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## **TOURIST EVENTS AS A SEGMENT OF THE TOURIST OFFER OF PEJA: CASE STUDY OF THE MUNICIPALITY OF PEJA**

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### **Abstract**

Tourist manifestations or event tourism includes trips that are primarily motivated by visiting manifestations of all forms, whether they are of a cultural, artistic, entertainment or similar nature. The city of Peja is one of the oldest cities in Kosovo. It is presented by a beautiful geographical position, it is surrounded by two rivers, the Bistrica and White Dream (Bijeli Drim) rivers, as well as mountains. It is one of the most beautiful and richest cities with cultural and historical heritage as well as other natural beauties. Numerous archeological objects have been discovered for which this city is famous. The main disadvantage when it comes to tourism is primarily related to the promotion of the city because Peja does not have good promoters who would present it in the best way, but we can say that it still has a lot to offer, it has beautiful catering facilities that offer us good accommodation capacity, quality, provide good service and guaranteed safety. Speaking of tourism, it is necessary to mention various types of festivals and events that have existed for a long time and are an important part of human society. Events are significant for any city because they give a destination a special charm, all with the aim of attracting more visitors. If they are not taken care of, the resources, goals, and wishes of the visitors are not coordinated, they can achieve financial loss. People in all cultures have recognized the need to set aside time to make room for creativity and fun.

***Key words:*** Peja, tourism, manifestations, cultural and historical heritage.

### **Introduction**

Tourist events in every region are a growing phenomenon, and many cities express their unique character and recognition through well-designed events. "Manifestations are as old as mankind. Manifestations can include conferences, festivals, sports events and more. This branch of tourism is developing rapidly and has an increasingly influential segment in tourism. Globalization and the development of technology help the development of tourism because there is an increasing popularity of social networks, because the Internet is being used more and more and in this way there is a spread of information that must not be ignored. It will contribute to the destinations being better presented to the interested parties because this increases their tourist offer.

### **Impact and effects of manifestations**

We can point out that events affect almost all aspects of human life, be it social, cultural or economic. They can have a positive and negative scope of influence on a particular destination. Events are organized for various reasons, the most important of which are: meeting social needs, promoting the city itself, increasing tourist activities and other reasons. Modern times have not stopped man's need for socializing and entertainment. The new era contributes to better economic progress, which will lead to the emergence of different types and forms of manifestations (Pivčević, 2016). "Manifestations mean special rituals, presentations, performances or celebrations that are carefully planned and created in advance to mark special events or achieve social, cultural or corporate goals." (Pivčević, 2016). Manifestations can be: cultural, religious, sports, entertainment. (Kušen, 2002). It is necessary to develop and maximize the positive effects and reduce the negative effects related to the holding of the event. The events have a direct social and cultural impact on the participants, including the exchange

of experiences, greater community participation. Organizing an event is an excellent opportunity to emphasize the quality and specificity of each tourist destination.

### **Natural resources of the Municipality of Peja**

Based on the terrain on which Peja is located, it is a city in Kosovo that stands out for its greenery, i.e. forests, rivers and mountains. The city as well as the region has great attractive and interesting tourist resources, which can satisfy fans of untouchable nature, the beauty of the countryside as well as researchers interested in the traces of the past. Located between the course of the White Dream (Bijeli Drim) and Bistrica rivers, Peja offers the opportunity for hunting and fishing of various types of fresh water fish, and for fans of winter and summer sports adventures, the Rugova Canyon and the sports center located in the village of Boge offer great opportunities for the beauty of the waterfall canyon and the corresponding ski slopes. It offers families with children the opportunity to enjoy a walk of natural refreshment, which will find an ideal place by the banks of the rivers in the hottest summer days.

### **Mount Rugova**

Mount Rugova has long and cold winters and hot summers. It offers tourists to breathe clean air with reduced ions from the forest in the early morning hours, which sets a great stimulus for human health. The thickness of the snow provides good conditions for skiing. This thickness goes from 1-2m in height and from 1200-2000m with the length of the tracks from 1-5km. The swelling of the water is excellent for the development of tourism, therefore this region is considered as a reservoir of water with optimal inputs in deep rivers that give an aesthetic appearance as well as waterfalls, springs and wells. The water is crystal clear, in most cases it is cold, but rich with tasty fish. The Rugova region remains one place with a favorable climate for summer vacations, in general with cool summers where temperatures reach 17-20°C and sometimes 20-25°C, which favors family tourism.

There are also spas for treatment and a sports and recreation center where favorable conditions are created for sports and recreation, parachuting, swimming in the Ličenat lake, as well as river cruises, walks and visits to cultural and historical heritage.

### **Springhead of the White Dream (Bijeli Drim)**



A special tourist motif with visible aesthetic features is the spring in the village of Radavac, and the waterfall of the White Dream (Bijeli Drim) spring about 11km away from the town of Peja in the direction of Rožaje in the northeast of the Prokletije mountains. The mentioned spring is located below the peak of Rusolija at an altitude of 2381m, below which the field next to Bijelo Drim spreads. It is without a doubt one of the largest pits in the region, and despite the fact that it has not been sufficiently explored, it has been declared a natural monument together with the source of the White Dream (Bijeli Drim). The spring water is clean drinking water used by the inhabitants of the surrounding villages. In the last few years, a lot of service facilities, both restaurants and hotels, have been opened, which are luxuriously equipped and which are visited by a large number of tourists who return with enthusiasm.

### **Bistrica River**

The Bistrica river passes through the city, which divides the city into two parts and gives it a special beauty, and their green banks are desirable for citizens to walk. During the warm summer days, the people of Peja go out with pleasure and refresh themselves with the water of the Bistrica river, in places

such as: the source of black water next to the Demaj cave, on the third kilometer next to the Kraljica cave up to the twelfth kilometer, and in the continuity of the river five kilometers from the city there is a swimming pool with an Olympic size dimensions, which on warm days is full of visitors of all generations, especially young people who come every day to refresh themselves with fresh water or fresh cold drinks. The best view is represented by the field around Bistrica, Peja, which goes towards the Rugovska gorge, past which passes the 24 km asphalted road, which leads from Peja to Montenegro. The area around the Bistrica river has the appearance of a 20-km-long gorge, and the most beautiful part of the Rugova gorge is the 10-km length through which the Bistrica river flows.

### **Cultural heritage of the municipality of Peja**



This mill was built in the second half of the 12th century. First it was an industrial building. The equipment used for this mill is imported from Western Europe. In the initial period, this mill had three stones that were moved by water, and later electricity was used and in 24 hours it was possible to grind about 2,400 kg of grain. This mill looks like a complex consisting of six buildings, which were documented as early as 1932, according to the property document number 280/7, which belongs to the family of Haxhi Zeka. The complex includes a mill, a road, accommodation for tourists and passers-by, as well as a place for keeping livestock. The complex of this mill represents the urban part of the city of Peja because it is very functional. The picture shows the appearance of the mill. The mill has a characteristic appearance in the architectural sense because it has an oriental style. The following materials were used for construction: stone, mud, wood and lime.

The mill was used by citizens of Peja and the surrounding regions of Plav and Gusinje. Archaeological excavations show that an organized civilization has been present in these areas since ancient times. The places of greatest interest are: 10 Archaeological sites, 12 Christian monuments, 23 Muslim monuments, 102 towers, Bektashi tomb and 9 mills. Next to this mill, of great interest in the city is the old bazaar, as an ecological motif with special characteristics for tourism, which is divided into 3 parts: the old bazaar, craft centers as an important place, nearby is the Čarši Dzamija, which was built in 1471 and at the same time, it is the oldest mosque in this place, where in its yard are the graves of Haxhi Zeke, Ali Pasha, Gusija, then the fountain, as well as many other craft shops. The mill complex in the city of Peja is an ecological motif with special features for tourism, then a long square that is divided into 3 parts: Haxhi Zeke, Jasar-Pasino dvor complex, Haxhi Beg's Hamam, tower complex. The tower is a fortified house for protection against the Turkish invaders who dominated this part of Europe for 500 years. Archaeological objects found in Peja are: Fibulae, pins, rings, bracelets, etc. To talk about the long history of local craft according to the cadastral register in 1582 in the city of Peja there were 56 craft products, the most prosperous period was achieved in the 17th and 19th centuries. The main handicraft products are wooden objects, coins, furniture, barrels, work tools, instruments of the Albanian musical tradition such as: Ziftelis, fiddles, cradles for children, traditional clothes, etc. In the market square in the old town of Peja, there are still shops of old crafts that process silver, copper and iron, tailors, carpentry, etc. Hammams (traditional baths) and weekly exhibitions (artists from Kosovo

and the neighborhood) are visited by local residents, and folklore is also presented in some of the municipalities. The mixture of different religions and games has a significant role in the development of tourism because religious celebrations always attract a large number of visitors.

#### **Regional Ethnological Museum**



One of the greatest cultural treasures of the city is the museum located on the Haxhi Zeke square, which connects the city center and the old bazaar. This museum is one of the most beautiful cultural and historical monuments. Located in the city center between the municipal building and the post office, it is very interesting for visitors because it exhibits folk costumes, hand tools, furniture and many other examples of the cultural heritage of the Peja region. The archaeological exhibition was opened in 2014. The museum consists of three parts, on the first floor there are things for children, on the second floor for adults, and on the third floor for the oldest guests. It houses the exhibits that were exhibited at exhibition in 2014. Other rooms house jewelry and musical instruments used by cultural or folklore societies. The museum is very attractive and important for tourists, so they always visit it.

#### **Manifestations in Peja**

Opportunities are seen in mountains, water, health tourism, rural tourism, culture, winter sports, family tourism, nature tourism, hunting and fishing, horse riding and transit tourism. Tourism can be a force for local development. The priorities are the restoration of historical monuments, the revitalization of traditional folklore, the opening of tourist information offices in the municipalities. There is a need to raise the awareness of the local population about the importance of tourism, to improve the means of communication, to improve the cooperation between the central and local authorities, as well as cooperation with non-governmental organizations and Kosovo's neighbors. As part of the work, we will list some of the priorities that are considered necessary in the future for the development of tourism in the region of Peja.

There are mainly two basic priorities that are interconnected and conditional:

- Development of tourism as an economic branch in the Region;
- Marketing activities aimed at promoting tourism as an activity and attracting tourists.

Achieving the goals is possible through the application of the necessary measures. Related to each of the defined goals, we will propose measures that should enable their realization. Tourist products are the basic units of the offer. Every tourism product should offer a unique experience.

With the motto "Let's act together for a more sustainable future", the non-governmental organization "Syri and Vizionit" organized for the first time in Kosovo the celebration of "Dream Day" along with other places in the region as well as in Albania, Macedonia, Montenegro and Greece. The goal of celebrating "Dream Day" was that Kosovo also participates together with other places from the surrounding area. The event marking the "Dream Day" began with the opening of the fair in the city center in Peja, where the organizers of this event addressed the attendees. As part of the "Let's work together for a more sustainable future" fair, all partner organizations and tourism offices promoted their

work, and then the event continued throughout the day with art societies. Various activities were also carried out, such as; rock climbing in the Bistrica canyon in Rugova, cycling competition, then numerous educational activities about the importance of rivers, as well as one visit to the hydro-meteorological institute in Peja, and one visit to the water supply center in Radavac with students from schools and with municipal officials, famous athletes and personalities. Present at this event were representatives of the German Embassy, the Ministry of Environment and Spatial Planning, the mayor of the municipality of Peja, representatives of the municipalities of Đakovica, Prizren and Bajram Curr, as well as officials from eight other municipalities that include the riverbed of the White Dream (Bijeli Drim) in Kosovo, as well as distinguished artists and various athletes.

#### **Sports manifestation on the occasion of the liberation of Peja**

The event was organized by Faik Balić from Vitimirica near Peja in this village, and on the occasion of Peja Liberation Day, a traditional sports event was held where competitions were held in five different sports disciplines. Due to the large turnout of competitors and teams, the competitions themselves were conducted throughout the day, so that diplomas and medals were awarded to the participants who won them only before dark, and gifts from KEP for the best ones. There was a wonderful and exciting atmosphere in front of the House of Culture during the awarding of medals, diplomas and awards, where about a hundred participants of this event and a very significant number of their relatives and fans were gathered.

#### **Manifestations on the occasion of the liberation of Peja "Bokud Đerdan"**

On the occasion of marking the 10th anniversary of the "Day of the Liberation of Peja", BOKUD organized an event that lasted from the early hours of the morning until late at night. Sports manifestation on the occasion of the liberation of Peja "Đerdan" cultural and artistic society took part in the traditional celebration in the city center of Peja. The program was opened in the city center right before the symbolic raising of the flag in the city center in front of the Municipality. We can be proud that for such a manifestation BOKUD "Đerdan" was honored to open the program with its dance, which was embellished by the smiling and excited faces of young Bosniaks from the Peja region. In general, all manifestations have their success, even though manifestations in Bosnian language are poorly represented in our region, our people are satisfied with the representation of our children in all fields, no matter how much. Every manifestation affects the development of tourism in our city, the more various manifestations there are, the stronger and more developed tourism is.

#### **Conclusion**

Any tourist destination that wants to improve its tourist attractiveness should have a detailed plan for tourism development where they should focus on strategic event planning if they want to realize the full potential of tourist tourism. Every event or manifestation that needs to be held in a certain city, the organizers are obliged to review all the necessary details in advance so that there are no negative consequences. The more recognizable the destination, the more attractive it is for tourists. The key to their success lies in the support of accommodation capacities of an appropriate standard, a high degree of cooperation between travel agencies, the availability of information on websites about events and further activities that will be held in that city. As we mentioned, the city of Peja is surrounded by the tributaries of the Bistrica and White Dream (Bijeli Drim) rivers, where visitors can walk and breathe fresh air. The city of Peja is a plain that is surrounded by greenery and enchants everyone present with its natural and cultural riches. Likewise, manifestations that are an important component of tourism are events that mark the Peja region where some of them are listed and, in accordance with the rest of the tourist offer, they provide a complete service to tourists who, if they are satisfied with the offer, will return to the destination. Events play a very important role in creating the tourist offer of destinations and countries and are often included in various package deals. The development of tourism in the Region should be based on the development of tourist products, which would take into account modern trends and demands of tourists. Creation of a detailed development plan for each individual tourism product for which there is potential. Plans should be done in a complete and comprehensive manner. In

Peja, there is potential for the development of more tourist products for which there is a developed demand on the domestic and foreign tourist markets.

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