



ISCTBL 2021
INTERNATIONAL SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

Универзитет „Гоце Делчев“ –
Штип

**Goce Delchev University
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Факултет за туризам и бизнис
логистика

**Faculty of Tourism and
Business Logistics**

**Четврта Меѓународна Научна Конференција
Fourth International Scientific Conference**

**ПРЕДИЗВИЦИТЕ ВО ТУРИЗМОТ И БИЗНИС
ЛОГИСТИКАТА ВО 21 ВЕК
CHALLENGES OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS
LOGISTICS IN THE 21ST CENTURY**

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19 ноември 2021 г. / November 19, 2021

Издавач:

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За издавачот:

д-р Татјана Бошков, декан

Организатор на конференцијата:

Факултет за туризам и бизнис логистика
Тираж: 146

Publisher:

Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics
Goce Delchev University of Shtip
“Krste Misirkov” no.10-A P.O. Box 201 Shtip 2000, North Macedonia
Tel: +389 32 550 350
www.ftbl.ugd.edu.mk
www.ugd.edu.mk

For the Publisher:

Tatjana Boshkov, Ph.D. – Dean

Conference Organizer:

Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics
Print circulation: 146

CIP - Каталогизација во публикација
Национална и универзитетска библиотека Св. „Климент Охридски“, Скопје

338.48(062)
658.6/.8:164(062)

МЕЃУНАРОДНА научна конференција (4 ; Штип ; 2021)

Предизвиците во туризмот и бизнис логистиката во 21 век : зборник на трудови / Четврта меѓународна научна конференција, 19 ноември 2021, Штип = Challenges of tourism and business logistics in the 21st century :

conference proceedings / Fourth international scientific conference, November 19, 2021, Shtip. - Штип : Универзитет "Гоце Делчев", Факултет за туризам и бизнис логистика, 2021. - 379 стр. : илустр. ; 25 см

Трудови на мак. и англ. јазик. - Фусноти кон текстот. - Библиографија кон трудовите

ISBN 978-608-244-824-4

1. Напор. ств. насл.

а) Туризам -- Собири б) Синцир на снабдување -- Логистички системи -- Собири

COBISS.MK-ID 55376901

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Пленарна сесија
Социо-економски импликации на КОВИД-19: намалување на
разликите и справување со дистрибутивните влијанија во различни
сектори

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д-р Татјана Бошков, вон. професор и декан на Факултет за туризам и бизнис логистика, Универзитет „Гоце Делчев“ – Штип, РС Македонија.

Втора сесија: Туризам, угостителство и гастрономија

д-р Наташа Митева, доцент и продекан за настава, Факултет за туризам и бизнис логистика, Универзитет „Гоце Делчев“ – Штип, РС Македонија.

Panel session

Socio-economic implications of COVID-19: reducing disparities and addressing distributional impacts in different sectors

Session chair: Tatjana Boshkov, Assoc.professor and Dean at Faculty of tourism and business logistics, „Goce Delcev University – Stip, N. Macedonia

Panelists

1. Gligor Bishev, University professor and Management Board Chairman, Sparkasse Bank, N. Macedonia
2. Zarko Radjenovic, PhD, Research Associate, Innovation Center, University of Nis, Serbia
3. Natasha Miteva, PhD, Vice-Dean for Education, Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics, Goce Delcev University – Stip, N. Macedonia

Moderators

First session: Business logistics and business administration

Tatjana Boshkov, PhD, Dean at Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics, Goce Delcev University – Stip, N. Macedonia

Second session: Tourism, hospitality and gastronomy

Natasha Miteva, PhD, Vice-Dean for Education, Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics, Goce Delcev University – Stip, N. Macedonia



УНИВЕРЗИТЕТ „ГОЦЕ ДЕЛЧЕВ“ - ШТИП
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ФАКУЛТЕТ ЗА ТУРИЗАМ И БИЗНИС ЛОГИСТИКА
FACULTY OF TOURISM AND BUSINESS LOGISTICS

ЧЕТВРТА МЕЃУНАРОДНА
НАУЧНА КОНФЕРЕНЦИЈА

FOURTH INTERNATIONAL
SCIENTIFIC CONFERENCE

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19 ноември, 2021, Штип / Shtip, November 19th, 2021

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DEVELOPMENT OF GOLF TOURISM ON THE NORTHERN BULGARIAN BLACK SEA COAST

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Abstract

Golf tourism is a specialized type of tourism, which is still not very popular in Bulgaria, but is assessed as particularly promising. The development of golf tourism in Bulgaria comes with the new century through large-scale foreign investors. 8 golf courses have already been built, and others are under construction. It is envisaged that their number will exceed 30. They attract solvent tourists, diversify the tourist product, extend the tourist season. The natural conditions in Bulgaria are suitable for this sport due to the good climatic and relief conditions. Despite these benefits, golf tourism also poses a number of threats, mainly to the environment, due to the drastic change in landscapes it causes. Territories with habitats of rare and endangered species, including protected areas, are being taken over. The economic benefits at the expense of environmental damage call into question the contribution of golf tourism to the sustainable development of Bulgarian tourism.

The aim is to study and analyze the current state, opportunities and prospects for the development of golf tourism on the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast. In accordance with the set goal, the report examines the golf complexes on the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

Key words: golf tourism, Bulgaria, Northern Black Sea coast, golf complexes, golf courses;

Introduction

Golf tourism is a type of sports tourism. It is a specialized type of tourism that meets the needs of tourists for sports and recreation. Tourism in Bulgaria is a priority industry. Great hopes are placed on it as an economic and social factor for the current and future development of the country. Golf tourism is a new type of tourism for Bulgaria and is still underdeveloped, but it has potential for future development. Golf tourism is still little known in Bulgaria, because the first golf course was opened only about 20 years ago. The object of the present paper is the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea Coast. The subject of the research are the specifics of golf tourism. The aim is to study and analyze the state, opportunities and prospects for the development of golf tourism on the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast. The research methods used to achieve the set goal include review of literature and online information sources, analysis, synthesis, summary and other general methods.

Origin and development of golf tourism in the World and Bulgaria

Golf has traditionally been considered a discovery of Scotland, and it has spread to England since the 17th century. In the heyday of the British Empire in the 19th century, golf clubs were founded in many parts of the world such as Ireland, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, South Africa, Singapore. Therefore, even today this game is popular mainly in English-speaking countries such as the United States, Great Britain, Canada, Australia. Accordingly, the popularity of golf tourism is greatest in North America. In Europe, organized golfers are 8 million people, and together with their families - over 25 million. souls. The region of Central and Eastern Europe, to which the World Tourism Organization refers Bulgaria, currently has relatively few playgrounds. However, their number has been growing rapidly in recent years. Golf facilities are also being built intensively on the Balkan Peninsula. There are already more

than 215 in Turkey, and Greece has a national strategy to increase golf courses to 30 in the next few years. Golf tourism is growing particularly fast in East Asia, where Japan is the leading golf destination. In 2015, the first golf complex in China was opened on the island of Hainan. Today, more than 50 million golfers travel to play on some of the 32,000 courses in various parts of the world. The contribution of golf tourism to the world economy is estimated at \$ 60,000 billion. In connection with this, new golf courses are constantly being built.

Bulgaria is an interesting new destination for golf tourism. In the 90^s of the 20th century Masako Oya, a Japanese business lady admirer of Bulgaria, considered that it was promising for the country to build golf courses. Thus, in the last 20 years there has been a boom in the construction of similar sites in Bulgaria. considered a priority. In Bulgaria you can play golf for 7-8 months a year. The country has a suitable terrain and climate for this. Another factor influencing golf tourism is infrastructure. The necessary sports facilities, places for accommodation and meals, educational institutions and accessibility have been built. The realized revenues are not only from golf, but also from the sale of real estate and the provision of additional services. Aiming at optimal exploitation of the tourist potential, Bulgaria has recently chosen to become one of the preferred golf destinations in Southeast Europe. The country already has 8 golf courses with a world-renowned design. The Bulgarian Golf Association became a member of the European Golf Association in 2001. The country is listed as a key golf destination for 2011 in the catalog of the Association of British Travel Agencies.

Although Bulgaria is visited for the purpose of golf tourism, it still cannot be compared with the established European golf destinations. But the Bulgarian golf courses are of a very high class. Not only as sports facilities, but also as a combination of services and overall experience. According to experts, in order for Bulgaria to become an attractive and competitive destination, at least 30 playgrounds that meet European standards are needed. This is written in the main guidelines for investing in golf. More than 28 projects for the construction of golf courses have already been approved. Among the main reasons hindering the development of golf in Bulgaria, experts determine the lack of suitable areas and locations. For one standard golf course with 18 holes, together with the infrastructure and the golf course, there is a necessary temperature with an area of about 1000 decares, and for the game - 500 meters. Private plots with such areas could easily be acquired by one investor. At the same time, the state and the municipalities have such conditions. Part of them are low-productive or existing lands, which are not used for their intended purpose. The price of the land is high, as is the price of golf development. Therefore, it is a world practice for the state or municipality to invest in golf courses by providing plots or giving them on concession for a long period. The investor is committed to building the golf course and the accompanying infrastructure. This practice is not accepted in Bulgaria. Another option is the creation of companies with state and municipal participation.. They perform the functions of holding companies. In 2008, the government declared golf tourism a priority for the country and began promoting it. Accordingly, most offers come from the municipalities, as a standard 18-hole course requires at least 50 decares and, depending on how ambitious the plans for ancillary facilities and holiday villages are, the required terrain may exceed 100 decares. Accordingly, only municipal holdings are so large. This is an expensive investment. However, it is possible that golf courses in Bulgaria will reach 40. Most Bulgarians welcome this fact with indifference. Golf has no traditions in Bulgaria, and it is within the capabilities of wealthier people. Therefore, golf courses in Bulgaria need additional products or services to survive.

In the last few years, Bulgaria has established itself as a serious golf destination. There are modern golf courses in the country, designed by world-famous experts. They are located in several areas - 3 on the North Black Sea coast, 3 in the area around the capital, one near the mountain resort of Bansko and one near the town of Sliven.

To expand and diversify golfers, it is possible to create combined golf packages with visits to golf courses in neighboring countries to diversify the product range. For the development and establishment of the country as a destination for golf tourism, it is necessary in the opinion of experts to have 30 golf

courses, which implies the construction of about 20 more. More golf courses in one destination reduce the period required for the market introduction of new golf courses. That is why there is interest in increasing the number of golf courses on the North Black Sea coast.

Specifics of golf tourism

Golf tourism is one of the elements of sports and leisure tourism. It is a kind of sports game with a competitive character, which requires specific skills, precise technique and exceptional concentration. Motivating factors include the attractiveness and emotion of playing outdoors, exercise and relaxation, as well as the satisfaction of communication during and after the game.

Golf is a type of tourism that, in order to be practiced, requires practitioners to travel to golf resorts around the world. It is a popular and healthy activity and, regardless of its image as an aristocratic sport, provides rest for people of both sexes and all ages. Golf is the most popular individual exclusive sport in the world. Golf is played by people whose purchasing power is above average. Over 80% of managers in Europe play golf. Golf is played all year round in areas with mild climates and no heavy snowfalls. Golf lovers and their families represent a significant share of the global tourism market.

From the point of view of the tourist destination, sports tourism helps to attract additional tourist contingent, as well as to increase the length of stay of tourists. The offer of sports activities significantly increases the attractiveness and competitiveness of the destination.

Golf is not only a sport but also a business. In the field of golf tourism, the main tourist services include, in addition to the traditional ones - transport services, accommodation, meals and the practice of golf. This is the motive for the implementation of this type of tourism and is the main service that attracts tourists. Additional services offered are equipment rental, golf courses, stroller rental, golf shop, as well as types of spa services, practicing other sports (horseback riding, cycling, off-road tours, yachting, diving, etc.), visiting cultural heritage sites, natural landmarks, etc. Around the golf courses are usually built small holiday villages, low-rise residential complexes and luxury hotels, spas and other tourist attractions - stables, swimming pools, small airports, beaches, gyms and more. This helps to distribute tourists more evenly, both in terms of territory and time. Golf allows the surrounding hotels to operate about 10 months a year. From the point of view of the tourist destination, sports tourism helps to attract additional tourist contingent, as well as to increase the length of stay of tourists. The offer of sports activities significantly increases the attractiveness and competitiveness of the destination.

The development of golf in the world shows as a pattern two types of concentration of golf courses:

- golf courses built near larger urban areas
- golf courses built near established tourist areas - mainly on the shores of warm seas or near famous ski resorts

In order for a region or country to become a golf destination, there must be several courses, which are grouped next to each other, but not more than 40-50 km. Golfers like to change courses during their vacations, just as skiers like to go down different slopes. *The profile of the golfer is: a middle-aged man with an above-average income. This profile is changing to some extent, as there is a tendency for more and more women to take part in this sport. Consumers of this tourist product are in a wide range of ages, as older and able-bodied tourists prefer to practice more expensive types of tourism such as yachting, golf, horseback riding and others. It has been established that the tourists for rest who visit golf complexes are about 24.4%, and for competitions 67.4%. It has also been found that 73% of British golfers want to try new destinations. The most important are the quality of the golf course, the climate and the location. It is estimated that Europeans spend 2.3 billion euros a year on golf trips, and North Americans spend more than \$ 64 billion.* Sports tourism contributes to the development of the destination in accordance with the principles of sustainability. From an ecological point of view, it is much more environmentally friendly to build golf courses instead of larger resorts. However, more and

more often environmental organizations are alerting to a number of dangers. The organization "For Nature to Remain in Bulgaria" warns that golf courses are often harmful to the environment and can cause a shortage of drinking water. The relief changes, the natural vegetation cover and the upper soil layer on large areas are destroyed, which leads to a serious change in the environment. Then a blanket of special grass is created. Its maintenance requires intensive use of herbicides and fertilizers that fall into groundwater and surrounding terrain. Very frequent mowing is required, which leads to depletion of the soil layer and even more intensive fertilization. Environmentalists remind that the maintenance of golf courses requires huge amounts of water. In countries such as Spain and Portugal, golf is already causing problems with drinking water. The organization "For Nature to Remain in Bulgaria" reminds that for a golf course in the area of the village of Bozhurets on the Black Sea coast, for example, about 700 decares of Ponto-Sarmatian steppes have already been destroyed, inhabited by 7 protected species and dozens of protected animals. . The coalition of 30 non-governmental organizations and civic groups "For Nature to Remain in Bulgaria" expresses its concern over the proposal to make summer and winter resorts year-round by building golf courses, which is seen as an attempt to continue their redevelopment. Some of the projects for the construction of golf courses fall into protected areas of the European ecological network Natura 2000.

In the future, it must be carefully considered where and how to build new golf courses. This should not be at the expense of nature and the interests of local people. Bulgaria has rich biodiversity, limited water resources, and golf does not have many supporters among the population. Desolate agricultural land can be used to build golf courses instead of destroying valuable natural ecosystems.

Territorial scope of the Northern Bulgarian Black sea coast

One of the golf zones in Bulgaria is the Northern Black Sea coast, in the area around Kavarna, where there are three closely located modern designer golf courses, offering luxury and comfort with impressive views of the Black Sea.

The Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast covers the part of the Black Sea coast from the border with Romania (Cape Sivriburun to the mouth of the Fandakliyska River (Shkorpilovska)), its length is 37.9% of the Bulgarian Black Sea coastline.

In terms of tourism, the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast is a significant territorial complex with a specific combination of natural-geographical, socio-economic and cultural-historical features and resources serving the development of tourism with all the hallmarks of a well-defined tourist area. The existing settlement network is typically rebuilt for tourism purposes. A special place in the landscape of the coast is occupied by the specially built and under construction material base, including resort and tourist complexes, campsites, hotels, villas, holiday homes, camps, etc. The cities and resorts such as Varna, Balchik, Kamchia, Kavarna, Shabla, Byala, Sv. St. Constantine and Helena, Golden Sands and Albena offer many entertainment, water parks, restaurants, shops for lovers of dynamic weekends. Apart from beaches, the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast also attracts with forests, mineral springs, healing mud. The further north, the more preserved the nature there, and the less human influence on flora and fauna.

Contemporary specifics of golf tourism on the North Bulgarian Black sea coast

The golf courses on the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast are located between Balchik and Kavarna. There are three golf complexes, which are located very close to each other - Black Sea Rama Golf and Villas, Lighthouse Golf and Spa resort and Thracian Cliffs Golf and Beach Resort. There are 40 km from city of Varna with an international airport for visitors from all over the world. The construction of these three complexes is also the largest investment in the municipalities of Balchik and Kavarna in recent years. Golf tourists who visit Bulgaria are from all over Europe, but mainly from Great Britain, Ireland, Sweden, Finland, etc. The organization of golf tournaments attracts more tourists, who in turn

fill their free time through the attendance of natural and cultural historical sites in the area, which are not insignificant. This stimulates the growth of additional services in tourism.

Lighthouse Golf & Spa resort is located near the town of Balchik, Dobrich region. It is located on 1300 decares in the area of the village of Topola. Lighthouse Golf & Spa Hotel is part of the golf complex. It is located in a beautiful place by the sea in Balchik. The complex offers accommodation in a hotel and holiday homes. The hotel overlooks the sea and one of the most beautiful landscapes in the area. It is close to the golf club building, the golf academy and the road to the sandy beaches. Lighthouse Hotel offers luxurious rooms, some with private pools. The luxury villas that are located throughout the complex are for rent for relaxation. Some of them are to the sea, others to the forest or lakes. In the heart of the complex is Green Park. These are 30 fully finished and furnished apartments, located next to the 18th hole of the golf course. All apartments have an attractive design.

The Lighthouse is designed by renowned former Ryder Cup captain Ian Wusnam with 18 holes. The elite golf course is of the "links" type and has a traditional design. Exceptional natural paintings contribute to the stunning landscape. The golf course is suitable not only for professionals but also for beginners. The complex is the first chosen for 2016 to be included as a destination in the European Tour. The golf course and facilities are designed according to the preferences of golfers who want to play sports all year round, choosing the golf game in this new location. The golf club, located in one of the most remarkable buildings in the complex, offers a real variety of services, including professional training, a specialty store, a restaurant, a bar and personal lockers for personal belongings. The golf school in the complex has everything you need for training and education: training fields, an area with bunkers and a short golf course. The hotel is next to the courses around the 12th, 13th and 14th holes, which allows all guests to enjoy the panoramic view of the golf course and the game on it. Facilities are complemented by sports and leisure facilities, including 2 tennis courts and a football pitch. The complex has many restaurants and entertainment - restaurant with international cuisine "Alexandra", restaurant "Foucault", restaurant "Prestige", bar "19th hole", beach bar, lobby bar, pool bar, piano bar. The beach offers its guests not only sunbeds and umbrellas, but also water attractions. The spa area is on two levels. The first level is the wellness center, which offers a steam bath, infra-red sauna, Finnish sauna, large indoor pool, jacuzzi and more. Second level offers 7 massage rooms, spa treatments and various types of therapies such as moisturizing body therapies, Asian therapies, organic facial and body therapies and more. There is also a hair salon and fitness center. Only 5 km from the complex is the special rehabilitation clinic Tuzla. Lighthouse offers hotel packages combined with special treatment procedures with healing mud for the treatment, rehabilitation and prevention of diseases of the central and peripheral nervous system, as well as some skin, gynecological and endocrine diseases. The designers of the hotel have not forgotten to think about the youngest visitors, the children. For them there is a games room with various video games, darts, billiards, indoor children's club, outdoor playground, also golf lessons for children, and in the summer a summer animation program with various sports, educational games and activities.

Black sea rama Golf and Villas complex is located on top of the coastal cliffs on the Bulgarian Black Sea coast overlooking the beautiful cape Kaliakra. Black sea rama is located in a gated residential complex of luxury villas. Black sea rama is a classic golf course with spectacular views. It is also the first completed playground in Eastern Europe designed by Gary Player. The resort boasts a golf academy, a wellness center, four restaurants and proximity to the other two courses. Black sea rama swells with more than 260 days a year sunshine, beautiful surroundings and first-class facilities. Black sea rama is located 200 meters above sea level. The complex was opened in 2008. The playground has 18 holes and is a relatively flat and open terrain, where the wind plays an important role. It has four large artificial lakes with over 100 decares, which offer water sports and fishing. The golf academy offers a complete learning experience covering all aspects of the game. There is also a children's golf academy, which offers group lessons for children aged 6 to 12. The course was awarded the prestigious award in the international category for "Best New Golf Course of 2009" by Golf Inc.

Accommodation consists of a boutique five-star hotel, as well as one or two-storey villas. All accommodation has five-star hotel service. The villas have swimming pools and fully equipped kitchens, making them suitable for holiday homes. The individual villas overlooking the sea and the lake are private houses with individual outdoor pools. Most of the villas have already been sold. The villas are located near the sports and wellness center. The owners of the villas are not only rich Bulgarians and Europeans, but also Chinese, Thai and Arab. Black sea rama avoids one of the most disturbing trends among golf resorts - redevelopment. The complex has 4 restaurants, each with a varied offer, as well as a brewery and a winery. These are House Bistro Club, Lake Tavern, La Campana Pizzeria, Steak Howe. The complex has a wine cellar, which produces its own white and red wine. Black sea rama also has 2 tennis courts, a professional gym as well as a fishing lake and a children's play area, a wellness center and a spa. The Black sea rama course was awarded the prestigious award in the international category for "Best New Golf Course of 2009" by Golf Magazine. One of the villas won the "Building of the Year" award in 2008. One of the most impressive elements of the whole complex is the amphitheater, which provides an opportunity for impressive wedding ceremonies.

Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort was not opened in 2011. It is not just a complex, but a whole resort including amazing properties with sea views near the protected area Kaliakra. Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort is located between the villages of Topola and Bozhurets and between the resorts of Balchik and Kavarna. The course meanders through rocky terrain on the northern Black Sea coast. The complex includes an 18-hole golf course, a club house with a driving range, a marina, residential buildings, villas and several hotels. The hotel base has a luxury spa. The resort has 6 dining options, a night piano bar and a panoramic games bar. The restaurants offer traditional local flavors and contemporary European cuisine with some accents from Morocco and Asia. Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort is a gated, private golf course that offers membership for an annual fee. It has two beaches, water and land sports facilities, six panoramic dining areas, a game bar, a piano bar with high quality service. The 18-hole golf course dominates the resort, covering the cliff tops for 4.5 km. rugged terrain above the sea. Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort is also the largest sports and tourist complex in Bulgaria. The complex was designed by Gary Player too, who predicts that the course will become one of the three most popular in the world.

Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort is an ideal holiday destination and the only resort in the area with two beautiful beaches reaching them with golf carts. They are recognized as one of the most exotic beaches on the Black Sea coast. One beach is Argata (Bohemian Escape) and the main beach is Bendita (Moroccan style). The latter is used as a venue for weddings with up to 130 guests, corporate banquets and private outdoor events. The beach also offers many water attractions such as a water banana, "aqua" rocket, water torpedo, stand-up paddle, water bike, diving, kayaking and more. The main item in the revenues of the considered complexes are the tourist packages, the group visits, the individual visits and the corporate tournaments. The price of one game on the existing playgrounds on the North Black Sea coast currently varies around 60 leva. It is lower during the week and higher on weekends. The differences between the membership fees for the clubs are bigger. Depending on the policy of the golf club, entrance fees may be charged. Where villas and apartments are sold, the properties usually result in club membership, with annual club fees collected separately. External members must pay a one-time fee. In addition to the club principle, where the main income is the annual membership fees, some playgrounds operate on a commercial basis, or pay per game.

Another outstanding project in the region is **Summerland Golf & beach club**. This is one of the complexes combining high quality construction, good location and extremely good conditions for both small and large investors. It is located in a quiet place, about 300 meters from the wide beach of Kavarna.

The complex is a combination of charming Bulgarian traditional architecture and modern design. It is divided into 4 separate sections, including 77 apartments for sale. The tendency is for the complex to be a closed type with private properties. Summerland Golf & beach club will have 3 swimming pools, spa, tennis court, a variety of restaurants, bars and shops. The project also includes a mini golf course, which complements the area formed as a golf area.

The fourth golf complex is opposed by conservationists because the place where they want it to be built is a protected area. Environmentalists also specify that if the project is implemented, about 40% of the dry grassland habitats in the protected area will be destroyed. Rare steppe habitats are under strict protection throughout the country, but are found only in Dobrogea. Due to their destruction during the construction of holiday complexes and golf courses on the North Black Sea coast, a lawsuit has already been filed against Bulgaria in the European Court. With the planned investment for the construction of a golf course and a holiday village, there is a new risk for Bulgaria of financial sanctions for non-compliance with European environmental legislation. The data of the environmentalists are that during the construction of the previous playgrounds the natural habitats have been completely erased. In their place are planted grasses that are not native species, are treated with chemicals against the appearance of unwanted grasses. Artificial water areas are being created; buildings are being built. All this hinders the natural movement of rare and protected species. In accordance with the goals and priorities of the National Strategy for Sustainable Tourism Development in the Republic of Bulgaria, a policy should be pursued to promote the development of golf tourism by creating an appropriate investment environment for rapid construction of the required number of golf courses to become a country attractive and competitive tourist "golf destination".

Table 1. SWOT analysis and marketing concept

Strengths	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Due to the favorable natural and climatic conditions Bulgaria is an attractive tourist golf destination for golf lovers; ❖ Golf tourism attracts more solvent tourists and generates high revenues; ❖ Golf services are a tourist product of higher quality; ❖ The prices of the golf services in Bulgaria are lower in comparison with the other golf destinations in Europe; ❖ Bulgaria's membership in the EU contributes to the development of golf tourism; ❖ Golf tourism doubles the summer tourist season on the Black Sea coast; ❖ With the development of golf tourism additional specialized types of tourism are stimulated (spa tourism, yachting tourism and many others); ❖ Golf tourism stimulates the attraction of foreign investments; ❖ Many of the golf courses in Bulgaria are surrounded by impressive natural landscapes, which distinguishes them from most European golf courses; ❖ Availability on a global basis; ❖ Affects the growth of real estate sales; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Bulgaria maintains a low standard of living, and golf tourism is an expensive sport, which is why it is inaccessible to most people in the country; ❖ Insufficient advertising; ❖ In Bulgaria there is still no base for training of qualified managers in golf complexes; ❖ The state does not invest in golf projects, and the financial assistance it provides is insignificant; ❖ The finances needed to build a golf complex are huge, and the return is slow and time consuming, which makes golf tourism a risky business; ❖ High costs for irrigation and maintenance of lawns in golf complexes; ❖ During the construction of golf courses and complexes the landscape changes; ❖ It strongly changes and even destroys the natural environment; ❖ Few Bulgarian tour operators are interested in golf tourism but only 2 are specialized golf travel agencies.
Opportunities	Threats

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Promotion of golf as a sport in Bulgaria among the local population and among golfers worldwide; ❖ Encouraging golf lessons among children; ❖ Improving the advertising activity and popularization of the golf tourism in Bulgaria, ❖ Increasing the number of travel agencies offering tourist packages to golf resorts; ❖ Preparation of maps with a percentage reduction of golf services for Bulgarian golf tourists; ❖ Great potential for development; ❖ Different new tourist product; ❖ Opportunity to attract solvent customers; ❖ Attracting foreign investors; ❖ Social effect - new jobs creation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ The high price of golf services - social discrimination; ❖ Prerequisite for the emergence of many environmental problems; ❖ Low percentage of operation of golf courses and complexes in Bulgaria; ❖ Risk of non-return on investment; ❖ Competition from other countries; ❖ Loss of interest and trust on the part of strategic investors; ❖ Shortage in quantity and quality of qualified tourist staff; ❖ Failure in the development of golf tourism.
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Golf tourism in Bulgaria is still not popular enough. This specialized type of tourism is in a very early stage of development and accordingly the country has potential and prospects in this regard. Its relative share in the country's tourist product is currently only 0.1%. One of the reasons it is so small is that there are only two Bulgarian tour operators that offer golf tourism in Bulgaria as a specialized product - VIP Holiday & Travel and Bulgarian Golf Tours, and only a few agencies work as travel agents. This leads to a very limited supply of Bulgarian golf tourism on the domestic market.

The marketing strategy for the development of the Northern Black Sea region as a European golf tourism center is based on conducted research, analysis of the exchange of good practices for tourism development and destination marketing. The main goal of the strategy is to contribute to the unification of the efforts of the public and private sector in the region for the development of golf tourism as a strategic industry on a regional scale. The strategy defines specific marketing activities of the municipal administration, as well as measures to stimulate the marketing activities of the private and non-governmental sector to develop a unified vision of the North Black Sea coast as a golf destination. The development of a marketing strategy is an established method for achieving sustainability, planning and setting long-term goals and prospects for the promotion of tourist destinations.

The strategy contains the following recommendations for the development of the promotion of the Northern Black Sea coast with the participation of the municipal administration:

- Support for the establishment of local, regional and international partnerships;
- Creation of marketing materials by the Municipalities;
- Creation of additional tourist products.

Expected results in the implementation of marketing strategy are:

- Developed and approved complex tourist products;
- Improved transport infrastructure;
- Improved and improved transport services;
- Built a unified information system for the bed base and for all attractions;
- Optimizing the usability of the hotels;
- Developed new attractive additional services;
- Increased qualification of the tourist staff and its transformation into an advisor for the client;
- Improved promotion of the complexes and the events in them;
- Increasing the tourist flow to the golf complexes.

Holding major events such as world and European championships is an effective means of placing Bulgaria and the North Black Sea region on the world map to promote a tourist destination - golf tourism.

Conclusion

The analysis and the results of the study show that the sports component is able to diversify and enrich the tourist product. Sports tourists are more loyal and have a positive effect on the local economy. Many tourists mention that they have chosen this destination precisely because of its good image for practicing and observing golf, as well as because of the positive previous experience (own or of relatives and friends). The northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast has a rich and still untapped potential for development of various types of tourism, incl. golf tourism. The design and construction of golf complexes needs to be in accordance with the ecological assessment of the environment in order to be able to really contribute to achieving sustainable development of tourism in the tourist region of the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea coast.

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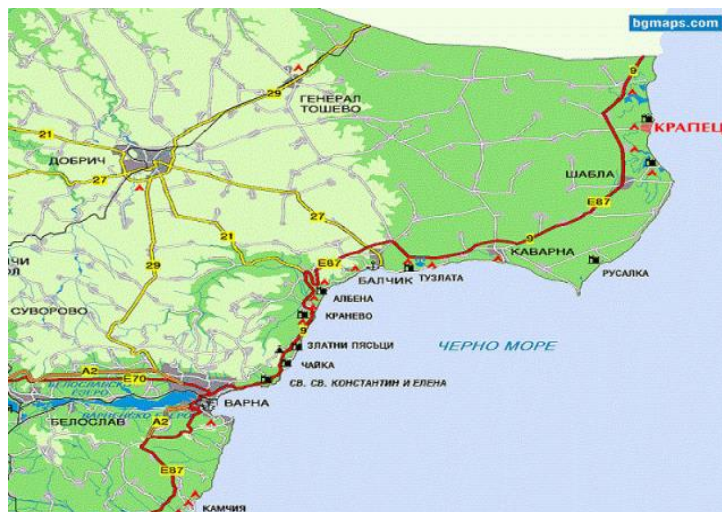


Figure 1: Map of the Northern Bulgarian Black Sea Coast
Source: www.otdihbg.com



Figure 2: Lighthouse Golf & Spa Resort
Source: www.lighthousegolfresort.com



Figure 3: Black Sea Rama complex
Source: www.blacksearama.com



Figure 4: Thracian Cliffs Golf & Beach Resort
Source: www.thraciancliffs.com