

**Resource Potential for Developing Tourism in a Small Municipality
(the Example of the Municipality of Dalgopol)**

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Abstract

The goal of this paper is to analyse and assess the resource potential for developing tourism in a local tourist destination. In the first part of the research work there are presented several models for studying the tourist potential of a territory. What unites them is the fact that most models emphasize the separate constituent elements and the interrelations between them. In the second part the resource potential for developing tourism in the researched site is analysed. The major issues of the research concern the parameters of tourist supply that include geographical location, natural and resource potential, cultural-and-historic potential, touristic infrastructure and superstructure. The results of the analysis show good opportunities for the researched site to be formed as a local tourist destination through creating sustainable connection tourism – nature – sport – folklore – ecology.

Keywords: tourism, tourist destination, tourist profiling, tourist resources, tourist superstructure.

JEL Code: Z310

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36997/IJUSV-ESS/2020.9.2.3>

Introduction

In the modern conditions of exceptionally dynamic socio-economic development, destinations face the challenges to offer a balanced package of tourist products all of which form an attractive multi-dimensional profile of the tourist territory. In this sense, designing the tourist profile of a particular territory, based on its resource potential, contributes for its competitiveness and effective development. Tourist profiling concerns sustainable development of tourism on a local level whose objective is to provide a tourist practice for satisfying the interests and increasing the wellbeing of the local population, together with preserving the natural and socio-cultural resources of the local environment for future generations. The set of issues for tourist profiling of the municipality is quite relevant and of essential importance for its regional development. I support the standpoint that the territory needs tourist profiling because it will contribute for revealing new opportunities for its development as an alternative tourist destination.

Tourist profiling, based on the resource potential of a particular place, can turn into one of the factors for sustainable development of the area, as well as for preserving its natural, cultural, archaeological and architectural heritage. Its goal is to form the tourist culture in respect to this type of resources and integrate tourists' interests with those of the representatives of the host community. In this way the tourist product is rolled out and puts the individual in the centre of the travel, together with his strive for gaining a unique experience by visiting a particular territory and meeting local population.

One of the keys for the progress and consolidation of destinations reveals that tourists take more active participation in new forms of tourist experience. According to Richards (2012), tourism evolves from classic contemplation of physical locations to more active experiences in which it is possible for the tourists to rediscover themselves, be involved and learn from the location.

The subject of this research work is the resource tourist potential of a particular territory, and the object of study is the municipality of Dalgopol.

The objective of the study is to reveal the resource potential of the municipality of Dalgopol and outline the main guidelines for using the potential to develop tourism in the municipality.

1. Thesis statement and literature review

In studying the theoretical notions about the touristic development of a particular territory in specialized literature, there stand out various models underpinned by the system of tourism

(Vodenska, 2004; Marinov, 2006; Briton, 1991; Mill & Morrison, 1992; Buhalis, 2000 et al). Researchers define concepts similar in meaning and content like tourist site, tourist destination, tourist area, territorial system for rest and tourism – all of them viewed from different standpoints – geographical, economic, marketing and social. We find it suitable to use the term “tourist destination” which is prevalent in scientific literature and gradually replaces the remaining notions (Neshkov, Marinov et al., 2013: 14). In general, meaning-wise the concept “tourist destination” signifies the target territory for the tourists. Having in mind that destinations can be of various sizes, the World Tourism Organization views the local tourist destination as a place with certain geographical or administrative boundaries and visited by tourists. The destination includes tourist products like services and attractions, tourist resources that are possible to use within a day trip (from the place where the tourists is staying). It is underlined explicitly that local destinations can be united to form larger destinations. A tourist destination can be viewed as a basic unit of analysis in tourism. (UNWTO. A Practical Guide to Tourism Destination Management. Madrid: UNWTO, 2007). In scientific literature there are various definitions of tourist destination from the standpoints of sociology and marketing and management which are based on the more general definition of WTO; yet, the modern understanding of destination is viewing it as a system of mutually dependent elements (Medlik, 1996; Davidson, & Maitland, 1997; Vanhov, 2011). It is formed and exists as a system on the ground of its ability to attract tourists and satisfy their needs, which means that, apart from accessible tourist resources, it is necessary to have the needed places for accommodating the tourists, places for dining out and other tourist activities that define the organization process concerning the tourist service in the destination.

For analyzing and assessing the tourist potential of a particular territory in specialized literature, there are suggested various models. An interesting viewpoint of the issues is given by Howie who thinks that simply encouraging tourists to visit a certain place is not enough to turn it into a touristic one (Howie, 2003). In order to turn a territory into a tourist destination, its development must be tourist oriented which means:

- turning potential resources into attractions;
- availability of places of accommodation that are appropriate in type, category and capacity;
- providing transport communications to, from and inside the destination;
- successful integration of tourist activities in managing the territory on a long-term and stable ground.

Morrison suggests the so-called “destination mix” which includes, apart from the places of accommodation and the places for eating, attractions and events, facilities, transport, infrastructure and hospitality (Morrison, 2013). The author offers a model of ten attributes of the successful destination, known as 10A. He develops ten characteristics on the ground of which one can determine the success of a tourist destination. In English all ten start with the letter A which results into the name of the model itself:

- ❖ awareness – concerns tourists’ level of information about the visited destination and is determined by the volume and nature of the information they get;
- ❖ attractiveness – defines the number, geographic scope and variety of attractions;
- ❖ availability – it is determined by the possibilities for making reservations and bookings and the variety and number of distribution channels;
- ❖ access – depends on the opportunities for comfortable movement to and inside the destination;
- ❖ appearance – this attribute is measured through the first impression tourists get when they arrive at the destination and then while staying at the tourist destination.
- ❖ activities – concerns the possibilities for things to do offered at the destination;
- ❖ assurance – it defines the degree of tourists’ security and safety at the destination;
- ❖ appreciation – concerns the sense for hospitality and good service;

- ❖ action – refers to the possibility for sustainable integration of the development of tourism in managing the territory;
- ❖ accountability – concerns the assessment of the efficiency of work of the organizations which deal with managing the destination.

A large part of the researchers views the destination as a system with internal constructs (subsystems) which interacts with other systems (Evrev, 1999; Vodenska, 2006). In this respect authors define the concept “territorial system for rest and tourism”. The internal structure of the system concerns the tourist resource responsible for the specialization, quality and attractiveness of the supply; the tourist contingent as a central subsystem setting the requirements for its functioning; the material-and-technical base and infrastructure that influence the accessibility, degree and nature of using the resources, volume and structure of tourist flows and the real capacity of the system; the service staff as a connection between all remaining subsystems and the functioning of the system as a whole. The economic, social, political and other systems are external ones (Vodenska, 2004).

A chance for a deep analysis and assessment of the tourist development on a certain territory is provided by the model of the tourist destination suggested by Marinov, 2002; in the framework of this model the author particularizes its essence, constituent elements and the peculiarities of its management (Marinov, 2002). In the model the tourist destination is presented as a system that includes the following components:

- ❖ External environment of the destination:
 - macro-environment – formed by political, economic, social, technological, ecological and legal factors on international, national and local level;
 - meso environment – tourist demand, tourist supply and competitive environment in tourism globally and locally;
 - micro-environment – suppliers, intermediaries, direct rivals, public opinion.
- ❖ Internal environment of the destination:
 - resources of the destination – tourist resources, tourist personnel, investments;
 - infrastructure and super structure – the material base needed to host and service the tourists during their stay at the destination;
 - public and private sector – state institutions on national and local level, municipal institutions, private organizations;
 - tourist industry – enterprises which create and provide services and goods for the tourists;
 - marketing mix of the destination – includes four components: total tourist product, price for the consumer of the destination, channels of distribution, image of the destination;
 - target market segments – the groups of consumers with which the destination interacts through its marketing mix;
 - organization of managing the destination – the organizations for management and marketing of the destination;
 - exit results – the consequences of the destination for the agents of the public and private sector, local population and tourists.

The suggested systemic model allows for analyzing the separate constructs of the systems, studying the connections between them and the impact of each one separately and jointly on the final results.

The reviewed models do not exhaust the issues, in specialized literature there are presented plenty of various standpoints and models (Gunn, 1994; Davidson, & Maitland, 1996, Buhalis, 2000 et al.). What they have in common is that most models emphasize the separate constituent elements of the tourist system and the interconnections between them. Most models are descriptive and partially explanatory; at the same time, they identify the interactive factors that form the demand in different circumstances (Aleksova, 2019: 28). One could say that in the science of tourism there is no commonly accepted methodology for analysis and assessment of the tourist system, its constructs, the interaction between them and the end results.

2. Methodology and experimental methods

The analysis and assessment of the tourist potential of the Dalgopol municipality are based on the presented models of tourist destination. The main research issues concern the parameters of tourist supply which include geographic location, nature-and-resource potential, culture-and-historical potential, tourist infrastructure and superstructure. Due to the limited volume of this publication, the survey is focused only on part of the elements of the tourist destination. No review has been made of the managerial and marketing aspects of tourist development of the destination since they could serve as the subject of a larger research work. The methodology of research is based on a combined use of various ways of gathering, processing and interpreting information about the development of tourism on local level. The specific methods applied in the study are:

- review and systematization of literature and internet sources, planning documents, official statistical data on district and municipal level, gathering information from local authorities and organizations that concern the development of tourism in the municipality.

- mathematic-and-statistical methods of processing quantity data;

- scientific analysis and synthesis.

For the goals of this research we are going to use the term *local tourist destination* due to the territorial and administrative scope of the studied object – a municipality with territory 440.9 km² and population 14 389 people.

3. Results and discussion

Geographic location and transport accessibility

The municipality of Dalgopol is located in the south-western part of the Varna region. Physically and geographically, it is situated in the eastern part of the Varbitsa Balkan Mountains (Eastern Stara planina). The territory of the municipality is about 440.9 km² and occupies 11.5% of the territory of the region of Varna and 3% of the territory of the north-eastern area of Bulgaria. Administrative-wise, the municipality of Dalgopol borders the municipalities of: Dolni chiflik, Provadia, Rouen and Smyadovo; its natural borders are outlined by the contours of the rivers Luda and Golyama Kamchia. The urban structure of the municipality consists of 17 towns and villages, incl. 1 town (Dalgopol) and 16 villages (Arkovna, Asparouhovo, Boryana, Velichkovo, Debelets, Kamen dyal, Komounari, Krasimir, Lopoushna, Medovets, Partizani, Polyatsite, Royak, Sava, Sladka voda and Tsonevo). The administrative centre is the town of Dalgopol, located 70 km away from the city of Varna and 50 km away from the city of Bourgas.

Through the territory of the municipality there runs the railway line Varna – Sofia with a deviation to Shoumen, as well as the road Provadia – Aytos which provides the connection between northern and southern Bulgaria. With its geographical location the municipality of Dalgopol and its centre are a significant part of the transport-and-communication system of the country. Through the territory of the region there runs a road of national importance – The Republican route III 208 – Provadia – Aytos through the Aytos pass. The composition of the automobile flow on this route is formed mainly by trucks, but the conditions for movement of the automobile flow are not particularly favourable. The size of the road varies from 4/6 m to 8/14 m, the former being way under the requirements considering the functions they perform (Portal za obshtestveni konsultatsii, 2020). Quite often in winter under heavy weather conditions the Aytos pass through Stara planina mountains happens to be the only passable one in eastern Bulgaria. The whole transport infrastructure in the municipality of Dalgopol consists of 50.1 km third-class and 60 km fourth-class road network. Most of the road cover is in good condition (some national sections are really bad and need thorough repair works). The roads connect all villages to the centre of the municipality Dalgopol, the average distance between them being about 6 km. The public transport is done by use of buses and railway. On the territory of the municipality there are four railway stations: Dalgopol, Asparouhovo, Komounari and Velichkovo, together with a railway stop – Boryana. They provide the connection to Sofia, Varna, Shoumen and Bourgas. A possible transport connection is also the

bus line Varna – Dalgopol.

From the point of view of tourism and territorial accessibility, one can define the geographic location of the municipality of Dalgopol as relatively favourable, which is predetermined by the proximity to the Black-sea coast, the regional centre Varna and the city of Bourgas.

Natural and resource potential

The relief specifics of the municipality of Dalgopol is determined by the valleys of the two rivers running through its territory – Louda Kamchia and Golyama Kamchia, as well as by the Northern slopes of the Kamchia mountains and the eastern branches of the Varbitsa mountains. The average altitude is 174.1 m (Portal za obshtestveni konsultatsii, 2020). The relief varies and from plane turns into partially hilly to mountainous one. The tourist potential of the relief of the municipality of Dalgopol is oriented to developing various alternative forms of tourism: mountain, extreme, adventure, eco and rural tourism. With growing tourist potential there stand out the rock phenomenon “Amazing rocks” on the valley of the Louda Kamchia river on the land of the village of Asparouhovo and the rock massif “The monastery” located 3 km west of the village of Asparouhovo. The natural landmark “Amazing rocks” is the major tourist site on the territory of the Dalgopol municipality. As a result of erosion activity of the river waters, a specific landscape was formed with unique rock formations – rock cones, arches and tunnels. The area is the habitat of rare species of the ornitofauna.

The rock massif “The monastery” is situated in the area Manastir bair at about 360 m altitude. The rocks face south and are suitable for climbing in spring and autumn, as well as on sunny days in winter. For the goals of extreme tourism there are designed more than 20 equipped climbing itineraries (Free rocks, 2020). The area Manastir bair is also appropriate for hiking and mountain biking. Through the territory of the Dalgopol municipality on forth-class roads and undesignated forest routes there run several off-road itineraries attractive for tourists.

The climate potential for developing tourism on the territory of the Dalgopol municipality is defined as moderate-continental characterized with mild winter, humid spring, dry summer and changeable autumn. The specific bio-climatic conditions predetermine the development of rural, eco and sport tourism.

The territory of Dalgopol municipality is rich in water resources. Through it there run the rivers Louda Kamchia and Golyama Kamchia, two dams were constructed there – Tsonevo and Eleshnitsa. The Tsonevo dam is the seventh largest in Bulgaria. Apart from the rivers listed above, in the area of the Dalgopol municipality there are smaller streams which contribute to the river network. Their debit is irregular and often they dry up at the end of summer. That is why their tourist potential is limited. The water resources of Dalgopol municipality favour the development of fish tourism, water and extreme sports like rowing, bridge jumping, canyoning and others.

The various forest, hilly and mountainous zones precondition the development of small and large game populations and are suitable for hunting tourism. The area is rich in various types of curable plants, which creates conditions for designing specialized eco tourist sites and itineraries.

According to the Register of protected territories and protected zones in Bulgaria kept by the Ministry of preserving environment and waters, on the territory of Dalgopol municipality there are 7 protected zones, 7 protected areas, 3 natural landmarks and 2 reservations (Ministerstvo na okolnata sreda i vodite, 2020):

- Protected zones:

- a) Protected zones in Directive 92/43/EEC for preserving natural habitats and wild flora and fauna:

- „Provadia-and-Royak plateau” – BG 0000104, on the land of the town of Dalgopol, the villages of Sava, Krasimir, Komounari, Kamen dyal, Boryana, Partizani, Arkovna, Sladka voda and Royak;

- “Kamchia-and-Emenska mountain” - BG 0000133, on the land of the villages of

Asparouhovo, Debelets and Tsonevo;

- "River Kamchia" - BG 0000141, on the land of the villages of Tsonevo, Debelets and Velichkovo;

- „Eco corridor Kamchia - Emine” – BG 0000393, on the land of the villages of Medovets and Lopushna;

- "Golyama Kamchia" – BG 0000501, on the land of Dalgopol, the villages of Arkovna, Kamen dyal, Partizani, Komounari, Krasimir and Velichkovo.

b) Protected zones in Directive 79/409/EEC for preserving wild birds:

- "Kamchiyska planina" – BG 0002044, on the land of the villages of Asparouhovo, Debelets, Tsonevo and Sava.

- "Provadia-Royak plateau" – BG 0002083, on the land of Dalgopol and the villages of Velichkovo, Royak, Skadka voda, Boryana, Kamen dyal, Krasimir, Komounari, Partizani, Arkovna, Medovets, Tsonevo and Asparouhovo.

▪ Protected areas:

- „Vodenitsite” encompasses 450 decares of forest land on the land of the village of Sladka voda. In the area there live rare bird species protected by law. There are also about 15 karst caves and rock alcoves. An infrastructure for visitors is available.

- „Toulumova cave” is located on the land of the village of Arkovna. It is the habitat of protected bat species. The area is hard to access.

- “Pregrada” is situated next to the village of Debelets, it has century-old mixed forestation of sessile oak and Hungarian oak, the trees being about 120 – 140 years old.

- “Royashka skala” is a protected area of characteristic landscape with remarkable rock formations – habitat of protected and priority-protection bird species. The area preserves protected animal and plant species and provides opportunities for educational and sustainable tourism.

- “Kozya reka” preserves the habitat for endangered and rare types of plants.

- “Debelets” preserves typical mixed oak plants.

- “Dabovete” is located on the land of the village of Polyatsite and includes typical mixed oak trees.

▪ Nature landmarks:

- „Sini vir” is situated on the land of the village of Debelets and happens to be a territory of woods with a waterfall formed in the valley of the Eleshnitsa river.

- “Amazing rocks” is made up of unique rock formations of scientific, cultural and aesthetic value, being also the habitat of rare plant and animal species. A second-class road makes the site accessible and there are places suitable for taking photographs.

- “Kouza skoka is a seasonal waterfall nurtured by snow melting and torrential rains, it is 7 m high, with a spring nearby. It is located on the land of the village of Lopushna.

▪ Reservations

- „Varbov dol” was created with the goal to preserve the oak forests typical for the area. It is a foothill strip of planes and hills with preserved woods and trees, situated on an area of 70.6 ha on the land of Asparouhovo village, about 14 km away from the town of Dalgopol.

- “Kalfata” is made up of century-old mixed deciduous trees. It is located on the land of Polyatsite village, about 21 km away from the town of Dalgopol.

Dalgopol municipality has favourable nature-and-geographic, climatic and biological resources for tourism which is a prerequisite for the development not only of water tourism, but also for the very popular lately alternative forms of tourism such as eco and extreme tourism.

Culture-and-historical potential

The municipality of Dalgopol stands out with its rich heritage of culture and history. On its territory there are numerous remains from antique and middle-age villages and fortresses which create prerequisites for developing historical and cultural tourism.

▪ Anthropogenic tourist resources:

- The prehistoric settlement mound near the village of Sava, which gives the name of the so-called “Culture Sava” from Chalcolithic times (the copper age between 5000 and 4000 ears BC). Of special interest are the ceramics, idols and decoration items made of pearl that are kept in the Town archaeological museum in Dalgopol. The prehistoric culture of the area has large untapped tourist potential. Exhibiting and presenting in an intelligent way these most-ancient layers of the morphology of the cultural landscape can turn the region into an attractive tourist centre.

- The prehistoric settlement of “Ousoe-1” and “Ousoe-2” the village of Asparouhovo is situated in the area Ousoeto and is actually a Neolithic settlement from 5000 BC. This is the first excavated “open-type” settlement on the territory of Bulgaria. The analysis of the ceramic vessels, tools for labour, clay idols and the type of dwellings show that there existed a well developed culture dated back to the new-stone age there. The name “culture Ousoe” is used to designate middle and late-Neolithic culture in North-Eastern Bulgaria and the Longoz.

- The early Neolithic archaeological culture of “Tsonevo” was discovered near the village of Tsonevo. The items from the site are kept in the town archaeological museum of Dalgopol, the Archaeological museum of BAS and NMH.

- The Antique and middle-age fortress of Arkovna is located in the village of Arkovna. On the crest of mount Arkovna there are remains of dwelling life from 3000 BC. More fortress remains can be found also near the villages of Komounari and Asparouhovo.

- Thracian necropolis from the Roman period, 2C - functioning excavation works about 2 km away from Dalgopol.

- The rock monastery in the village of Royak is a site of local importance. It was used by the issihastic monks during late middle ages. There were discovered donor’s inscriptions by the kings Mihail Asen and Yoan Vladislav from 13C.

- Middle-age monastery “St. Anastasij” from 12-14C. The remains of the monastery are located 4 km away from the village of Asparouhovo.

- The Revival church “St. Petka Paraskeva” in the village of Asparouhovo. The church was built in mid 19C by craftsmen from the town of Ohrid. In 1968-1978 during the construction of the “Tsonevo” dam that flooded most of the village, each stone of the church “St. Paraskeva”, an architectural monument of the Revival, was moved into the village ethnographic complex.

- The place where the rebel leader Hristo Petrov died in the April uprising, near the village of Asparouhovo. The monument is of national importance and is accessible from the town of Dalgopol and the village of Asparouhovo by use of designated tourist routes.

- The museum of history in the town of Dalgopol was established in 1948. It preserves a large number of archaeological, ethnographic, folklore and other items. Quite many of those have precious value and national significance. The museum is located in a purpose-built two-storey building with two expositions – archaeological and ethnographic. In the archaeological division there are encompassed all ages – from Paleolithic to Late middle ages. In the ethnographic exposition there are displayed items of the lifestyle of people, folk costumes, materials, jewelry and ritual practices of 19C. Ethnographic items are kept also in the “Dobri Nedev-1894” community centre in the village of Asparouhovo which has gathered items of the culture and lifestyle of the people of last century.

▪ Traditions and customs

The town and villages of the Dalgopol municipality have preserved local traditions, mostly those of the calendar set of customs, people’s faith, various curative practices and others. Every year folk groups of the local community centres (12 community centres are registered) carry out enactments of the most respected festivities and take part in various folk festivals. In the last couple of years, the village of Asparouhovo affirms itself as a destination for wedding tourism.

The culture-and-history resources of the Dalgopol municipality are various; they have local

importance mainly and part of them – national. The resources are essentially significant for developing tourism in the municipality and serve as a prerequisite for doing cultural tourism.

Tourist structure

Tourist superstructure is an important condition for valorizing nature and anthropogenic resources. Territory-wise, the hotel superstructure in the Dalgopol municipality is focused mainly in two villages – Asparouhovo where nearly 70% of the places for accommodation are and Debelets with 26%. A negligible number of places for accommodation are located in the villages of Arkovna (1) and Partizani (1). As for types of accommodation the hotel superstructure on the territory of the Dalgopol municipality is presented by guest rooms, guest houses and family hotels (Table 1).

Table 1. Hotel superstructure on the territory of the Dalgopol municipality as of 2020

	№ of sites	№ of rooms	№ of beds
Family hotels	6	92	205
Guest houses	8	58	125
Guest rooms	39	39	86
Total	53	189	416

Source: Done by author using data of the Ministry of tourism.

The structure by category of the places for accommodation in the Dalgopol municipality is adequate to the tourist specialization of the territory. Quality-wise, there prevail the places for accommodation in the one-star category, whereas those with 2 and 3 stars are only a few. There are no outlets of the 4- and 5-star category (Figure 1).

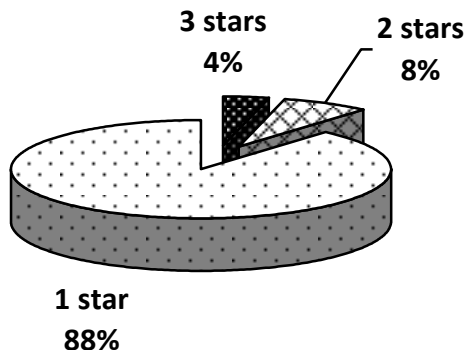


Figure 1. Category structure of the places for accommodation in the Dalgopol municipality

The climatic characteristics of the studied territory and the specifics of the tourist resources allow for practicing tourism all year round, that is why the occupancy in the places for accommodation is 12 months. On the territory of the village of Asparouhovo there was constructed a Municipal centre for sport, youth activities and rest. It has a sport hall, open-air grounds, parking lot, as well as a section with beds and canteen. The municipal sport centre is suitable for holding events like competitions or amateur activities like football, handball, volleyball, basketball, wrestling, box, weight lifting and others. In the section for accommodation there are halls with equipment for board games, dancing, fitness and sauna. There are available 20 rooms with 60 beds total; the parking lot has 62 parking spaces, incl. for individuals with disabilities. This place could be used to attract a larger tourist flow if meant for other attractions and events. We could

recommend making it more popular due to the opportunity for using its sport ground by tourist, especially in late spring, summer and early autumn.

Having in mind the structure by territory, type and category of the places for accommodation, one can say that the village of Asparouhovo starts to affirm itself as the main tourist centre in the Dalgopol municipality. It is the focus of 70% of the places for accommodation, 100% of the three-star and 50% of the two-star outlets.

The places for eating and entertainment are located a bit more regularly on the territory unlike those for accommodation. There prevail the complex ones that are part of family hotels or guest houses. According to data of the National tourist register (Ministerstvo na turizma, 2020), on the territory of the Dalgopol municipality there function 17 outlets for eating with approximate capacity for about 500 people. Most of those are of the one-star category, only one has two; however, the conditions and services they offer exceed the regulative requirements for the particular category. Their typical structure is relatively various: 5 restaurants, 4 bistros, 5 coffee-and-alcohol shops, 2 pubs and 1 coffee-and-pastry shop. The restaurant product does not feature a peculiar specialization. Taking into consideration the characteristics of the destination, it would be appropriate for the restaurants to offer customers dishes and specialties of the local cuisine by use of ingredients produced and grown locally.

The additional tourist services provided in the destination are sporadic and not sufficient, there is no complex tourist product and, on the whole, there is a lack of a general concept and vision for the development of tourism in the Dalgopol municipality as a local tourist destination. The provided extra additional services are limited to: attending an ethnographic collection, ride in a traditional cart, enactment of ritual practices (for the occasion of Christmas, Lasar-day and Palm Sunday, Sirni Zagovezni, Kuker-day, Enyo-day); meeting guests in the old Bulgarian ways by local women dressed in traditional folk costumes typical for the area, tasting local wines and raki, traditional weaving, bread kneading and others, boat riding in the Tsonevo dam, degustation of honey and demonstration of the way to make it. Local providers of services and the owners of tourist sites still do not tap off the available potential for diversification of the tourist supply. The Dalgopol municipality has a significant potential for designing interesting hiking, horse, bicycle and off-road routes. The existing ones need improved tourist infrastructure, digitalization (GPS photo service) and making those on internet through the municipal web platform for tourism, as well as in specialized internet sites and channels for tourism. It is essential to point out that in the Dalgopol municipality there is no registered tour operator or tour agent.

To this day the municipality of Dalgopol lacks reliable statistical information about the number of tourists and the realized bed-nights in the places for accommodation, their average annual occupancy, the motifs of tourists for visiting and others. This prevents from making analyses and assessment, bringing up tendencies and designing programmes and strategies for the development of tourism. Another important shortcoming is the lack in the local managerial structure of a division or specialist with competence in the field of tourism who could deal with all issues for planning, organizing, coordinating and overseeing the tourist activities in the Dalgopol municipality.

Conclusion

To sum up the analysis of the tourist potential of the Dalgopol municipality above, one can point out that there are available good opportunities for the area to become a local tourist destination. Its favourable geographic location, the natural resources, the preserved local folk traditions and cultural-and-historic heritage are good prerequisites for creating a complex tourist product. In this respect it is appropriate to build the sustainable connection tourism – nature – sport – folklore – ecology which can emphasize the strongest sides of the local tourist destination Dalgopol.

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