant to trail degradation. The study results can help make informed decisions for sustainable management of recreation activities in the Seven Rila Lakes Cirque.

#### **Indicator D.9. Published chapter of a collective monograph**

Г.9.1. Dogramadjieva, E., V. Nikolova, **R. Mitova**. 2018. Sofia City As A Tourist Destination: Development Trends And Driving Forces. In: "Contemporary Tourism – Traditions And Innovations"(Ed. V. Marinov, M. Vodenska, M. Assenova and E. Dogramadjieva),

Cambridge Scholars Publishing, UK , ISBN (10): 1-5275-0829-3, ISBN (13): 978-1-5275-0829-3

#### Sofia City As A Tourist Destination: Development Trends And Driving Forces

Despite the crucial importance of Sofia city as Bulgaria's main administrative and cultural center, and the availability of diverse tourism resources both in the city center and the city surroundings, until recently it has not been distinguished as an attractive tourist destination. However, this situation seems to have changed over the last several years. There is a general feeling of upturning tourism industry while the widespread presence of foreign tourists in the streets, in restaurants and shops is no longer a surprise but is gradually becoming part of the urban landscape.

This paper seeks to answer several research questions: 1) is the overall impression of dynamic development of Sofia city as a tourist destination supported by the official statistics; 2) is such an impression shared by different stakeholders in local tourism development and in which aspects do they see positive or negative change; 3) what are the main current drivers and restraints of Sofia's tourism development according to the stakeholders' perceptions. The analysis is based on statistical data and semi-structured interviews with selected key informants.

Conclusions are drawn considering positive and negative tourism development trends as well as the main current challenges associated with internal and external development driving forces.

D.9.2. Маринов, В., М. Асенова, **Р. Митова**. 2021. Кризата от COVID-19 през погледа на потърпевшите - резултати от анкетно проучване: Методика на проучването. В: Кабаков, И., В. Маринов, М. Асенова, В. Николова, Е. Петкова, Р. Митова, Н. Стоева, М. Станева, П. В. Петров, Г. Димитрова. COVID-кризата в културата и туризма, основан на културното наследство: идеи за изход от ситуацията. 2021. УИ "Св. Климент Охридски", С. ISBN 978-954-07-5214-3 (меки корици), ISBN

978-954-07-5215-0 (pdf) <https://kinnpor.uni-sofia.bg/resources/item/77-covid-krizata-ebook>

#### The COVID-19 crisis through the eyes of the victims - survey results: Survey method

In the chapter "The COVID-19 crisis through the eyes of the victims – results of a survey: Survey method" the algorithm for developing the methodology of the conducted online survey among representatives of the culture and cultural tourism sectors is presented in detail. The algorithm includes two phases. In the first phase, a preliminary online survey was made to a limited number of interested parties. Based on the answers received and their analysis, the results of which are presented in a summarized form in the chapter, the questionnaire for the actual broader survey was developed. The preliminary survey shows that the consequences in the economic aspects of the crisis seem to depend to a large extent on the form of financing the activity. Adaptation to the new situation requires interventions through a series of specific measures, initiatives, and practices in the field of culture and cultural tourism in the following aspects: product policy, partnerships, the attraction of audiences/visitors/users, visit management, price, and financial policy and personnel policy.

D.9.3. Маринов, В., **Р. Митова**. 2021. Кризата от COVID-19 през погледа на потърпевшите - резултати от анкетно проучване: Адаптиране. В: Кабаков, И., В. Маринов, М. Асенова, В. Николова, Е. Петкова, Р. Митова, Н. Стоева, М. Станева, П. В. Петров, Г. Димитрова. COVID-кризата в културата и туризма, основан на културното наследство: идеи за изход от ситуацията. 2021. УИ "Св. Климент Охридски", С. ISBN 978-954-07-5214-3 (меки корици), ISBN 978-954-07-5215-0

(pdf); <https://kinnpor.uni-sofia.bg/resources/item/77-covid-krizata-ebook>

#### The COVID-19 crisis through the eyes of the victims - survey results: Adaptation

In the chapter "The COVID-19 crisis through the eyes of the victims - results of a survey: Adaptation" of the collective monograph "The COVID-19 crisis in culture and tourism based on cultural heritage: ideas for a way out of the situation" the results of a conducted online survey among 154 representatives of the culture and cultural tourism sectors are presented. The focus is on the adaptive abilities of organizations from the field of culture and cultural tourism to deal with the crisis situation in connection with the pandemic. The change in the activities of the organizations, the intentions to develop the offer, the measures to attract users, the expectations of support from the public authorities, the intentions regarding human resources, and the attitudes to create partnerships in view of the challenges caused by the Covid-crisis were studied. The results of the analysis are presented differentiated in view of the different subsectors and the size of the



organizations. In addition to qualitative analysis and open coding, 79 received free comments were subjected, based on which the main criticisms, requests and recommendations made by the respondents to the public authorities were brought out.